



Solway Coast Tour – Portpatrick to Kirkcudbright

Summary

Southwest Scotland's coast provides an amazing backdrop for this fantastic road biking holiday. Galloway is a forgotten corner of Scotland with miles of deserted road through beautiful, green, rolling countryside, perfect for road cycling. Spend 3 or 4 days biking and soaking up the stunning rugged forest and coastal scenery, including a foray into the most southerly remaining wilderness in Britain, the Galloway forest park, recently designated the UK's first Dark Sky Park.

Highlights

Exploring the stunning coastline in a forgotten corner of Scotland
Visiting the most southerly point of Scotland at the Mull of Galloway
Star gazing in the UK's first Dark Sky Park
Unrivalled hospitality to be found at every step of the way

Example 4 - Day Itinerary

Day 1. Arrive in Kirkcudbright and transfer to Portpatrick, about an hour and a quarter's drive away. Stay overnight in a very comfortable bed and breakfast or hotel. You can enjoy the local hospitality, soak up the atmosphere in this lovely Galloway harbour town and prepare your bike for the journey ahead.

Day 2. A circuit from Portpatrick - 45 miles/73 km; 970m of ascent

Equipped with a set of comprehensive maps and some top tips from our cycle travel experts, you're ready to set off on your incredible journey and head along the lovely coastline overlooking the Irish Sea. You'll reach the most southerly point in Scotland, the Mull of Galloway before heading north back to the beautiful fishing village of Portpatrick and your comfortable bed for the night.

Day 3. Portpatrick to Garlieston - 47 miles/76 km; 570m of ascent

There's only one way to go today and that's east! Following the remote coastline, skirting around the golden sands of Luce Bay, the route heads through remote fishing villages in this forgotten corner of Scotland. You'll cycle past the impressive Glenluce Abbey to the remote Isle of Whithorn and finish the day in Garlieston, a tiny coastal village.

Day 4. Garlieston to Gatehouse of Fleet - 35 miles/56 km; 525m of ascent

You'll leave Garlieston and cycle through rolling hills to Wigtown, Scotland's Book Town before arriving at Newton Stewart, gateway to the Galloway Hills. From here you'll follow National Cycle Network cycle route 7, also known as the Lochs and Glens route, and climb eastwards. The route follows the Water of Fleet as it winds its way through remote hills to Gatehouse of Fleet, a picturesque village surrounded by heather-clad hillsides and your home for the night.

Day 4. Gatehouse of Fleet to Kirkcudbright - 34 miles/55 km; 695m of ascent

From Gatehouse you'll skirt around the Solway Firth on a stunning section of coastline to Kirkcudbright Bay and a well-deserved celebratory evening in Scotland's Artist Town, or you can collect your car and head home straight away – well done! There's also the option of adding an 18 mile loop onto your day and a visit to Dundrennan Abbey.

Duration:

3 or 4 days of scenic cycling
3 to 5 nights of comfortable accommodation

Why not add an extra day's riding with a circuit into Galloway Forest Park? Let us know if you'd like more information about this version of this route.

Total Distance:

230 km or 141 miles

Self Guided trip includes:

- 3 or 4 days biking and 3 to 6 nights' comfortable accommodation
- Baggage transfers
- Comprehensive maps, gpx. Files & list of services on the route
- Phone support from us
- One way transfer between Kirkcudbright and Portpatrick

Available on request:

- Pick up and drop off from public transport links
- Bike and equipment hire
- Accommodation in Kirkcudbright at the end of the trip

Dates:

Self-guided cycling trips are available between April and September for groups of 2 or more. Contact us with the dates you have in mind.

What bike?

The Solway Coast Tour can be ridden on a hybrid or road bike. See below for more details.

To make a booking or for more information:

Email us: info@trailbrakes.co.uk
Phone us: +44 (0)7922 653327 or +44 (0)141 6286676



Solway Coast Tour – Further Information

Accommodation and food

We use only tried and tested accommodation providers on our trips, many that we have worked with for years, so that we know that you will receive an excellent level of service. They provide everything you could need after a long day in the saddle from bike storage to hot showers, hearty breakfasts and comfortable beds. Accommodation in guest houses and hotels is always on a bed and breakfast basis and trip prices are based on two people sharing a room, unless otherwise arranged. Most of our accommodation is en-suite and we will let you know if it is not possible to book en-suite rooms. Wifi is now also pretty much universal in every location. If you would prefer hostel or bunkhouse style accommodation, breakfast is not included although most bunkhouses can provide meals at an additional charge. Bunkhouses will often have cooking facilities so that you can prepare your own meals if you'd prefer. Wherever you stay you will be able to get an evening meal at a pub or restaurant within walking distance. Lunches can usually be bought during the course of the day as you will be passing through towns or villages. It is advisable to carry plenty of snacks with you each day to keep the energy levels up!

