Southampton Parish



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HIGHLIGHTS

Spend a day at the beach on the unrivaled pink sands of Horseshoe Bay (p120)

+ Port Roya

Golf Co

Play a challenging round at the stunning Port Royal Golf Course (p123)

POPULATION: 6117

Relax over tea and scones at the Gibbs Hill Lighthouse Tea Room (p125)

AREA: 2.16 SQ MILES

Gibbs Hill 🖌

Lighthouse Tea Room

★ Horseshoe

If you had to sum up the crowning characteristic of Southampton Parish in one word, it's a cinch – beaches. Fantastic beaches – whether your preference is sunbathing, swimming or snorkeling, there's a beach in the parish to suit everyone's seaside requirements. Little wonder there are more hotel rooms in Southampton than in any other parish on the whole island. What's more, the recreational choices don't stop at the water's edge. Southampton boasts golfing opportunities for players of every level from miniature golf to championship greens. The range of accommodations will suit any taste as well, with quiet cottages and pampering small hotels contrasted against big oceanfront resorts. Some accommodations are located so close to the water that you can just mosey on out of your room and step right on to the beach, while others are built around the edges of golfing greens.

Southampton Parish, sometimes referred to as the western elbow of Bermuda, is bordered by Little Sound to the north and the Atlantic to the south. Because the land is so long and thin, with a width that tapers to a mere one-third of a mile at its narrowest point, wherever you are in the parish you're just minutes from the water. The north side of the parish is residential with a rocky shoreline; all those gorgeous pink-sand beaches and picture-postcard bays and coves run along the south coast. If you're up for a hike, a gem of a trail connects the south shore beaches, offering dramatic scenery to the hiker en route.

To take in a panoramic vista of both the north and south shores in one fell swoop, climb to the top of the historic Gibbs Hill Lighthouse. While you're there, enjoy some tea in one of Bermuda's most atmospheric settings, the lighthouse tea room. Seaside dining while you breathe the scent of the salt air is another treat to be savored in Southampton Parish.

Information

The **post office** (C 238-0253; cnr Church & Middle Rds) is in the center of the parish and there are Bank of Butterfield ATMs at the Fairmont Southampton (101 South Rd) and the Marketplace grocery store (Middle Rd).

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PARISH

GIBBS HILL LIGHTHOUSE The parish's predominant landmark, this

handsome **lighthouse** (B 238-8069;68 St Anne's Rd; admission \$2.50; P 9am-4:30pm), towering 117ft above Gibbs Hill, is the tallest cast-iron lighthouse in the world.

Hoping to stem a rash of shipwrecks along Bermuda's treacherous western shoals, the British erected the lighthouse in 1846. The lens, which consists of concentric prisms, weighs 2³/₄ tons and is capable of generating a half-million candlepower. Using just a 1000-watt electric bulb, it produces a beam that can be seen up to 40 miles out to sea.

Climb the eight flights of stairs to the top – some 185 steps in all – and you'll be rewarded with a panoramic 360° view of the entire West End of Bermuda. On the way up the stairs, you'll encounter some interesting shipwreck-related displays, a fine excuse to stop and catch your breath.

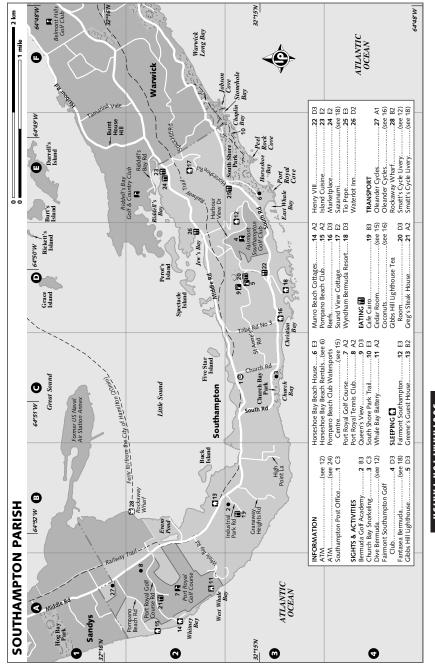
On the same grounds, opposite the driveway into the lighthouse, is a lookout that's been known as the **Queen's View** ever since Queen Elizabeth II paused there in 1953 to admire the scenery; a plaque duly notes the event.

The Gibbs Hill Lighthouse is just off Lighthouse Rd, which begins west of the Henry VIII restaurant on South Rd. If you don't have a scooter, it takes only about 10 minutes to walk up to it.

