



Coast and Castles: Newcastle to Edinburgh

Introduction:

The National Cycle Network Route 1 runs down the east coast of the UK and forms part of the North Sea EuroVelo cycle route. The Coast and Castles runs along route 1 from Newcastle up the Northumberland Coast to Edinburgh. This is a great route suitable for all types of cyclists, running up the beautiful, scenic and historic Northumberland Coast and Scottish Borders. This tour is one of our least challenging, in terms of climbs, but no less epic. The coastal views are stunning and the castles, such as Bamburgh, are some of the most iconic castles to be found in Britain. The Coast and Castles route heads inland through the Scottish Borders at Berwick upon Tweed, however some people prefer to continue north along the coastline through Dunbar to Edinburgh. The Coast and Castles is 200 miles in long.

Details:

Duration: Generally between 2 and 6 days in length, but we can organise any length of tour including days of during the tour on request. We can also organise extra nights accommodation before the tour starts and when it ends.

Distance: 200 miles / 321 km

Included in tour:

- Bed and Breakfast in cycling friendly accommodation
- Daily luggage transfers
- Return transfer
- Extensive maps (paper and digital)
- Emergency contacts
- Meet and greet at the beginning of the tour including tour introduction with the chance to take a few photos before you leave.

- Supported tours are also available (please enquire)

Extras:

- Bike rental
- Electric bike
- Extra night(s) accommodation (before, during or after)
- Single room supplement

Date: Tours are available from March to October. Please let us know when you would like to travel.

Tour Highlights:

Stunning views of the Northumberland Coastline.

Bamburgh and Lindisfarne castles, amongst others.

The rugged Scottish Borders and the Moorfoot Hills

Druridge Bay's expansive beaches and sand dunes.

Discover Edinburgh amazing city centre and Arthur's Seat

Tynemouth and its Priory

Off-route and other pit stops:

There are some options en-route for diversions, one might need a day's break being a day trip to the Farne Islands to catch sight of their most famous inhabitants – puffins and seals. Another detour, as mentioned above, is continuing up the coast after Berwick and riding via Dunbar (Dunbar being the birthplace of the famous conservationist John Dunbar).

Mielle Patisserie, Berwick for coffee, cake and hot chocolate

Melrose, it's abbey and the birthplace of Sevens Rugby

National Mining Museum, Newtongrange, just outside Edinburgh

Alnwick Castle, a slight detour but worth it if you're a Potter or Downton Abbey fan.

Sample 3 Day Self-guided Itinerary:

Day 1: Newcastle to Embleton: 64 miles / 103 km - 1135ft / 345 meters ascent

Lots of people ask us to organise their accommodation in Newcastle or Tynemouth the night before the tour starts, please ask for details. Meet in Newcastle at your hotel or start point. Our rep will take your luggage, handover your bikes, if rented from us, maps and will give you a brief intro into the tour. They will be available to answer any of your questions and take a few 'before' photos for you before you head off east towards Tynemouth and it's priory! From Tynemouth the route heads north along the coast past Druridge Bay, Alnmouth and Alnwick before arriving in Embleton.

Day 2: Embleton to Kelso: 68 miles / 109 km - 1411ft / 430 meters ascent

Continuing north we head a little inland before seeing the coast again by Seahouses and Bamburgh. A little further up we pass Lindisfarne Castle and Holy Island, which is accessible by causeway from Beal at low tide. After reaching the border town of Berwick you head west into the Scottish Borders, following the border and the River Tweed on the Scottish side to Melrose.

Day 3: Kelso to Edinburgh: 68 miles / 109 km - 2990ft / 912 meters ascent

Final day and we continue west along the border through Melrose to Innerleithen. From Innerleithen we head into the Moorfoot Hills for our first views of Edinburgh before descending into the city, past Arthur's Seat and into your destination.

Clothing

The UK boasts some of the most spectacular scenery in the world and its diverse history is one of the main pulls for tourists. We can guarantee that you will experience this whilst on your cycling adventure. What we are unfortunately unable to guarantee is the weather, so we would advise to be prepared for all eventualities!

