

UK Canal Boating

Escape with a canal boating holiday!

Ellesmere Port and return from Whitchurch

Cruise this route from : Whitchurch

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Ellesmere Port and return from Whitchurch

Cruising Days : 8.00 to 0.00

Cruising Time : 42.00

Total Distance : 78.00

Number of Locks : 66

Number of Tunnels : 0

Number of Aqueducts : 0

There is a wealth of things to do in the Roman City of Chester which can be seen on foot, because of the amazing survival of the old city wall. You can walk right round Chester on this superb footpath.

Chester Roman Amphitheatre is the largest in Britain, used for entertainment and military training by the 20th Legion, based at the fortress of 'Deva' (Chester). Discover 1,000 of shops behind the façades of the black and white buildings, find high street brands to designer boutiques. Shop in Chester's Rows where 21st century stores thrive in a Medieval setting. Take home some Cheshire cheese which is one of the oldest recorded cheeses in British history and is even referred to in the Domesday Book.

Lying outside the town is Chester Zoo is home to 7000 animals including some of the most endangered species on the planet.

In Ellesmere Port part of the old Dock complex is home to the Boat Museum. Exhibits, models and photos trace the development of the canal system from early time to its heyday in the 19th century.

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Cruising Notes

Day 1

From Whitchurch marina turn north and you will soon reach the Whitchurch arm which is a little cul de sac canal leading to the town of Whitchurch.

Leaving Whitchurch you travel up to the Grindley Brook Locks, these famous staircase locks have made this a canal monument.

The 3 staircase locks are closely followed by 3 more locks, a friendly lock-keeper is on hand to help from April-Oct 8.30 am to 18.30.

By the Locks is the Lockside Stores, selling local produce and with tea & coffee & snacks served in the adjacent cafe, which has internet access.

You can moor up just past the locks for the night as it is 2 hours cruising to here.

The Horse & Jockey pub is near the bottom lock.

Day 2

The Canal travels again through quiet countryside only interrupted by the occasional lock- the 2nd of which has a Pub called the Willey Moor Lock tavern, formally the Lock keepers cottage, it contains some fine Canal paintings.

½ mile south from Marbury Lock is the enchanting village of Marbury.

Further on is the village on Wrenbury, access can be reached from Bridge 20 or 19, about a ¼ mile walk. There are some thatched magpie cottages around the village green.

The Dusty Miller pub is by the Lift bridge and the Cotton Arms is just down the road from the Bridge.

The lift bridge at Wrenbury is a push button, and you will need to close the road off with the gates.

There are 3 locks at Baddiley but apart from that the countryside is flat, rich farmland.

You can moor up after a couple of hours cruising by Halls lane bridge 12, and take the track to Ravensmoor where you will find the Farmers Arms serving real ale & meals.

There are 2 locks at Swanley but no more until you reach the end of the Llangollen canal at Hurleston, where there are 4 in quick succession. Hurleston reservoir is off to the left.

Turn left at Hurleston junction onto the Shropshire Union Canal, you will follow the reservoir for a short while. At Barbridge you reach the junction of the Middlewich branch of the Shropshire Union, There is a bar & grill at Barbridge and this is a good place to moor for the night, moor by Bridge 100 Bremilow's Bridge.

It is 8 hours cruising to here.

Day 3

At Barbridge Junction you carry straight on and head towards Chester, you are joined by a busy road until it

turns away at Calveley. .

At Bunbury Wharf, 2 staircase locks require thought before action, they are 14 feet wide like all subsequent locks between here and Chester. The village of Bunbury is 1 mile south west of the Locks and has stores, butcher & take away fish & chips & a couple of pubs.

Bunbury water mill is up the hill from Bunbury Wharf, & is open Easter-Sep & gives guided tours around its fully restored watermill.

From Wharton Lock is an excellent view of Beeston castle- a massive ruin dating back to the 14th century which is visible from 30 miles away. The castle was built by the Earl of Chester in 1337, & is situated on the top of a steep hill dominating the surrounding countryside. It is open April to September.