A delightful way to top off a visit is to have lunch or afternoon tea at the atmospheric **tea room** (p125) on the ground level of the lighthouse.

HORSESHOE BAY

With its turquoise waters lapping onto pink sands, $\ensuremath{\mathsf{Horseshoe}}\xspace$ Bay (South Rd) is as gorgeous



as it gets. Once you set eyes on it, you'll understand why this is the most popular beach in Bermuda. It's also the only beach in the area with full facilities and lifeguards. Not surprisingly, both locals and tourists flock here on a hot summer's day, but because it has such a wide crescent of sand there's always plenty of room to spread your towel.

Rocky outcroppings mark both ends of this horseshoe-shaped bay. Just beyond the outcropping at the west end of the beach you'll find the tiny Port Royal Cove, whose clear and typically calm waters make for protected swimming and snorkeling.

All of the facilities sit at the west end of the beach, along with an ample parking lot. The Horseshoe Bay Beach House (admission free; 🕑 8am-8pm Apr-Oct) has changing rooms with toilets and private shower stalls. Adjacent to the beach house is Horseshoe Bay Beach Rentals (238-2651; 94 South Rd; rental items per day \$5-10; (Y) 9:30am-5pm Apr-Oct), a concession that rents beach chairs, towels, body boards, umbrellas and locker space. Next to the concession stand, and with the same opening hours, is a little café that sells hot dogs, burgers, sandwiches and ice cream.

The main entrance to Horseshoe Bay is on South Rd, opposite Tio Pepe restaurant, where you'll also find a bus stop.

CHURCH BAY PARK

It may not be as grand as popular Horseshoe Bay, but this attractive beach (South Rd) has its own appeal, including some of Bermuda's best snorkeling. The reef comes in relatively close to the

shore here, making Church Bay's snorkel sites easy to reach. You can find fish almost as soon as you enter the water, but for the best underwater scenery swim out to the reef, which is approximately 100yd from the beach. There you'll find lots of colorful tropical fish, including large parrotfish that feed on algae growing on the coral. In the process of chomping at the coral, the parrotfish actually create some of the sand that eventually accumulates on the beach.

A concessionaire (opposite) sets up right on the beach from April to October, renting snorkel gear, beach umbrellas, chairs and lounges, selling cold soda and cheerily dishing out snorkeling tips.

Although the main sights are found in the water, there's a bit of history here as

well. In early colonial times a coastal fort stood at the east side of the bay; if you walk up onto the knoll above the beach you'll find a plaque marking the spot where the fort was erected in 1612.

SOUTH SHORE PARK TRAIL

If you do just one long beach walk, make it this one. The South Shore Park Trail is an absolute beauty of a hike that takes you past a run of hidden coves sandwiched between the island's two most glorious beaches, Warwick Long Bay (p113) and Horseshoe Bay (p120). Picturesque views abound along the way as the undulating trail winds up to coastal cliffs and then back down to lovely little beaches. Bring a bathing suit!

You can walk in either direction, but if you start at Horseshoe Bay and head east, you'll keep the midday sun at your back. The walk goes from one end to the other of South Shore Park, a 1.5-mile-long coastal park established to protect Bermuda's finest stretch of undeveloped beaches.

The trail is easy to follow. At Horseshoe Bay, just walk along the beach and when you reach the end you'll find a path jutting up the cliffside that marks the east end of the bay. At the top you'll be rewarded with a fine view of turquoise seas lapping at pink sands below. This cliff is the first in a series of outcroppings of craggy rocks that form the nine secluded coves and small bays dotting the shoreline between the two bookend beaches. The first one you come to, Peel Rock Cove, is just a five-minute walk beyond Horseshoe Bay and has an inviting little beach.

After Peel Rock Cove, continue along the shoreline and the path will wind you up to scenic clifftops and back down to the water's edge. In about 20 minutes you'll

KEEP YOUR TOP ON

It's tempting, so tempting...those glorious expanses of glistening sand, those hidden private coves, all look as if they're inviting you to fling off your cares and bare your skin to the sun.

Yet, no. Not only is nudity illegal on Bermudian beaches, so is topless sunbathing for women. You'll just have to get rid of those tan lines someplace else.

reach **Chaplin Bay**, a sandy beach that once belonged to the family of movie star Charlie Chaplin. The path continues through flowering beach morning glory and oleander into Warwick Parish, past a fine beach at Stonehole Bay and little Jobson Cove before bringing you to Warwick Long Bay.

