

UK Canal Boating

Escape with a canal boating holiday!

Birmingham from Stourport on Severn

Cruise this route from : Stourport on Severn

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Cruising Days : 8.00 to 0.00

Cruising Time : 40.00

Total Distance : 68.00

Number of Locks : 80

Number of Tunnels : 8

Number of Aqueducts : 0

Experience Britain's second city, a thriving cosmopolitan centre, with some of the finest shopping, culture and visitor attractions in Europe, with it's waterside pubs and colourful boating community.

Travel through Birmingham's past industry of glass making, and old engine houses which uses to pump the water from flooded colliery mines.

By the 20th century Birmingham had become the metropolitan hub of the United Kingdom's manufacturing and automotive industries, having earned itself a reputation first as a city of canals, then of cars, and most recently as a major European convention and shopping destination.

Among other attractions are the National Sea Life Centre, Fine Art Galleries, and the Jewellery Quarter, which dates back over 250 years and is still home to over 400 jewellery businesses.

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Cruising Notes

Day 1

If time allows take a train ride on the Steam Railway. The Severn Valley railway is a full-size standard-gauge railway line running regular steam-hauled passenger trains for the benefit of visitors and enthusiasts alike

between Kidderminster in Worcestershire and bridgnorth in Shropshire, a distance of 16 miles.

The journey is full of interest, for the route follows closely the meandering course of the River Severn for most of the way on its journey between Kidderminster and bridgnorth. One highlight of the trip is the crossing of the River Severn by means of the Victoria bridge - a massive 200-foot single span, high above the water which, incidentally, features in the film 'The Thirty-nine Steps' with Robert Powell in the leading role.

There being few roads in the Severn Valley, some of the views are only visible from the Railway. The scenery is varied and largely unspoiled, punctuated by the quaint 'olde worlde' charm of country stations, each one giving ready access to local villages and riverside walks.

The canal basins at Stourport are full of pretty moored boats, the locks are open 24 hrs, and form a staircase, the lock-keeper is around much of the day in case of difficulties. You should proceed to the eastern corner of the upper basins to join the Staffs & Worcs canal. There is a useful tea room & craft shop by the lock and temporary moorings.

You soon leave Stourport behind and approach Kidderminster with its smart new developments. Beyond Falling sands Bridge look out for the steam trains on the Viaduct on the Severn valley Railway. There are good moorings at Weavers wharf between bridges 15 and 16 , with supermarkets & cafes nearby. It is 2.5 hours to here

Day 2

Leaving Kidderminster behind you soon enter the open countryside again, until the canal is encroached by trees and cliffs which make you feel you are in the jungle.

Wolverley is north west of bridge 20 and is a fascinating village once dedicated to the nail-making industry. The church stands on a sandstone rock so steep that the building has to be approached by a zig-zag path cut through the constantly eroding stone. In the base of this outcrop is the remains of a smithy's shop. Many of the houses nearby are partly carved from the rock, their dark back rooms actually caves.

At Debdale lock a doorway reveals a cavern cut into the solid rock, which may have been used to stable towing horses.

The canal continues through secluded woodland and pretty locks to the very pretty village of Kinver, where you can stock up on provisions or get some fish & chips! It is worth having a look at the fascinating Rock houses, carved out of the cliffs and in continuous occupation for 150 years until 1935.(Walk up Stone lane close to the White Hart Hotel until trees appear on your left, then follow the path into the trees, the rock houses are at Holy Austin Rock).

Stewponey Wharf at the head of Stewponey lock is very interesting wharf with a restored octagonal toll office.

Turn right at the Stourbridge Canal and you immediately encounter 4 locks .

The Stourbridge and Dudley Canals link Birmingham to the River Severn and you pass through a mixture of fine countryside old industrial surroundings and new developments.

You pass pretty wooded countryside which surrounds the canal until 2 miles later you pass the Stourbridge

Town arm to your right which you can ignore, keep straight on through the flight of 16 Stourbridge Locks which raise the canal 145 feet.

Beyond lock 13 the canal passes Redhouse Glassworks which houses Stuart Crystal . Moorings are provided for those who are visiting the Museum in a restored bottle kiln.

You can moor by lock 5 as there is a fine old canal pub here called the Samson & Lion where boatmans horses were once stabled where you can get a burger and pint!

It is 8.5 hours to here

Day 3

Ignore the Fens branch and take the right turn through Brierley Hill and Dudley. There is a handy Fish & chip shop and takeaway next to Farmers Bridge. A more open landscape flanks the canal now and the start of the Delph locks is in view and here the Stourbridge canal ends and the Dudley canal starts. The flight has been designated a conservation area .

Leaving the flight you pass the vast Merryhill shopping centre in Dudley with its 250 shops, and modern waterfront area with many restaurants and bars, so if you would like to stop for a bit of retail therapy or a meal in one of the lovely Restaurants now is your chance.

The Blowers Green Lock is the deepest on the Birmingham Canal navigation, and the pumphouse here has been restored. There are good views towards Netherton hill, at the top of the hill is St Andrews Church where cholera victims were buried in mass graves.

After the lock a sharp right turn is required as straight on the Dudley Tunnel which is impassible for boats with engines.

Netherton was once the centre for chains and anchors but the old wharves no longer house these activiites.

Beyond Fox & Goose Bridge the houses retreat and a fine green open space by a lake lies beside the Windmill End Junction , with cast iron bridges and the remains of an Engine house with its tall chimney still standing, built to pump water from the local mines to keep them from flooding.

The Bumblehole Branch is off to the west, but you will continue straight on to the grand entrance of the Netherton tunnel , the canal is high on an embankment in a nature reserve.

Netherton Tunnel has a long history of haunting. At least 2 ghosts have been reported here. The first is an old time policeman who was said to have been mudedered in the tunnel and the 2nd is a lady in a dirty white dress known as the Grey lady. People have also heard footsteps behind them which stop when they turn around, and also wet footsteps disappearing into the tunnel but which suddenly disappear!

Netherton tunnel is 3027 yards long and emerges to go under the Tididale aqueduct which carries the Wolverhampton level, and at Dudley Port Junction you turn right along the Birmingham Level main line.

At Bromford Junction do not turn off but keep straight on under the Stewart Aqueduct which takes the Wolverhampton level overhead, through Galton Tunnel (122 yards), ignorng the Soho Loop and Ickniel Port Loop and you can moor by Sheepcote Street moorings or further on at Gas Street Basin.

You are in the heart of Birmingham's canal network, which has been redeveloped into a unique experience where traditional narrow boats moor up next to cosmopolitan cafes and bars.

The surrounding area is a vibrant arts & entertainment area and there are many shopping options within a short walk.

If you choose to moor up next to the Sea Life Centre, you will be spoilt for choice with the variety of cuisine on offer, with over 500 restaurants to choose from offering Caribbean to Nepalese, Thai to Italian, and many more. You will also find clubs and bars, cinema's, theatre's and comedy clubs.

Among other attractions are the National Sea Life Centre, Fine Art Galleries, and the Jewellery Quarter, which dates back over 250 years and is still home to over 400 jewellery businesses.

It is a designated conservation area, with only 200 listed buildings, and has been described by English Heritage as 'a unique historic environment in England'.

For those who like a little retail therapy, a visit to the BullRing is a must. It covers an area the size of 26 football pitches, and has an enormous range of shops.

Also nearby, is the National Indoor Arena, one of the busiest large scale indoor sporting and entertainment venues in Europe.

It is 9 hours to here .

Days 4 5 6 7

Its 20 hours back to Stourport, so spend a day exploring Birmingham , that still gives you 3 days left with about 7 hours each day cruising

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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