EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Cycling Coast to Coast (C2C 2015)

CYCLING

TOURDURAT
4
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Comfort: Simple
Tour Type: Small Groups
Cycling Grade: Challenging
tour Code: C2C

Tour Highlights - Cycling Coast to Coast

- ✓ Coast to Coast - Cycling from the Irish Sea to the North Sea
- ✓ Sense of achievement - Cross England by pedal power
- ✓ Natural beauty - ever changing scenery from the Lake District across the North Pennines
- ✓ On your doorstep - A superb and classic cycle route relatively close to home

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	1 night Standard Hotel 1 night Simple Guesthouse 1 night Basic Hostel
Included Meals:	3 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Whitehaven
End Point:	Tour ends: Tynemouth Metro Station
Included Bike:	21 gear Ridgeback Meteor hybrid bikes
Transport:	Bicycle
Countries:	United Kingdom

Cycling Coast To Coast

On this cycling trip we cross the breadth of England on two wheels from Whitehaven on the Irish Sea to Tynemouth on the North Sea. This classic coast to coast challenge cycles through some of the wildest and most spectacular landscapes in the north of England; discovering the dramatic beauty of the Lake District, Eden Valley and the rugged North Pennines.

Why Book this tour

Unlike many other operators, we include the hire of your bike in the overall cost of the holiday: you don't need to bring your own or pay extra to hire one locally. We also provide a support vehicle, spare parts and take care of day to day bike maintenance. All you need bring is your own helmet.

Cycling Information

On this tour we cycle 225 km over three days (an average of 75 km per day). Our route follows bike trails along disused railway lines and quiet back roads with some short sections on main roads. Maps are provided to cycle individually or in groups while the tour leader drives the support vehicle. We have graded the route as challenging.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Simple

These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, typically with en suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Cycling Grade: Challenging

Longer, more demanding rides for cyclists who enjoy hilly terrain with some challenging ascents. The routes demand a good level of fitness and may include some non-technical, off-road riding.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others

DAY 1 Join tour Whitehaven

Whitehaven is a small, former mining town and port on the Irish Sea, on the western edge of the Lake District. This Georgian town was one of the first Post renaissance planned towns in the country. We meet up here at our hotel in Whitehaven, where you can familiarise yourself with your bike for the trip and make any necessary adjustments. We use 21 gear Ridgeback Meteor hybrid bikes which are ideally suited to the terrain and will provide maps and detailed route notes which means we can cycle at our own pace, either individually or with other group members. There will be a short introductory briefing this evening. Our tour leader will transfer the baggage and provide emergency vehicle back up and will meet us at various points during our days cycling. After dinner there'll be time for a drink with fellow riders and to discuss the challenge ahead!

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Cycle through the Lake District

After breakfast we'll freewheel down to Whitehaven Harbour to perform the customary wheel dipping ceremony then leave the town heading east. We'll soon be travelling along a disused railway line heading towards the rolling green landscape of the Lake District, with stone walls and glorious views of the fells and tiny hamlets with tranquil Loweswater in the distance. Our first real test will come as we make the long climb up to the forested pass at Whinlatter. After 25 miles or so we will stop to grab a sandwich & slice of delicious homemade cake at the visitor centre café, before the fast descent down to Keswick. We'll spend the afternoon riding on more disused railways, back roads & quiet lanes, passing through quiet Cumbrian villages and hamlets. Our night stop is in Penrith a simple guesthouse close to the town centre. Tonight we'll head into town for a well-earned dinner and drinks. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 86 kilometres (Total 1509 metres ascent and 1385 meters descent)

Overnight: **Simple Guesthouse**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Cross the Pennines by pedal power

After a good night's sleep and a full English breakfast to fuel us for today's ride, we head uphill and east out of town. The hill can be quite a challenge early on, but we soon get into our stride, climbing then descending to the River Eden and Langwathby. After about an hour and a half the scenery - and the gradient - changes as we start the climb to Hartside Pass. The road zigzags its way up the side of the hill to the summit at 580m (1903ft). Whilst not the steepest hill on the ride, it's a steady climb up the 3-4 miles to the cafe at the top - the highest in England - for a hot drink and a welcome slice of cake! Then it's a fast freewheel for several miles down towards the picturesque Pennine village of Garrigill. The pull out of Garrigill towards Nenthead is one of the most challenging of the route - let's not pretend it's anything other than tough! But it's over faster than you expect and we're in Nenthead before you know it with just one more big climb remaining for the day. After Nenthead we reach the highest point of the C2C route, crossing into Northumberland before another good descent, a short gradual climb and then a final descent into Allenheads. Tonight's accommodation is in dorm style rooms with shared facilities and there's a great pub a short way up the valley where we can enjoy a pint of real ale and something hearty and filling for dinner. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 54 kilometres (Total 1428 metres ascent and 1173 meters descent)

Overnight: **Basic Hostel**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4 Cycle to Tynemouth, tour ends Tynemouth

