

UK Canal Boating

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Escape with a canal boating holiday!

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## Stately homes, Castles and Wedgwood Potteries

Cruise this route from : Glascote Basin

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[Stately-homes,-Castles-and-Wedgwood-Potteries-Cruising-Route.html](#)

Cruising Days : 8.00 to 0.00

Cruising Time : 40.00

Total Distance : 80.00

Number of Locks : 40

Number of Tunnels : 0

Number of Aqueducts : 0

Picturesque route through the Staffordshire countryside , past Canalside pubs and villages.

Visit Shugborough Hall a Stately home, and a rare survival of a complete estate, with all major buildings including mansion house, servants' quarters, historic farmyard and walled garden.

Make sure you leave time to visit Tamworth Castle- Spanning more than 900 years of history, your visit to Tamworth Castle really is a journey through time. You can explore 15 different rooms - along with the courtyard and other hidden gems - each offering something different, giving a glimpse into the Castle's past and how it has changed over the centuries.

One of the most photographed Canal Junctions is Fradley Junction where the Coventry Canal joins the Trent & Mersey Canal. It's one of the busiest places on the waterways with cafes, a pub and the ever popular Fradley Pool Nature Reserve.

## Cruising Notes

Step back through 900 years of history with a visit to Tamworth Castle. Uncover the secrets held within the chambers and hallways of this unique building and get a real sense of how the Saxons, Normans, Tudors and Victorians lived. It has a Norman motte, an Elizabethan timbered hall, and Jacobean apartments. Tamworth itself has a Post office, stores, garage, station and cinema.

If you wish to start your holiday off with an adventure, how about walking to the Snow Dome which is only about 10 minutes from the marina. All weather skiing and snowboarding centre with kit rental, an ice rink, swimming pool and gym. It is open until late every night.

## **Day 1**

Turn right out of the marina

You will soon reach the only locks on this stretch at Glascote, there are 2 locks fairly close together.

Houses and factories flank the canal as it passes Kettlebrook Wharf, and then it moves briefly into more open country, crossing the River Tame on an impressive aqueduct. The Three Tuns Pub is alongside the canal serving food all day and has moorings.

There are useful stores south of Bridge 76.

At Fazeley junction , the Coventry Canal meets the Birmingham & Fazeley Canal and continues north west towards Fradley Junction, initially on the Birmingham & Fazeley canal, until it becomes the Coventry Canal once again.

This all gives way to lightly wooded open fields towards Hopwas Hill as the Canal follows the course of the River Tame very closely, passing below Hopwas village.

Hopwas is a pretty & tidy village with a green, built on the side of a hill. It has a PO, and a convenience store. On the Canal is the Tame Otter Pub, where real ale & food are served all day, there are moorings available, also here is the Red Lion, food at lunch and in the evenings, steaks are a speciality.

Moor for the night here, it is 2 hours to here.

## **Day 2**

Just beyond here there is a delightful wooded stretch that covers the side of the hill.

Landing is forbidden because these are the Whittington Firing Ranges.

After the wood the canal continues in a side cut embankment with a view of Tamworth to the east.

The next village you will reach is Whittington. There is a PO stores, garage, chemist, Chinese takeaway & off

licence. The village centre is to the west of Whittington bridge, the shops are best approached from bridge 78. There are 3 pubs here, The Swan Inn on the Canalside, and the Bell Inn & Dog Inn in the main street. From here you can catch a bus into Lichfield, which is well worth the detour.

The three spires of the 13th century Cathedral in Lichfield, the 'Ladies of the Vale' are a visible landmark for miles around. The modern shopping centre contrasts sharply with the graceful Georgian buildings of the city centre. There are excellent pubs & restaurants and night clubs, with a Farmers market on Sundays. You can also catch a train into the centre of Birmingham from Litchfield.

Between Whittington & bridge 78, the Birmingham & Fazeley Canal changes to the Coventry Canal. At Huddlesford is the junction with the Wyrley & Essington Canal, now only used for private moorings. There is an award winning friendly canalside pub here, - The Plough serving real ale & good food. You can walk the 1- 2 miles to Lichfield.

The Canal runs northward through flat open country and a swing bridge announces your arrival at Fradley Junction, where you meet the Trent & Mersey canal. There is a boatyard here, a british Waterways information centre and cafe, and a very popular pub, The Swan – reputedly one of the most photographed pubs in the country. It is in a 200 yr old listed building, with cosy fires, real ales, and good bar meals with a carvery on Sundays.

