



Stage 1 - MELROSE ABBEY TO KELSO ABBEY

Distance - 27.6km / 17.1 miles

Explorer maps - Galashiels, Selkirk & Melrose OS 338 / Kelso, Coldstream OS 339

Time - 7.5 - 8 hours average time based on Naismith's rule

Total ascent - 333m

Total descent - 412m

Description - This is a very pleasant and easy walk from Melrose Abbey that passes the Rhymer Stone which marks the site of the Eildon tree. Legend says that Thomas Rhymer met the queen of the faeries and where he was inspired to utter the first notes of a Scottish muse (poem). Continue pass the Eildon Hills on the right and briefly through Newtown St Boswells and then along the river Tweed. Cross over using the suspension bridge to Dryburgh Abbey which is worth a detour to look around.

From the Abbey the path returns to the River Tweed, famous for its Scottish Salmon, and then leaves it to resume through the countryside along tracks, tarmac lanes and through fields. The whole route is well marked and easy to navigate to the outskirts of Kelso where the route is then not so easily marked and therefore the walk notes provide a more direct and easy route to reach the Abbey.

1 - With the abbey behind you turn left to reach the Market Place and then keep left to leave the town along High Road. At the main road turn left then right, direction Rhymer's Stone 0.5 mile. Continue on the road past the stone, past the metal gate stopping traffic using the old road, to reach a T-junction.

2 - Turn right and then third left on Tweeside Road. Just before a single storey red brick building turn left, signed Border Abbeys Way (a Scottish Thistle picture) to pass the auction market on the left above the path. Pass under the main road and continue ahead to reach the river bearing right for it to be on the left. Continue along the river path and eventually down a flight of steps to reach a tarmac lane.

3 - Turn left and across the suspension bridge over the river to continue ahead and reach a T-junction. Bear right to pass the entrance to Dryburgh Abbey Hotel before reach Dryburgh Abbey and its car park. It is worth spending a short period of time at the abbey.

4 - From the abbey entrance bear right passing a low building on the left to continue down the lane. Before reaching the river turn left to walk along the riverside path. Before reaching the weir keep left and around a field to reach the road (B6356). Turn right to pass through Clintmains to a T-junction.



5 - Turn left, direction Kelso 9 miles. Keep on the right hand side to walk through a brief section through the woods to avoid the road. At the T-junction turn right to rejoin the riverside path. At the end of a second wooded area, bear left to pass a large pond and then a house on the left to reach a track and then a tarmac lane.



6 - Turn right on the lane and pass through the farm. The lane bears right at the next house and then left to Makerstoun and a T-junction. Turn right, signed Borders Abbey Way and then right at the next junction. Continue past a monument on the right and then two telegraph poles on the left to the T-junction. Turn left and then right and then straight across the next road (B6397) past Wester Muirdean farm on the right and then straight across the main road to Kelso (A6089).

7 - Continue down the hedge lined road past a small group of houses and then by a stone wall on the left. By the wooden gate in the wall turn right (footpath signpost) into the field with the field boundary on the right. In the the next field bear left to reach the B6364 road and cross over.

8 - Turn left in the field and follow the boundary line up to a stile and through the next field and left on the green lane to the tarmac road. Turn right and then right to pass Kelso racecourse. At the T-junction turn left Golf course road to another T-junction. Turn left and opposite the curling / ice rink turn right along and alley between houses. At the end bear right and down the hill to the road, and turn left onto Inchmyre.

9 - Turn right onto Inchmead Drive to the end and the left hand corner. Continue down the alley past the hospital on the right to the road. Turn right then left and down the Tofts to the far left corner. Continue along the alley to the end and turn right on Edenside Road past the Tait Hall.



10 - Continue straight across the roundabout and along Horsemarket into the town centre. Turn left at the T-junction to reach Kelso Abbey and the end of the stage.



