

UK Canal Boating

Escape with a canal boating holiday!

Avon Ring from Stourport on Severn

Cruise this route from : Stourport on Severn

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Avon Ring from Stourport on Severn

Cruising Days : 11.00 to 15.00

Cruising Time : 69.50

Total Distance : 130.00

Number of Locks : 145

Number of Tunnels : 7

Number of Aqueducts : 1

The River Avon stretches for some 40 navigable miles between Tewkesbury and Stratford upon Avon, through the Vale of Evesham, Pershore and Tewkesbury.

Tewkesbury is an attractive, historic town dominated by timber-framed buildings and is renowned as having one of the best medieval black and white townscapes in the country and has much to delight the visitor, including; Tewkesbury Abbey, Tewkesbury Museum, Shopping, Pubs, Bars and Restaurants.

The historic town of Evesham, on the banks of Shakespeare's River Avon, is the "capital" of the Vale of Evesham, lying between the Malvern and Bredon Hills and the Cotswolds in the Heart of England.

Sitting on the banks of the River Avon is the elegant market town of Pershore which is renowned for its Georgian architecture.

A short distance away from the town centre stands Pershore Bridge a scene of Civil War skirmishes if you look closely and you will be able to see the scars of battle.

Stratford upon Avon is situated on the River Avon in the Heart of England and is the famous birthplace of England's greatest poet and playwright, William Shakespeare. This market town is a perfect combination of old and new, and with its beautiful surroundings, is a fine place to visit for a relaxing holiday.

There are many places to visit and attractions including; The Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford Town Walk - taking you around the historical sites of Stratford, Anne Hathaway's Cottage - home of Anne Hathaway,

Shakespeare's sweet-heart and wife, Shakespeare's Birthplace.

When visiting by boat you have the unique opportunity to moor adjacent to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

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Cruising Notes

Cruising on the River is very different to the Canals, there is no continuous towpath and therefore no right to land and moor up as you please. The scenery is one of quiet water meadows & prolific bird life. Moor up only at recognised sites. You are responsible for assessing whether it is safe to use the waterway in flood or strong stream conditions, but note that CRT may decide not to operate its locks.

This route is planned over 10 nights, if staying longer then consider spending more time in Stratford, Worcester, Tewkesbury and Evesham or just taking it at an easy pace

Opening hours for the River Severn and Gloucester & Sharpness Canal from 26th March 2018 – 24th March 2019

Monday 1st November to 24th March 2019 - 08:00 to 16:00 Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The Canal and River Severn will be closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. During this period the following Locks will be unmanned: Lincomb, Holt, Bever, Diglis and Upper lode.

Lock bookings for the River Severn can be requested by calling Gloucester Lock, 24 hours prior to passage on 01452 310832.

Day 1

Leave the Stourport Basin through the closest locks to you, and turn left to go down the River Severn.

The River winds its way through lovely peaceful countryside until you reach Holt Fleet, which takes about 2.5 hours, and you can moor up with a couple of pubs just after the bridge.

Day 2

Continue on passing the quiet countryside passing the entrance to the Droitwich Canal.

Soon you will approach Worcester. There are various moorings by the racecourse on the left, and just after Worcester Railway bridge.

Worcester has a splendid cathedral dating from 1074, & museums, art galleries and half timbered buildings. The museum at the Royal Worcester Porcelain works is well worth a visit, as it contains the most comprehensive collection of Worcester Porcelain in the world.

Passing the Diglis Basin is the end of the Worcester and Birmingham canal.

The small towns of Kempsey and delightful towns like Upton upon Severn are passed amongst quiet

countryside, which is situated on the riverbank with various pubs close by.

There is moorings as Upton on Severn on the right before Upton Bridge. This delightful town is well provided with fascinating old timbered and early Georgian buildings. The best area is near the river . During the summer this vibrant town is host to a series of music events, www.uptonjazz.co.uk and uponbluesfestival.co.uk.

