

# UK Canal Boating

Escape with a canal boating holiday!

## Manchester from Middlewich

Cruise this route from : Middlewich

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Cruising Days : 8.00 to 0.00

Cruising Time : 31.50

Total Distance : 81.00

Number of Locks : 10

Number of Tunnels : 6

Number of Aqueducts : 0

Manchester is a dramatic mix of old and new with outstanding shopping, eating, drinking and nightlife the city has something to offer everyone.

Visit Old Trafford home to one of the most famous football teams in the world or view one of the many museums or art galleries, also visit Manchester Cathedral and the Museum of Science and Industry and Imperial War Museum North.

Chill Factor is Britains longest and widest Ski Slope.

The Opera House has a variety of theatrical and musical performances.

The Castlefield Project has a museum complex on Liverpool Road.

There is an enormous range of retail opportunities.

## Cruising Notes

Day 1

Leaving Middlewich Top Wharf you will immediately encounter 3 locks , and another after a few hundred yards, so get your crew ready!

There are no more locks today and you continue through fine open country , often overhung by trees this is a

beautiful part of the Canal. It follows the valley of the River Dane. There are pleasant moorings just north of bridge 176 on the off-side. You can stop for the night at Broken Cross, where the Old Broken Cross Pub is canalside at Bridge 184.

It is 3 hours to here.

## Day 2

You are now on the outskirts of Northwich, the scenery has been determined by the salt mining industry which this area is known for.

Northwich is another salt mining town, typical of this area. The town centre is close to the wharves near Town Bridge, and there are good moorings here. There is a relatively new shopping precinct in the town and a variety of pubs and restaurants.

Leaving here, you will soon see Anderton come into view, with its iconic boat lift. For lots of interesting information about the boat lift, visit [www.andertonboatlift.co.uk](http://www.andertonboatlift.co.uk) or call 01606 786777.

There is a cafe at the lift, serving hot and cold drinks and light snacks. Its opening times are the same as the lift. You pass the town of Barnton on your right, and you will then come to 2 small tunnels, both of which have room for only 1 boat at a time, so make sure they are clear before proceeding.

All around this area are relics of salt workings, some of which still go on today. Going through Barnton Tunnel you emerge onto a hillside overlooking the River Weaver, with a marvellous view straight down the huge Saltersford locks. There is a useful range of shops up the hill from the east end of the tunnel, including a launderette, chemist and butcher.

At the east end of the tunnel, you will see some handy shops, so maybe a good time to stock up, if you have not already done so.

Moving on, you will now enter Saltersford Tunnel, again, two boats cannot pass in this tunnel, so do take care when entering and leaving it.

Passage is timed - northbound is on the hour to 20 past, southbound is half past the hour for 20 minutes.

Once through the tunnel, you will again be in open countryside.

To the north of Bridge 209, along the road to your right by the bridge, you might like to have a meal in The Holly Bush Inn, Little Leigh, Northwich. Food is served at lunchtimes and evenings, along with traditional ales. There is a large beer garden with children's play area, so the whole family can relax.

You will soon enter some woodlands, just prior to Preston Brook Tunnel which is 1239 yards long. From the North end of the tunnel, you will see a sign announcing that from here onwards, you are now on the Bridgewater Canal.

You will notice that the canal now splits into two, where you will need to bear right. If you have the time, and want to visit Runcorn, then bear left for the 1½ hour cruise to the end of the canal, otherwise, keep left and make for Stockton Heath, a suburb of Warrington.

Runcorn (if you chose this route), has a really impressive road bridge, called the 'Silver Jubilee Bridge'. It links Runcorn to Widnes and is around 1,082 feet long, and it really is worth taking the detour to Runcorn just to see

it.

Back towards Preston Brook Marina, bear left on a rural stretch until you reach Higher Walton, which is a pretty estate village, with local shops and amenities. A nice place to stop is the Walton Arms in Higher Walton. Children are welcome here, but only if they are dining with adults. It is 6.5 hours cruising to here & a nice place to stop for the night.

### Day 3

If you have time, you might like to visit Walton Hall in Higher Walton. This beautiful house and its gardens makes a nice day out for all the family, with play area's for the children.

