

# The Isle of Man

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**Tour Manager: John Upton**

**Wednesday 11th to Monday 16th June 2025**

Despite being just 50km long and 20km wide, the Isle of Man contains an enormous variety of scenery. Its 160km of unspoilt coastline includes dramatic cliffs, rocky headlands, sandy beaches and picturesque harbours. Inland, the flat areas of the north give way further south to tranquil glens, remote moorland, steep-sided valleys and rolling hills dominated by the 2,036ft summit of Snaefell, the island's only mountain. Based for the 5 nights in a 4 star hotel in Douglas, this tour will explore all areas of the island on rides of 65 to 90km per day.

## Itinerary

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### **Wednesday 11th June 2025 Arrival**

The tour will officially start on the Isle of Man on the afternoon of Wednesday 11-Jun-2025, meeting at the hotel from 4pm onwards. However, for those of you catching the same ferry as me, it would be great to travel across the Irish Sea together, see the 'Ferry' section for details of when I travel. I expect to arrive at the hotel at 5pm.

- No cycling
- Accommodation: 4 star hotel
- Meals: Self-Catering

### **Thursday 12th June 2025 The South**

We start the day heading south along the old coast road for the first 8km. Part of this is not accessible by car meaning that the whole of it is virtually car-free. Heading slightly more inland past the airport, we will reach our first coffee stop with fine views out to sea. We then head to our first lighthouse at Dreswick point. Doubling back, we head through Castletown further along the coast to our lunch stop with views of The Calf of Man. Port Erin affords a glimpse of Milner's tower before we head a little inland towards Douglas, stopping for a mid-afternoon ice cream break on the way.

- Route distance: 73.0km
- Route altitude gain: 1200m
- Accommodation: 4 star hotel
- Meals: (B)

### Friday 13th June 2025 The North

We start off by heading up the east coast on our toughest day at just over 80km, with 1500m of climbing. The first half of the day is 'lumpy' as is so often the case near the sea. Our first stop is at the Laxey wheel, we can take a look and some refreshment at the cafe. It's then on up to the remote north east corner and Maughold Lighthouse. We'll stop for an early lunch in Ramsay, then head off for a much flatter start to the afternoon, visiting The Point of Ayre and its lighthouse before coming back inland. There's a further chance for a coffee break, then on to our biggest challenge so far: the climb up past the Sulby Reservoir. The reward is the 11km downhill back into Douglas. Note that if anyone doesn't feel up to the climb, then there is an option to get the train back from Ramsay.

- Route distance: 86.0km
- Route altitude gain: 1500m
- Accommodation: 4 star hotel
- Meals: (B)

### Saturday 14th June 2025 Rest Day

A chance for a rest after the exertions of the tough day before. There are many things to do on the island including a steam, electric and even house-drawn railway/tram. The Manx Museum is just around the corner from the hotel and well worth spending a couple of hours in and there are a variety of other museums sprinkled around the island, as well as interesting looking castles and towns. Or perhaps some excitement with a motorised trike tour?

- No cycling
- Accommodation: 4 star hotel
- Meals: Self-Catering

### Sunday 15th June 2025 The Middle

Riding north from Douglas, we climb to the lower slopes of Snaefell, with the reward of the Victory Cafe at the top. It's then down the other side and on to Jurby for a lunch stop and an optional look around Manx Motor Museum. We then follow the coast south to Peel with the option of a further coffee stop and/or a look around the castle if there is time. The last 16km home is beautifully flat, following the course of an old train line back into Douglas.

- Route distance: 70.0km
- Route altitude gain: 900m
- Accommodation: 4 star hotel
- Meals: (B)

### Monday 16th June 2025 The TT

A short climb from the hotel takes us up to near the start of the famous Isle of Man TT (Tourist Trophy) race route. Down Bray Hill, we turn right and head towards Peel along the main road. There's the option for a coffee at either Kirk Michael (25km) and/or Ramsey

(40km) before a climb and final sweeping downhill back to Ramsey. We'll have lunch there if there is time, or just wait until we get the ferry back to the mainland. Again, there is the option to get the train back from Ramsay to Douglas for anyone who doesn't fancy the final climb.

