



Suggested Holiday Routes...



....and Route Availability

One Week Holidays

Route 1 – Stourport Ring (Minus) via Netherton Tunnel & Droitwich Canal (best for shorter winter days)

The Stourport Ring (Minus) misses out Worcester and Wolverhampton, but still includes the beautiful Worcestershire canals and the gorgeous River Severn up to Stourport on Severn. Our suggested itinerary will be provided to you before your holiday; it would give you time to visit Cadbury's World, Birmingham Gas Street Basin (which is full of lovely eateries, entertainment and shopping), and you could even find a few hours to visit the Black Country Museum further up the waterways. Taking in all attractions does result in some longer days out on the water to make up for the hours off, but we enjoy this route and love the mix between long days on the water and shorter days visiting canal side points of interest. Clearly, to do the longer days you need the daylight hours, so fitting all this in really depends what time of year you take the boat out. However, the choice of routes in this area is extensive, so no matter what time of year you travel, there is something for everyone.

Route 2 – Stourport Ring via Netherton Tunnel & Worcester (Particularly suited to the longer summer daylight hours)

Choosing the Stourport Ring to include Worcester is a must in our view when the summer daylight hours allow. Worcester is such a beautiful city and the Cathedral, the pretty timber-framed Tudor-housed shops and its many wonderful eateries are really worth a visit. If you do some longer days, you can still fit in a stop-over at Cadbury's World and Birmingham's Gas Street Basin, so again it is time of year dependant, but you can pick and choose exactly where you want to stop and what you want to see.

Route 3 – Mid-Worcestershire Ring (Droitwich Circle)

In reality, the Mid-Worcestershire Ring which we call the Droitwich Circle, can be completed in a very leisurely 3 to 4 days, or a more energetic weekend, but we offer a suggested 7 night route that allows for those that want to spend less hours per day cruising and more time just relaxing by the water or adventuring around the towns.



Route 4 – The Historic Town of Stourbridge and Return

If you don't want to put yourself under any pressure to complete a ring in your week away, you could still do parts of the Stourport Circle by doing an out and back route. You could choose to leave the Marina and head up towards the historic town of Stourbridge which has some lovely sights along the way. These include the Severn Valley Railway at Kidderminster, Kinver Edge and Rock Houses and Red House Glass Cone where you can see glass-making demonstrations.

Route 5 – Vibrant Birmingham Gas Street Basin and Return

Any long-held misconceptions we may have had about Birmingham being an industrial town not worth a visit were completely knocked on the head after our first sightings of the city's Gas Street Basin & Brindley Place. The tow path around the very eclectic basin are lined with bars, cafes and restaurants all nestled amongst old and modern buildings alike. As a boater you can enjoy this unique area in style and witness first hand where industrial heritage meets modern cosmopolitan living. Route 5 is better than the alternative part-river routes if the weather is particularly rainy; the rivers can flood and sticking to a straight forward canal route is advisable if the weather is poor.



Two Week Holidays

Route 6 – Stourport Ring (Plus)

The Stourport Ring (Plus) includes Worcester and bypasses Wolverhampton, and is therefore not really possible to complete on a 7 night holiday, but it does make for a gentle 2 week break with lots of fascinating things to see and do. You can clearly cover the circle in any direction you like and stay where you wish, but we've got a suggested itinerary to send you that we feel is perfect.

Route 7 – The Black Country Ring (Plus)

The Black Country Ring (Plus) is so called because we have allowed for you to get up to the Birmingham area via Stourport. You could make it shorter by going anti-clockwise and straight up to Birmingham via Alvechurch, which would allow you a bit more time to spend at various attractions, but the route we've planned takes in an entire circle which means you don't have to repeat any stretches of water (see Route 5 for ideas on where to go en route directly to Birmingham). The route passes through a variety of lovely landscapes, from long stretches of peaceful countryside to the vibrancy of Birmingham's theatres, canal side cafes and bars and onto Drayton Manor Theme Park and Zoo if that is your thing and back to Cadbury's World if you fancy some chocolate. It's totally up to you to choose to do as much or as little off the boat as you wish.

Route 8 – The Warwickshire Ring (Plus)

The beautiful Warwickshire Ring is a total trip of 163 miles and 225 locks, with only one small section (the 'Plus' bit from Droitwich Spa to Kings Norton Junction) being repeated. The circuit takes in sections of the Grand Union, Oxford, Coventry and Birmingham and Fazeley Canals. Highlights include Cadbury's World and Birmingham's Gas Street Basin, Drayton Manor, the pretty canal village of Braunston, Royal Leamington Spa, and Warwick Castle. This is a challenging route with lots of locks including a number of flights, but oh the feeling of achievement and joy is worth the extra effort.



Route 9 – The Avon Ring

The Avon Ring is one of my favourites as it takes in the River Avon, the River Severn, the Worcestershire and Birmingham Canal, and the Stratford Canal. If you've got two weeks for a holiday, why would you not want to visit Worcester, Stratford-upon-Avon, Evesham, Pershore, Tewkesbury and Upton-upon-Severn? So many beautiful towns joined by the prettiest of waterways. One thing to be aware of, the River Avon does not belong to the Canal & Riverboat Trust and to use it you will need to pay for an extra licence at about £50 a week, (which is the only licence not covered by Cafwin Cruises). You can obtain a licence as you join the Avon at Stratford-upon-Avon or Tewkesbury (depending which way round you cruise the Avon Ring). On the River Avon you can only moor up at designated Visitor Moorings, unlike the canals where you can moor up almost anywhere along the canal path. Overnight mooring on the Avon does usually attract a charge and can range anything from £3 a night to £12 depending on where you stay; we don't think you'll regret the little extra expense if you fancy this particular route. This link provides all the overnight mooring spots on the River Avon with a little more detail:

<https://www.avonnavigationtrust.org/downloads/Services%20Mar%20130001.pdf>



Route Availability

The Canal & Riverboat Trust firmly believe that life is better by water so they keep our waterways in the best working order possible to benefit the millions of people who use our canals each year. However, keeping 200-year-old waterways open can sometimes throw up a surprise or two.

With over 2,000 miles of historic canals and rivers to look after, the CRT occasionally have to shut a stretch of canal or towpath whilst they are repairing it. When you are planning your boat holiday it's a good idea to check the CRT's navigational advice at this following site before you make a journey:

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/notices>

When the CRT close a stretch of canal or towpath, whether it's an emergency stoppage or planned maintenance work, they'll post a notice on the site above to let you know what they're doing and how the work is progressing.

This is also the best place to find out about any placed restrictions, opening times of manned structures, booking information and general navigation advice.

All you need to do is select the waterway(s) you'd like to find out about and then select the type of notice that you're interested in from the search box.