WEST WHALE BAY

Off the main tourist beat, West Whale Bay (end of Whale Bay Rd) offers a little sandy cove in a quiet, natural setting. And if you want to pack a lunch, you'll find a couple of picnic tables on the hillside above the beach.

The remains of a small fort, Whale Bay Battery, can be explored by making a mere three-minute walk up the hill to the northwest. The fortification, overlooking the Port Royal Golf Course, offers a panoramic view of the endless turquoise and cobalt waters of the Atlantic.

The gun battery was built in 1876 to defend Hog Fish Cut, a channel through the reefs leading to the Royal Naval Dockyard. The battery's original cannons weighed 12 tons and provided a hefty defense against potential raids on the Dockyard. Whale Bay Battery was recommissioned during WWII to serve as a lookout for German boats. Now abandoned, its guns are gone but you can still rummage through the former ammunition magazines and barracks.

Activities SNORKELING

The west side's best easy-access snorkeling spot is Church Bay, where the nearshore reef harbors a variety of colorful tropical fish and you can rent quality snorkel gear right on the beach from Church Bay Snorkeling (🖻 799-5657; snorkel gear per day \$15; 🏵 10am-5pm Mon-Sat May-Oct).

Both Dive Bermuda and Fantasea Bermuda dive shops (below) allow snorkelers to go out with their dive boat when their divers are diving shallow reefs. Snorkelers pay \$40 to \$50, gear included.

DIVING

Fantasea Bermuda (238-1833; 6 Sonesta Dr; 1-/2tank dive \$65/84; 🕎 9am-5pm) at the Wyndham Bermuda Resort has numerous dive options. For people who have never dived before, these folks make it easy with their 'Discover Scuba' course (\$100) for begin-

ners, which includes an hour-long introductory lesson at the hotel pool and then goes out to dive on a 25ft reef - all you need is a bathing suit. For experienced divers there's everything from wreck dives to night dives.

Dive Bermuda (🗃 238-2332; 101 South Rd; 1-/2tank dive \$70/100; (Y) 9am-5pm) at the Fairmont Southampton also offers a full range of professionally run dives.

GOLF

Championship Port Royal Golf Course (234-0974, automated reservation system 🖻 234-4653; 5 Middle Rd; greens fee \$132; 🕑 sunrise-sunset) offers dramatic views and demanding greens. The course, par 71, 6561yd, was designed by Robert Trent Jones.

A better choice for beginning golfers, Fairmont Southampton Golf Club (🗃 239-6952; Fairmont Southampton, 101 South Rd; greens fee \$70; 🕑 sunrisesunset) is shorter and has players concentrating on close shots more than power strokes. This par-54, 2684yd course is no slouch in the scenery department either, with lakes, hills and ocean views.

Just want to hit, hit, hit? The Bermuda Golf Academy (238-8800; Industrial Park Rd; basket of balls at driving range \$5, mini-golf \$8; 🏵 9am-10pm) has a 320yd driving range, 40 practice bays, target greens and a charming 18-hole miniature golf course.

BOATING Pompano Beach Club Watersports Centre (234-0222; 36 Pompano Beach Rd; boats per hr \$15-35; 9 9am-5pm May-Oct) at the Pompano Beach resort rents a wide range of boats including sail-boats, kayaks, paddleboats and glass-bottom beate boats.

Fantasea Bermuda (☎ 238-1833; 6 Sonesta Dr; pedal boat per hr \$20, 2-person kayak per hr \$30; ☜ 9am-5pm) at the Wyndham Bermuda Resort rents self-propelled boats for paddling around.

HIKING

In addition to the coastal South Shore Park Trail (opposite), a section of the Railway Trail (p34) runs clear through Southampton Parish, connecting it with neighboring Sandys Parish to the northwest and Warwick Parish to the east. The Railway Trail parallels Middle Rd most of the way, offering views of Southampton's less-touristed north shore and Little Sound.

LOST IN THE TRIANGLE

Few terms conjure up images of the paranormal the way that 'Bermuda Triangle' does.

The name is given to a triangular section of the Atlantic Ocean that's bound by Bermuda to the north, Florida to the west and Puerto Rico to the south. It's thought that as many as 100 ships and planes have vanished in the triangle. The mysterious disappearances in this zone, which is also known as the Devil's Triangle, date back to the mid-19th century. It wasn't until the 1970s, however, when a popular interest in UFOs and other unexplained phenomena arose, that the disappearances drew international attention and the term Bermuda Triangle came into common use.

