

UK Canal Boating

Escape with a canal boating holiday!

Warwickshire Ring from Coventry

Cruise this route from : Coventry

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Cruising Days : 8.00 to 0.00

Cruising Time : 57.00

Total Distance : 110.00

Number of Locks : 94

Number of Tunnels : 6

Number of Aqueducts : 0

This route combines historic castles, like Warwick, daredevil rides at Drayton manor, tobogganning or ski-ing in Tamworth, the Stairway to heaven at Hatton's 21 locks, Braunston's pretty canal village and much more. (May require a longer stay)

Are you looking for a holiday combining relaxing narrowboating with adventures on and off the water? One offering traditional 'Olde English' towns, cosmopolitan cities and memorable waterway sights? Then you will love the Warwickshire Ring.

Sections of the Coventry, Oxford, Grand Union & Birmingham & Fazeley canals are components in the Warwickshire Ring which, despite the almost constant proximity of conurbation and industry, manages to carve a surprisingly rural route through manicured fields and ancient meadows for much of its length.

Warwickshire Ring from Coventry

Cruising Notes

The Coventry Canal Basin opened in 1769, on the side of a hill, overlooked by buildings such as old wooden canal warehouses, dating from 1914.

Coventry's crowning glory, is its Cathedral. Designed by Sir Basil Spence, and completed in 1962, it is pretty spectacular. The font is a boulder from a hillside near Bethlehem, and stands in front of the Baptistry window. The original old Cathedral was destroyed by the Luftwaffe in 1940, but the ruins remain, along with some of the

original stained-glass windows. There are many interesting things on display in the ruins, and there is a Blitz Experience Museum with 1940's room reconstructions.

The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum houses works by Turner, Constable and Lowry, among others.

Day 1

Leaving the Canal Basin, you will be heading for Hawkesbury Junction (also known as Sutton Stop), about 4 miles away.

The canal is quite narrow in places, as you cruise through busy industrial areas. Beyond Bridge 2 are 'Cash's Hundred Houses', a pretty row of former weavers' houses. 37 of the original 48 now remain.

Just above New Inn Bridge No. 8, there is a Tesco store, which would be a good place to stock up on provisions, if you've not already done so.

The canal takes you through a hairpin bend to the right, then a little further, a wide curve to the left, as you approach the outskirts of Coventry, widening a little as you near Bridge No. 10. This is at Longford, the original junction of the Oxford and Coventry Canals.

Soon, the motorway will be ahead of you, and just beyond it, is Hawkesbury Junction, where you will see many traditional boats, an engine house and useful facilities. To the east of the Junction you can see Hawkesbury Hall, now a private house.

There is a pub at the Junction, called The Greyhound, a traditional canalside pub, dating from the 1800's, which serves food and real ales. There is a garden and mooring here, and children are welcome.

You will have cruised about 4 miles, in around 2 hours.

Day 2

From Hawkesbury Junction, you will now be heading towards, Bridge No. 84, which is 20 miles away. Firstly when you leave the moorings, you will go under the M6 Motorway Bridge, then turn right onto the Oxford Canal.

On this stretch of canal, the Motorway runs alongside, to your right, until you reach bridges 7 and 9, where the canal veers off to the left. However, at M69 Motorway Bridge No. 13A, you will again go under the Motorway, on your way to Ansty.

Other than the distant noise of the Motorway, the landscape is pretty remote, with just the odd farm here and there.

Ansty is a small picturesque village that grew up next to the canal. Ansty Hall is a popular location for weddings and other events, and is dated 1678. There is a pub in the village, called The Rose and Castle, serving food and real ales. Children are welcome, and there is a large play area in the canalside garden. Moorings and water are also available there.

Moving on, through a couple of small aqueducts, rolling fields flanking the canal, you will again pass under the M6.