Beeston Castle is also known as the the formidable 'Castle of the Rock'. Climb to the top of this impressive crag with incredible views over eight counties, from the Pennines to the Welsh mountains. Legend has it that Beeston still guards King Richard II's lost treasure – maybe your family can find it? An exciting exhibition details the secrets of 4,000 years of Beeston Castle's history, from Bronze Age settlement to Iron Age hill fort, the Castle itself was begun in 1225.

With over 40 acres of unspoiled woodland trails to explore and an abundance of wildlife Beeston Castle and Woodland Park makes for a truly exhilarating and enchanting day out for all the family.

The Canal continues through the flat but green Cheshire landscape, the Cheshire cycleway following the canal here, and continues all the way into Chester.

Off to the left by bridge 113 there is a pub- the Poachers Pocket.

Continue through the quiet countryside there are no stores until you get to Waverton where there is a shop.

Just past Waverton off to your left was the site of the Battle of Rowton Moor in 1645, where one of the last major battles of the Civil War took place, with the Parliamentarians beating the Royalists.

You are now on the outskirts of Chester & there is a very convenient Park & Ride here which can take you into the city of Chester in a few minutes. Moor up by Christleton Bridge 122, if you don't want to go down the 5 locks that take you down to the City centre.

For those wanting to moor up in the heart of Chester continue on through the 5 locks. Chester city centre is easily accessed near Cow lane Bridge 123e.

It is 7.5 hours to here from Barbridge Junction.

CHESTER-

There is a wealth of things to do in this Roman City which can be seen on foot, because of the amazing survival of the old city wall. You can walk right round Chester on this superb footpath.

Chester Roman Amphitheatre is the largest in Britain, used for entertainment and military training by the 20th

Legion, based at the fortress of 'Deva' (Chester).

Excavations by English Heritage and Chester City Council in 2004-5 revealed two successive stone-built amphitheatres with wooden seating. The first included access to the upper tiers of seats via stairs on the rear wall, as at Pompeii, and had a small shrine next to its north entrance. The second provided seat access via vaulted stairways. The two buildings differed from each other and from all other British amphitheatres, underlining the importance of Roman Chester.

There has been a church on the site of The Cathedral for over 1,000 years originally a Saxon Minster then rebuilt as a Benedictine Abbey this magnificent building is a national treasure in the heart of the city. Visitors can view the Norman arches and Gothic columns and the medieval shrine of St. Werburgh. The Cloisters and Church form one of the most complete medieval monastic complexes in the country.

Handel gave his first public performance of the Messiah here in 1742.

Discover 1,000 of shops behind the façades of the black and white buildings, find high street brands to designer boutiques. Shop in Chester's Rows where 21st century stores thrive in a Medieval setting. Take home some Cheshire cheese which is one of the oldest recorded cheeses in British history and is even referred to in the Domesday Book.

Discover 2000 years of Chester life in the Grosvenor Museum see the impressive collection of Roman tombstones and displays depicting Roman Chester - look out for the Roman soldiers on the way. Discover the world of the famous naturalist Charles Kingsley and explore 'hands-on' the geology and natural history of the area. Also visit the Cheshire Military museum situated inside the tower of Chester castle. Little of the Castle remains but the 13th century tower is open to the public.

Grosvenor Park miniature Railway is one of Chester's premier attractions for 9-90 year olds!. Open April to Oct Sat Sun & school holidays, where you can experience this steam railway laid out in the Grosvenor Park amongst the ducks, moorhens & geese.

Lying outside the town is Chester Zoo is home to 7000 animals including some of the most endangered species on the planet.

Take a journey through the Butterfly house a 400sq meters tropical house and is home to more than 30 species of butterfly from South America, Africa and South East Asia. One of the most critically threatened species around, the Philippine Crocodile is new to Chester Zoo and a breeding programme is in place for this species to ensure its long-term survival. . Tel 01244 380280.

