

UK Canal Boating

Escape with a canal boating holiday!

Stourport ring from Worcester

Cruise this route from : Worcester

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Cruising Days : 8.00 to 11.00

Cruising Time : 51.50

Total Distance : 84.00

Number of Locks : 118

Number of Tunnels : 10

Number of Aqueducts : 0

Offering an interesting mix of river, countryside and cities, this route will take you through the historic city of Worcester, along the River Severn to one of the prettiest canals in England- The Staffordshire & Worcestershire

Take a Steam train ride in the Severn valley and cruise through Birmingham to the superb 26 acre outdoor Black Country Museum, the cosmopolitan Gas Street Basin with all its cafes and bars, and Cadbury World at Bournville.

Stourport ring from Worcester

Cruising Notes

Day 1

Turn right out of Lowesmoor wharf down the Birmingham & Worcester canal & soon you will encounter 2 locks, one called Blockhouse lock, followed by Sidbury lock. which will get you into the swing of things. It takes about an hour to get to Diglis basin, and if time is passing it is best to stop there for the night, and then you will have time to explore the city of Worcester. There is a water point just above Diglis lock.

The marina is a short walk from the City centre, where you can explore the lovely cathedral dating from 1074. There is a wealth of stained glass and monuments to see including the tomb of King John. Also a good place to

visit is the Museum of Worcester Porcelain, which not surprisingly has the largest collection of Worcester Porcelain in the world. The Guildhall in the High street was built in 1721 and has a fantastic elaborate facade with statues of Charles I and II and Queen Anne.

In Friar Street is Greyfriars, dating from 1480, this was one part of a Franciscan priory, and is one of the finest half timbered houses in the country. Charles II escaped from this house after the Battle of Worcester in the civil war in 1651. In the George Marshall Medical museum you can meet the past heroes of medicine. Regular bus service from Crown Gate Bus station.

Close to Sidbury lock is the Commandery Civil War Centre, a museum devoted entirely to the story of the Civil War. The museum dates from the reign of Henry 8th and served as Charles 11's HQ before the Battle of Worcester in 1651.

It should take 1 hour from Lowesmoor to Diglis basin

Day 2

From Diglis basin you enter the Diglis locks- 2 deep locks which take you out onto the River Severn. The locks are under the supervision of the lock-keeper, who should tell you whether it is alright to proceed onto the River Severn, but to make sure look out for the red, amber and green water level gauge to see if the Severn is in flood or not.

After coming out of the last lock onto the Severn, it is best to head towards the far bank heading south (in the opposite direction to which you will be headed) and then turn the boat to pick up your crew from the pontoon near the lock. So you do a half circle anti clockwise, the river is very wide so it is easy to do.

Heading upstream the River passes the imposing cathedral and then the fine five arched bridge. The famous racecourse is on your right, and there are moorings here, also a water point.

The River winds through pleasant countryside to Bevere lock, but just before here is the Camp House inn pub on your left, with moorings. If you moor on the River leave your rope loose because it is tidal.

For opening hours of the British Waterways operated Bevere lock.

A mile beyond Bevere the river swings right, and soon you will see the entrance lock at the start of the Droitwich barge Canal.

You leave the River Severn at Stourport on Severn & join the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal.

This canal is one of the prettiest and most interesting waterways in England.

The canal basins at Stourport are full of pretty moored boats, there are 2 entrances to the basins from the Severn one through broad locks, and the second one through narrow locks which is the one you should take.

The locks are open 24 hrs, and form a staircase, the lock-keeper is usually around 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, & good moorings at Weavers wharf, with supermarkets & cafes nearby.

It is 9 hours cruising to here, with 15 locks.

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. Why not disembark at Bewdley & take a trip to the safari park with its free roaming giraffes, elephants & big cats.

The train 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.

Day 3

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).

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

You pass by the Stourbridge Canal and at the far end of the aqueduct near here is a curious narrowboat-house known as the Devil's Den, cut into the rock. Further on after Rocky lock rooms have been carved into the sandstone.

The canal forks and you should keep left to avoid the marina, the countryside becomes flatter and more regular. There are occasional locks and canalside pubs including a 2 step staircase at Botterham lock which has 4 locks in total. There are pubs by bridges 43 & 45, and shops near 44.

A good place to moor up for the night you have cruised for 8.5 hours

Day 4

Have an early breakfast & prepare for a long day with lots of locks!

After Bumblehole Lock you reach the 3 bratch Locks just north of Wombourne. These locks are open from 8am

to 8pm and you should carefully study the operating instructions before use, or consult the lock-keeper if in any doubt.

The Octagonal toll house, lovely setting and unusual layout of the locks make an interesting view, but just treat each one as a separate lock & you should be OK.

You are soon approaching the outskirts of Wolverhampton, there is a handy supermarket near Compton Lock.

You turn off right onto the main line of the Birmingham Canal. 21 locks will carry you up into the heart of Wolverhampton.

Dunstall Park racecourse is passed on the right.

After the last lock you can moor up in the broad Street basin, as there are useful water and refuse points and plenty of takeaways and shops closeby. The Wulfrun shopping Centre is in the city centre just off Dudley Street also the Mander centre with over 100 shops.