Soon you will reach Stretton Stop, with the Stretton Wharf to the left. If you want to, you can moor up here and make your way into Brinklow, a pre-industrial village, with a motte and bailey mound alongside the C15th Church of St John. There are a good selection of pubs here – The White Lion, a traditional coaching inn, children and dogs welcome; The Bulls Head, a family pub; The Raven, also family-friendly – to name just three. Cruising on through pretty farmland, you will soon pass All Oaks Wood to your right. There are moorings here if you want to go exploring.

A little further, and to your left, you will see a quiet little village called Harborough Magna.

Very shortly, you will approach Newbold Tunnel, which is 250 yards long, and as you emerge from it, you will be in Newbold-on-Avon, on the outskirts of Rugby.

If you want to moor up and take a look around Rugby, there is much to see, including The Webb Ellis Rugby Football Museum and The Rugby Art Gallery and Museum.

As you cruise on, you will notice that to the left is mostly open countryside, whilst to the left it becomes more built up again as you approach Hilmorton.

By Hilmorton Visitor Moorings alongside the canal is a pub called The Old Royal Oak (by Bridge No. 73, with its own moorings), serving food all day, real ale and has a children's room and play area. Also nearby, is Canalchef Cafe, a licensed cafe with a beer garden.

Cruising through a largely isolated and quiet stretch of canal, with fields flanking the canal, the peace will be temporarily shattered by the noise of the M45 at Barby, as it crosses the canal.

Then a wide curve to the right around Barby Hill, onto a straight stretch of tranquility as you approach Willoughby, a small village to the right of the canal.

A little further on, and you will reach Braunston, and Braunston Turn, the junction of the Grand Union, Oxford and Grand Junction Canals.

Braunston is set up on a hill to the north of the canal, and is a popular canal centre. The village has houses of all periods, and is predominantly one long main street.

Just beside Braunston Marina, is a cafe in a narrowboat, called *The Gongoozler's Rest, serving breakfasts, sandwiches and more. There are also a selection of pubs, including The Wheatsheaf, The Old Plough and The Boathouse.

Just before Braunston Turn, is Bridge No. 84, on a quiet, straight stretch of canal. You can moor up here for the night if you don't want to go as far as Braunston.

You will have cruised for 20 miles and navigated 4 locks in 9 hours.

Day 3

At Braunston Turn, you need to bear right, onto the Grand Union Canal (Oxford Canal Section).

The canal meanders through quiet, rural countryside, as you make your way towards, Napton Junction. En route,

you will pass Flecknoe, off to the left and then Lower Shugborough, also on the left. This is a tiny village, worth mooring up for if you want to stretch your legs for a bit.

At Napton Junction, you need to bear right, onto the Grand Union Canal (Warwick and Napton Canal), passing Napton Reservoirs and the marina above, home to Calcutt Boats.

From the Junction, you can clearly see the windmill on top of Napton Hill.

The rolling countryside continues on through Stockton Locks, then on towards Bascote Locks, but stopping at Shop Lock No. 12 which is close to the locks, but far enough away to moor.

Long Itchington is just to the left of the canal, where there are plenty of pubs to choose from, including The Two Boats Inn, The Duck on the Pond and The Harvester. All serve food and real ales, and all welcome children. Fields and distant hills flank the canal as you make your way to the Bascote Locks, which descend towards Warwick. Once through the locks, you will once again be in wooded countryside, then descending through Fosse Locks.

Today you will have cruised for around 9 hours and navigated 21 locks over 15 miles.

Day 4

There is a pretty wooded cutting as you pass through Radford Semele, a suburb of Royal Leamington Spa. Soon you will be cruising through Leamington, where halfway through the town, the canal enters a cutting, hiding it from the road and railway.

If you want to have a look around Leamington, there are numerous places to moor. The Fusilier, The Lock, Dock and Barrell and The Grand Union, are among several pubs within walking distance of the canal. Cruising onwards, out of Leamington, you will cross the River Avon via an aqueduct at Emscote, into the suburbs of Warwick.