The Chester Visitor & Craft Centre is open Mon-Sat 9-5, and has working craft shops and cafe.

Chester Heritage Tours- – see highlights of Historic Chester from an open top 1930s vintage omnibus. Or experience Chester in an open top bus -www.city-sightseeing.com, the tour takes 55 minutes.

Chester Market in Princess Street is that site of an undercover market with up to 100 stalls selling fresh produce, and continues the tradition of a market in the city that started in the 14th Century.
Open Mon-Sat 8am to 5pm.

Day 4

Continue on through Chester right through the middle of the town. Passing the site of an old lead works and a great variety of bridges, the navigation approaches the old city and suddenly curves round into a very steep rock cutting.

Soon the Northgate staircase locks are reached , at the bottom is a sharp right turn to Tower Wharf. Northgate Locks are hewn out of solid rock, and these impressive locks lower the canal by 33 feet.

There is a handy store next to Bridge 128.

Sweeping northwards along the lock free pound from Chester to the Mersey, the canal enters open country as it crosses the Wirral and enters Ellesmere Port.

Turn around near bridge 147, as you cannot go onto the Manchester Ship Canal.

It is 3.5 hours to here from Chester.

In Ellesmere Port part of the old Dock complex is home to the Boat Museum. Exhibits, models and photos trace the development of the canal system from early time to its heyday in the 19th century.

Vessels on display include a diverse array of narrowboats and some restored period cottages. This exciting and expanding venture in a splendid setting beside the canal is not to be missed. Open April- October 10-5 & Nov – March Sat-Wed 11-4.

Blue Planet Aquarium is west of bridge 140a . It is a new aquarium with 2 floors of interactive exhibits, themed restaurant, Caribbean reef, Amazon Jungle and shop.

Easily reached by bus from Ellesmere port, Birkenhead is worth a visit. Birkenhead Park has benefited from an £11m restoration, and the gardens inspired the designs for Central park in New York.

At Birkenhead Tramway & transport Museum you can travel back in time on either a genuine Hong Kong Tram or the beautifully restored 1901 Birkenhead Tram. Also see the Baxter collection of cars and motorcycles. . Open April to Oct Sat & Sun 1-5pm, also Wednes – Friday during School summer holidays & Easter.

German U Boat at Birkenhead-View the amazing life on board a German U Boat, you can look into the U boat and discover well preserved artefacts and a rare Enigma machine. The U Boat story is at Woodside ferry terminal inn Birkenhead.

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

It is 21 hours back to Whitchurch, so cruise for about 7 hours a day.

Useful Links

Description : Chester Zoo

Website : <http://www.chesterzoo.org/>

Telephone : 01244 380280

Description : Blue Planet Aquarium

Website : <http://www.blueplanetaquarium.com/>

Telephone : 0151 357 8804

Description : National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port

Website : <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/national-waterways-museum>

Telephone : 0151 355 5017

Description : Chester Tourist Information

Website : <http://www.visitchester.com>

Telephone : n/a

Description : Chester Roman Amphitheatre

Website : <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/chester-roman-amphitheatre>

Telephone : 0870 333 1181

Description : Chester Cathedral

Website : <http://www.chestercathedral.com>

Telephone : 01244 324756

Description : Cheshire Military Museum

Website : <http://www.cheshiremilitarymuseum.co.uk>

Telephone : 01244 327617

Description : Blakemere Craft Centre

Website : <http://www.visitchester.com/things-to-do/cheshire-workshops-candle-workshop-p29841>

Telephone : 01606 883261

Description : Birkenhead Park

Website : www.wirral.gov.uk/

Telephone : 0151 652 5197

Description : Birkenhead Tramway and Transport Museum

Website : <http://www.visitwirral.com/attractions-and-activities/wirral-tramway-and-wirral-transport-museum-p18340>

Telephone : 0151 647 2128

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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