



Walk: Temple Meads to Clifton Suspension Bridge

Route 1: For City Lovers - Distance: approx. 2.8 miles / Time: approx. 65 minutes

Route 2: For Nature Lovers (two options) - Distance: approx. 3.4-4.5 miles / Time: approx. 80-100 minutes

Route 3: for Brunel Aficionados (two options) - Distance: approx. 3-4.2 miles / Time: approx. 75-100 minutes

These routes might not necessarily provide the quickest journey, but they do take in some of the history and the more pleasant sights of the city and the river. Note that the Museum is on the Leigh Woods side of the Bridge, so routes that take you into Clifton will entail crossing the Bridge.

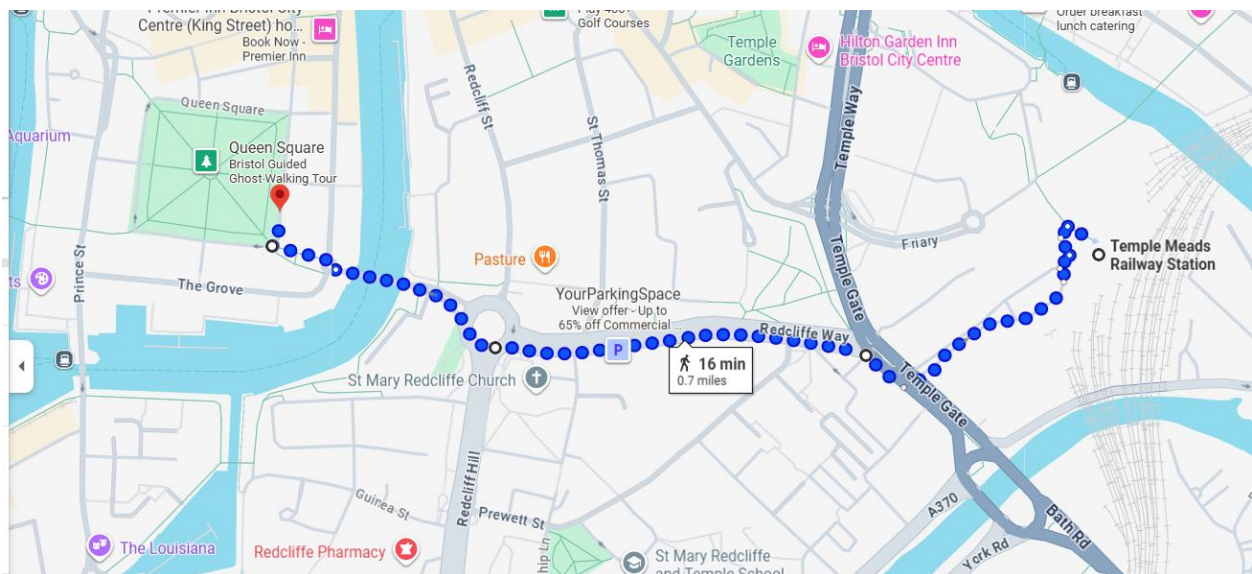
Terrain: the 'Nature Lovers' walks include areas of woodland that are not suitable for wheelchairs. There are also areas of uneven surface, cobblestones and railway tracks in the harbour area, so great care should be taken here.

The approximate time for each route is taken from Google maps and describes the walk from Temple Meads to the Suspension Bridge. It's quicker downhill going back!

Note: Clifton is 'the settlement on the cliff' and is at a much higher elevation than Bristol city centre. Whichever route is chosen, be prepared for a **steep climb** (indicated in **bold** in the directions) at some point!

Start

All the walks start at Temple Meads and head for Queen Square, so these directions will not be repeated each time.



Exit Temple Meads through the main doors out into the taxi rank and short-stay car park area. Head down the incline, noting Brunel's original Bristol Station beside you on the right (<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/who-we-are/our-history/iconic-infrastructure/the-history-of-bristol-temple-meads-station/>).

