

UK Canal Boating

Escape with a canal boating holiday!

Shugborough hall from Sawley marina along Trent and Mersey

Cruise this route from : Sawley

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Shugborough hall from Sawley marina along Trent and Mersey

Cruising Days : 8.00 to 0.00

Cruising Time : 38.00

Total Distance : 79.00

Number of Locks : 44

Number of Tunnels : 0

Number of Aqueducts : 0

Leisurely cruise along the Trent & Mersey Canal, passing lovely canalside pubs and villages, including Burton on Trent, the home of brewing

Heritage Centre, near Shardlow Lock as you leave the village, where you can gain insight into canal life from the early 18th century.

Visit Burton on Trent, internationally known as the brewing capital of Great Britain .

Marstons Brewery Visitor Centre give tours of the brewery, including the unique and world famous Burton Union System.

The back lanes of Alrewas hide pretty half-timbered thatched cottages.

The Swan public house is situated at Fradley Junction, where the Trent & Mersey meets the Coventry Canal and is one of the most picturesque waterside locations in the Midlands.

You may spot some of the wildlife to be found here including kingfishers, herons and moorhens.

Shugborough Hall, the home of the late Patrick Lichfield. The house and grounds are open from March to October 11-5pm. The house is an 18th mansion, and has magnificent grounds.

Shugborough hall from Sawley marina along Trent and Mersey

Cruising Notes

Day 1

A short river section takes you to Derwent Mouth, and the entrance to the Trent & Mersey Canal.

Within an hour or so of departure, you will arrive at Shardlow. This is an attractive canal village, with a restaurant and some canalside pubs, including the Navigation Inn, near Bridge No.3, a haunted pub with its own moorings. Also near the Canal is The Old Crown.

This is a good place to moor for the first night.

There is a Heritage Centre, near Shardlow Lock as you leave the village, where you can gain insight into canal life from the early 18th century.

If you feel like a stroll around the village, you could follow the Village Trail.

All around there are examples of large-scale canal architecture. By the Shardlow Lock is the biggest and best of these buildings, the C18th Trent Mill, now The Clock Warehouse, an attractive pub/restaurant.

It is one hour to here.

Day 2

Passing Weston-on-Trent to your right, there is a pleasant walk south east down the lane near Weston Lock, to the river opposite Kings Mills. In the village, there are a couple of pubs with restaurants.

Soon you will come to the small villages of Swarkestone & Barrow-on-Trent to your left. The Crew & Harpur Arms at Swarkstone is near the river bridge, and The Ragley Boat Stop Pub is 300yds west of Bridge No.17.

There is a good pub alongside Stenson Lock & Marina, about hour before you get to Willington, called The Bubble Inn. Moor up at Bridge No.19 for access.

The next main village is Willington, about 5 hours cruising from Shardlow. This has a village green, pubs, shops and a Post Office. The Green Dragon is a popular & welcoming pub, with moorings.

A 12 arch stone aqueduct carries the canal over the River Dove.

At Bridge No.29a you will find The Mill House Bar, with its own moorings and large canal side terrace. Children welcome in the family dining area, and inside and outside play areas.

At the Horninglow Basin you might like to moor up and get some fish and chips.

Burton-on-Trent has traditionally been associated with the brewing industry, it is internationally known as the brewing capital of Great Britain.

You can visit the Heritage Brewery Museum if you moor up here.

Coors Visitor Centre is 3-4 miles from Horninglow Basin. Here, you can see all aspects of brewing during the late C19th, and also a preserved steam engine, cafe & shops. Conducted tours round the Brewery are also available.

Marstons Brewery Visitor Centre Tours of the brewery, including the unique and world famous Burton Union System, are generally available Monday to Friday. At the end of the tour, sample some of the real ale in the Visitor Centre. Please telephone in advance to book if you want to visit.

The previous section of the canal has double-width locks, but once you reach Dallow Lane Lock, you will see the first of the narrow locks, which are wide enough for one boat only at a time.

There are numerous pubs near the canal.

You can moor at the visitor moorings near Shobnall basin, from where you can walk into the town.

Or you can cruise on to Branston, which is a good place for overnight mooring. It is just over an hour or so from Burton-on-Trent.

At Branston, you can moor near The Bridge Inn, at Bridge No.34. It serves good food and real ales. There is also a seasonal shop selling provisions, home made cakes & crafts.

Nearby is the Branston Water Park, with several walks around the ponds and lakes, which were formed from old gravel pits. There is a small Visitor Centre a short walk from the towpath.

It is 8 hours cruising to here from Shardlow.

Day 3

3 hours' cruising from Branston will bring you to Alrewas, a large, attractive village with shops and pubs, which is well worth a stroll around.

The canal meanders through the village, passing well tended gardens and a bowling green. With the C13th church, a friendly and tranquil felling is created. The back lanes hide pretty half-timbered thatched cottages. There is a fine butchers shop, and also well worth a visit, is a wonderful wine & whisky store – Barkers of Alrewas - which has hundreds of bottles of Scotch whiskey among its stock.

Good pubs here are The Crown Inn, near Bridge No.46 and The George & Dragon in the village.

3 more hours cruising will take you to Fradley Junction, where the Trent & Mersey meets the Coventry Canal.

The Swan public house is situated on one of the most picturesque waterside locations in the Midlands.

You may spot some of the wildlife to be found here including kingfishers, herons and moorhens. Visit the shop and Information Centre if you're looking for souvenirs.

Fradley Junction can be reached in 3 days of cruising from Sawley, generally giving plenty of time for the

return journey.

Visit the Fradley Pool Nature Reserve, and perhaps have a go at pond dipping, or view the abundance of birdlife from the bird hide. For the more energetic, pick up a map and guide and try one of the wonderful walks - listen out en route for the green woodpeckers.

Moor here for the night it is 6 hours from Shobnall Visitor Moorings

Day 4

The canal continues through open country until you reach the villages of Handascre and Armitage. Rugeley is soon reached with its huge power station, there are pleasant moorings by Bridge 66 with the pleasant town centre and shops only a short walk away. North of the town the canal crosses the River Trent via a substantial aqueduct.

Little Haywood is a elegant village just west of the canal at bridge 72, and soon you arrive at the Great Haywood Junction just past the lock, and be able to view Shugborough Hall and the Estate and Park, the home of the late Patrick Lichfield. The house and grounds are open from March to October 11-5pm. The house is an C18th mansion, and has magnificent grounds and has been restored at great expense and there are some magnificent rooms and many treasures inside. Walk west from Haywood Lock and through the Park. It is 6 hours from Fradley Junction to here.

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

retrace your steps, you have 19 hours cruising back.

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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