What makes the triangle unusual is that not only are the disappearances guite substantial for an area of this size, but many of the vessels have gone down without so much as emitting a distress signal - and with no subsequent trace of the craft ever appearing. In other cases ships have reappeared intact months after disappearing, but with no trace of the crew ever found.

The largest single disappearance in the Bermuda Triangle was that of the infamous Flight 19, a group of five US Navy torpedo bombers that flew out of Florida on a routine flight in December 1945 and vanished; a search plane sent in their wake also disappeared.

Various theories have been advanced to explain the disappearances, ranging from atmospheric disturbances and erratic magnetic forces to time warps and extraterrestrial kidnappings. Others just write most of it off as coincidence and the usual combination of mechanical failure, bad weather and human error.

However you look at it, the Bermuda Triangle gives those with a rich imagination plenty to work with.

TENNIS

The Port Royal Tennis Club (238-9070; 5 Middle Rd; per court per hr \$10; 🕑 8am-8pm), near the golf course, has four Plexipave courts, and the Fairmont Southampton (239-6950; 101 South Rd; per court per day \$15; 🕑 8am-9pm) resort has 11. Both have lights for night play.

Sleeping

SOUTHAMPTON PARISH Fairmont Southampton (238-8000, in the USA

& Canada 🖻 800-441-1414; www.fairmont.com/sout hampton; 101 South Rd; r winter/summer from \$219/419; 🕅 🔀 😰) Bermuda's largest and most upscale resort exudes elegance. Despite its size it's an unhurried place with a quiet hilltop location amidst an 18-hole golf course. Other facilities include a spa, a fitness center, tennis courts and several restaurants. The rooms have waterview balconies and some pleasant touches like velour bathrobes. Although the hotel is about a half-mile inland, its own private white-sand beach - and anywhere else on the 100-acre grounds - can be reached by a complimentary shuttle. The resort is a member of the Fairmont chain.

Pompano Beach Club (234-0222, in the USA & Canada 🕿 800-343-4155; www.pompanobeachclub.com; 36 Pompano Beach Rd; r winter/summer from \$280/375; 🔀 😰) Friendly staff, striking ocean views

and comfy rooms await at this small upmarket hotel. The rooms are spread in a scattering of two-story buildings along a coastal cliff at the north side of the Port Royal Golf Course. It's all very quiet and low-key, making it an ideal getaway choice. Facilities include clay tennis courts and a fitness room. There's a small beach with shallow waters that are good for snorkeling. The rooms have rattan furnishings, kingsize beds and oceanview balconies. Breakfast is included.

Wyndham Bermuda Resort (238-8122, in the USA a 800-996-3426; www.wyndham.com; 6 Sonesta Dr; r winter/summer from \$275/320; 🔀 😰) Perched on a rocky outcrop that separates twin bays, this resort boasts two beautiful beaches. In an effort to attract more families it's dedicated one sandy area to the kids, adding some neat water slides and pools just inland of the beach. The resort took a beating (it lost a whole wing!) during Hurricane Fabian - so virtually everything has been rebuilt. With its long curving design, nearly every room here enjoys a fine water view. Tennis courts, a health spa and a fitness center round out the facilities.

Reefs (238-0222, in the USA & Canada 2800-742-2008; www.thereefs.com; 56 South Rd; r winter/summer from \$185/365; 🔀 😰) This pampering upscale hotel has a handsome private beach at Christian Bay just west of the Wyndham Bermuda Resort. There are 73 attractive rooms in a series of terraced hillside buildings. Most sport waterview balconies and all have cheery tropical decor. The grounds have two tennis courts, a fitness center and a good seaside restaurant. Breakfast is included. Swimming, snorkeling and diving are possible from the beach.

Munro Beach Cottages (234-1175, in the USA 800-637-4116; www.munrobeach.com; 2 Port Royal Golf Course Rd; apt winter/summer from \$130/230; 🔀 🕄) The perfect choice for golfers, this quiet complex looks out on the Port Royal Golf Course in one direction and the ocean in the other. The place is composed of nine duplex units spread in an arc along low seacliffs. The units are modern, with full kitchens, oceanfront patios and all the expected amenities. A path leads down to a small, private beach at Whitney Bay, and tennis is available nearby.

