

Cycle by the Shore

This tour traces the course of the River Stour from Canterbury to the ancient Cinque Port of Sandwich. It then follows the coastline using part of the National Cycle Route 1 via Deal and Dover. The return ride passes through a number of interesting villages, the last few near Canterbury are particularly attractive. The total distance of the ride is 50 miles / 80 kilometers. Most of the route is easy to moderate to ride but there are some hilly stretches around Kingsdown, Dover and Lydden. The route can be ridden in its entirety it can be ridden to Dover and then catch the train back to Canterbury. If riding the whole route the midway point for overnight accommodation is St. Margaret's at Cliffe or Dover. If only riding to Dover the midway point can either be Sandwich or Deal.

1. From the station bear left and pass through a new housing estate bearing right all the time until you reach North Lane, cross and go straight ahead into the Causeway. Turn left into St. Radigunds Street, cross over the Stour River passing the Millers arms on your right and continue following this road until it meets Northgate. Turn left, pass Broad Street, on your right and turn right into the next alleyway on your right. Follow this road as it twists and turns until you reach Military Road.
2. At staggered pedestrian crossings go straight ahead into North Holmes Road. and at T junction by the side of the local prison turn left and in a very short while turn right into Spring Lane signposted Cycle Route 16/17 towards Dover. By the Chaucer School turn right into Pilgrims Way. At the end of the housing estate the route enters a private road and Cycle Track 16. Follow this route carefully through the orchards. (Straight in at the crossroads, and just after passing under high tension electric power cable fork left and climb a short incline.)
3. In a while join a lane on a sharp bend and go straight ahead passing Hode Farm and its oasthouses. Descend a hill and beware there is a T junction at the bottom. Turn left and almost immediately you will come to a mini roundabout, turn left towards Littlebourne and Howletts Safari Park.
4. Follow this road under a large railway viaduct and pass Howletts Zoo Park on your right. This Safari Park is famous for its work in protecting endangered species in particular tigers and gorillas. Continue along this road to Littlebourne to the staggered crossroads. There are several public houses where you can get refreshments.

(5.5 miles/9 kilometers)

5. Go straight ahead at staggered crossroads into Nargate Street signposted Ickham and Wickhambreaux and the Rose public house. Continue to the village of Grove and on a sharp left hand bend turn right into a lane signposted Preston and Wingham. Cross over Little Stour River, enter

village of Preston and at T junction with B2046 turn right signposted Wingham and Canterbury and Cycle Route 1 sign.

(10 miles/16.5 kilometers)

6. Pass the Moon and Seven Stars public house on right and then turn left opposite village stores into Mill Lane signposted Elmstone and Westmarsh. Follow signs for Elmstone and Cycle Route 1 all the way to Sandwich. At fork in the road just before you reach the very interesting church at Elmstone fork left signposted Shearwater, Hoaden and Westmarsh. Enter village of Westmarsh and immediately turn left into lane signposted Westmarsh.

(12.5 miles/ 21 kilometers)

7. Pass Way Out Inn in Village. At crossroads turn left (fingerposts broken but indicating Cycle Route 1). At T junction turn right signposted Ash. At next turning on left turn left signposted Cop Street, Richborough and Sandwich. At crossroads turn left into lane marked No Through Road and signposted Goldstone.
8. In hamlet of Lower Goldstone path becomes a bridlepath. Continue until you reach the road again and turn left. Shortly after returning to the road you will pass Potts Farm. Continue to follow signs for Richborough. Pass Richborough Castle in fields on your left.

(17 miles/ 28 kilometers)

9. Continue by crossing the railway line by level crossing and pass under bypass then on into the ancient Cinque Port of Sandwich. At T junction opposite Fire Station turn left. Continue along Strand Street to a T junction with the Bell Hotel opposite.

(18 miles/ 30 kilometers)

Sandwich

Among the places to visit while you are in Sandwich there is The Guildhall which is still used as a Court Room, the Barbican and Sandwich Quay, the Ancient St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and the Precinct Toy Museum.

10. At the end of your tour of Sandwich either catch the train to Deal or return to the Bell Hotel.
11. From the Bell Hotel take Upper Strand Street down the side of it. By the Salutation at the crossroads turn right into Knightrider Street and then left

into Sandown Road. Follow this road out of Sandwich and through a Toll Road. Cycles travel free. Road in parts is a bridleway and crosses the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course so look out for any misguided golf balls. Pass into Godwyne Road and turn right onto the seafront.

(22 miles/ 36.5 kilometers)

Deal

This is a quaint seaside resort with no less than three Tudor castles, one you have just passed the remains of at Sandown, now reclaimed by the sea, the other two, at Deal and Walmer are both adjacent to the seafront. Walmer Castle is the home of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and has a most attractive garden called the Queen Mother's Garden. The timeball tower also on the seafront was built in 1785 and originally used as a signaling station, the ball was lowered at 1pm every day for the shipping in the channel to synchronise clocks. If you have time explore this town.

