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 [Droitwich Ring](#) *(Opens late 2009)*

Stourport Ring

Guides: P1, N2, L16

7 nights, 7.5 hours per day, 116 locks

One of the most popular one-week cruises of all. This route of contrasts takes in the 21st century Birmingham city centre, 19th century heritage and some of the most rural stretches of canal imaginable along with the river Severn .

Much of the stunning new development in **Birmingham** city centre is focused on the canalside area - **Symphony Hall**, the International Convention Centre and the **Sea Life Centre**. Branch off to the impressive Netherton tunnel or visit the award winning **Black Country Museum** . Birmingham TIC
0870 2250127

If time permits, experience the wonder of steam trains on the **Severn Valley Railway**, with a trip from Kidderminster to the picturesque market town of Bridgnorth. 01299 403816 www.svr.co.uk

Take an enviable river perspective of the magnificent **Worcester cathedral** in a city where you will also find both quaint and modern shopping malls and, of course, the **Royal Worcester Porcelain** factory.
Worcester TIC 01905 726311



Stratford-upon-Avon & return

Guides: P2, N2, L15

7 nights, 6 hours per day, 44 locks

(Avon Licence required, can be purchased on arrival at the Avon River)

Cruise through idyllic stretches of countryside to this historic town, each route offering a superb mixture of culture, history and shopping. Moor in the beautifully maintained canal basin at Stratford, near to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. 01789 403444 www.rsc.org.uk

The convenient Tourist Information Centre 0870 1607930 gives details of all you need to know about Shakespeare's birthplace.



Staffordshire & return

Guides: P1, N2, L16

7 days, 6 hours per day, 80 Locks

Passing through Worcester by canal, you join the River Sever for a leisurely cruise up to Stourport where you join the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal .

Here you will appreciate the contrast between the wide river and the more intimate atmosphere of the canal, which threads its way unobtrusively through the landscape, encouraging you to stop at will. This canal takes you north past dramatic sandstone rocks and through the beautifully preserved Bratch locks towards Autherley Junction where you have the opportunity of joining the Shropshire Union Canal for a short while.

You will probably want to turn here in order to make the most of the return journey which, apart from opening up new views of the countryside, will give you a chance to visit some of the attractions you may have missed on the way up, such as the Severn Valley Railway, or the sandstone caves at Austcliffe.



Avon Ring

Guides: P2, N2, L15

**14 nights or (10/11 nights, 6 hours a day), 139 locks
(Additional licence required for River Avon)**

To really enjoy the delightful river cruising on both the Severn and Avon you will need at least a 10 or 11 night break.

In fact, allowing two weeks enables a detour down to Gloucester to visit its docks, warehouses and museums.

Worcester, Tewkesbury, Evesham and Stratford each offer a superb mixture of culture, history and shopping.



Droitwich Ring

From Worcester 41 locks, 20 hours cruising

Late 2009 should see the opening of the restored Droitwich Canal. The Droitwich Canal links the Birmingham and Worcester Canal with the River Severn at Hawford creating a new mini ring from Worcester. Cruising the ring will take approximately 20 hours so a short break is possible but will require long days cruising.

The Droitwich Canal is an amalgamation of the Droitwich Barge Canal and the Droitwich Junction Canal both were built to carry salt from Droitwich Spa but were abandoned in 1939. The Droitwich Canal Trust has worked since 1973 to restore this stretch, which is now due for completion this year.