

Road Tour for Garmin satnav

Thinking of visiting Britain?

by Chris Hall published on 28 April 2008

Adding extras to your satnav is an increasingly common option. If you are looking to visit Britain, or just spending more time travelling around these glorious isles, then Road Tour offer downloadable guides for your Garmin satnav. But should you shelve your trusty Michelin Guide and take the Road Tour offering instead? We go tourist to find out

Available from the Road Tour website, we looked at their Full Trip offering, consisting of their UK Heritage guide, selected by visitBritain, and Pubs and Inns, in association with Sawday's. Available as a download, CD or on SD card, it can easily be added as an extra to your Garmin device. (It is also available for Windows Mobile devices, but we didn't test that version.)

Hiding under the Extras button on your Garmin, the guides basically establish a number of custom POIs and when you browse the list, they are conveniently ordered by proximity, so you can see what is close to you and worth a visit.

If you have turned on the TourGuides option on your device, then you can opt to have a brief 1 or 2 minute description read out to you. For example, driving into the office in Ascot, we learnt that Runnymede was the location of the signing of the Magna Carta and that there is are three memorials: one for the aforementioned document, one for the Royal Air Force and one for John F Kennedy.

As you drive around, obviously the interesting Heritage sites in your proximity change, so the information changes and you can listen to details about something new. From a tourist point of view, this might not actually be very useful unless you are just driving around aimlessly. As a local, it is interesting to learn about attractions you drive past every day without a second's thought.



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Selecting a location will bring up the address, any photos, access to the recorded description, as well as a large "Go!" button allowing to you navigate directly to that site, very much like the default tour guide elements that come with the device.

Cunningly, if you have paired your mobile phone via Bluetooth (depending on which device you have) you can then call any numbers supplied - useful to make reservations at the nearest gastropub.

The Pubs and Inns section contains a range of details and will appeal to those looking for "traditional" British pub fare, something that is always popular with visiting tourists. Again it is linked in to the navigation, so after you visit to Runnymede to see the JFK memorial, you can head over to the Greene Oak in Windsor, which offers "a mix of British classic dishes and fashionable modern".

Some may feel that this is simply a duplication of the included travel guides supplied by Garmin and that is perhaps true. However, The Road Tour offering does provide much more detail and is clearly aimed at those a little more interested in quality pubs and exploring the cultural heritage of the UK.

Unfortunately the system is not the most intuitive, and it takes a while to figure out how to enable or disable particular options, as these settings seem to get distributed amongst the various options already in the Garmin device. Also, when a Heritage location is identified, it appears at the top of the screen, obscuring any instruction that might have been there. If you don't switch off the guide, you'll find that you always have a bar locating you to the closest attraction.

Still, it is worth considering the price too, as the Full Trip download can be yours for £24.99, the pubs alone are £7.95.

VERDICT

If you already have a compatible Garmin device
Pocket-lint.com, the premier gadget news and reviews website in the UK

At a glance

What is it?

Add in for Garmin satnav

Good

Enough detail to whet your appetite, mobile phone link, price

Bad

Not all the controls appear in one place, might duplicate some existing POI information

Verdict

If you already have a compatible Garmin device and plan a visit to the UK, then this might really appeal to you

Price £7.95

Our score

7/10

Your score

?/10

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/3097/Road-Tour-for-Garmin-satnav>

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(a list can be found on the website) and plan a visit to the UK, then this might really appeal to you as a convenient way of getting your information in one place to slap into your hire car on arrival. Certainly if you are looking to tour heritage sites, then this is a convenient approach.