As Tewkesbury approaches, turn left just after King John's bridge, avoiding a shallow spit projecting from the junction with the River Avon.

The Avon Lock is operated by a resident Lock-keeper, & is only open from 9am to 6pm, or until 8pm in May-August. In the winter you can use the lock yourself. He is also closed for lunch between 1-2pm. last locking 15 minutes before closing time. You will need to buy a Lower Avon navigation trust licence to cruise on the River Avon.

You can moor up in Tewkesbury it is 6 hours cruising to here.

Time to explore the historic town of Tewkesbury with its many attractive & ancient buildings including of course, it's cathedral-like Abbey, which is reckoned to be one of the finest Norman churches in the Country. The abbey was completed about 1120, and is splendid both inside & out. Its magnificent and beautifully decorated tower stands at 130 feet high and 46 feet square, and is the largest Norman tower in existence.

The most unusual buildings in Tewkesbury are the row of medieval shops near the Abbey, in fact most of the medieval aspects & character of the town have survived to this day.

One of the more unusual aspects of the town is the maze of small alleyways leading off from the main street. There is a couple of museums, and the Tourist information office can tell you more about other attractions.

The Battle of Tewkesbury fought here in 1471 was the penultimate battle in the War of the Roses.

There are many pubs and hotels in Tewkesbury.

From Tewkesbury cruise along the River Avon which twists and turns through the lovely vale of Evesham, passing small villages like Bredon with its many fine timbered buildings. Just beyond the Severn Sailing club, beware of a weir which spills into the River creating a very strong cross current when the river is high.

There are good moorings at Eckington Wharf just past Eckington Bridge where you should take the largest Arch It is 8.5 hours to here.

Also moorings at Comberton Quay, Defford Road Wharf and the picnic area below Pershore New bridge.

Day 3

Pershore is a small market town with many well kept Georgian buildings set amongst the many fruit farms & market gardens that are scattered all over this area.

Just past Pershore is Fladbury, another picturesque village of half timbered cottages and houses. Craycombe farm, just north of Fladbury & Evesham Golf course, is a farm shop where you can buy fresh fruit and veg, local ciders & country wines, and home make cakes & preserves. There is also a gift shop, both are open all year.

The River continues on its meandering course past small villages including the lovely named Wyre Piddle, just

opposite Tiddle Widdle island, and where you will find the Brewery that makes 'Piddle in the Hole' Ale!! (Wyre Piddle Micro-brewery is North west of the Anchor Inn. Open Mon-Fri).

The Anchor Inn here is ideal for mooring.

On your approach to Evesham, look out for the cable across the river, this is Hampton ferry, the wire will be lowered when the ferry man hears 3 blasts of your horn.

In Evesham there are 3 lots of Visitor moorings along the River, as the Avon cuts a loop around Evesham, the last and most extensive are by Workman Gardens.

There are many pubs & restaurants in Evesham, and even a night club!

Evesham has many elegant Georgian houses and fine timbered buildings.

Moor for the night here it is 7.5 hours to here

Day 4

On your departure from Evesham take the centre arch at Workman bridge, avoid the weir just after Evesham lock, and then keep to the left for a short distance.

The Lock-keeper here sells Lower Avon Navigation trust Licences, he is open from 9-6 or 9-8 May to August. During the winter the lock is set for manual operation. Out of these hours you cannot go through the lock, nor during his lunch time 1-2pm!

Evesham Country Park at Twyford is a short walk on your left hand side as you approach Offenham on your right. This is a shopping & garden centre & also incorporates the Vale Wildlife Centre. There is a narrow gauge steam railway running through the 130 acre Park.

The River now heads away north approaching Bidford-on-Avon with its splendid bridge. The village makes a good place for mooring , there are a few pubs close by.

The river continues to meander its way as it enters Warwickshire and Stratford -upon-Avon is reached. There are moorings opposite the Royal Shakespeare Theatre by the recreation ground.

