

Cycle the Taff Trail



Highlights

Cycle the Taff Trail through the Welsh countryside from the Brecon Beacons down to the capital city of Cardiff on this two-day cycling holiday. With the option for a guided or self-guided trip, you'll spend most of your time on bike-friendly, traffic-free routes, travelling along former tram and railway lines – so it's great for families with young kids.

The Taff Trail traces a mostly traffic free 55 mile (88km) route from the waterfront in Cardiff to the historic market town of Brecon in the North. In many sections the Taff Trail uses traffic free canal towpaths and abandoned railways, tramways and canals along the narrow Taff Valley.

You'll coast along beside the Monmouthshire and Brecon canal, and then follow the old Brecon and Merthyr railway before climbing up to Talybont reservoir. Then on the second day you'll speed along the Taff Valley towards the coast. As well as wonderful rambling countryside you'll see spectacular feats of engineering from Wales' industrial past like the Cefn Coed Viaduct that looks like something straight from Harry Potter. And if that wasn't awe-inspiring enough, there's also Cyfarthfa Castle and the romantic folly, Castell Coch near Cardiff.

Is it for me?

You have two options for this trip, to go on a guided, or self-guided ride. If you prefer to be master of your own destiny then the self-guided option will suit you best. The route's already mapped out for you and it's up to you how fast or slow you take things. If you would rather cycle in a group, then choose the guided option. The group size tends to be 4 - 8 people.

As this is a relatively short two-day trip it would suit families with young kids, or anyone who fancies a bit of cycling but doesn't want a mammoth hundred-mile adventure. Over the two days you'll cover 54 miles so you'll have to be fairly happy in the saddle but you don't need to have the stamina of Mr Motivator.

Accommodation

As this is a short two-day tour you'll be spending a night in Brecon before beginning your ride and then just one further night in farmhouse accommodation. It's a welcoming place that's just above the Talybont reservoir so great views are part of the package, too. Apart from breakfast, your meals aren't included so you'll need to budget extra for this. Bring supplies to keep you going and then stop off in country pubs for lunches and evening meals.

Itinerary

Day 1-Brecon to Pontsticill (19 miles)

The route begins in the Canal Basin in Brecon, and a ride beside the tranquil Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, passing barges and flower-filled cottage gardens. After a few miles, you'll begin a gentle climb alongside the Talybont Reservoir, following the route of the old Brecon and Merthyr Railway, which once transported goods through the mountains. The views from the top, at Torpantau, are magnificent and the hardest part of the trail is now over! You'll spend the night in a welcoming farmhouse above the Talybont Reservoir.

Day 2-Pontsticill to Cardiff (35 miles)

Prices from

245 GBP (2 days) per person

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The second day is easier, with no big hills, and plenty of interest as you follow the Taff Valley towards the coast. It's a chance to experience the rich industrial heritage of the world-famous Welsh Valleys, but without the crowds. The curving sweep of the Cefn Coed Viaduct, and the unexpected fairytale castles of Cyfarthfa Castle and Castell Coch, are all to be enjoyed. Your journey ends on the waterfront of Cardiff Bay, in the vibrant capital city of Wales.

Details

Getting there

The nearest train station to Brecon is Abergavenny where trains run regularly to and from Shrewsbury and Birmingham.

Price includes

Price quoted is for the self-guided 2 day cycle ride. The price for the self-guided 3 day cycle ride is £315. The price for the guided 2 day cycle ride is £225.

Guided cycle ride dates:

8 June - 10 June 2011

7 September - 9 September 2011

Pick-up and drop-off at nearest railway or bus station at the start and end of the tour, 2 nights accommodation in B&Bs and guesthouses, luggage transfer, emergency vehicle back-up, custom maps with your daily ride highlighted and route guide including directions and background information. 2 days' hire of a quality hybrid bike is included and a handlebar bag, puncture repair kit, lock and water bottle are also supplied.

Available

Jan—Dec

Typical Duration

2 days

Comfort level

Reasonably comfortable (Inns, B&Bs, luxury camping etc.)

Experience required

A reasonable level of fitness and interest is all that is needed