And moving on, towards Stockton Heath, it becomes more urban and is a popular area for walkers and fishermen. Stockton Heath is North of London Road Bridge No. 15, and is a suburb of Warrington. This side of the canal is quite built-up, but on the South side, it is still very much unspoilt and open.

Next, you will pass by Grappenhall and Thelwall, where there is a pub called The Penny Ferry Inn. You can get a drink and maybe a snack here whilst waiting for the Penny Ferry to transport you across the Manchester Ship Canal, for a minimal fee.

Once back on your boat, you will cruise towards Lymm.

Lymm is a pretty little town with the streets tumbling down to the canal side. If you want to stop here and have a look around, there are 24 hour moorings, which is handy for the fish and chip shop! In the town centre is Lymm Cross, built in C17th, and the centre-point of the town.

You will now pass through some small villages – Oughttrington, Bollington and Dunham, to name but a few. The Swan With Two Nicks is a nice pub in Little Bollington, near the canal, and not far from Dunham Massey Country Park.

As you leave here, you will notice it becoming more built-up as you approach Sale.

From Timperley, you can get the Metrolink tram into Manchester, where there is a wealth of culture, restaurants and cafe's. On the canal side, you will find The Waterside Arts Centre and The Robert Bolt Theatre. In the Waterside Plaza, you might like to eat in The Waterside, a modern bar serving food all day, with a patio area overlooking the canal. They have a strict dress code, so do check first.

From here, you will reach Waters Meeting, and turn right and continue on the Bridgewater Canal, passing Manchester United Football Ground to your right just before Bridge 94. You also pass the magnificent Salford Quays. Old Trafford cricket ground- the home of Lancashire cricket club and a Test Match venue is a little further south.

The Manchester Ship Canal is very close- just across the towpath . The new Metrolink towers above .

Your mooring for the night is Castlefield, either in the main Castlefield Basin or in the Staffordshire Arm, leading under the railway viaducts towards the Museum. There is a water point on the Staffordshire Arm, next to the railway arch. Boaters regard Castlefield as a safe place to leave boats unattended and it is a good starting point for exploring what Manchester has to offer. The trams crossing the viaduct are noisy but they don't run all

night! The Museum of Science and Industry is only across the road from the Staffordshire Arm.

Designated an "Urban Heritage Park," Castlefield is an excellent place to begin exploring Manchester, and a walk among the lovingly restored Victorian houses along the old canals or through the reconstructed Roman Fort is time well spent.

It is 6 hours to here.

Try the new Crystal Maze experience in Manchester. - You and your team must test your skills, solve mysteries and overcome challenges both mental and physical. They're in four adventure zones – Medieval, Industrial, Aztec and Futuristic. Plus they're all against the clock. The more challenges your team completes successfully, the more Crystals you win and the more time you'll get to catch tokens in the iconic Crystal Dome.

If cars are your thing then visit the Museum of Transport where you will find the largest collections of its kind in the country.

No visit to Manchester would be complete without a visit to one of the country's most famous Football clubs, Manchester City. Begin at the museum and learn about the club's 130 year history. Have a go at commentating on some of the glorious goals or relive the greatest moments on the video jukebox. Take a look behind the scenes when your tour guide will give you an insight into the day to day activities of the club or walk in the footsteps of your football hero's.

The Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) is on the site of the world's oldest railroad station. Its 12 galleries include the Power Hall, with water and steam-driven machines from the golden age of the textile industry, as well as vintage made-in-Manchester cars, including a rare 1904 Rolls Royce. The history of the city from Roman times through the Industrial Revolution to the present day is documented in the Station Building. The Air and Space Gallery is another must-see and is home to numerous historic aircraft, including a replica of Triplane 1 by A. V. Roe, the first British plane to successfully fly.

Also worth visiting for its collections of fighting vehicles and aircraft is Imperial War Museum North. Highlights include audiovisual presentations and exhibits dealing with the history of warfare and its role in shaping civilization, as well as large machines such as tanks, aircraft, artillery, and handheld weaponry.