Stratford has endless streets of low-timbered buildings. The whole town is full of Shakespeare relics and buildings, like Ann Hathaway's Cottage, Shakespeare's birthplace, and Halls' Croft where his daughter lived, and numerous bars and restaurants.

It is 7.5 hours to here

Day 5

Head for the village of Wilmcote, the home of Shakespeare's mother .

Wilmcote is just north of the Wilmcote locks, a flight of 11 locks, rising just over 77 feet in total. Before these locks, is Bishopton Lock, on the outskirts of Stratford.

Once moored, Wilmcote village will be to your left. There is a fine old pub here, called The Mary Arden Inn, due to its proximity to Mary Arden's house. Real ales, and bar and restaurant food are available. There is a beer

garden, and children are welcome. Nearby, is another pub called The Masons Arms, with open fires, and also serving food and real ales. Again, children are welcome.

As you cruise out of Wilmcote, you will be heading towards Edstone Aqueduct (South end). This is the longest aqueduct in England, with a towpath that is level with the canal bed, making it even more unique. At this end of the aqueduct, there is a very pretty cottage.

For a while the canal straightens out as you head towards Wootton Wawen. After navigating Bearley Lock, the canal curves to the left, and as it straightens again, you will see Austy Wood and Manor away to your right. A bend to the right takes you over another aqueduct, and Wootton Wawen is to your left.

If you want to moor up here, there is a conveniently placed pub, called The Navigation, which is in the basin. Real ale and home-cooked food are available. There is a garden with children's play area, overlooking the canal

Continuing, you may just be able to see Wootton Pool over to your left, as you wend your way through the peaceful countryside. You will soon get to Preston Bagot Locks, Claverdon Top Lock, then Yarningdale Aqueduct. You will now be able to moor for the night if you wish.

Canalside, there is a pub called The Fleur-de-Lys, at Lowsonford. You can moor here, but you must ask first, and don't tie up to the trees. Again, real ale and bar meals are available, and there is a large canalside garden, which is safe for children to play in.

Moor here for the night it is 8.5 hours to here

Day 6

Cruising northwards, the canal crosses the M40, disturbing the relative peace for a while, as you meander through mostly open countryside. To the right, you may see the Grand Union Canal, as it too makes its way to Kingswood Junction.

There is a handy shop near to Lock No. 14, and a pub called The Boot Inn. Children and well-behaved dogs are welcome. Real ale and food served lunch and evenings.

Once you have completed the Lapworth Locks, you continue past Lapworth village, and on to Hockley Heath, to the right of the canal. Here you will find a few shops near the canal, and a pub, The Wharf Inn, which is canalside. Children are welcome and there is an outdoor adventure playground.

If you have time, and want to explore a bit, there is a cycle hire shop in Hockley Heath, called Dynamic Rides (www.dymamicrides.co.uk; 01564 783332).

Moor for the night here it is 6.5 hours to here

Day 7

North of Hockley Heath, you will pass under the M42 bridge, then on through some quiet countryside, cruising through Warrings Green and Earlswood.

You will see boats moored near Earlswood as it is the base for the Motor Yacht Club. To the left of the canal are

Earlswood Lakes.

You can moor near Shirley Draw bridge, and pop into the Drawbridge pub canalside

Following a wooded and twisting course, you will shortly reach the suburbs of King's Norton. As you cruise further into the suburbs, you will soon reach Brandwood Tunnel (352 yds). Once through it, you will soon be at King's Norton Junction.

You need to bear left here onto the Worcester and Birmingham Canal.

There is a nice pub- The Navigation Inn about 100 yards west of Bridge 71 on your right

Looming in front of you now is West Hills Tunnel (2,726 yds). It is one of the longest tunnels in the country. It is often difficult to see right through, and there are lots of drips, so perhaps put on a waterproof jacket for the duration!

At the end of the tunnel, you will soon be in Hopwood. If you want to stop here, there is a pub called Hopwood House, canalside. Real ale and bar meals are served all day. Children are welcome until 9pm.