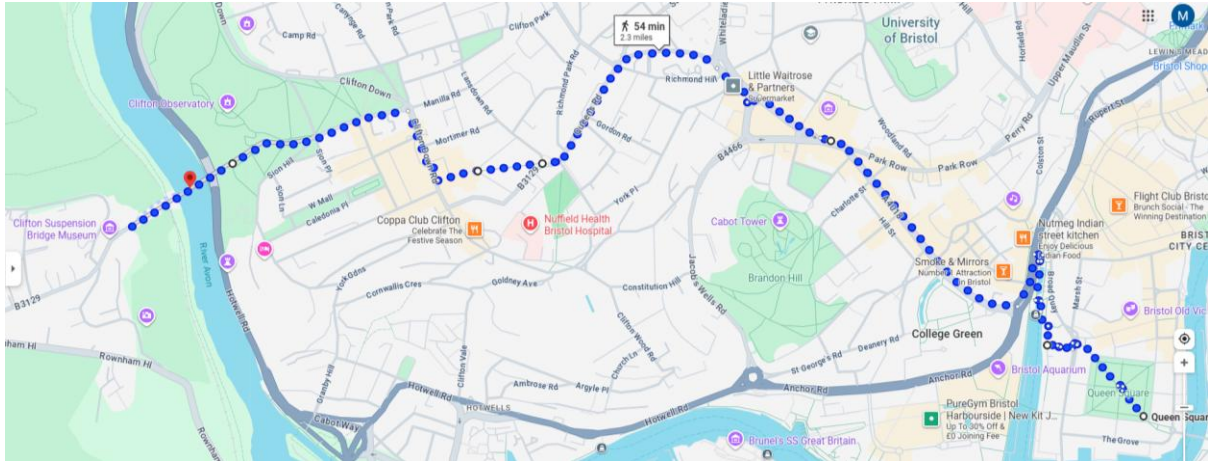
The busy road Temple Gate is in front of you: cross (carefully!) at the pedestrian lights, bear slightly right and then left into Redcliffe Way – you will soon see the grand church St Mary Redcliffe ahead of you (<https://www.stmaryredcliffe.co.uk/>), declared by Queen Elizabeth I on her visit to Bristol in 1574 as 'The fairest, goodliest and most famous parish church in England'.

Staying on the same side of the road, at the large roundabout bear slightly left on to Redcliffe Hill to cross that road on the zebra crossings, then bear slightly right to carry on in the direction you were heading.

You will cross the river on the Redcliffe Bascule Bridge; continue straight ahead on the path beside the Hole in the Wall pub to your left and you will be in Queen Square (<https://visitbristol.co.uk/listing/queen-square/3865101/>), now a very grand square but in 1831 the site of the Bristol Riots in which Brunel served as a special constable (https://www.bbc.co.uk/bristol/content/articles/2008/03/11/queensquare_feature.shtml).

Route 1: For City Lovers

Temple Meads incline – Redcliffe Way – Queen Square – College Green – **Park Street (steep)** – Queens Road (Triangle) – Queens Road – Merchants Road (option: Victoria Square, Boyce's Avenue) – Regent Street – Clifton Down Road – B3129 (Beaufort Buildings, Gloucester Row) – Bridge (Clifton side: walk across the Bridge to access the Museum)



Start by following the route to Queen Square detailed above. Cross the square diagonally, allowing the statue of King William on his horse to point you in the right direction, and exit via the plaza onto Prince Street.

Cross at the pedestrian crossing and you will find yourself in The Centre, with the head of the river and the Cascade Steps, where the Bristol ferry departs, on your left. In Brunel's time the river was open all the way through this area, with tall ships jostling where now there are buses.

Continue ahead, to cross the road at the pedestrian crossing with the Bristol Marriott Royal Hotel in front of you (a notable landmark is the statue of Queen Victoria, usually with a seagull on her head). Next to the hotel is Bristol Cathedral, overlooking the large green space of College Green and with the curved Council House opposite, topped by golden unicorns, a symbol of the city.

Follow the main road beside College Green and past the Council House: this is **Park Street**, which is quite a steep climb (you can pick up the bus services 5 and 8 here if you wish). You will soon pass a notable Banksy artwork on your right: The Well Hung Lover.

At the top of the hill is the Wills Memorial Building, part of Bristol University. Another notable building adjacent to it is the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery (<https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-museum-and-art-gallery>).

