

Canal Cruising

OUR HERITAGE IS YOUR PLEASURE



The Four Counties Ring Holiday

Millington Weeks Summer Holiday

DAY ONE Saturday

Had a horrid journey to the yard, but what a lovely surprise when we got there! The boat was beautiful, just the right size for the two of us and it had a lovely little wood stove. She is called, Maria and because we are CAMRA members we had a gift of Limestone Ales. Much nicer than other boats we have hired; all the staff were so pleasant and helped us load up. Had the usual run through, very thorough! Doing the Four Counties Ring anti-clockwise. Headed north first. Got to Trentham 1st night.

DAY TWO Sunday - 7.30 a.m. What a lovely day. Heading up to Stoke and the tunnel. Not too much boat traffic. Locks in Stoke are deep. Lots of Graffiti, must have been a very busy city in its hay day. Quite sad looking now. Interesting architecture. Nice man at the Tunnel explained what we should and shouldn't do, counted us in. Yuck, dark noisy and lots of drips. Let hubby drive, took about 50 minutes to get through. What a difference in the water colour – its bright orange. Stopped at the Blue Bell for one. Two locks side by side, works well when both pairs work. Long day. Got to Malkins Bank. Had a throw away BBQ and watched the sun go down with a glass of red wine, nothing beats it, glorious.

DAY THREE Monday - Early Start 7.30 a.m. Bit wet this morning. Met some lovely people very friendly and helpful. Nice having locks side by side. Aiming for the Middlewich Branch tonight hopefully Nantwich. Countryside changed from hilly to open plains. Good chip shop in Middlewich by Kings Lock. Got to Barbridge.

DAY FOUR Tuesday - Early start 7.30 a.m. heading for top of Audlem today so we can walk back to the Shroppie Fly pub for Tea. Glorious Day. Needed sun cream. See for miles over the Shropshire plains and the Welsh Hills. England really does have some wonderful scenery. Not many locks today, I jest! 15 at Audlem alone plus the other 6, no wonder I slept. Had a walk into Audlem. Lovely village with the church on the hill. Good butchers bought some steak for tomorrow's tea. They have a Festival of Transport in July, with a boat gathering. Wow that could be interesting. Might tie that in with another holiday next year. Audlem seems to have a really proactive village committee as there lots of things going on.

DAY FIVE Wednesday - 7.30 a.m. Having to do another long day to get round. What a lot of Locks yesterday. Got through Market Drayton today. Would have liked to have stopped at the Joules pub 'The Red Lion'. It's harder than you think this ring. Arrived at Wheaton Aston had a very good meal at the Hartley Arms.

DAY SIX Thursday - 7.30 a.m. Early start this morning. Need to get to Penkridge tonight. Lovely day again. Good job the boat has a brolley - phew it's hot, shut all the curtains to keep the sun out.

DAY SEVEN Friday - 8.00 a.m. Early start again to get back to Stone for tonight. Weather still very good. Got a tan! Stopped below the locks and went to the Little Seeds restaurant. Brilliant night. Good end to the holiday.

DAY EIGHT Saturday - Lazy morning. Up at 8.00 a.m. tidied the boat and packed. Set off up the 2 locks back in the yard just after 9.30 a.m. Met by the helpful and friendly staff at the yard who tied us up. Unpacked the boat. What a great time. The boat was brilliant and comfortable. Had everything we needed and more. We will be back!



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