Sound View Cottage (238-0064; 9 Bowe Lane; apt \$85; 🛛 🔀 😰) Enjoy a hilltop view of the Great Sound from one of these three apartments in a residential neighborhood midway between Middle Rd and South Shore Park. Each of the compact units has a kitchenette and there's a poolside patio with a barbecue. All in all, it's good budget value. It's open from April through October only.

Greene's Guest House (238-0834; greenes guesthouse@yahoo.com; 71 Middle Rd; s/d \$110/130; 🔀 😰) Set back away from the road, this friendly family-run guesthouse has six comfortable rooms appointed with little extras like refrigerators, coffeemakers and VCRs. Breakfast is included. Join your fellow guests in the cheery lounge at night. The only drawback is that the location, at the north side of the parish, isn't close to the south shore's sandy beaches, though it is on a bus route.

Eating

Gibbs Hill Lighthouse Tea Room (🖻 238-8679; Gibbs Hill Lighthouse, 68 St Anne's Rd; 🕑 9am-4:45pm; 🕅 😭) When was the last time you ate at a lighthouse? This cozy spot combines a lovely setting and view with a casual air and an English-style menu. While away the afternoon over a pot of hot tea and some luscious scones served warm with butter

and jam. In the morning you can also get egg breakfasts and after 11:30am some oldfashioned lunches like codfish croquettes with salad.

Cedar Room (234-0222; Pompano Beach Club, Pompano Beach Rd; breakfast & lunch \$10-15, dinner \$52; 🕑 breakfast, lunch & dinner; 🕺 🕄) Wrap-around picture windows looking across an azure ocean, good food and attentive service make for a winning combination. Lunch is casual fare, including tasty fish chowder, creative sandwiches and Greek salads. Dinner is a more upscale affair featuring a five-course prix fixe meal, with several choices for each course. The menu changes daily but dinner mains typically include fresh seafood, a beef dish and a gourmet country-style offering like grilled quail.

Henry VIII (238-1977; 56 South Rd; lunch \$12-20, dinner \$20-40; 🕅 lunch & dinner; 🕅 🔀) Southampton's best-known restaurant plays up a convivial Olde English ambiance, all burgundy and dark wood, with waitresses in Tudorstyle dress. Lunch features sandwiches and pub grub like steak-and-kidney pie, but most everybody comes here for dinner. The cornerstone for big meat-eaters is the Angus prime rib with Yorkshire pudding, but in addition to beef dishes there's lighter fare such as curried vegetable strudel or poached salmon. The adjoining pub features English lagers on tap. All in all a bit pricey, but a fun night out.

tun night out. **Coconuts** (238-0222; The Reefs, 56 South Rd; lunch \$9-16, 4-course dinner \$64; \mathfrak{D} noon-4pm & 7-9:30pm) Dine to the sound of the surf at this ro-mantic beachside restaurant that features a menu with Caribbean and Cajun accents. At lunch choose between the likes of jerked chicken sandwiches, Cajun quesadillas and curried salads. At dinner there's a prix fixe menu that changes daily but dangles such temptations as coconut-crusted tiger shrimp in mango dipping sauce.

Island Cuisine (238-3287; 235 Middle Rd; breakfast \$6-10, sandwiches \$4-6, dinner \$11-15; 🕑 6am-10pm Mon-Sat, 6am-1pm Sun; 🕄) Don't be put off by the bland exterior - this place serves up good hearty breakfasts and real homestyle local food. You can get pancakes and various egg dishes any time of the day. Meals of fried chicken or fish, dished up with peas and rice, provide a solid, affordable dinner option. On Sundays the thing to order is the traditional codfish-and-potatoes breakfast.

Greg's Steak House (ⓐ 234-6092; 5 Port Royal Dr; lunch \$10-18, dinner \$22-40; ⓑ lunch 11:30am-5pm, dinner 6:30-10pm; ⓑ ⓑ) Bermuda's best steak restaurant graces the greens at Port Royal Golf Course. Greg's 16oz Angus beef T-bone is legendary but if you're looking for something on a more reasonable scale the filet mignon is as tender as they come. There are also lamb and fish options, but everyone comes up here at dinner for the steaks. Lunch features the more typical light golfclub fare of sandwiches and salads.

