

SPEYSIDE WAY

The Speyside Way is a long distance path that runs from Buckie to Spey Bay then up the Spey with alternative destinations at Aviemore and Tomintoul. Parts of this are readily accessible to riders, especially the section from Craigellachie to Ballindalloch which follows the old railway line.

Location: *Beside the River Spey*

Map: *Landranger 28, Elgin & Dufftown*

Distance: *Eighteen mile round trip from Craigellachie to Ballindalloch.*

Going: *Firm grass or soft track.*

Access & Parking: *There are several access points with information boards; from north to south these are:*

- *Craigellachie – car park with loos just by the Fiddich Inn. Usually quite quiet, but not a lot of room.*
- *Aberlour - car park at the Alice Littler Park. Quite a lot of room, but the car park can be busy and you are in the edge of the town so lots of people around.*
- *Carron Village – small parking area next to a grassy paddock. Very quiet and probably the nicest spot but a bit further to drive. It is in the centre of the route so useful if you do not want to ride too far.*
- *Cragganmore, near Ballindalloch – another small quiet car park by the river. Follow the signs from the main road.*

A good smooth surface, no gates or hills, several distilleries and some lovely views. This ride is especially nice in the spring when there are a lot of wildflowers and the views are not obscured by leaves on the trees.

As there are usually walkers about, galloping is not allowed. The section from Dufftown to Craigellachie is closed due to a landslide and is no longer passable on horseback.

Heading south from Craigellachie your first ‘hazard’ is a short echoing subway under the main road followed shortly by a 100 yard long railway tunnel! Then a long straight section to Aberlour where you pass through the park. South of the village is a narrow footbridge, (theoretically unsuitable for horses though it has been done), so ford the burn a few yards upstream. You are in woodland for the next mile or so before briefly rejoining the river then back into the trees before briefly joining the public road. You cross an old metal bridge, unique in Britain as the only bridge where the road and railway run side by side, and this takes you into the quiet distillery village of Carron. Continuing south you pass the Knockandhu distillery and another ford, then Blackboat and finally the impressive bridge across the Spey to the end of the rideable section at Cragganmore.

Then you can enjoy the ride all the way back again!