

CASTLE ACRE CIRCULAR WALK

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Length: 6miles, 2 hrs/2 ¼ hrs

Ease of Walk: easy with a few inclines

What you'll see: Clear chalk stream of the River Nar, woodland, open fields and farm tracks with vistas across the countryside, hedgerows, Castle Acre Priory ruins, Castle Acre village

OS map: Explorer No 236

This Castle Acre Circular Walk is an **easy and incredibly varied stroll in a very pretty part of rural West Norfolk.**



You'll meander alongside the picturesque River Nar and the flood meadows (which takes in part of the Nar Valley Way trail), and you'll continue on through attractive woodland and out onto open fields. You'll walk along hedgerows full of wildlife and with wonderful views across the countryside, and finally **walk up past the impressive ancient ruins of Castle Acre Priory which forms part of the Peddars Way**, arriving back in Castle Acre village where you can have a well-deserved drink/lunch/tea in the local pub, the Ostrich Inn, or choose one of the tea rooms in the centre of the village.

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The best place to start this Castle Acre Circular Walk is in the middle of the village. That way, you finish your walk in the village where there are lots of available refreshments, be it a pub or in one of the few tea rooms dotted around the centre of the village.

Much of the time dogs can spend off the lead. There is free parking around the Bailey Gate and Green.

The best place to start the Castle Acre circular walk would be to park here and head away from the village, with the church on your left, and down towards The Priory (signposted) keeping the remains of the flintstone wall on your left.

At the end of this road, you reach a T junction, (The Priory being on your left). You want to turn right and follow the road to the next corner. Here you take the track to the left (all very well signposted with the circular walk in blue and, where appropriate, The Nar Valley Way signs in pink).

Continue to follow this track down to the River Nar where you come across a wooden kissing gate and, in my opinion, the most scenic part of the walk. Continue along the flood meadow to the start of an undulating

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woodland path which eventually brings you to a board walk, two footbridges, an attractive imposing mill house and finally a tarmac road. All of this stretch is very obvious to follow, the river and paths through the wood are well trodden. **In autumn, the colours in the wood are spectacular.**

Once you reach the tarmac road, **it's worth just turning right to the ford and standing on the bridge over the River Nar and admiring the beautiful river.**

To continue on this Castle Acre circular walk, retrace your steps from the ford up the slight incline to the grass car park on the right, turn right here and head along a short stretch of heathland which will then lead you to bear left along a narrow footpath with a hedge and the view of West Acre Priory on one side, and a post and wire fence on the other side.

At the end of this very short track you'll reach a tarmac road, cross straight over this road and continue up the hill along a track running between fields on either side. Continue on up past a wood on your left.

Carry on straight past the wood, don't go right or left, continue up the hill until you reach the end of the field. Turn left here and stroll along the well-worn tracks with the hedge on your left and open countryside on both sides of you **(there are signs all the way along this walk, you can't go wrong!)**

From here, just follow the signs, walking along the farm tracks that eventually bring you to another tarmac road with a wonderful beech hedge. From here, turn right, walk along the pleasant tranquil country lane, passing South Acre Church as well as a few very pretty houses, and then take the left hand fork before a sharp corner.

This leads you into a very quiet lane, and **almost immediately you get a chance to have spectacular views over to the ruins of Castle Acre Priory.** This is part of the Peddars Way walk. This road brings you to another ford. Walk over this wooden bridge.

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To deviate from the Castle Acre circular walk, you could, at this stage, walk around the outside of the Priory, but if you just want to get back to the village with the thought of refreshments looming large (!), follow the road straight up the hill and this will bring you back to the church and finally the village.

And if you want to see the Castle ruins, all you need to do is walk straight through the village, and on the corner is a small lane which will take you to the ruins and wonderful views over the surrounding countryside.

