

Suggestion for a Norfolk Broads Itinerary

norfolkbroadsboathire.biz/suggested-itinerary-from-Horning-7-nights-first-timer.asp

One week's Norfolk Broads boat hire starting from Horning

This itinerary includes many of the villages and towns of the northern Broads. We have suggested stop-off points where moorings are easier to manage for those with less confidence or the smaller crew.

Day 1 Afternoon

Horning to Wroxham

5 Miles

1 hour & 15 mins cruise time

On leaving the boatyard, turn right onto the River Bure. Cruise through Horning village. Following the abrupt left turn of the river opposite the black and white gabled Swan Inn, continue to sail away from Horning. On your left bank, you will see the signposted entrances to Salhouse and Wroxham Broads. Soon after, the chalets and riverside houses of Wroxham will come into view. The large boatyard you pass on the right bank is Barnes Brinkcraft, and you can moor for free here. Alternatively, continue on, taking the last turning on your left before the bridge. This leads you to another set of free moorings, belonging to the Faircraft Loynes boatyard. On the opposite bank, you will see the Wroxham Hotel. You can moor here also, but this is at a fee.

Day 2 Morning

Wroxham to Coltishall

4.5 Miles

1 hour & 15 mins cruise time

Make your way to the bridge pilot's pick up point, which is right next to the bridge on the right-hand bank, next to the Wroxham Hotel. The pilots operate between 8.30 am and 5 pm, seven days a week, and will be along shortly to take you under the bridge. Once through, note the drop-off/pick-up point, and sail onwards towards Coltishall, passing the small village of Belaugh on the way. Coltishall has plenty of free moorings next to the green.

Day 2 Afternoon

At Coltishall

0 Miles

0 hour cruise time

Take it easy, have a picnic lunch before taking time to familiarise yourselves with your boat. Perhaps take a walk into the village centre.

Day 3 Morning
Coltishall to Ranworth

12 Miles
2 hours 45 mins cruise time

Retrace your steps back down towards Wroxham, passing Belaugh en route. On arrival at Wroxham, look out for the bridge pilot pick up point on your left bank, and wait for passage under Wroxham Bridge. Once through, continue on down the Bure, passing the entrances to Wroxham and Salhouse Broads on your right. Continue on, cruising through the village of Horning, the location of your home boatyard, and out past the moorings of Cockshoot Dyke on your right. Soon after, look out for the signposted turn for Ranworth, also on your right bank. Turn down the dyke, which leads on to Malthouse Broad. At the top end of the Broad, you will see the moorings, where you will need to moor stern on. These moorings are very busy, and you may have to wait for a boat to vacate before you can get in. The best time to arrive is around 2.30 pm, when those who have stayed for lunch, have then moved on.

Day 3 Afternoon
at Ranworth

0 Miles
0 hours cruise time

These moorings are a delight, and there's much to see and do, which is detailed in our guide to Ranworth. Alternatively, just sit back on the deck of your boat, and watch the comings and goings of this busy location.

Day 4 Morning
Ranworth to Ludham Bridge

2.5 Miles
45 mins cruise time

Make your way back out across Malthouse Broad, and then out onto the River Bure, turning right at the junction. Continue your cruise until you see the signposted entrance to the River Ant and Stalham, on your left. Cruise up the River Ant, until you see the bridge at Ludham Bridge, which straddles the river. As you get closer, slow down and watch for craft coming through from the opposite direction. This is a busy bottleneck, so be prepared to stop or reverse your boat if necessary. Just beyond the bridge, are free moorings on either side of the river.

Day 4 Afternoon
Ludham Bridge to Sutton Staithe

6.5 Miles

1 hour & 30 mins cruise time

Cast off and sail in the same direction, away from the bridge. Soon you will pass the extensive moorings of the How Hill Educational Centre on your right. These make a good stop-off point to walk the dog, or just to stretch the legs. Continuing on, you will pass the pretty chocolate box lid village of Irstead, with its picturesque riverside homes. Just beyond, the river opens out into Barton Broad, a wide expanse of water where you will often see sailing boats. The Broad has channel markers to keep you from going aground in the shallow areas. Keep to the right channel, which will take you across the Broad, to an exit dyke at the far end. Watch out for the signpost for Stalham. Take this channel, which eventually diverges. Take the right, signposted for Sutton dyke, which will lead you on to the moorings at the far end of Sutton Broad (it's not much wider than a river actually). You have two sets of moorings. One in the narrow dyke you first encounter, and also a little further along, on a green outside the Sutton Staithe Hotel. A turning area is available on your right, just beyond the moorings. The little village of Sutton, is around 15 minutes walk away.