We have found that the best way to do this, is through layers and with a lightweight waterproof on top. It might be a chilly day, but when climbing a hill for 30+ minutes, you will soon create your very own central heating system and will regret having to lug around a thick jumper!

In the colder weather, it is also advisable to wear warm footwear. Our bikes aren't fitted with pedal cleats, but a pair of good-grip shoes will do you well (if you are hiring bikes from and want to bring your own pedals, you are more than welcome but please let us know beforehand).

For update advice on the weather please consult the met office's forecast here <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather>.

Bikes

Our bikes are hybrid bikes with at least 24 gears. They are perfectly suited for cycling on country lanes, cycle paths, roads and trails. They're neither mountain bikes nor road bikes so we would advise against going off-piste at any point, or expecting to keep up with the peloton! All our bikes include a pannier, spare tube and repair equipment, a mini u-lock, a mini pump and lights. We can also supply electric bikes, please enquire. If you want to bring your own saddle or pedals you are more than welcome, please advise us beforehand.

The Coast and Castles is suitable for most bikes, there are some sections which can get a bit sandy if the wind has been blowing a bit previously. The route itself is suitable for a levels of cyclists as it doesn't have any of the major steep climbs of the Coast to Coast, but it still has rolling hills and 200 km to give yourself a challenge.

Accommodation

We take pride in the b&b accommodation we work with on our cycling tours, they are chosen for being cycling friendly, welcoming and comfortable, include a hearty breakfast and we get great feedback from our tourers on our choice of accommodation. The accommodation will also provide secure bike storage and some can provide a packed lunch if booked in advance.

Fitness

Even our most leisurely tours will have some element of climbing so you will benefit from having done a sufficient amount of training prior to the departure. You will know yourself how far and how long you are able to cycle, so we hope that you have chosen a tour accordingly. You can allow yourself extra time by having an early start if needed, but please be mindful of daylight hours. All our bikes will be fitted with lights, but we would advise to try and finish the day's cycling before it gets dark.

And if a hill is too steep, walk the bike up! Having scaled the Rocky Mountains without ever being beaten by a 'hill', I have had to push a bike up a 200 metre long climb in Shropshire, and there's no shame in it!

Food

A cyclist's best friend. We would suggest stocking up on snacks whenever you get a chance. There is nothing worse than peddling on empty, so bananas, cereal bars, biscuits (etc.) could provide that much needed extra bit of energy. Most of the towns and villages will have at least one cafe or pub for lunch/tea/coffee breaks; on the maps we supply each town or village with a pub or cafe is clearly marked with a glass or cup.

Roads and Route

Parts of our tours will take place on roads and you will be sharing that road with cars. We ask you to be mindful in this case. For example: Signal when you're changing lanes or turning corners and don't cycle more than two abreast. If you're unsure of the laws of the land in regards to cycling, you can brush up on your knowledge here: . <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/rules-for-cyclists-59-to-82>

The Coast and Castles route itself is very clearly signposted (thank you very much Sustrans), this along with the maps both paper and digital we provide you with allow for a very comfortable orientation on this ride.

Transfer

Each tour includes a transfer from the end of the tour for you, your bike and luggage, back to the start of the tour. It is possible to change this to another destination, to have this at the start of the year or to have a transfer at the start and finish (i.e. a door to door transfer) please enquire if needed

Further Questions

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any other questions on the route or the tour. You can contact us on the following:

Call us at 01524840072

Email us on info@openroadopenskies.co.uk

Tweet us @oroskies

Facebook us www.facebook.com/oroskies/

We also have an FAQ page for you to look through <http://www.openroadopenskies.co.uk/info/faqs>

Enjoyment

We want you to enjoy this adventure. It is, after all, a holiday. Relax, enjoy the ride, take in the country, stop off at areas of interest, chat to the locals and, most importantly, go at your own pace!

May the wind be at your back!