You arrive on the Trent & Mersey in the middle of a 5-lock flight.

Also nearby & good for kids to unwind is the Fradley pool Nature reserve, with lots of walks quite close to the Canal.

The canal soon enters quiet countryside until it gets to the village of Handsacre. There is useful store 500 yards south of bridge 59, and a fish and chip shop and a cafe near bridge 58. The net village is Armitage and there is a very popular restaurant called Tom Cobleighs Spode Cottage, also the Plum Pudding Pub is canalside, and the Ash tree at bridge 62.

You pass on your left Spode House, a former home of the pottery family.

The huge chimneys of Rugeley Power station come into view, there are pleasant moorings by bridge 66 with the town centre and shops just a short walk away.

Moor for the night it is 7 hours to here

### **Day 3**

Cannock chase to the south covers an area of 26 miles and has been designated an area of outstanding natural beauty. Near the Sherlock valley are German war graves from the 1st and 2nd World wars. The museum of Cannock Chase illustrate the life of the Chase, from medieval times to a 19th century colliery.

To the south of Wolseley bridge is a pub, indian restaurant, and antique, craft & garden centre.

The village of Little Haywood is off to the right, to your left you have lovely views of Shugborough Hall. Shugborough

Hall dates from 1693 and belonged to the Earl of Lichfields family. The estate is now managed by Staffordshire County Council and is open during the season. You can look around the Mansion, servants quarters, walled garden and beautiful terraces and stone monuments with extravagant names scattered around the stunning 19th century Grade One listed gardens. Also on hand is Park Farm which contains an agricultural museum a working mill and a rare breeds centre. There are stores in Great haywood.

Turn left at Great Haywood Junction onto the Trent & Mersey Canal and and cruise towards Weston Upon Trent, en route to Stone. Hoo Mill Lock is the first one you approach, and is a busy spot with lots of moored boats and a boatyard. It is here that the A31 comes alongside the canal for a short distance.

The canal is quiet and peaceful, and Weston Upon Trent is a pretty village with local amenities. There are two pubs here – The Woolpack and the Saracens Head.

Passing through Salt, you will shortly be in the suburbs of Stone, and at the bottom lock there is an ideal spot to moor, and a quaint pub canal side, called the Star.

Stone is a pretty, bustling town, with excellent shopping facilities, and is steeped in canal history, with much to see and do.

It is 7 hours to here

#### **Day 4**

Leaving Stone, you will make your way to Barlaston, home of the Wedgwood Visitor Centre. But before mooring here to take a look around, cruise further on until you reach Trentham Lock Footbridge, where you can turn around ready for the return journey. Find suitable moorings if you want to stay for two nights, as this will give you a whole day to visit the museum, before returning.

It is 3 hours to here from Stone.

You can spend the day at the Wedgwood Visitor Centre, and stay at the same mooring, ready to make your return journey tomorrow.

From Monday to Friday you can do a Factory Tour and see craftsmen at work in the heart of the Potteries, utilising unique artisan skills and techniques honed over 250 years at Barlaston, the home of Wedgwood.

The award winning Factory Tour offers an indepth view of all aspects of quality ceramic production including casting, figure making, pattern decorating and hand painting, ornamentation and gilding. See iconic Jasper pieces in production showcasing the pinnacle of ceramic craftsmanship.

The largest Wedgwood retail space in the world, also factory shop is here.

#### **Day 5 6 7 8**

It is 20 hours back to Glascote Basin, so 3 full days cruising of just under 7 hours per day to get you back in time.

## **Useful Links**

Description : Tamworth Snowdome  
Website : <http://www.snowdome.co.uk/>  
Telephone : 0844 800 0011

Description : Wedgwood Visitor Centre  
Website : <http://www.wedgwoodvisitorcentre.com/>  
Telephone : 01782 282986

Description : Staffordshire Information  
Website : <http://www.enjoystaffordshire.com/>  
Telephone : n/a

Description : Shugborough Estate  
Website : <http://www.shugborough.org.uk/homepage.aspx>  
Telephone : n/a

Description : Tamworth Castle  
Website : <http://www.tamworthcastle.co.uk/>  
Telephone : n/a

*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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