

Bikexplore

London and The River Thames (Tour BC221)

10th - 16th May 2022



Tour Prospectus

This is a 7 day fixed centre cycling holiday staying at a 3 star hotel on half board basis in the pleasant residential area of Gidea Park in the London Borough of Havering, one of London's greenest boroughs. You will see the many iconic sights of London, including cycling through the Royal Parks and alongside the River Thames. Our routes will make extensive use of the many new cycleways in the city, keeping you separated from the traffic. We will also use train, boat and cable car assistance to avoid busy stretches and to get further afield. There is also a ride exploring Havering's country parks and the newly established Thames Chase Community Forest, along with a train-assisted ride to Southend-on-Sea where a lengthy seafront cyclepath allows you to 'ride beside the seaside, beside the sea'.

Itinerary

Tue 10 May	Arrive at Gidea Park Hotel between 3pm and 7pm in time for your evening meal. Stay 6 nights.	
Wed 11 May	A ride to see the local area of country lanes villages, woods and country parks. Havering is one of London's greenest boroughs with gently dramatic scenery.	23 miles
Thur 12 May	Travel by bike and train for a River Thames sightseeing trip to 'Big Ben', returning on a fun ride through East London side streets and parks back to our hotel.	35 miles
Fri 13 May	A train assisted ride to where the Thames meets the sea at Southend-on-Sea. Southend has the world's longest pier and nearby the old fashioned town of Leigh is the place to sample seafood London East End style. We then ride an easy off-road route through Hadleigh Castle Country Park (the venue for the mountain biking at the 2012 Olympics), with one steep section which can be walked down if necessary.	25 miles
Sat 14 May	With assistance by train and cable car, cycle to the riverside town of Greenwich, a world heritage site. From the cable car there are extensive views in all directions.	30 miles
Sun 15 May	Take the train up to London, for a grand cycle tour finale of iconic London attractions. You name it, we probably ride past it!	28 miles
Mon 16 May	The holiday finishes after breakfast.	

Accommodation and meals

Accommodation is in a 3 star hotel on a half board basis (dinner, bed and breakfast), in shared twin or triple-bedded rooms. Single room occupancy may be possible, but there is limited availability, and a supplement of £20 per night will apply.

Price: £565

The price is based on a minimum number of 6 participants taking part in the tour. If there are insufficient bookings by 15 March 2022, we will contact you and return all monies paid.

Price includes:

- 6 nights accommodation in a 3 star hotel on a half board basis, sharing a twin or triple room
- Bikexplore costs.

Price does not include:

- Travel to and from the hotel in London.
- Lunches or refreshments during the day
- Drinks with evening meals
- Entry fees at any attractions
- Fares on trains, boats and cable car (£40 approx).
- Any other personal expenses
- Travel Insurance
- Single occupancy supplement (£20 per night).

Payment schedule

A deposit of £50 per person must accompany the Booking Form, with the final balance of £515 per person to be paid no later than ten weeks prior to departure, by 15th March 2022.

Cancellations

Should you be forced to cancel your booking for any reason you must notify us in writing. Cancellation charges are as follows:

Written notice received:	Cancellation charge:
15 March 2022	Deposit (£50)
16 March through to departure	100% (£565)

To make a booking

Read the section on 'Booking a Holiday' on the Bikexplore website, then contact the Tour Leader to check that there are still places available. If there are, download and complete the booking form and email it to the Tour Leader. Instructions on how to pay the deposit (and balance) will then be sent to you.

Leader's Information Sheet

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10th - 16th May 2022



This holiday is classed as Grade 2 – Easy

The information below is given by the tour leader to help enquirers decide if the tour is suitable for them.

The area covered by the tour

This Tour uses train, boat and cable car assistance to enhance your sightseeing experience of London, Essex and the River Thames by bike. The daily rides will take you through Royal Parks and beside the River Thames, past Buckingham Palace, across Trafalgar Square, and to the Houses of Parliament, St Paul's Cathedral, London Bridge, Tower Bridge and the Greenwich World Heritage Site. There is also a trip to the

seaside at Southend, and an exploration of the forests and other green spaces to the east of the capital. You won't just see London and its surroundings on a bike, you will become part of it: a real adventure on mostly flat and undemanding terrain.

Rides and rest days

There will be three rides into central London to see the sights and two rides out into Essex. The Tour Leader or his assistant will normally be at the front of the group and we will regroup at frequent intervals. You should be prepared to carry your bike up or down stairways and on and off trains, a boat and a cable car. Mostly the rides traverse very flat terrain. The routes include riding through public and Royal Parks, as well as along quieter back streets. The city is not congested with traffic at weekends. There could be diversions due to road works but generally the aim is to avoid places with heavy traffic. There are plenty of taxis and train services to get you back to our hotel in the event of a bike failure or in an emergency, but you should remember that bikes cannot be taken on trains or the London Underground during morning and evening rush hours between Monday and Friday. Engineering works could also affect the routes used.

Travel and Parking

Gidea Park railway station is 3 minutes' cycle from the hotel, and Junction 28 on the M25 is about 3 miles away. There is ample car parking at the hotel with covered and locked storage for bikes overnight.

You will need a contactless credit or debit card to pay your train, boat and cable car fares (£40 approx): these are not included in the holiday price. If this is a problem the Tour Leader can supply you with a Visitor Oyster Card (£5) which then needs to be uploaded with funds to cover the fares. This can be arranged on the first evening if the request is made prior to the holiday.

Accommodation / Meals

All nights are spent at the 3 star Gidea Park Hotel, located in a good residential area close to public parks and just a mile from Romford's famous and historic shopping centre. You will share a twin, double or triple room unless you request single occupancy, there is a room available and you have paid the appropriate supplement. All breakfast and dinners are included, with vegetarians, vegans or those on a gluten free diet catered for if this has been noted as a special requirement on the Booking Form.

Group information

The maximum group size will be 14 (including the leader).

Weather and clothing

London and the South East tend to have milder weather than the rest of the country, but you should be prepared for rain and cold, even though the weather has been kind to us when this tour has run previously.

Cycles / Equipment

A solo mountain, touring, hybrid or electric bike with a rack pack, bar bag or similar, plus a cage for a water bottle, would be fine for this tour. It is very important to have a bell to enable you to warn pedestrians of your approach on shared paths. Bring a good quality

bike lock and sufficient spares (including at least two inner tubes) and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs. Make sure your bike has been serviced before shortly before the start of the tour. Mudguards are optional but will be appreciated (particularly by other tour participants riding behind you) if the weather happens to be wet. Unfortunately tandem and recumbent bicycles cannot be taken on public transport in the Greater London and Essex area, and therefore are not an option for this tour.

Maps

In case you become separated from the group, or wish to spend some time cycling apart from the group, you should carry a suitable map. A London A - Z Map and OS Land Ranger 1:50,000 Maps 167 and 178 cover the areas in which we will be cycling.

About the leader

Bernie is a qualified member of the Institute of Tourist Guiding (Blue Badge Guide). He is an active member of The London Cycling Campaign and The Forty-Plus Cycling Club. Although he has organised and led holidays in England and France he now specialises in London sightseeing holidays by bike with train, boat and even cable car assistance



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