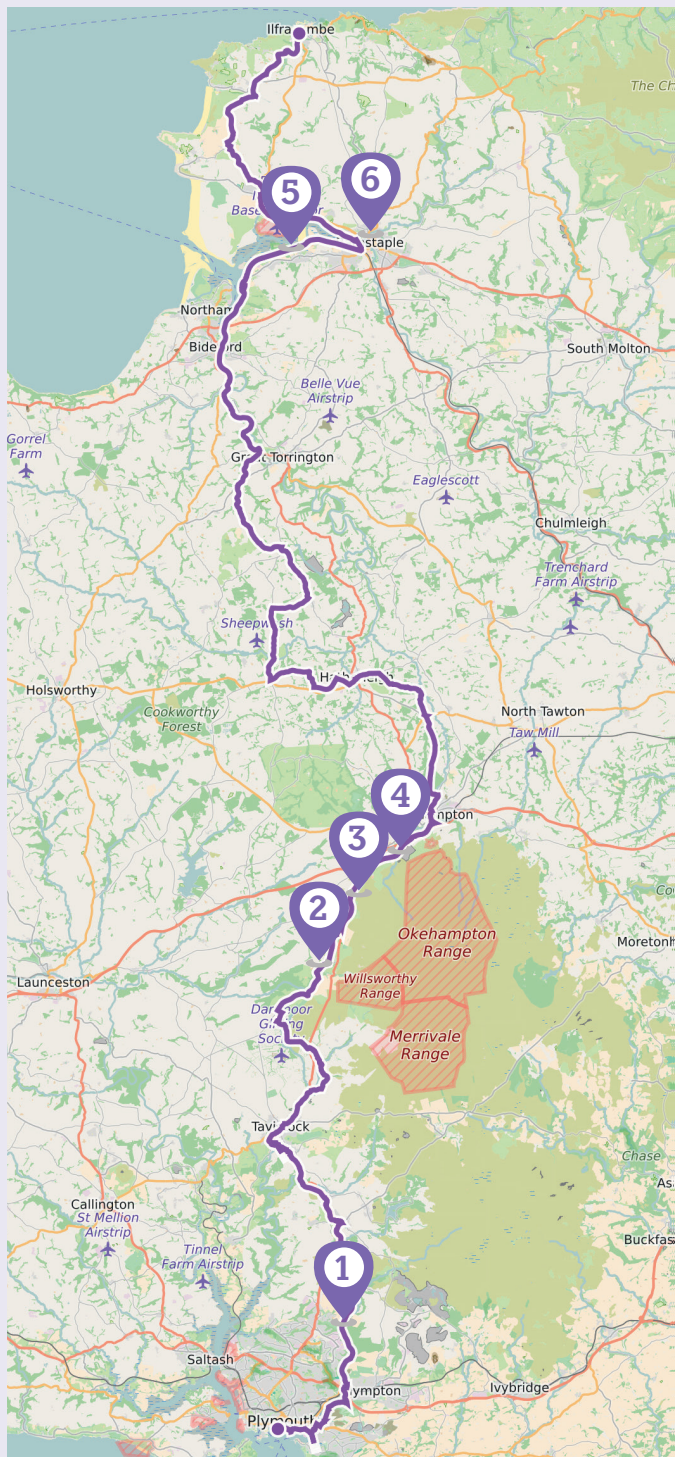


Weekend ride

DEVON COAST TO COAST

• **Start/finish:** Plymouth train station (SX 4660 5414) to Ilfracombe Harbour (SS 5263 4785) • **Maps:** OS Landranger 180, 191, 201 • **Ride length:** 157km (97.6 miles) • **Climbing:** 2,064m • **Bike type:** touring, hybrid, gravel, a rugged road bike or a long-suffering e-bike like mine • **Ride level:** regular • **GPX file:** cyclinguk.org/weekender-devonC2C



1 **DRAKE'S LEAT**
Approaching Dartmoor your route follows a former tramway and an intact 16th-century waterway. Two 'leats' carried fresh water from three rivers to the expanding docks at Devonport and Plymouth. Construction was overseen by Sir Francis Drake who, legend has it, rode his horse ahead of the water all the way to Plymouth.



4 **MELDON VIADUCT**
This wonder of Victorian engineering was built in 1874 and spans 164m between steep hillsides. Beneath it are former mineral mines. Almost 50m high, and with views towards Dartmoor and Meldon Dam and reservoir, this truly is breathtaking.



2 **Norman Fort, Lydford**
A medieval castle with its own prison, peering into its ruins takes you back almost a full millennia to its founding after 1066. Dismounting to wander around the site, including the later Norman additions, gives you a breather after some stiff climbs.



5 **FREMINGTON**
Delightful riverfront spot with a café in the former railway station. Grab some refreshments and look out over the water. The waterfront stretch from Bideford is a delight, affording plenty of photo opportunities.

3 **Farmer's gates near Sourton**
On the rail trail near Sourton and Prewley Moor, two gates bookend a liminal space of rocks and saplings, which the farmer retains the right to lock at their pleasure. If it's closed, follow the detour map on the gates.

6 **Barnstaple**
This historic town grew rich on wool imports from the 14th century, and glimpses of its age – and splendour – can be sniffed out. Peek in the restaurant at 62 The Bank for a jaw-dropping, intact Jacobean plasterwork ceiling, completed in 1620 and featuring an array of creatures, including dizzy-looking elephants.