

Wander through Worcestershire

18th-19th May 2024

A weekend break of around 40 miles a day, starting and finishing at New Street station in Birmingham. Mainly cycle routes through the city, then quiet back roads through Worcestershire. Dinner, bed and breakfast are included in the price, staying overnight at The Bank House in Bransford just beyond Worcester where you can use the swimming pool and thermal rooms. The return leg is similar, but on a different route.



Itinerary

Saturday - Birmingham to Bransford

Meet at New Street Station by 09:20am to leave at 09:30am. We head south along the Rae Valley cycle route, picking up the well-paved Birmingham-Worcester canal to take us to the fringe of the city, then country roads to Barnt Green for a café stop. Over the tail end of the Lickey Hills, we bypass Bromsgrove to take lunch at the Jinney Ring craft centre. In the afternoon, we push on to Worcester and the option of a coffee break, perhaps at Worcester Woods Country Park cafe, before crossing the Severn at Diglis foot bridge and heading to Bransford via Powick.

Jinney Ring: <https://www.jinneyring.co.uk/acatalog/Craft-Studios-and-Shops.html>

- Route distance: 63.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 600.0 m
- Accommodation: Hotel
- Meals: (D)

Sunday - Bransford to Birmingham

Leaving Bransford we head north, zig-zagging through the countryside up to Witley Court for a break at the tea rooms. Then it's back to the Severn, crossing at Holt Fleet and on to a country pub for lunch. In the afternoon there is the option of a further cafe stop, or simply pressing on into Birmingham. We roll through the suburbs via Woodgate Valley Country Park, picking up the canal at Selly Oak for the final leg into the city centre. Although there are a couple of stretches on 'A' roads, they are short and not fast. Again, it is roads or well maintained tow-paths and cycle tracks.

- Route distance: 72.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 800.0 m
- Accommodation: N/A
- Meals: (B)



Dates and Prices

Cost

- Land only price: £125.0

Payment Schedule

A deposit of £50 per person is required as soon as possible once the Tour Leader has confirmed your booking, with the final balance to be paid by 18-Apr-2024

Price includes:

- 1 night's dinner, bed and breakfast. Note this is for 1 person in a shared room. Single rooms (actually it's a double room to yourself) are available for an additional £70 each.
- It is possible that they will have a room available to us to store all of the bikes in, but it depends on what else might be going on at the hotel, so they will not guarantee this. The alternatives are to take your bike to your room (the hotel are fine with this) or otherwise, lock your bike in their car park. They have CCTV, but ultimately it will be at your own risk, and if you do, a substantial (e.g. D-shaped) lock would be recommended.
- Use of the swimming pool and thermal rooms.

Price does not include:

- Travel to and from the start point.
- Single room occupancy supplement (£70).
- Lunch on either day.
- Drinks with meals.
- Entry fees to any attractions.
- Any other personal expenses.
- Travel insurance.

Cancellations

Written Notice Received: Cancellation Charge:

- Before 1st May 2024: £50 (deposit)
- 1st May 2024 to departure: £125.0

Holiday Information

Accommodation

- The Bankhouse, Bransford. This is a nice hotel. Check out the website: <https://www.bankhouseworchester.com/>

Rooms

- Twin rooms, or for an additional £70 supplement a double room to yourself. Both are subject to availability.

The nature of the holiday

- A two day weekend break where you will have to carry your own luggage. Most of each day will be spent cycling. People will be expected to ride at their own pace and often in loose groups, at around 10-12 mph on the flat, slower up hills, usually meeting up at cafes for lunch and refreshment breaks. It is expected that you may want to stop for photographs, look at the view or explore some local object and this is okay. You are on holiday. Inevitably, parts of the route are hilly, and there is no back-up vehicle to carry your luggage, so you do need to be fit to get the most out of this tour. It is essential to get out on your bike and do some 20-30 mile rides before the tour starts. There are some descents too, so you should be able to negotiate these safely. Please note it may not always be possible to follow the itinerary exactly due to road works or weather etc, as things do not always go as planned. In these circumstances, you will be advised of alternative arrangements. I will not always be at the front of the group but may be anywhere within it, as circumstances require, so you will need to be aware of the route each day. This information will be given to you before, or at the beginning of the holiday, and again at daily briefings.

Rest Day

- None.

Roads used

- Mainly quiet country roads, minor urban roads, cycle routes and well maintained city tow-paths. There are occasional short stretches on 'A' roads, but they are not fast.

Route Sheets

- None provided as such, just print the maps as you see fit.

Group information

- • The maximum group size will be 10, the minimum 2 (including the Tour Leader).

Weather and Clothing

- Hopefully sunny! Suggest cycling top and shorts, with a lightweight waterproof. However, if the forecast looks inclement, a more substantial waterproof and gloves would be a good idea.
You will obviously need clothes for the evening, but what you bring is up to you. There is no need to leave the hotel as we will be dining there, but the grounds are pleasant so you might want to something to wear outside. Bring a swimming costume if you might fancy a dip in the pool, but they will provide towels.
Whatever toiletries you need, but of course keep to a minimum to save weight (as with everything else).

Cycles / Equipment

- Any sort of bike, though ideally a touring bike. I suggest slick tyres (i.e. NOT heavily treaded mountain bike tyres). It is nearly all paved and any parts that are not are well maintained, I would happily take my 25mm tyred road bike.
I heavily suggest at least one spare innertube. I will carry basic general tools and a basic 1st aid kit, but I suggest you also bring a small 1st aid kit and any tools that are specific to your bike. A water bottle should suffice as we are stopping every 10 miles or so, but bring another if the forecast is hot or you like to drink a lot!
You should ensure your bike is well maintained, paying particular attention to wheels, tyres and brakes. A low (easy) bottom gear is useful on hills and although it is not a particularly hilly route, Worcestershire is certainly full of rolling countryside, with 800m of ascent on the second day.
Mudguards are optional, but if it is wet then it's not so much fun cycling behind someone without them!
A lock will be useful, but it is unlikely we will be leaving our bikes for longer than it takes to have coffee and cake.
As we are staying at a different place to where we start, you will need to carry your luggage. It is heavily suggested that you don't carry a rucksack, but rather carry it on your bike in e.g. a rack-top bag or pannier.
Emergency rations e.g. energy bars are good to have and I suggest a map or some means of navigation.

Maps

- GPX files (or links to them) will be provided the week before the start.