Day 5 Morning

Sutton Staithe to Gays Staithe

3.5 Mile

45 mins cruise time

Time to head back out of Sutton Broad, and back in the direction of Barton Broad. Keep to the same channel you arrived on yesterday. About two-thirds of the way across, you will see that the channel diverges, marked by a yellow and black post. Take the right channel, which will lead you to Gays Staithe and Neatishead. Eventually, the channel narrows to a dyke. Follow this until you see the turn off for Gays Staithe on your left bank. Gays Staithe has been chosen in preference to Neatishead, which is further down a narrowing dyke. The moorings at Neatishead are difficult as you will need to either reverse in or reverse out. Mooring here is stern on and is free. Gays Staithe is around 10-minute walk from Neatishead.

Day 5 Afternoon

Gays Staithe to Ludham

12 Miles

2 hour & 55 mins cruise time

Return back across Barton Broad, keeping to the marked channel, and aiming for the point where you entered the Broad yesterday. Cruise on past Irstead and How Hill before arriving at Ludham Bridge. Again, approach slowly, so that you have enough time to take evasive action if a boat is about to pass under from the opposite direction. Once through, head on towards the junction with the River Bure, where you should turn left. Shortly after, you will see the entrance to South Walsham Broad

on your right and the ruins of St Benets Abbey on your left bank. Continue on until you see the signposted entrance of the River Thurne, and Potter Heigham on your left bank. Take this turning and cruise past the entrance to Thurne Dyke on your right, and the magnificent Thurne Windpump which stands at the entrance. Continue on up the Thurne. After a while, you will see the signpost for Womack Water and Ludham (not to be confused with Ludham Bridge on the River Ant), on your left. Turn down the dyke and cruise on until you see the dyke widen out onto Womack Water. The moorings are located at the far end, on the right bank. You will need to moor stern on here. There is no charge for mooring during the day, though a nominal charge is made for overnight stops.

Day 6 Morning
at Ludham

0 Miles
0 hours cruise time

This is a very scenic spot to just sit and watch the boats come and go. Ludham village itself is a delight with its many thatched roof cottages, and turn of the century buildings. It's a pleasant 15 minute walk from the moorings.

Day 6 Afternoon
Ludham to Potter Heigham

2.5 Miles
45 mins cruise time

It's just a short cruise on to Potter Heigham. Return the way you came, back onto the River Thurne, turning left at the junction. Soon you will see the lines of holiday chalets and bungalows that populate the banks of the river right up to the mediaeval bridge, which marks the heart of the village. The river narrows as it approaches the centre so be cautious passing other boats. There are two possible mooring locations to choose from in Potter Heigham. Just before the bridge, on the right bank, there's room for between 15 and boats. On the opposite bank, under a footbridge, is the entrance to the Herbert Woods boatyard, which has extensive moorings. Both are free for up to 24-hour stays.

Day 7 Morning
Potter Heigham to Acle

6 Miles
1 hour & 15 mins cruise time

It's back down the Thurne, cruising away from the bridge this morning. You will pass the entrance to Womack Water on your right, followed shortly by the white Thurne Windpump on your left bank. At the junction with the River Bure, turn left. You will eventually pass the entrance to Upton Dyke on your right, which signals that you are

not far from Acle. You will know you are there by the site of the road bridge that crosses the river here.

This will be your first real taste of cruising on a tidal river, as you are only around 10 miles from Great Yarmouth and the coast now. Moorings are available on both banks before the bridge, and on the right bank, just after the bridge, outside the Bridge Inn bar and restaurant. Only the moorings on the left bank, before the bridge, are free. All others attract a fee. As you come in to moor, you need to ascertain whether the tide is flowing in or ebbing out (the direction of the running stream). Always approach your chosen mooring against the stream (if your boat was stood still, the tide would be pushing you backwards). This way, you will have more control, and won't find yourself being pushed onto the next moored boat, by the running tide.

Day 7 Afternoon
Acle to Horning

8 Miles
2 hours cruise time

Time for your last sail, this time back to Horning and your home yard. You need to cast off (depart) with the front of your boat heading into the tide again. This will stop your boat from hitting the next boat along as you try to depart. If necessary, turn your boat around using its ropes. Departing into a tide gives much more control. Continue to sail away from Acle Bridge, past the entrance to Upton Dyke, which will now be on your left, the entrances to the Rivers Thurne and Ant on your right, and also the turn off for Ranworth on your left. Soon after, you will see the moorings of Cockshoot Dyke on your left. This signifies that you are close to Horning village. Soon after, look for the entrance to your home boatyard, which is on the right bank. Arriving the evening before you are due to hand back the boat, is easier than arriving the next morning, as many boats turn up together. Plus you will be able to start packing things away in your vehicle so that vacating the boat is not as much of a rush.

Day 8 Morning
at Horning

0 Miles
0 hours cruise time

You must vacate the boat and hand it back to the boatyard, at the time stipulated on your booking confirmation. It's usually 9 am, and the boatyard staff will have confirmed this to you before you set sail at the start of your holiday.