The best place to moor if you want to go into Warwick, is by Bridge 49. It is then about a half hour walk. Another good place is from the Saltisford Canal Centre.

After Cape Locks, the canal swings round to the left, towards Budbrooke Junction, with the Saltisford Arm branching to the left.

Warwick has plenty to offer. There is the Castle (details above); Market Hall Museum; Lord Leycester Hospital – C14th timber framed buildings, incorporating the Chapel of St James, the Great Hall and a galleried courtyard, also housing The Museum of the Queen's Own Hussars.

Near to Cape Locks is a canalside pub called The Cape of Good Hope, whose speciality is fish dishes. There is lockside seating, and children are welcome.

From Cape Locks you will soon be at Budbrooke Junction. Bear right (left is the Saltisford Arm, which is a dead end), and continue towards Hatton Locks. You will see the paddle gear and gates stretching up the hill in the distance. As you climb the flight, a total rise of 142 feet, look back and you will see the spires of Warwick in the distance. Hatton Locks Cafe is between locks 45 and 46, a welcome break. At the top of the flight the canal passes through wooden hills, concealing the village and Hatton Park. A wooded cutting then takes you to Shrewley Tunnel.

Shrewley Tunnel is 433 yards long. Two 7ft boats can pass each other, please keep right.

Hills surround the canal once you're through the Tunnel. To the left, you may hear the roar of traffic on the M40. The canal winds its way along to Turner's Green, where a beautiful old beamed house stands alongside the canal.

At Kingswood Junction, keep right, staying on the Grand Union Canal, and very soon you will be near to Bakers Lane Bridge No. 68, where you can moor for the night if you wish.

Near Black Boy Bridge No. 69, is a pub called The Black Boy, a traditional family-friendly pub with a canalside garden and children's play area. Real ale and good food are available lunch and evenings. A little further, at Kings Arms Bridge No. 70, is another pub, called The Heron's Nest, with the same services as The Black Boy. 15 miles and 24 locks have been navigated today in around 9 hours.

Day 5

First task today is tackling Knowle Locks, a rise of 42ft, cruising through green and hilly countryside.

The village of Knowle is set back from the canal, on the left. It has maintained its village status, despite its close proximity to Birmingham. The one pub in the village is a Toby Carvery, called The Wilsons Arms. Children are welcome and there is outside seating.

You will soon pass under the M42 and cross the River Blythe, via a small aqueduct. Between Knowle and Bordesley Junction the canal is quite shallow, so take care not to get grounded.

Soon, you will reach the outskirts of Birmingham, via Solihull. The last village before Solihull is Catherine de Barnes, a small village with a shop, post office and pub, called The Boat Inn, a friendly pub offering real ale and bar meals. Children are welcome, and there is a garden.

As you cruise further into Birmingham, the wooded cutting ends and housing estates and disused buildings prevail.

Leaving Solihull, there is a cafe between bridges 87 and 88, called The Barge Stop, with a restaurant and bar, and canalside seats.

A little further and you will reach Camp Hill Locks, another rise of 41ft 8", then Bordesley Junction where you bear right and continue on to Salford Junction. Here, bear right towards Erdington. As you leave the suburbs you will encounter Minworth Locks, which will start your descent towards Fazeley, just beyond which is Caters Bridge. Two bridges further on, Minworth Green Bridge, is a pub, The Hare and Hounds, family-friendly with children's indoor and outdoor play activities. Food is available all day, and there is a garden.

Cruising 18 miles and 20 locks to here should take around 9½ hours.

Day 6

Curdworth is the next village you pass, through a tree lined cutting. You will be able to see the church tower.

Beyond Curdworth Bridge is a short tunnel, 57yds long, just prior to the M6 toll road.

Following the M6 for a while, the canal veers away from it at Bodymoor Heath. East of the bridge here is Kingsbury Water Park.

The White Horse at Curdworth and The Dog and Doublet at Bodymoor Heath conveniently placed if you want to stop for lunch or just a snack.