- Route distance: 62.0km
- Route altitude gain: 900m
- Accommodation: None
- Meals: (B)

## Dates and Prices

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### Cost

- Land only price: £620

### Payment Schedule

A deposit of £100 per person is required as soon as possible once the Tour Organiser has confirmed your booking, with the final balance to be paid by 01-May-2025

Price includes:

- 5 nights hotel accommodation with breakfasts
- Inside overnight bike storage

Price does not include:

- Ferry tickets or any other travel expenses
- Any food except for breakfasts
- Travel insurance
- Single room supplement - £300

### Cancellations

Written Notice Received	Cancellation Charge
01-May-2025	£100 (deposit)
02-May-2025 onwards	Full price of tour

The price of £620 is based on a minimum number of 6 people taking part in the holiday. If there are insufficient bookings by Thursday 01st May 2025, we will contact you and return all monies paid.

## Holiday Information

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## Grade and Area Covered by the Holiday

This Holiday is classed as Energetic.

From our base in Douglas we will explore the surrounding countryside in a series of day rides.

The terrain varies between flat and hilly.

## Travel and Communication

The tour starts and finishes in Douglas.

Travel to the start and from the finish is not included in this holiday. Thus, it is very important that you note that neither your Tour Organiser nor Bikexplore are responsible for you in any way until the appointed time at the designated meeting point. Should you fail to arrive at the appointed time for whatever reason, we will not be responsible for any additional expenses you may incur in order to meet up with the tour group. Before finalising travel arrangements, you should ensure that the tour is definitely going ahead.

Should there be insufficient bookings or pandemic travel restrictions are re-imposed, we reserve the right to cancel the tour at any time. It is therefore recommended that you book fully flexible and refundable transport and accommodation or wait until you have been told the tour will go ahead. In the event of the tour being cancelled we will not be responsible for any losses incurred outside what you pay us.

The main ferry services to the island are run by the Steam Packet Company:

<https://www.steam-packet.com/>

At the time of writing, return tickets from Liverpool (which is the most obvious route from much of the UK) are £74 return (£54 for a foot passenger +£10 each way for your bike).

I will be catching the 14:00 ferry on Wednesday 11-Jun-2025, returning at 15:00 on Monday 16-Jun-2025.

You need to arrive at least 25 minutes before departure and you will be directed to board with your bike through the vehicle ramp, though they usually let you jump the queue. There is plenty of space for bikes and you can lock them to a railing.

It can seat some hundreds of people comfortably and has a restaurant and bar. The crossing takes about 2 hours 45 minutes.

I imagine that most if not all of us will get both the outward and return ferry together, but I have not included the tickets within the price to leave it open for you to extend your holiday at either end as you see fit. I will set up a Whatsapp group a day or so before the start of the tour for all those who agree to be included to facilitate meeting on board, in addition to using it to make arrangements through the rest of the tour.

Other ferry crossings are available and there is an airport on the island, feel free to export these options as you see fit.

If you are unable to join the WhatsApp group I can only communicate with you in an emergency.

### **Accommodation**

We will stay in a 4 star hotel in the centre of Douglas. Has a health and leisure club including swimming pool. Also multiple communal areas such as an atrium, library, bar and restaurant

There are 7 large twin bedrooms, all en suite. There are no single rooms as such, but for those preferring single occupancy, I will endeavour to change a twin room to a double, or you may just get a twin to yourself. Similarly if you are booking as a couple and prefer a double room, please let me know and I will seek to swap it.

Prices are based on two people sharing a room.

### **Meals, Health and Diet**

On every day, breakfast will be provided at the hotel, which is included in the tour price. We will source and pay for lunch and dinner ourselves.