Perched on the banks of the Irwell, Manchester Cathedral dates mostly from 1422 to 1506 and was raised to cathedral status in 1847. Particularly attractive are its chapels on both sides of the nave and choir, built between 1486 and 1508 with further additions and alterations in almost every subsequent century. Particularly notable are the choir stalls, with some of the most richly decorated misericords in the country. St. John's Chapel is the chapel of the Manchester Regiment, and the little Lady Chapel has a wooden screen dating from 1440. The octagonal chapterhouse, built in 1465, has murals that include a figure of Christ in modern dress.

ome to two of Europe's top football teams - Man City and Man United - Manchester is a great place to pay homage to the country's favorite sport. First stop should be the National Football Museum. This football shrine features fascinating memorabilia related to the sport, including such gems as the very first rulebook, as well as historic trophies and clothing. A variety of great short movies show the history of the sport, while fun hands-on (and feet-on, for that matter) displays provide plenty of additional entertainment for youngsters.

It's also worth paying a visit to one (or both) of the Manchester teams' home stadiums. Manchester City's Etihad Stadium offers a variety of fun tour options, including behind-the-scenes and deluxe dinner tours, while Old Trafford - home to Manchester United - offers guided tours that allow access to private boxes and the chance to

tread the field itself.

Chetham's Hospital, just north of Manchester Cathedral, dates in part to 1422. Originally a residence for priests, it's now home to a music school and Chetham Library, one of the oldest public libraries in England. In continuous use since 1653, the library has more than 100,000 books, more than half of them printed before 1850. Chetham's is also famous as the meeting place of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels during Marx's visit to Manchester.

The Manchester Art Gallery possesses one of the largest art collections in Britain outside of London. The gallery includes works by the pre-Raphaelites; Flemish masters of the 17th century; French impressionists, including Gauguin, Manet, and Monet; and German artists such as Max Ernst. There are also pieces from well-known English artists, including Stubbs, Constable, and Turner, while the sculpture collection includes works by Rodin, Maillol, Jacob Epstein, and Henry Moore.

Platt Hall, an elegant Georgian house built in 1764 and now part of the Manchester Art Gallery, presents an excellent overview of English fashion and costume from 1600 to the present day and is perhaps the only collection to rival London's Victoria and Albert Museum. Strengths of the museum include its many examples of everyday dress, with the Gallery of Costume containing one of the largest collections of costumes and accessories in Britain.

The colorful home of one of the largest Chinese communities in Britain, Chinatown is only a stone's throw from the Manchester Art Gallery. The richly decorated arched gateway leading into the district is especially striking. Many shops and restaurants offering a wide range of culinary delicacies from Hong Kong and Beijing have become established in this quarter, while unique Chinese handicrafts and artworks are at the Centre for Contemporary Chinese Art.

The People's History Museum is the national center for the collection, conservation, interpretation, and study of material relating to the history of working people in Britain. Located in a former pumping station, the museum showcases the history of British democracy and its impact on the population, as well as extensive collections of artifacts relating to trade unions and women's suffrage.

Two other museums close by are the Manchester Jewish Museum, with its collection dealing with the city's Jewish community, and the Museum of Transport, with its many old buses and other vehicles belonging to the city transport services.

Covering some 600 acres, Heaton Park is the biggest park in Greater Manchester and one of the largest municipal parks in Europe. Heaton Hall, built in 1772, lies in the very heart of the park and although not currently open to the public, it remains an impressive sight. The park has been extensively restored and retains many of its original buildings and vistas. Sports enthusiasts will enjoy its 18-hole golf course, driving range, mini putt, and tennis courts, while families can explore the boating lake, animal farm, woodlands, ornamental gardens, observatory, adventure playground, and volunteer-run tramway and museum.

Also worth visiting is Fletcher Moss Botanical Garden. Founded in 1917, this large green space - part botanical garden and part wildlife habitat - is an engaging contrast to the busy city center. Popular things to do here include enjoying a stroll or picnic (there's also a pleasant café) or playing more strenuous activities, such as tennis, rugby, or football.

Day 4 Day 5 Day 6 Day 7

It is 15.5 hours back to Middlewich Marina, and you have 4 full days left , so plenty of time to spend a day

exploring Manchester.

## 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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