



Liberation
Route
Europe

TOUR & TRAVEL GUIDE
**UK & THE CHANNEL
ISLANDS**

Preparation for D-Day

Operation Overlord is one of the most remembered campaigns of the Second World War. The operation involved troops from Britain, the United States, Canada and several other countries.

On 6 June 1944, the Allied forces sailed across the English Channel to begin their campaign to gain victory against the German army. Planning the invasion was an enormous undertaking.

Often overlooked, planning the invasion (codenamed Operation Overlord) was a mammoth task. A vast army of workers

toiled on various elements of the campaign, from providing safe harbours for the travelling fleet to ensuring that fuel would be in plentiful supply. An array of sites linked to the planning, preparation and implementation of D-Day are located across Britain.



Eisenhower talking to his troops



Map showing disembarkation and embarkation points for the D-Day landings



Ecstatic crowds at St. Helier greet members of British Liberation Force 135 on 9 May 1945. ©Channel Islands Military Museum/Damien Horn

The Channel Islands, from occupation to liberation

When it became clear that the Islands would be occupied, the population faced the traumatic decision to leave their homes and move to England, divide their family by evacuating only their children or to remain together living under German rule.

Those choosing to remain experienced five hard and hungry years living under stifling rules and regulations. On Guernsey, 17,000 of approximately 41,000 inhabitants are believed to have evacuated between 19 and 22 June 1940, in response to demilitarisation and predicted invasion by German forces. On 28 June that summer, these forces bombed St. Peter Port harbour. On Jersey, around 6,000 of the 47,000 inhabitants fled. Conversely, virtually all residents of Alderney were evacuated and the occupying forces arrived to an almost uninhabited Island. Most Sark residents stayed on the Island. One family lived on Herm Island and Lihou had no permanent

inhabitants. Mainly used for hunting and training exercises, these smaller Islands remained largely unoccupied by German forces. The Islands were liberated by Allied Force 135 on the 9 & 10 May 1945. While the liberation was achieved without armed conflict, sadly both British and German POWs and soldiers lost their lives clearing mines. The effects of the occupation were far reaching. Food shortages had emaciated the inhabitants of the Islands and German fortifications dotted the landscape. Many evacuated children suffered an inability to re-connect with their families, which would linger throughout their lives.



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Key events & commemorations

27th
of January
Holocaust
Memorial Day

8th
of May
Victory in Europe
Day (VE-Day)

9th
of May
Liberation Day
(Channel Islands)

11th
of November
Remembrance Day

History



VE-Day Prime Minister Winston Churchill gives the V for Victory sign.

United Kingdom

Great Britain played a key role in the resistance against Germany and its final defeat. After the defeat of France in 1940, UK was left to face Nazi Germany on its own until the United States and the Soviet Union entered the war. British forces fought on almost all fronts while the civilians endured attacks by the German Air Force and later by the V-weapons. In 1944, Great Britain also became the staging ground for the Allied invasion of North Western Europe.

The Channel Islands

The two Bailiwicks of Jersey and Guernsey were the only parts of the British Isles to be occupied by Nazi Germany. Their occupation lasted from June 1940 to May 1945. From early 1941, work began to convert the Islands into impregnable fortresses to prevent them falling back into the hands of the British. They bristled with coastal defence bunkers, artillery batteries and anti-aircraft installations. The Allied blockade imposed on the Islands following the success of the Battle of Normandy, resulted in considerable privations for the civilian population, with longterm relief coming only after the German surrender.

Operation Fortitude

ONE OF THE WAR'S GREATEST DECEPTION OPERATIONS



Dummy aircraft as part of Operation Fortitude

As D-Day approached, Kent became the stage for one of the War's greatest deception plans, Operation Fortitude South. In order to mislead the German army and conceal the real location of the Allied invasion of Western Europe, extensive military preparations were made around Dover. But it was all fake.

Operation Fortitude sought to mislead the German army and conceal the real location of the foreseen Allied invasion of Normandy (June 1944). Operation Fortitude North was designed to give the impression of an impending Allied invasion of Norway, while Operation Fortitude South was to develop a mock invasion at Pas-de-Calais, all working to divert German troops away from Normandy. For the German troops, Pas-de-Calais looked to be the obvious place for an Allied invasion into Europe, offering the shortest route across the Channel. A fictitious 1st U.S. Army Group (FUSAG) was placed in Kent, supported by the construction of roads, bridges, buildings, airfields and embarkation points where dummy airplanes and landing crafts were stationed. Even false radio transmissions were made.

A decrypted transmission from the Japanese Ambassador to his government, recounting a conversation with Hitler, revealed that the German troops indeed expected an Allied invasion via the Straits of Dover. On 5 June 1944, a mock invasion was launched from Dover, while the real invasion on 6 June, Operation Overlord, successfully delivered 185,000 troops across to Normandy.

