



Captain's Club Hotel

Christchurch, Dorset, England

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7/10

Telegraph expert rating

" On the outskirts of a town famed for it's smuggling heritage you'll find the Captain's Club Hotel, which takes subtle cues from the area's seafaring connections to offer polished accommodation, extensive spa indulgences and a spot for cocktails on the river's edge. "

By **Benjamin Parker**,
TRAVEL WRITER

Location

7/10

Despite being tucked in a nondescript residential area, Captain's Club Hotel sits on the banks of Dorset's River Stour and looks towards green parkland on the stream's other side; birds and boats floating gently on the water will banish any suburban feeling. From the hotel's jetty you can take a ferry to Hengistbury Head, which shoots out into the Channel between Mudeford and Bournemouth. It's also possible to arrange trips to the Isle of Wight, a 45-minute journey from the hotel. Christchurch, the most easterly coastal town in Dorset, has wonderful heritage buildings from a range of periods, including an 11th-century priory. There's also bustling town centre and regular markets. Serious shoppers may want to head seven miles (11km) west to Bournemouth, where you'll also find a better nightlife. The New Forest is only six miles (10km) away.



Map ©Report a map error

Style & character

7/10

The building - long and white, with blue swatches of glass - stands out among rows of red brick houses. It's a far cry from the early 90s, when the building was part of a Pontin's holiday park. On the northern exterior, lines of Siberian larch wood and Tiffany blue 'porthole' windows give a nod to the nautical inspirations that run subtly throughout (thankfully the hotel has avoided a banal maritime theme). Interiors are spacious and bright, mirroring the outside with whites, blues and wooden touches. It feels like some effort has gone into making the hotel a calm, sophisticated space, though there are few obvious personal touches to give it character. On warm days, the riverside terrace is the place to be.



Service & facilities

7/10

Smart staff are polite and well trained. They chat with confidence, both small talk and in-depth, and waistcoated staff behind the bar seem passionate about the wine and cocktail lists. On-site spa facilities are popular, and include a hydrotherapy pool and sauna as well as an extensive list of treatments. You can tackle mind-body balance with aromatherapy or massage, or simply go for beauty with facials, nail work and Fake Bake tanning.

- ✔ Bar
- ✔ Parking
- ✔ Restaurant
- ✔ Room service
- ✔ Spa
- ✔ Steam room/hammam
- ✔ Wi-Fi

Rooms

7/10

The hotel has 29 rooms and suites, and all face out towards the river. Style throughout is understated and contemporary: uncluttered space, mixtures of varying chairs, sleek furnishings. Neutral hues contrast with occasional vivid accoutrements, like yellow cotton cushions. Floor-to-ceiling windows amplify water and sky views - vivid sunshine works well with the muted interiors. Rooms, even the standard ones, are spacious, and all feature satellite television, air conditioning and Nespresso machines. Suites have fully equipped kitchens. Bathrooms, coloured by faint cream tiles from floor to ceiling, contain Aromatherapy Associates products, glass sinks and large showers.

Food & drink

7/10

The hotel's restaurant is split in two: one side is more convivial lounge bar, the other is more formal (though the same menu is served in both). When the weather suits, glass doors open to the terrace, meaning an al fresco gin and tonic before dining indoors. Unsurprisingly given the nautical focus, there's a decent selection of fish and seafood. It may not be trendsetting, but the menu does the serves good, classic dishes. The wine selection is impressive, and the owners have invested a lot of effort into it - including employing a sommelier who knows his stuff, and is happy to pair each course. Breakfast is a buffet of fruit, pastries and more, alongside decent à la carte options.

Value for money

6/10

Double rooms from £179 in low season; and from £289 in high. Breakfast included. Free Wi-Fi.

Access for guests with disabilities?

Two rooms have been adapted for disabled guests, with easy ground floor access.

Family-friendly?

Yes, with a 'junior shipmates' menu in the restaurant, cots available and entertainment on the smart TVs among the offerings.

📍 Captains Club Hotel, Wick Ferry, Wick Lane, Christchurch, BH23 1HU, England.
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