

Summer Days Out - Tamar Valley Line

If you're thinking about a summer day trip with the family to Plymouth, then we highly recommend you add an enchanting railway journey to your adventure! The Tamar Valley Line runs from Gunnislake through the valley alongside the River Tamar to Plymouth station approximately every two hours, 7 days a week. The journey takes about 45 minutes, and you can park for free at Gunnislake station and leave the car there all day. This was our day out recently which you may like to try:

Parking at Gunnislake Station we caught the 11.19 train to Plymouth. The first part of the journey can only be described as 'leafy lane'! The train takes you right through the trees, slowly working its way downhill to Calstock. Spot the wildflowers along the way and look out for your first glimpse of the River Tamar. First stop Calstock and over the impressive viaduct giving you fantastic views of the village, river and down towards Cotehele. The train then climbs uphill again towards Bere Alston station where there is a pause while the driver swaps ends and the train heads back out again on its journey south. The second part of the journey is great for spotting Tamar views and heritage – how many old bridges do you go over and under? Can you see the old train carriages at Bere Ferrers station? Who can be the first to glimpse Cargreen on the opposite side of the river?



The next part of the journey between Bere Ferrers and St Budeaux offers stunning views, taking you right alongside the waters' edge. How many viaducts do you cross? If it's low tide, can you spot any birds on the mudflats? Then as you pass the Tamar bridges with Saltash opposite, you are now into the final part of the journey as you enter the City of Plymouth. This train journey not only takes you through countryside and city, but also past the largest naval base in Western Europe! So, as you look down across Devonport Dockyard, how many naval ships can you spot?

Arriving in Plymouth station at 12.04 it is just a 10-minute walk into the city centre where you can spend the day, whatever the weather, having fun. If the weather is fine, walk down to Plymouth Hoe, take in the views, go for a swim (sea or Lido!), take a harbour tour and see the warships up close, stroll around the cobbled streets of the Barbican and be spoilt for choice on where to have lunch! If the weather is not so good, Drake's Circus offers plenty of retail therapy, The Box Museum (free admission) is brilliant for local history and exhibitions and the National Marine Aquarium (charges apply) is great for all ages.

We returned on the 18.38 train from Plymouth and arrived back in Gunnislake at 19.24. Be sure to check the timetable as times do vary between weekdays and weekends. An adult off-peak return

costs £6.70 and child £3.65. It's cheaper too if you have a railcard or travel together in a group of 3 or more.