Continue down the main line of the Birmingham canal, ignoring the left turn up the Wyrley & Essington Canal, and later on the Wednesbury Oak Loop . After the short Coseley Tunnel you will see a canal leading off to your right which you should take towards Dudley and the Black Country Museum. It is worth mooring up near this superb 26 acre outdoor Museum which has been built around a re-constructed canal village, with a pub, shops and an inland port. You can ride on a trolley bus or tram, try sweet making , metal working or glass cutting, experience an underground coal mine & meet the characters in the shops and houses.

It is 11 hours cruising to here, and there are 31 locks.

Day 5

Turn right along the Wolverhampton level canal, it is lock free for a while now, ignore the right turning at Oldbury Junction, and turn right at the Spon Lane Junction. There are 3 locks at Smethwick, but after these it is lock free again, you re join the Birmingham Main line at Smethwick Junction.. Keep on the Birmingham main line towards the Gas Street basin which is where you will join the Worcester & Birmingham Canal again on your way back to Alvechurch.

For those on a 10-14 night cruise it is worth mooring up in the Gas Street basin which is in the heart of Birmingham's canal network, and 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.

Continuing on down the Worcester & Birmingham canal through Edgbaston & Selly Oak, you will reach Bournville where there are visitor moorings & you can visit Cadbury World, a must for adults and children alike!! You do need to book beforehand Tel. 0121 451 4159 . It is signposted from the canal. There is an exhibition dedicated to the history of chocolate, audio visual displays, Victorian Birmingham & a Jungle to explore!

After Bournville continue on at the Kings Norton Junction, ignoring the right hand turn to the Stratford on Avon canal, & soon you will come to Wast Hills Tunnel, at 2726 yards it is one of the longest in the country.

After the tunnel you will have left Birmingham behind as you cruise southwards towards Worcester and a

couple of shorter tunnels.

After the last tunnel you will soon reach the Tardebigge Locks. These represent the Boaters Rite of Passage, as these 30 locks, combined with the nearby 6 Stoke Locks, represent 36 locks in 4 miles, and other groups of locks will pale into insignificance in comparison.

Tardebigge reservoir is near here, and the old Engine house is now restored as flats.

It is 9.5 hours cruising to here

Day 6

Have a good breakfast & then descend the Tardebigge flight set in very pretty rural surroundings, which can take 4-5 hours, but there are places in between the locks where you can moor up & have a breather!

At the bottom of the locks is the Queens Pub- Canalside at bridge 48, with good food and a lovely waterside terrace.

The 6 Stoke locks are slightly more interspersed and the canal continues through very rural surroundings towards the 5 Astwood Locks.

It is worth stopping near bridge 41 before these locks, as you can walk into the village of Astwood and find the Bowling Green pub, which has a Bowling green in the garden!

It is 7 hours cruising to here.

Day 7

Day 8

Here are not so many locks today as you climb down through the countryside towards Worcester. The 6 Astwood locks start you off, and then there is a short tunnel at Dunhampstead to negotiate, with no more locks until you get to the 6 Tibberton locks. Soon you are passing the outskirts of Worcester and you can moor up at Lowesmoor Wharf, which is where our boats also start from.

It takes about 8 ¼ hours cruising to get here.

From the Wharf you can walk into the city centre of Worcester, with its splendid cathedral dating from 1074, & museums, art galleries and half timbered buildings. The museum at the Royal Worcester Porcelain works is well worth a visit, as it contains the most comprehensive collection of Worcester Porcelain in the world.

There are many bars, pubs and restaurants and take-aways around Worcester, and plenty of shops to stock up on supplies, or for a little retail therapy.

Useful Links

Description : Cadbury World

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

Telephone : 0844 880 7667

Description : National Sea Life Centre
Website : <http://www.visitsealife.com/birmingham/>
Telephone : 0871 423 2110

Description : Visit Birmingham
Website : <http://visitbirmingham.com/>
Telephone : n/a

Description : The Black Country Museum
Website : <http://www.bclm.co.uk/>
Telephone : 0121 557 9643

Description : Worcester City Museums
Website : www.whub.org.uk/cms/museums-worcestershire.aspx
Telephone : 01905 25371

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 : Worcester Porcelain Museum
Website : <http://www.worcesterporcelainmuseum.org.uk/>
Telephone : n/a

Description : Museum of Royal Worcester
Website : www.museumofroyalworcester.org/
Telephone : 01905 21247

Description : Worcester Cathedral
Website : <http://www.worcestercathedral.co.uk>
Telephone : 01905 732900

Description : Treasure Island
Website : <http://www.stourportfair.co.uk>
Telephone : 07976 413330

Description : Stourport-on-Severn Tourist Info
Website : <http://stourporttown.co.uk>
Telephone : n/a

Description : Severn Valley Railway.
Website : <http://www.svr.co.uk>

Telephone : 01562 757900

Description : West Midlands Safari Park, Bewdley

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

Telephone : 01299 402114

Description : Kinver Edge and Holy Austin Rock Houses

Website : <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/kinver-edge/>

Telephone : 01384 872553

Description : Dunstall Park Racecourse, Wolverhampton

Website : <http://www.wolverhampton-racecourse.co.uk/>

Telephone : 01902 390000

Description : Wulfrun Shopping Centre, Wolverhampton

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

Telephone : 01902 424536

Description : Mander Shopping Centre, Wolverhampton

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

Telephone : 01902 711084

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](#).

PDF created : 20 Feb 2023

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