Even long after the Normandy landings, Adolf Hitler retained his best troops in Pas-de-Calais, expecting an even larger invasion at a later date.

The 'Friendly Invasion'

Quickly following the United States' entrance into the Second World War in December 1941, hundreds of thousands of American troops crossed the Atlantic to the UK to assist with the war effort in Europe. They remained in large numbers throughout the rest of the war from 1942 to 1945. This event became known as the 'Friendly Invasion'.

The American servicemen stationed in various villages and cities throughout the UK had a profound impact on British culture. They introduced popular American music and dances such as the jitterbug to Great Britain. In addition, iconic American food appeared in Britain for the first time

such as peanut butter, chewing gum, donuts and Coca Cola. British families often opened their homes to the American servicemen for tea and meals. The Americans brought gifts such as chocolate, candy, cigarettes, and nylon stockings - items in short supply due to rations. Many American camps held dances open to the public with many British girls as the special guests. American servicemen would often spend their free time in many of the cinemas, cafes, restaurants and pubs, cultivating friendly relationships that often turned into romantic ones. This resulted in a great number of wartime marriages. Many of the British girlfriends emigrated to the US at the end of the war...



Racial segregation.

The Americans also brought their oppressive system of racial segregation with them. White and African American servicemen served in separate units, and spent their free time apart. Certain British towns were designated by the U.S. military as only for black or white soldiers, while others alternated certain days for each race. Many interracial relationships between black American servicemen and their white British girlfriends ended in tears. Families were often separated as interracial marriage remained illegal in many American states in the years following the war. By the end of the war, the American - British cultural relationship was largely strengthened thanks to the 'Friendly Invasion'. The images above capture the friendship that grew between the Americans soldiers and British civilians during these three years.

Important sites across the country



1 International Bomber Command Centre
LINCOLN – internationalbcc.co.uk



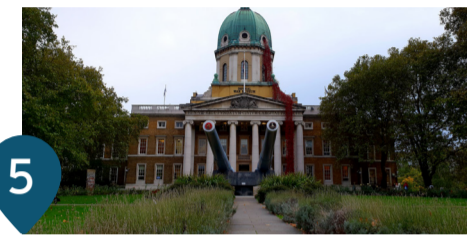
2 Bletchley Park
MILTON KEYNES – bletchleypark.org.uk



3 Cambridge American Cemetery and Memorial
MADINGLEY – abmc.gov/Cambridge



4 IWM Duxford
DUXFORD – iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-duxford



5 Imperial War Museum
LONDON – iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-london



6 Dover Castle
DOVER – english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/dover-castle

The Channel Islands, from occupation to liberation



1 Alderney Harbour & Museum
ALDERNEY ISLAND – alderneysociety.org/museum



2 The German Occupation Museum
LES HOUARDS FOREST, GUERNSEY – germanoccupationmuseum.co.uk



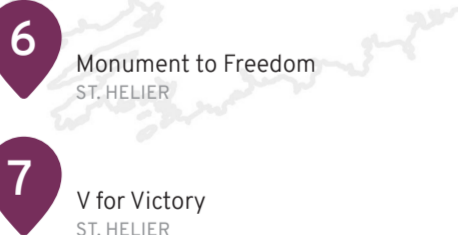
3 Elizabeth Castle
ST. HELIER – jerseyheritage.org/places-to-visit/elizabeth-castle



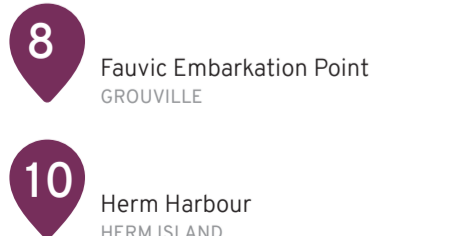
4 Castle Cornet
ST. PETER PORT, GUERNSEY – museums.gov.gg/CastleCornet



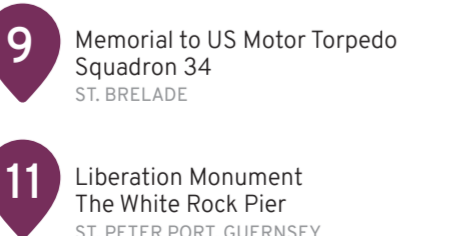
5 Mill Lane and La Seigneurie
LA SEIGNEURIE, SARK ISLAND – laseigneuriegardens.com