Cross at the pedestrian crossing opposite these buildings to join Queens Road, staying on the opposite side of the road to the Museum; cross again at the next pedestrian crossing to head towards Little Waitrose (this is quicker than following the one-way road system!).

Follow Queens Road as it bears round to the left, crossing over Park Place and Richmond Hill, and noting the splendid fountains outside the Victoria Rooms across the road from you and the opulent Royal West of England Academy opposite it.

Soon you will cross the other end of Richmond Hill at the junction with the double mini roundabout; continue along Queens Road to pass Bristol University Students Union building on

your left. (You can, of course, simply cut down Richmond Hill as a shortcut, but then you'd miss the Victoria Rooms and the West of England Academy, both worth seeing, even in passing.)

When Queens Road reaches Victoria Square you have two options: either continue to follow the road (now Merchants Road) to turn right at the junction with Clifton Down Road, or you can cut through the square and enjoy the peace and calm. Going through the square will bring you out into Boyce's Avenue, a small traffic-free road with independent shops and cafes.

Whichever route you choose, you will end up on the main road, Clifton Down Road; cross over at the zebra crossing opposite the wine bar, turn right and head towards the tall spire of Christ Church and the large green space of Clifton Down.

At the roundabout turn left and walk past Beaufort Buildings and along Gloucester Row, keeping the Down on your right.

After you have crossed the tricky junction of Sion Place and Sion Hill you are on the approach to the bridge, which will shortly appear in front of you. There is a refreshment kiosk and a public toilet just before the bridge.

To avoid the steep climb up Park Street, the bus service 8 connects Temple Meads to Clifton Down following the above route very closely. Bus service 5 connects Park Street to Clifton Down along the same route.

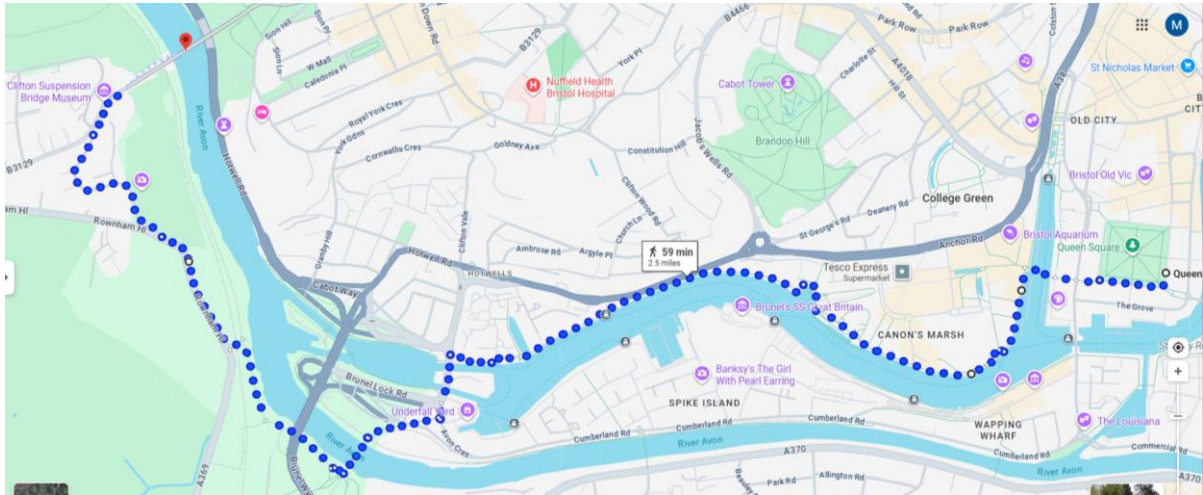
Distance: total approx. 2.8 miles

Time: approx. 65 minutes

Route 2: For Nature Lovers

Option A – ‘A Good Walk’

Temple Meads incline – Redcliffe Way – Queen Square (side) – Prince Street – Pero’s Bridge – Hannover Quay – riverside footpath to Hotwells – Merchants Road (Junction Lock Bridge) – Ashton Avenue Bridge (National Cycle Route 33) – **path through Leigh Woods beside Rownham Hill (steep)** – Burwalls Road – Bridge Road – Bridge (Leigh Woods side)



Start by following the route to Queen Square detailed above.

