

Destination Bristol

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PRESS FACT SHEET – BRISTOL FOR FAMILIES

Bristol is one of the most family-friendly cities in the UK, packed with activities, award-winning attractions and exciting things to keep all ages entertained.

The Harbourside is one of the best places to start, with **Bristol Aquarium** and **We The Curious**, which is one of the UK's leading interactive science centres with more than 300 hands-on exhibits, live science shows and areas to get creative. One of the most popular features is Animate It! developed in collaboration with the Oscar-winning Aardman Animations - the makers of the world-famous Wallace & Gromit films whose studios are based in Bristol - to give children the chance to be an animator for the day. The stunning silver orb of We The Curious' planetarium has become an iconic part of Millennium Square and is the UK's only digital 3D planetarium.

Across the water you'll find **M Shed**, the free-to-enter museum that tells the history of Bristol through the memories and stories of the people who have lived here. Interactive exhibits and the family-friendly café are open year-round, also look out for rides on the museum's working exhibits – the steam train, world's oldest tug boat and electric cranes – which operate at certain times of year.

It's just a short ferry ride along the river to the multi award-winning **Brunel's SS Great Britain**. Board the ship for a world-class experience of Victorian history and engineering, follow trails, discover the sights and smells of life on board, and don't miss Flash! Bang! Wallop! where all the family can dress up in Victorian costumes and have their photograph taken, plus the ship's 'talking toilet' will keep all ages amused. 'Go Aloft' is a chance to scale SS Great Britain's rigging and walk out across the yardarm for a unique and exhilarating view of Bristol more than 30 metres from ground level (closed in winter). **Being Brunel** an exciting new public museum and visitor experience where Isambard Kingdom Brunel's inventive genius will be celebrated, and the personality behind the icon explored.

If it's ships and life on the high seas that you're interested in, hunt for treasure with **Bristol Pirate Walks** who run one-hour guided tours around the Harbourside telling the turbulent history of Bristol and revealing the haunts of pirates and swashbucklers from the 17th and 18th centuries. Or you could climb aboard our very own explorer ship, The Matthew, which is a fabulous and faithful reconstruction of the boat used by John Cabot when he discovered Newfoundland in 1497. Children are encouraged to dress up as sailors and pirates on-board too!

Recently transformed into a visitor centre, **Underfall Yard** is the historic working 19th Century boatyard which counts William Jessop and Brunel amongst famous engineers linked with its past. Newly-renovated historic buildings (including the Power House and chimney - Grade 2* listed landmarks) now forms part of a visitor centre which focuses on people's stories and the history of the site. Visitors will be able to take guided tours of the workshop and sluice room or grab a bite to eat at the cafe. Underfall Yard completes the Harbourside Walk, allowing people to walk around Bristol's glorious harbour in its entirety.

There are fantastic family-friendly cafes around the Harbourside and across the city offering great value menus with favourite foods for little ones. **Watershed Café Bar** is a good informal place to eat, as is neighbouring pizza bar **The Stable**. **Pieminister** at Broad Quay, Stokes Croft and inside St Nicholas Market is a true Bristol favourite. There are also plenty of options to try new flavours at **Las Iguanas** and **Za Za Bazaar** - both in the harbourside - while Bristol Shopping Quarter is packed with children's favourites from **TGI Fridays** and **Frankie and Benny's** to **Giraffe**. Ethical restaurant, **No 1 Harbourside** (right on the waterfront) has recently upgraded the menu to offer more choice for kids. Half boat, half tent, **Three Brothers Burgers** on Welsh Back offers an affordable family-friendly lunch deal – a real-meat burger and chips for £5.

Clifton is a top spot for families and is home to the historic **Bristol Zoo Gardens**. The zoo features fun facilities for younger children to play at Explorer's Creek, whilst children over five can walk the high ropes of Zooropia for a bird's eye view of the grounds. The Hide is the zoo's interactive, family-friendly restaurant.

A walk across the **Clifton Suspension Bridge** is a must. The visitor centre opened in 2014 to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the bridge and is open daily from 10am to 5pm (closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day). There is a small park and playground on the Clifton side of the bridge, while **Ashton Court Estate** can be found on the opposite side, with its rolling parkland, herds of roaming deer, golf course, mountain bike centre and popular cycle tracks.

Bristol boasts hundreds of beautiful **parks and green spaces**, from the historic Queen Square to The Downs, which are great for stretching little legs and enjoying a picnic. Brandon Hill nature reserve is located just off Park Street and features a children's play area, beautiful paths and great views over the city. Plus, you can climb to the top of Cabot Tower - an iconic part of Bristol's skyline. It's free to enter, open in daylight hours and once you've counted all 108 steps on the way up you'll be rewarded with a bird's-eye view of the city.

Bristol has some fantastic family attractions outside the city centre. Windmill Hill City Farm and St Werburghs City Farm are both a short distance away. A journey into the surrounding countryside will bring you to attractions like Wild Place Project, Avon Valley Country Park, Puxton Park, Noah's Ark Zoo Farm, Blaise Castle Estate, National Trust Tyntesfield, Old Down Country Park or Longleat – the UK's No.1 safari park. Bristol is also close to the North Somerset coast where Weston-super-Mare's beaches and fun-filled Grand Pier are waiting to be discovered. AirHop Bristol near Cribbs Causeway is one of the first indoor trampoline parks in England, while the nearby **Aerospace Bristol** is home to the last Concorde ever to be built.

Some of the most popular family-friendly annual events in Bristol include the free, three-day **Bristol Harbour Festival** in July and **Bristol International Balloon Fiesta** in August, which is the largest event of its kind in Europe and celebrates its 40th year in 2018.

For more information, visit www.visitbristol.co.uk/family