

The Ribble Valley Loop

There's so much to explore in the Ribble Valley so we've devised a driving tour taking you directly from Northcote in a circular loop to introduce you to the delights this often overlooked part of the country has to offer.

Do not rely on your phone's sat nav to guide you, as some of the areas on the route are rural and you may lose signal. Always carry a good map with you and familiarise yourself with the route before you set off.

Northcote to Whalley: 2.6 miles • Whalley to Clitheroe: 3.7 miles
Clitheroe to Slaidburn: 11.2 miles • Slaidburn to Whitewell: 6.5 miles
Whitewell to Great Mitton: 7 miles • Great Mitton to Hurst Green: 3 miles
Hurst Green to Northcote: 11 miles

Total loop distance is 45 miles and the estimated driving time is 2 hours 5 minutes. However, we recommend taking your time to discover the hidden gems of the Ribble Valley.

STAGE 1 NORTHCOTE TO WHALLEY

2.6 MILES



Picturesque Whalley village



The well-preserved gatehouse at Whalley Abbey

DIRECTIONS

From Northcote car park turn left and left again on to the A59.

At the busy roundabout take the 2nd exit to Whalley. The road will take you through the village of Billington, across the River Calder and onto King Street in Whalley.

Keep straight ahead at a mini roundabout and then turn first left into Church Lane at the De Lacy Arms. This narrow lane will

lead to The Sands and the main gateway of Whalley Abbey.

ON THE WAY..

This first stage of the route provides a sense of elevation which becomes even more obvious as the road dips down towards the River Calder. Here the township of Whalley is spread out before you with the impressive backdrop of the railway viaduct.

FOR SAT NAV USE - Whalley Abbey: **BB7 9SS**

POINTS OF INTEREST

The grounds of Whalley Abbey are open daily and offer a rewarding stroll close to the banks of the Calder. Today the main buildings are used as a Church of England Retreat and Conference Centre.

The original monastery was a Cistercian Foundation of the 14th century and fell into disuse following King Henry VIII's break with the Church of Rome. The Abbey is one of Lancashire's most important historical buildings. Of particular interest is the gatehouse a little further along The Sands.

This area is something of a spiritual hotspot with the parish church on Church Lane and the newer Catholic Church of English Martyrs on the way to the gatehouse.

From a different age altogether are the impressive arches of the Whalley Railway Viaduct which spans the River Calder. Comprising of 48 brick-built arches it was constructed between 1846-1850 during the height of the railway boom. Walk beyond the gatehouse to get the very best view of this magnificent piece of engineering.

STAGE 2 WHALLEY TO CLITHEROE CASTLE

3.7 MILES

DIRECTIONS

Return to the main street and turn left. Keep ahead through the town. At the roundabout continue straight into Clitheroe Road.

This becomes Whalley Road passing through the growing village of Barrow. At the T-junction with the A671 turn left.

This will take you into Clitheroe. Once in the town centre bear left at the first roundabout into Moor Lane.

At the next mini roundabout bear left and, continue up the incline, passing the entrance to the Castle. Keep left where the road forks and join Parson Lane (one-way).

Follow to the next roundabout and turn right in Station Road. This takes you past Booths supermarket on the left and short and long stay car parks are clearly signposted.

ON THE WAY..

There is less elevation on this part of the route but a great deal of new housing and commercial park development is taking place. However, as you approach Clitheroe you'll get sight of the castle keep, perched in its prominent position looking down on the town below.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Clitheroe is a bustling market town dominated to the north by the stack of Hanson's cement works. The Castle is its other prominent landmark. The keep, built in the 12th century, is one of the smallest in the country and provides an outstanding viewpoint over the Ribble Valley and Pendle Hill. The castle houses an excellent museum providing the visitor with easy to absorb information about the history of the castle and town.

FOR SAT NAV USE - Clitheroe Railway Station: **BB7 2ED**