



Hops Festival 2018

At Ventnor Botanic Garden



Ventnor Botanic Garden is delighted to announce that this year's Hops Festival will be held on Sunday 16th September from 11am to 6pm.

The Hops Festival celebrates the harvest of the hops grown on site at Ventnor Botanic Garden as well as the continuation of the tradition of picking them by hand. Once picked, they are brewed into our Original Botanic Ale by Yate's Brewery, and by Goddard's Brewery, our Limited Edition Botanic Pale Ale and our hugely popular Botanic Lager with a Hint of Eucalyptus - a fresh, citrusy surprise for your taste buds.

The Festival will include entertainment for all ages with music, competitions, dancing, magic and more. Food will be served throughout the day with live music performances including the talented Danton, the beautiful Holly and the Great Outdoors and the mellow jazz sounds of the Ric Harris duo. They along with lots more music, entertainers, and of course beer, will help create a merry atmosphere and ensure the celebration of this year's harvest continues in style.

Entry to the Hops Festival is free as is parking. For those who would like to look round the Garden whilst they are here, and why wouldn't you, we simply ask for a donation towards the ongoing maintenance of the Garden (£5 minimum donation).

More about the Hops

The Hop, *Humulus lupulus*, has been added to drinks since antiquity for its intoxicating effect. Dried hops add bitterness, act as a preservative and profoundly affect ale's flavour and scent. While mechanical picking collects stalks, stems and less mature cones, hand picking takes only the best cones. Far fewer of the flowers' lupulin sacs containing the dark yellow essential oils and bitter alpha acids are burst, leading to the high A values master brewers like. As the only fully established, productive hop yard on the island, we grow under a special Trials Agreement from Wye Hops Ltd, appointed by Her Majesty's government to control hop growing.

Ventnor Botanic Garden began growing hops in 2009.

A stretch of land running along the coastal path was developed with the help of the VBG Friends' Society and has provided a crop each year since, ensuring a good supply.

Since the first harvest, VBG's loyal Volunteer Group has been on hand to help pick the hops when the call to action goes out. Deciding when to pick the hops to make sure they are at their finest is a last minute decision made by Curator, Chris Kidd. He commented, *"In early September, we start checking the hops twice daily to see if they are ready. We predict a date they are likely to be at their best and we let all our Volunteers know to be on standby. In previous years, the sun has been shining and we have all worked together – it's a really great day."* This year, the local community is also invited to join in with the hops picking – watch our website or social media pages for the call to action!



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