



Celtic Trail

10-day Self-Guided Cycling Holiday

The Celtic Trail spans the breadth of Wales, from Fishguard in the West to Chepstow on the English Border. The western section of the trail follows the beautiful coastline of Pembrokeshire, with off-shore islands, beaches and great wildlife to enjoy. Then it's inland to rural Carmarthenshire, a calm green county known as the garden of Wales, with some fabulous castles. The second half of the journey brings you to the heart and soul of Wales – the Welsh Valleys. Once the industrial heartland of the country, these areas are now being regenerated and offer an interesting mix of cultural and natural heritage. Tramways that once carried coal from the mines have now been converted into traffic-free trails which are perfect for care-free cycling.



Day 1

Fishguard to St David's - 19 ½ miles (31 km)

The journey begins on the Pembrokeshire coast in Fishguard, at the mouth of the Gwaun River. It's a fabulous first day, with the route sticking close to the sea as you head south-west, before heading inland to the cathedral city of St David's. It's worth a short detour today to visit the delightful Melin Tregwynt – a centuries-old woollen mill still in operation and with an excellent café! The day ends in the tiny town of St Davids, famous for its cathedral.



Day 2

St David's to Broad Haven - 15 miles (24 km)

An easy ride along St Bride's Bay brings you to the renowned surfing waters off Newgale Beach. The second half of the day is more strenuous but fabulous views from Ramsey Island to Skomer Island are more than enough reward for the climbs! Where the route stays close to the shore, there are rock pools and coves to explore, and several idyllic spots to rest your legs. The wildlife in the Pembrokeshire National Park is superb – seabirds, seals and even dolphins can be seen.



Day 3

Broad Haven to Tenby - 29 miles (46 km)

It's a cross-country ride to Pembroke, with its sturdy stone castle and 12th century keep – worth climbing for views of the town! Follow the route of a Neolithic trackway known as The Ridgeway, to finish the day in the pretty town of Tenby with its pastel-painted beachfront. Caldey Island, with its resident monks, lies just offshore and Tenby is a popular place for a rest day.



Day 4

Tenby to Laugharne - 16 miles (26 km)

A short day on quiet lanes, but with a couple of stiff climbs to test your legs. Laugharne Castle makes a good stopping off point for a picnic and a rest before the final miles to Laugharne. Don't miss The Boathouse, where Dylan Thomas penned the famous *Under Milk Wood*, and the imposing castle, in a tranquil spot surrounded by greenery.



Day 5

Laugharne to Carmarthen - 18 ½ miles (30km)

Follow the River Taf upstream today to St Clears, through a landscape steeped in archaeological significance. The area is dotted with prehistoric sites, and the town of Carmarthen itself has been in existence since the Roman occupation of Britain. Set astride the River Towy, Carmarthen is a welcoming stopover, offering plenty of places to enjoy a well-deserved meal.

Day 6

Carmarthen to Kidwelly - 14 miles (22 km)

A short but strenuous day as the road rises and falls on its way southwards from Carmarthen. The castle at Kidwelly is the reward for your efforts. Kidwelly Castle was begun in the 13th century and is an imposing though little-visited example of the power of the Normans in Wales. This was one of the fortifications built to secure South Wales for the incomers and even today it certainly looks impressively unyielding!



Day 7

Kidwelly to Swansea - 29 miles (46 km)

A wonderful and almost totally traffic-free ride today, at first through Pembrey Country Park and then through wetlands, woodland and along the seafront to the great city of Swansea. You could stop off for an hour at the National Wetland Centre, where it's possible to canoe among the lakes and canals – a wonderful way to see the birdlife. Swansea's regenerated maritime quarter, the National Waterfront Museum and the Dylan Thomas Centre are all worth a look. In the summer, an evening ride down to the Gower is well worth it for the wonderful sunsets and dramatic coastline.



Day 8

Swansea to Blackmill – 28 miles (45km)

After initially negotiating your way through the suburbs of Swansea, the route leaves the roads and roundabouts behind and heads into Margam Country Park. The ruins of Margam's Cistercian Abbey lie en-route. Two further parks are encountered today on a largely traffic-free ride. They are amazing examples of nature reclaiming the industrial landscape – this was once a centre for ironworking but is now a peaceful mosaic of grasslands and pools.

Day 9

Blackmill to Hengoed – 22 miles (35 km)



You barely touch the road today, following a network of railway paths and cycle trails westwards. From the Sirhowy Valley the route drops down to the Brecon & Monmouth Canal and there is lots of information at the Fourteen Locks Canal Centre where the canal is raised by 50 metres using a series of locks. Further along lies another example of Industrial Age engineering. Hengoed Viaduct which was built in the mid-19th century, has 16 arches rising to an impressive height of 260 metres.

Day 10

Hengoed to Chepstow - 33 miles (53 km)

The final day takes you down into the busy city of Newport. You emerge into a landscape more reminiscent of the Netherlands than Wales! It's a flat coastal plain, criss-crossed by drainage ditches, reed beds and stands of willow. It's easy cycling – provided the wind is on your side! En-route it's worth stopping off at Caldicot Castle and the Newport Wetlands reserve if you're a bird-lover – a haven for wildlife on the edge of Newport managed by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. A visit to the Roman ruins at Caerleon, can also be arranged. Your ride across Wales ends in the historic town of Chepstow, beside the River Wye and beneath the walls of the impressive Chepstow Castle.



Netherlands than Wales! It's a flat coastal plain, criss-crossed by drainage ditches, reed beds and stands of willow. It's easy cycling – provided the wind is on your side! En-route it's worth



Tour summary

Duration	10 days
Distance	224 miles (360 km)
Grading	Moderate
Price	£985 per person based on 2 people sharing a twin/double room. Contact us for sole traveller/single occupancy rates.
Meals	Cooked breakfast included. Packed lunches & evening meals can be arranged on your behalf if required.
Options	Add an extra night at any stage of the tour, prices from £40pp per night.
Bike Hire	Bike hire is included in the tour price. For tandem bikes, please add £10pp 10% discount if you bring your own bike.

Remember, this itinerary is just the starting point.

Please contact us if you have any special requirements and we will be happy to tailor the tour to suit you.