Sole occupancy rooms are usually available in hotels or guest houses so please ask us if you'd prefer to have your own room. A single supplement of at least £30 per person, per night will apply.

Clothing and kit

South West Scotland receives a generally mild climate all year round. Conditions can and do change quickly especially on higher and more exposed areas. It can rain at any time of year, sometimes all day and we often get four seasons in a day, so come prepared! A full kit list is available on our website (<http://www.trailbrakes.co.uk/kit-list-equipment-recommendations>) and a list of useful items will also be sent to you when you book your trip with us. General climatic information for Newton Stewart is available here: http://www.yr.no/place/United_Kingdom/Scotland/Newton_Stewart/statistics.html. Up-to-the-minute weather forecasts for specific regions of the UK are available at the met office website (<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/>).

It is advisable to bring a small back-pack with you on your trip, in which you can carry spare clothes and basic spares and tools that you might need during the course of a day on the bikes. Alternatively, if you're hiring bikes from us, we can provide pannier bags in which to carry supplies for the day.

The route

Our Solway Coast cycle route is a unique, specifically-designed road biking route, along quiet country roads and incorporating some stretches of National Cycle Network. This trip has a **Fitness Grading of 5** which means that you should have a good level of fitness and take part in cycling based activities regularly. You're comfortable riding for up to 6 hours per day on terrain that can include short, steep climbs and occasionally longer, more gradual climbs.

What bike?

The Solway Coast route is perfect for hybrid or road bikes. The entire route is comprised of scenic paved roads. It is possible to complete the route on mountain bikes but it would be a good idea to fit smooth tyres to make the bike roll more easily along the roads. Ask us if you need any further advice.

Bike hire

It is always more comfortable for you if you can use your own bike but we can provide you with quality hybrid bikes if required, which are a perfect option for the route. They have plenty of gears to help you make it up those climbs and are supplied with a spare inner tube, puncture repair kit, pump, lock, bottle holder and pannier rack. Pannier bags can also be provided by prior arrangement. If you need to hire a bike, please let us know at the time of booking and we will make sure that we get the right bike for you.

Hire bikes are provided with comfortable touring-style saddles and standard flat pedals. You are welcome to bring your own saddle and/or clipless pedals to make your ride more comfortable. Please note that, if you're taking part in a self guided trip, you may have to change your saddle and/or pedals yourself so please bring suitable tools (a pedal spanner and set of allen/hex keys) with you in order for you to do this.

Self guided trips

Our self guided trips are the most popular choice and are designed for cyclists who are comfortable carrying their own basic tools and spares along with them each day so that they can fix any minor technical issues encountered along the route (punctures etc.). We will organise quality accommodation, bag transfers each day, detailed information about the route, official maps of the route, pick-up and drop-off at locations convenient for your travel plans and a comprehensive list of bike shops that are located along the route. We will always be only a phone call away should you require any additional advice/support so you'll never be truly on your own!

Fully supported trips

Our fully supported cycling trips are designed to provide you with a completely hassle-free biking holiday experience. We will organise every aspect of your trip including quality accommodation, bag transfers each day, detailed information about the route, official maps of the route, pick up and drop off at locations convenient for your travel plans and full support from our friendly, knowledgeable back-up team in case of technical (or physical!) emergencies. We will provide a back-up vehicle full of spares and tools to carry your baggage between your accommodation each day. Our drivers are proficient bike mechanics so will be able to help you out with common technical problems. If the issue is a bit more serious, they will be able to take your bike to a local bike shop for some TLC. Their main aim is to keep you and your bike on the road!

Transport and baggage transfers

We are always happy to help you to get to where you need to be as quickly and easily as possible. We can provide transfers from any local airport, train or bus station or ferry terminal to your accommodation at the beginning of your trip and back again at the end. Just let us know where and how you intend to arrive at your destination and we will arrange a pick-up for you. Please note that an extra charge may apply to cover fuel costs.

We transport your bags between each night's accommodation during your trip, leaving you free to carry a small day-pack containing some spare clothes, food and drink. Please note that baggage should be limited to one bag per person, not exceeding 20kg per bag unless prior arrangements are made.

Any questions?

We've tried to cover everything on our website and this information pack but If you'd like some further information or want to ask us anything at all about our biking trips please don't hesitate to contact us on the details below:

Email: info@trailbrakes.co.uk

Phone: +44 (0)7922 653327 or +44 (0)141 6286676

We look forward to seeing you on one of our fantastic biking adventures!