Tio Pepe (ⓐ 238-1897; 117 South Rd; lunch \$10-20, dinner \$15-34; ⓑ 11am-10pm; ⊠ ②) If you've worked up an appetite after a day at the beach, this homestyle Italian restaurant opposite Horseshoe Bay has crispy pizza and good pastas. At dinner it adds on steaks and tempting specials like lobster ravioli in a light cream sauce. You can dine outside at umbrella-shaded tables or indoors in air con comfort.

Waterlot Inn (ⓐ 239-6967; Middle Rd; appetizers \$12-24, mains \$26-40; ⓑ dinner; ☑) Within the walls of a 320-year-old dockside inn, this dinner restaurant is a throwback to an earlier era. The cuisine blends Mediterranean and Bermudian fare, with everything from fresh seafood to rack of lamb and dry-aged steaks. The wine list is award winning and the service is polished. Affiliated with the Fairmont Southampton, Waterlot is the resort's most formal choice and tends to appeal to an older crowd; cigar smoking is allowed and jackets and ties are suggested.

Sazanami (🖻 239-3322; 6 Sonesta Dr; à la carte sushi

\$3-10, mains \$15-30; 🏵 dinner; 🕺 🕄) The most in-

teresting of the Wyndham Bermuda Resort's

several restaurants, Sazanami offers authen-

tic Japanese fare and dramatic ocean views. For the most fun, sit at the revolving sushi

bar and choose whatever catches your eye.

You can also dine at tables and enjoy every-

thing from sashimi to tempura dinners. **Cafe Cairo** (238-1831; 10 Industrial Park Rd; lunch 59-15, dinner \$12-35; 11am-10pm; 2) Walking through the door is a bit like stepping into a Bedouin tent. Carpets on the floor, lowslung cushions in place of chairs and candle lighting set the tone at this Middle Eastern restaurant. The menu runs the gamut from wrap sandwiches and burgers to moussaka and *shish tawook* with hummus. On weekends there's a grand buffet spread (\$35) at dinner. Marketplace ((2) 238-1993; Middle Rd; (2) 7am-10pm Mon-Sat, 1-5pm Sun) If you need groceries, get 'em here.

Entertainment

Henry VIII (238-1977; 56 South Rd) Here you'll find a frolicking pub atmosphere and entertainment almost nightly. Usually it's a keyboardist, with the music going until 1am, but on Sunday night it rocks with a DJ and dancing until 3am.

Getting There & Around

The two main roads through Southampton are Middle Rd, which runs along Little Sound, and South Rd, which runs past the beaches and hotels on the south shore.

BICYCLE

Bicycle rentals are available from **Oleander Cycles** (**C** 234-0629; Middle Rd), just north of the Port Royal Golf Course.

BOAT

In an effort to relieve vehicle congestion on the roads, the government has instituted a high-speed commuter ferry service (p154) between Southampton and the City of Hamilton. Not surprisingly, the schedule is busiest during commuter hours, from 7am to 9am and 5pm to 7pm Monday to Friday, when sailings take place every 30 minutes.

The ferry – called the Rockaway Express, or the Green Route – takes just 20 minutes and costs \$4 one way. On Saturday there are half a dozen sailings between 8am and 5:30pm from Hamilton and 8:25am and 6pm from Rockaway. There is no service on Sunday.

BUS

Middle Rd is served by bus No 8 and South Rd is served by bus No 7. The service along either route runs once every 15 minutes during the day and about once every 30 minutes in the evening and on Sunday. It takes about 30 minutes to reach either the Royal Naval Dockyard (\$4.50) or the City of Hamilton (\$3). If you're going to Hamilton for dinner, keep in mind that the last No 7 bus leaves Hamilton at 9:15pm (6pm Sunday), and the last No 8 bus departs at 11:45pm (10:45pm Sunday).

South Rd merges with Middle Rd about midway in the parish at a spot called Barnes

Corner. Note that a number of buses terminate at Barnes Corner, so if you're going any further west, make sure you take a bus that's marked 'Dockyard' or 'Somerset.' Things are simple if you're heading east, as all No 7 and 8 buses terminate in the City of Hamilton.

For more information on public buses, including passes, see p155.

MOTOR SCOOTER

Scooter rentals are available at two branches of **Oleander Cycles** (234-0629; Middle Rd): just north of the Port Royal Golf Course, and at the **Reefs** (234-2335; 56 South Rd). Scooters can also be rented from **Smatt's Cycle Livery** (295-1180; 101 South Rd) at the Fairmont Southampton and at **Wyndham Bermuda Resort** (238-7900; 6 Sonesta Dr).

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