12. Join the Cycle path in front of Deal Castle running along the seafront and continue along the coastline towards Kingsdown. Pass Walmer Castle on your right and enter Kingsdown. Veer left when the road swings uphill. Keep on towards the white cliffs and head inland in an adopted road, Oldstairs road. Straight on (No Through Road) and immediately fork right signposted Kingsdown Riding Centre and start to climb up an unmetalled road through Otty Bottom. At T junction in St. Margaret's, in metalled road again, by the Red Lion Public house turn left.

(27 miles/ 45 kilometers)

13. Turn right by the Hope Inn, Pass a holiday camp and as the road starts to descend on a right hairpin bend, turn left and enter Langdon Cliff Car Park and enjoy the view of the straights of Dover and the Port. Return to the road and continue towards Dover. If you are going to visit the Castle, take the slip road on your left as you descend the very steep hill.

(31 miles/ 51 kilometers)

Dover

Dover is mainly known as a cross channel ferry port, but it is a town steeped in history. It has one of the finest Norman Castles in the country with a commanding view over the straits of Dover. In the cliffs underneath is Hellfire Corner, which was a wartime command post controlling the straits of Dover, Other places to visit in the town include the Roman painted house, Victorian Gaol, the White Cliffs Experience and the Grand Redoubt.

14. From the town centre follow the one way street system north towards Canterbury. Pass along the High Street and London Road and at the end of the one way street system bear left and climb Crabble Hill, at the traffic lights fork left signposted River and Crabble Corn Mill.
15. Turn right into Lower Road. Pass the mill and continue along Valley Road. Turn right at T junction and immediately left into left into River Street. Turn left at the junction by Dublin Man O War Public House. Turn left at the next junction into Alkham road signposted Kearsney Abbey.
16. Turn right by park signposted Temple Ewell and pass under bridge. Turn left at crossroads at the top of a short slope and head into the countryside. Pass under railway bridge and enter village of Lydden. Just before chapel fork right into Stonehall Road signposted Eyethorne. After a dip in the road turn right at T junction and climb hill to the top and junction with busy main A2.
17. Take great care at this staggered crossroads, turn left followed almost immediately right signposted Coldred. Continue through Coldred to Shepherdswell and by the village stores turn right to go to railway station. On Sundays steam trains run on the East Kent Railway, a former Colliery line, which starts at the station.

(37 miles/ 62 kilometers)

18. From the station return to the village stores and turn right towards Wollage and leave village of Shepherdswell. Straight on at next crossroads following signs to Wollage Green and Wollage Village. Straight on at crossroads signposted Nonnington and Snowdon. Take next left signposted Barnham and Canterbury and left at T junction. Pass Woodpecker Hotel and at T junction turn left onto B2046 signposted Barham and Canterbury.
19. Straight on at roundabout and cross over bridge over A2. At T junction turn right and almost immediately left signposted Barham. At crossroads turn right and enter village of Barham passing church and Duke of Cumberland Public House. At T junction turn right into Valley Road.

(43 miles/ 72 kilometers)

20. Leave village of Barham. Pass Black Robin Public House (an excellent food stop if you are hungry) and take the next turning in the left signposted Kingston. 200 meters up the lane turn right into a bridlepath and slowly ride along this track to Bishopsbourne. In a while this track becomes a tree lined road past a cricket field.

21. Enter the village of Bishopsbourne. Pass Mermaid Inn on your left and the Blacksmiths Forge on your right. Just before church turn right and at foot of hill, turn left (unsigned), and ride through Bourne Park.
22. At T junction on Bridge Hill turn left and descend hill to Red Lion Public House. Turn right and follow Cycle Route 16/17. Enter village of Patribourne noting the diversity of styles of architecture in this most attractive village. At mini roundabout at the end of the village veer left and almost immediately fork right into Hode land and up the hill to Hode Farm.
23. On left hand bend go straight ahead into private road through orchards. Enter Canterbury through a housing estate, Pilgrims Way. Bear right over railway bridge where road becomes Pilgrims Road. By Chaucer School turn left into Spring Lane. At T junction turn left into St. Martins Hill and almost immediately right into special Cycle lane in North Homes Road.
24. Follow special track along North Homes Road and continue straight ahead into Cycle path. At junction with busy Military Road cross road to central island, turn left and cross again. Enter alleyway and follow to Northgate.
25. At junction with road turn left and take the second turning on the right into St. Radigunds Street. Pass Millers Arms, pass over river bridge and turn right into the Causeway. At next junction go straight ahead into Station Road West and follow track through new housing estate veering left all the time until you come to Canterbury West Railway Station.

(50 miles/ 80 kilometers)