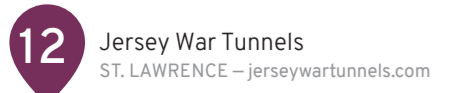
6 Monument to Freedom
ST. HELIER



8 Fauvic Embarkation Point
GROUVILLE



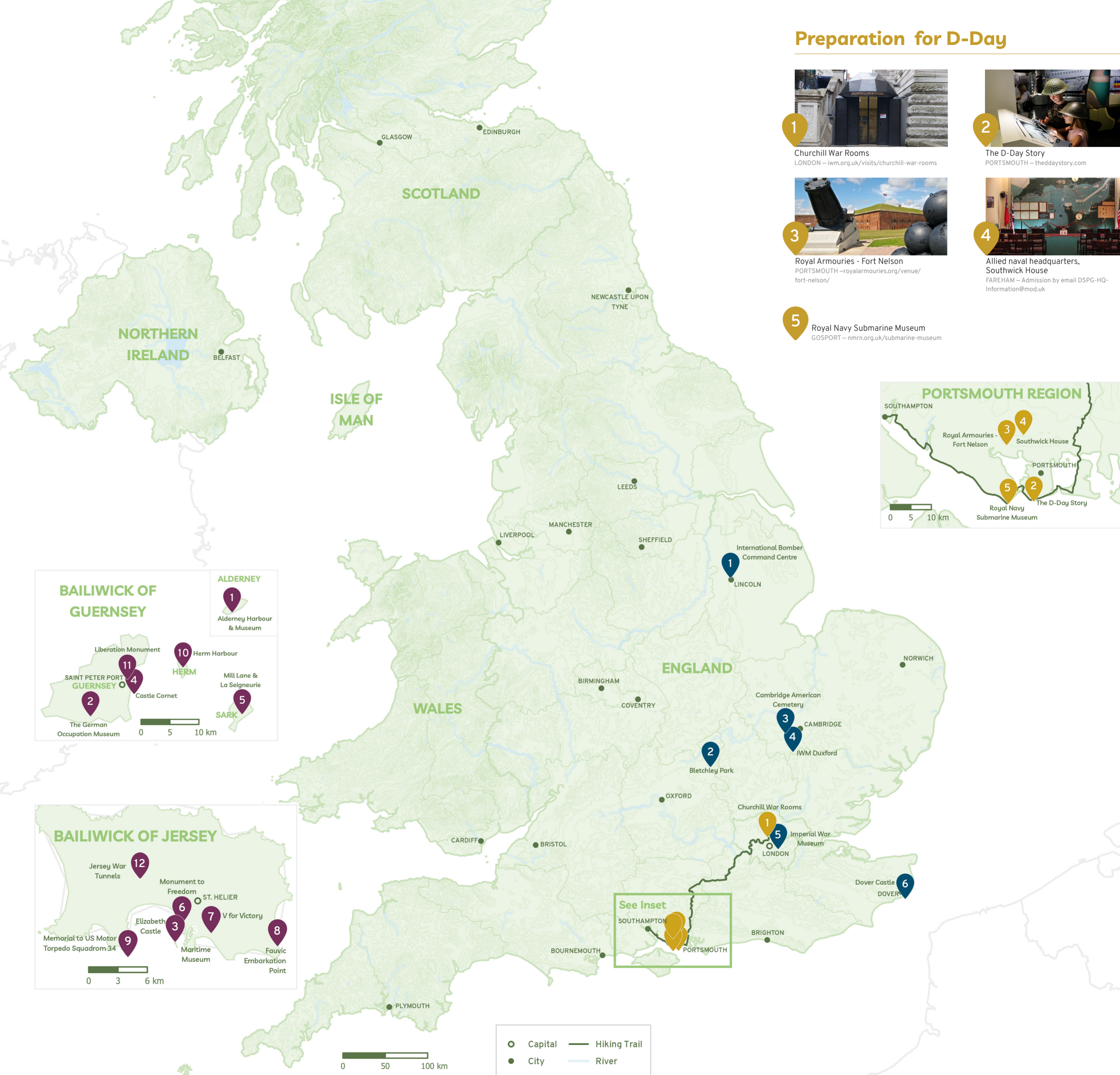
7 V for Victory
ST. HELIER



12 Jersey War Tunnels
ST. LAWRENCE – jerseywartunnels.com



11 Liberation Monument The White Rock Pier
ST. PETER PORT, GUERNSEY



Preparation for D-Day



1 Churchill War Rooms
LONDON – iwm.org.uk/visits/churchill-war-rooms



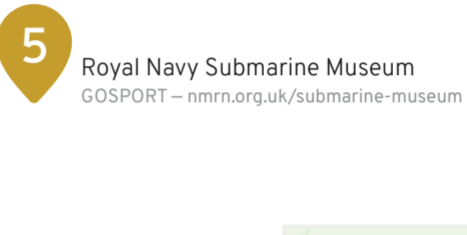
2 The D-Day Story
PORTSMOUTH – thedaystory.com



3 Royal Armories - Fort Nelson
PORTSMOUTH – royalarmories.org/venue/fort-nelson/



4 Allied naval headquarters, Southwick House
FAREHAM – Admission by email DSPG-HQ-Information@mod.uk



5 Royal Navy Submarine Museum
GOSPORT – nmrn.org.uk/submarine-museum