The final day's ride starts with another early morning steep climb as we leave the village and climb up through the head of the valley. The reward is open moorland views and the longest most enjoyable descent of the entire route towards Rookhope. After Rookhope comes - yes, you've guessed it - another climb followed by a good long descent. The ascent out of Stanhope takes the award for steepest climb but there's a great little cyclists cafe at the top - formerly the old miners railway station at the start of the 'Waskerley Way'. From here we follow the disused railway line across open moorland, over cattle grids and through numerous gates as we start to descend towards Consett. Skirting the old steel town we soon join another disused railway line now known as Derwent Walk which takes us all the way to the outskirts of Newcastle. The C2C signs take us round docks and over bridges as we approach the city alongside the Tyne, with the view of the bridges in the centre of the city beckoning us on. It's tempting to think Newcastle might be the end of the ride, but there's still another 12 miles to go! With the river on our right we weave our way through Wallsend and North Shields. Before passing a marina, and following the Tyne for the last few miles to the sea. There's one more very short hill before our final destination - the small bay at Tynemouth with the ruins of Tynemouth Castle and Priory on the headland above, and the end point of our Coast to Coast ride. There's a great feeling of real achievement as we reach the North Sea, and realise that we just crossed England by pedal power! Our journey ends here so we leave the bikes and take a short walk to Tynemouth metro station on the Tyne and Wear Metro system, from where it is a 30 minute journey into central Newcastle and the mainline rail station. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 85 kilometres (Total 1093 metres ascent and 1476 meters descent)

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Rating

An important feature of many Explore tours is the wide range of accommodation used, and since the beginning our philosophy has been to select accommodation to suit the itinerary - not the other way round. To help gauge the comfort level on your chosen tour, we have graded the accommodation standards at all night-stops using the rating guide below. Please keep in mind however that standards can vary from one trip to the next, and occasionally we may need to change a night-stop without advance warning.
Basic - Our basic accommodation can offer the most rewarding and memorable places to stay. These are usually communal or camping style with shared facilities. Running hot and cold water may be unreliable and overall comfort levels are basic.
Simple - These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, sometimes with en suite facilities.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 3 breakfasts, 0 lunches,0 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

United Kingdom

Lunch £: 10.00

Dinner £: 18.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

United Kingdom

Bottle of Beer £: 4.00

Water £: 0.80

International Departure Taxes

N/A

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

N/A

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

United Kingdom

ATM Availability: ATM’s are widely available in main towns.

Credit Card Acceptance: Widely accepted.

Travellers Cheques: Can be exchanged at most banks and post offices.

Local Currency: Pounds Sterling.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Carry a combination of UK Sterling cash, ATM and credit cards.

Where to Exchange: Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip between 01 January 2015 and 31 August 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited. who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

Visa Information

UK: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

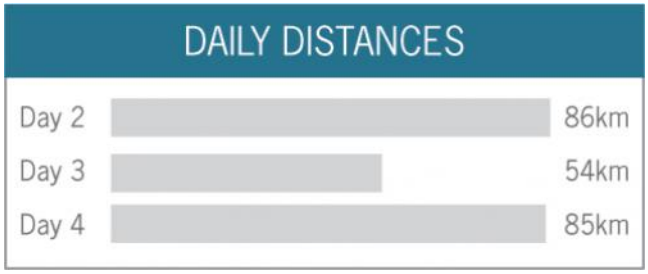
Vaccinations & Protection

United Kingdom

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at

http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Tour



Altitude Description

N/A

Bike Details

Your included bike is a 21 gear Ridgeback Meteor hybrid and will be the correct frame size for your height. An 18-litre pannier is included as well as the facility to fit your own pedals or saddle if you wish to bring them. A support vehicle accompanies the rides throughout the tour. We provide spare parts and take care of the day to day maintenance. All you need to bring is your own helmet.

Climate

United Kingdom

The UK has a temperate but very variable climate. In general the summers are warm with July and August being the warmest. The winters are cool and the lowest temperatures are recorded during January and February. Whatever the season it is advisable to be prepared for rain!

Clothing

Light rainwear may be needed at any time of year, and a warm fleece/jacket is recommended for cooler evenings and nights. Other additions that you may find useful are tracksuit bottoms, cycle gloves, cycling shorts/trousers and a gel seat cover. Bring a towel for the night we stay in Allenheads.

Equipment

A water bottle, sunhat and sunscreen are all essential, as is your own cycling helmet. Panniers are provided on the bikes for small items to be stored, and a small tool kit, lock, water-bottle holder and map-holder are also provided locally. You will also be given route notes on arrival. You may wish to bring a small knife, bungy cords and wrap around sunglasses with you.

Footwear

Cycle shoes make for easier cycling. Alternatively you can ride in trainers or light walking shoes.

Luggage: On Tour

Your main luggage (one bag) will be transferred in the support vehicle between hotels. The bike is fitted with a rear pannier for items you wish to access during the day.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Country details

United Kingdom

Population: 62,262,000

Size of Country: 243,610 sq km

Major Language: English

Religion: Christian

Electric Supply & Plugs

United Kingdom

3 Pin Flat

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2. 3/ itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 3.

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