Carry straight ahead along the side of the square, which will lead you to the pedestrian crossing on Prince Street; cross carefully, noting that there is a separate roadway for cycles with its own crossing lights, then continue straight ahead down on to the harbourside.

Cross Pero’s Bridge, the large horned bridge in front of you
(<https://visitbristol.co.uk/listing/peros-bridge/26952301/>).

Turn left and follow the edge of the harbour past restaurants and bars, along Hannover Quay and continuing around. You will be on the opposite side of the harbour to M Shed, and you might see the Matthew moored alongside: you can visit those on another of these walking routes.

As you walk further, you will see Brunel’s SS Great Britain as you round the corner to follow the walking route parallel to Hotwell Road.

Keep going along the harbourside until you reach the Pump House pub; exit on to Merchants Road and turn left to cross the bridge beside the old Dock Cottages, heading towards the Nova Scotia pub.

Where Merchants Road meets Avon Crescent at the Nova Scotia, and just before the large, strange concrete building on the right, there is a walkway and cycle route (National Route 33) bearing off to the right marked ‘RVP 5’; take this route, passing under Cumberland Road, and you are now on the Metrobus route – buses and cycles are the only traffic you will see here.

Follow the route between the large red-brick warehouses, across Ashton Avenue Bridge over the river, then take the footpath to the right along the river bank. You will pass beneath the large, elevated roadway that now takes all the traffic (and more) that used to cross on the small bridge you have just walked over!

Soon this path will rise slightly uphill and meet a small railway bridge on the left – turn left and cross this bridge, and you will see the main road up Rownham Hill in front of you. Just before you meet this road take the little path off to the right, into Leigh Woods. There is an information sign about the woods, and a bicycle park, a little unexpectedly!

Follow the **main path right up through the wood**, staying adjacent to Rownham Hill – ignore the other small paths that lead off towards the river. It is a **steep climb** and you will need to be careful of your footing.

Towards the top of the hill there is a Forest Bench with information and a viewing point, looking across to Clifton (although the trees can be too leafy in summer for much of a view beyond the woods). Exit the woods through the gate in the fence on your left and you will emerge on to Burwalls Road.

Turn right and follow this road to the top, leaving the woods behind and emerging into a residential area; this will bring you out on to Bridge Road shortly before the Suspension Bridge Museum and the bridge.

Distance: approx. 3.4 miles

Time: approx. 80 minutes

Route 2: For Nature Lovers

Option B – ‘Bit of a Hike’

As Route (A) as far as Ashton Avenue Bridge – riverside path beneath the Suspension Bridge, then **into Nightingale Valley, Leigh Woods (very steep – walking boots recommended)** – North Road – Bridge Road – Bridge (Leigh Woods side)



Start by following the route to Queen Square detailed above.

Carry straight ahead along the side of the square, which will lead you to the pedestrian crossing on Prince Street; cross carefully, noting that there is a separate roadway for cycles with its own crossing lights, then continue straight ahead down on to the harbourside.

Cross Pero's Bridge, the large horned bridge in front of you
(<https://visitbristol.co.uk/listing/peros-bridge/26952301/>).

Turn left and follow the edge of the harbour past restaurants and bars, along Hannover Quay and continuing around. You will be on the opposite side of the harbour to M Shed, and you might see the Matthew moored alongside: you can visit those on another of these walking routes.

As you walk further, you will see Brunel's SS Great Britain as you round the corner to follow the walking route parallel to Hotwell Road.

Keep going along the harbourside until you reach the Pump House pub; exit on to Merchants Road and turn left to cross the bridge beside the old Dock Cottages, heading towards the Nova Scotia pub.

Where Merchants Road meets Avon Crescent at the Nova Scotia, and just before the large, strange concrete building on the right, there is a walkway and cycle route (National Route 33) bearing off to the right marked 'RVP 5'; take this route, passing under Cumberland Road, and you are now on the Metrobus route – buses and cycles are the only traffic you will see here.

Follow the route between the large red-brick warehouses, across Ashton Avenue Bridge over the river, then take the footpath to the right along the river bank. You will pass beneath the large, elevated roadway that now takes all the traffic (and more) that used to cross on the small bridge you have just walked over!