Next are Curdwoth Locks, then quiet, pretty open countryside, as you cruise towards Fazeley Junction. En route, you will pass Cliff Pool Nature Reserve and Middleton Lakes Nature Reserve on the right. The isolation of the canal ends at Drayton Bassett, where the A4091 runs alongside until Fazeley.

At Fazeley Junction, bear right onto the Coventry Canal, where a couple of sharp turns take you through the Glascote Locks, rising 13ft 8", and into the suburbs of Tamworth.

Polesworth is the first village of note, having stores, takeaways, fish and chip shop, off licence, etc, and spans the canal.

Cruising through more predominantly open countryside, you will soon reach Atherstone Bottom Lock No. 11. You can moor here for the night if you wish, or you can cruise a little closer to Atherstone, a small town with plenty of pubs, for instance, Market Tavern, The Black Swan and The Kings Head.

Cruising to Atherstone Bottom Lock should take around 9 hours, after cruising 16 miles and navigating 13 locks.

Day 7

Day 8

Today you will cruise back to Coventry Basin.

Leaving Atherstone, you will have to navigate the locks, just south of which is Mancetter, another small village, to the left of the canal.

Continue south, through the quarry belt towards Nuneaton. En route is a pub at Hartshill called The Anchor Inn. Cruise through Nuneaton until you reach Marston Junction, then continue south, with the suburbs of Bedworth to your right.

Not far from here is Hawkesbury Junction, which continuing south will take you back into Coventry Basin.

From Atherstone Bottom Lock No. 11 back to Coventry Basin is 18 miles, with 10 locks, and should take you around 9 hours.

Useful Links

Description : Cadbury World

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

Telephone : 0844 880 7667

Description : Coventry Cathedral

Website : <http://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/>

Telephone : 024 7652 1200

Description : National Sea Life Centre

Website : <http://www.visitsealife.com/birmingham/>

Telephone : 0871 423 2110

Description : Packwood House, Tudor Manor House near Lapworth

Website : <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/packwood-house/>

Telephone : 01564 782024

Description : Drayton Manor Theme Park

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

Telephone : 01827 285551

Description : Herbert Art Gallery and Museum

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

Telephone : 024 7623 7521

Description : Coventry Transport Museum

Website : <http://www.transport-museum.com/>

Telephone : 024 7623 4270

Description : Tamworth Snowdome

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

Telephone : 0844 800 0011

Description : Hatton Country World

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

Telephone : 01926 843411

Description : Gas Street Basin, Birmingham

Website : <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/directory/65/gas-street-basin>

Telephone : n/a

Description : The Bullring Shopping Centre, Birmingham

Website : <http://www.bullring.co.uk/shops>

Telephone : 0121 632 1500

Description : The Mailbox, Shopping Centre, Wharfside

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

Telephone : 0121 632 1000

Description : Warwick Castle

Website : <http://www.warwick-castle.com/>

Telephone : 0871 265 2000

Description : Tyseley Locomotive Works

Website : <http://www.tyseleylocoworks.co.uk/tlw/>

Telephone : 0121 708 4960

Description : Baddesley Clinton, Moated Manor House

Website : <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/baddesley-clinton/>

Telephone : 01564 783294

Description : Earlswood Lakes

Website : <http://www.fisheries.co.uk/earlswood/>

Telephone : 01908 302556

Description : Kingsbury Water Park

Website : <http://countryparks.warwickshire.gov.uk/country-parks/kingsbury-water-park/>

Telephone : 01827 872660

Description : Tamworth Castle

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

Telephone : n/a

Description : Leamington Spa Royal Pump Rooms

Website : <http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/royalpumprooms/>

Telephone : 01926 742762

Description : Museum

Website : <http://www.webb-ellis.co.uk>

Telephone : n/a

Description : Tourist information for Rugby

Website : www.enjoyrugby.co.uk

Telephone : n/a

Description : Rugby Tourist information

Website : <http://www.enjoyrugby.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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