We will frequently be travelling through rural areas and will stop at cafes during the rides whenever possible but you should buy and carry sufficient food and drink for lunch in case of emergencies.

Check that you have informed the Tour Organiser of any dietary requirements in your Booking Form.

Please remember to pack any medications that you need to take regularly.

### **Cycles and Equipment**

A touring cycle, hybrid, tandem, recumbent or lightweight road bike would all be suitable for this holiday.

You should ensure your cycle is well maintained, paying particular attention to wheels, tyres and brakes.

A low bottom gear (eg. small chainring the same size or smaller than the largest cog on your rear wheel) is recommended; if unsure about gears, please talk to the Bikeplore organiser about them.

Mudguards are optional but demonstrate respect to those who are following you in wet weather.

Lights are recommended in the very unlikely event of arriving back late and useful if walking outdoors at night. A bell is advised and bring a bike lock for security. Water bottles are required to ensure you are hydrated at all times.

You will be expected to carry sufficient spares and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs, including two inner tubes, a spare gear cable, split link and spare brake pads. There may not be many bike shops on route and they are never when you need them.

You are advised to use 28mm tyres, or larger, to suit the variable terrain.

You will not need to carry luggage, but a rack-top pack or bar bag will be useful for carrying wet weather gear, spare clothing needed for the day, camera, emergency rations and a map.

### **Rides, Rest Days and Fitness**

The holiday is for 5 days including rest day.

This is a centre based holiday with led rides available each day, on 4 days.

Most of the roads are minor or at least quiet, are used by tourist traffic and maybe/will be hilly in parts. Though we may need to use some busier roads at times, we avoid them as much as possible. The exception to this is the last day on the TT circuit, which is entirely on main roads. However, traffic on the island of man is relatively light and tends not to be fast moving.

There is only one non-tarmac road (the old trainline between Peel and Douglas) and that is compacted gravel – I've taken my 25mm tyred road bike on it without hesitation.

Most of each cycling day may be spent cycling. People will be expected to ride at their own pace and often in loose groups, at around 15-18 kmph (10-12 mph) on the flat, slower up hills, usually meeting up at cafes for lunch and refreshment breaks. You will be notified of the two or three available or recommended refreshment stops each day.

It is expected that you may want to stop for photographs, look at the view or explore some local object and this is okay. You are on holiday.

Inevitably, you might consider parts of the route hilly, and there is no back-up vehicle to carry your luggage, so you need to be fit to get the most out of this tour.

It is essential to get out on your bike and do some rides comparable distance before the tour starts.

There are descents too, so you should be able to negotiate these safely.

Please note it may not always be possible to follow the itinerary exactly due to road works or weather etc, as things do not always go as planned. In these circumstances, you will be advised of alternative arrangements.

The Organiser will not always be at the front of the group but may be anywhere within it, as circumstances require, so you will need to be aware of the route and likely stopping places each day.

### **Weather and clothing**

Lightweight clothing, suitable for a range of temperatures, is needed and possibly smarter, warmer clothing for the evenings.

Lightweight waterproofs/windproofs will be needed.

Sun cream, lip balm and sun glasses are recommended along with insect repellent and bite cream.

My packing list is available on request - advisable if this is your first tour.

The weather is typically similar to the Lake District, but obviously can be variable, with a possibility of both heat waves and cold, wet weather, so be prepared for all possibilities including storms.

### **Maps and Guides**

A gpx, or an online link to a gpx, of each day's route and/or detailed route notes, will be provided before of the tour.

If you would like any other means of navigation, please contact the Tour Organiser well before the start of the tour.

### **Travel Insurance and Vaccinations**

Travel insurance is not compulsory for UK nationals traveling in the UK.

Current Covid and Influenza vaccinations are recommended for participants of 75 years of age and over and those deemed medically vulnerable.

### **Passport, Visa and Monies**

You do NOT need a passport to visit The Isle of Man if you are a UK citizens.

It uses UK currency.

### **Tour Manager Contact Details**

John Upton

jupton100@gmail.com