To your right you will be able to see the Bittell reservoirs, and again you will go under the M42 Bridge. Just beyond here is Alvechurch, a pretty little town with a marina.

Again, there is a pub here called The Weighbridge, right beside the marina, food is served, but not every day, so do check first.

You can moor here for the night or by bridge 61 also canalside, is The Crown Inn, serving bar food.

It is 7 hours to here

Day 8

Leaving the marina, head towards Shortwood Tunnel (614 yards long), which seems longer due to the 3mph speed limit! Watch out for the drips, as tunnels are very wet.

Once through, you will cruise through some very tranquil and pretty countryside, with the sound of birdsong just audible above the gentle chug of the boat, before reaching the 580 yard Tardebigge Tunnel.

Just the other side of the tunnel, you will soon spot Tardebigge Top Lock No. 58 – the first one in the mammoth flight!

You won't have much chance to stop once you start on the locks. The flight consists of 30 narrow locks over 2¼ miles, and is the longest in the United Kingdom, just take your time and you will soon feel like you've been doing it all your life!

Before you know it, you will reach Tardebigge Bottom Lock No. 29.

If you have time and want to moor up, there is a really nice pub across canal (accessible by bridge), called The Queens Head. The food here is really good, and children and dogs are allowed in the restaurant if they are well-behaved. If you're lucky, you will get a table by the window, or outside on the decking, overlooking the canal.

It is 6 hours to here

Day 9

Moving on from here, you will soon reach Stoke Locks at Stoke Prior, and once through, you might like to moor and have a look around this pretty town.

About 10 minutes walk from the bridge, is a nice pub called The Navigation. It has a pretty, sunny beer garden, and the food is very good value for money.

Moving on from here, you will approach Astwood Locks, a flight of six, but by now you should find it much easier.

Turn right at Hanbury Junction onto the Droitwich canal.

The entrance is very pretty, and if you want to, you can moor up, and perhaps visit The Eagle and Sun at Hanbury Wharf, where they have a nice beer garden, and serve good food.

As you turn onto the canal, you will immediately encounter the Hanbury Locks, before approaching the outskirts of Droitwich.

In Droitwich Spa, there are a couple of nice parks – Vines Park and Lido Park. Vines Park is so-named because in Roman times vines were grown there. Just north of the park, a Roman cemetery was excavated. Lido Park, opened in the 1930's, has a children's play area and an outdoor swimming pool.

Moor in Droitwich it is 5 5 hours here, there are designated visitor moorings on the pontoons to the east of the Netherwich basin in Droitwich, beware of the large concrete pedestal sticking up in the middle of channel, this is the cap of an old brine well.

Droitwich has been a salt mining town since Roman Times , and this has caused subsidence in many of the buildings, so you will see some very old lop-sided houses in this pretty town!

There is a small museum devoted to the Salt Industry in the Tourist information centre which is housed on the former Brine Baths site, Droitwich was transformed into a Sap town in the 1800's due to the therapeutic qualities of the salt water.

Day 10

Last day if doing this ring in 10 nights !!

Moving off from your mooring you pass the tiny village of Salwarpe. There is access to the village through a wooden gate.

The glorious half-timbered Salwarpe Court is to your left.

You will notice many reeds in the canal, and by the abandoned swing bridge at Hill End is the main entrance to the Coney Meadow Reed Bed.

The ladywood set of 5 locks are spaced out over half a mile. The countryside opens out to either side.

Linacre Bridge 3 is worthy of close inspection as it is a rare surviving example of one of Brindley's original structures.

You leave the Droitwich canal at Hawford Junction after passing through the two locks.

Turn right up the River Severn.

The river continues North West along the way you came until you reach Stourport Basin.

It is 8 hours back here.

Useful Links

The information above is provided in good faith to assist you with planning your canal boat holiday. Information accuracy cannot be guaranteed, however, if you do see something that needs updating, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

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