Follow this riverside footpath until it passes beneath the Suspension Bridge; shortly afterwards, on the left there is a stone archway and a wooden gate that mark the entrance to Leigh Woods (<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/bath-bristol/leigh-woods/the-history-of-leigh-woods>).

Enter **the woods, and be prepared for a long and very steep climb** – you are climbing up the side of the Avon Gorge! Be careful of your footing, as some of the rocks are worn smooth and can be slippery: ramblers recommend wearing walking boots on this path.

When you reach the top of the path take the gate to the left, which brings you out into North Road; turn left and follow this road parallel to the edge of the woods, doubling back on the way you have just come. The first stretch of this road has no pavement, just parking spaces, and when a pavement does appear it tends to be rough and uneven, so take care. If you feel able to take your eyes off the pavement, you can admire the grand Victorian houses on the other side of the road!

Shortly before the road bends to the right, there is a bench and a viewing spot with an excellent view along the Gorge. At this point also you will see the Leigh Woods tower of the bridge ahead of you – note that you are now actually higher up than most of the bridge! A little further on you will have a good view across the gorge to the Observatory, and St Vincent's rock on which the Clifton tower of the bridge is built.

Follow the road downhill and you will join Bridge Road; turn left, and the Museum is a few yards ahead on your left with the bridge just beyond.

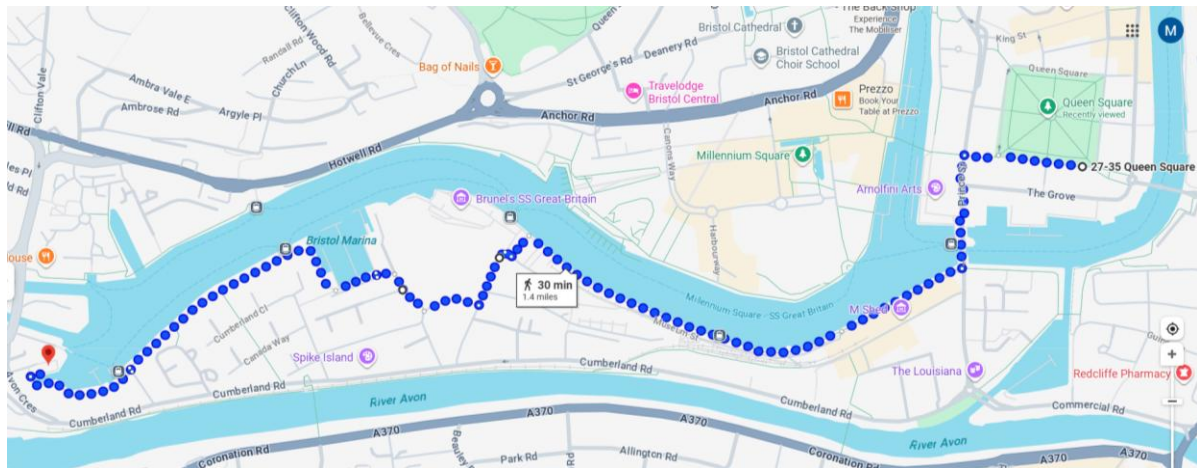
Distance: approx. 4.5 miles

Time: approx. 100 minutes

Route 3: For Brunel Aficionados

Option A – Short but Steep

Temple Meads incline – Redcliffe Way – Queen Square (side) – Prince Street – Prince Street Bridge – Wapping Wharf – harbourside path past SS Great Britain, Baltic Wharf and Underfall Yard – Cumberland Basin – Dowry Parade – **Hope Chapel Hill (steep)** – Granby Hill – Wellington Terrace – Sion Hill – Clifton Down – Bridge (Clifton side: walk across the Bridge to access the Museum)



Start by following the route to Queen Square detailed above.

Carry straight ahead along the side of the square, which will lead you to the pedestrian crossing on Prince Street; cross carefully, noting that there is a separate roadway for cycles with its own crossing lights, then turn left, passing the Shakespeare pub and the Arnolfini Arts Centre (<https://arnolfini.org.uk>) on your right.

Cross the river on Prince Street Bridge – this will bring you to M Shed on the harbourside (<https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed>), the site of the launch of Brunel's first ship, PS Great Western (that stands for Paddle Steamer, if you are wondering!).

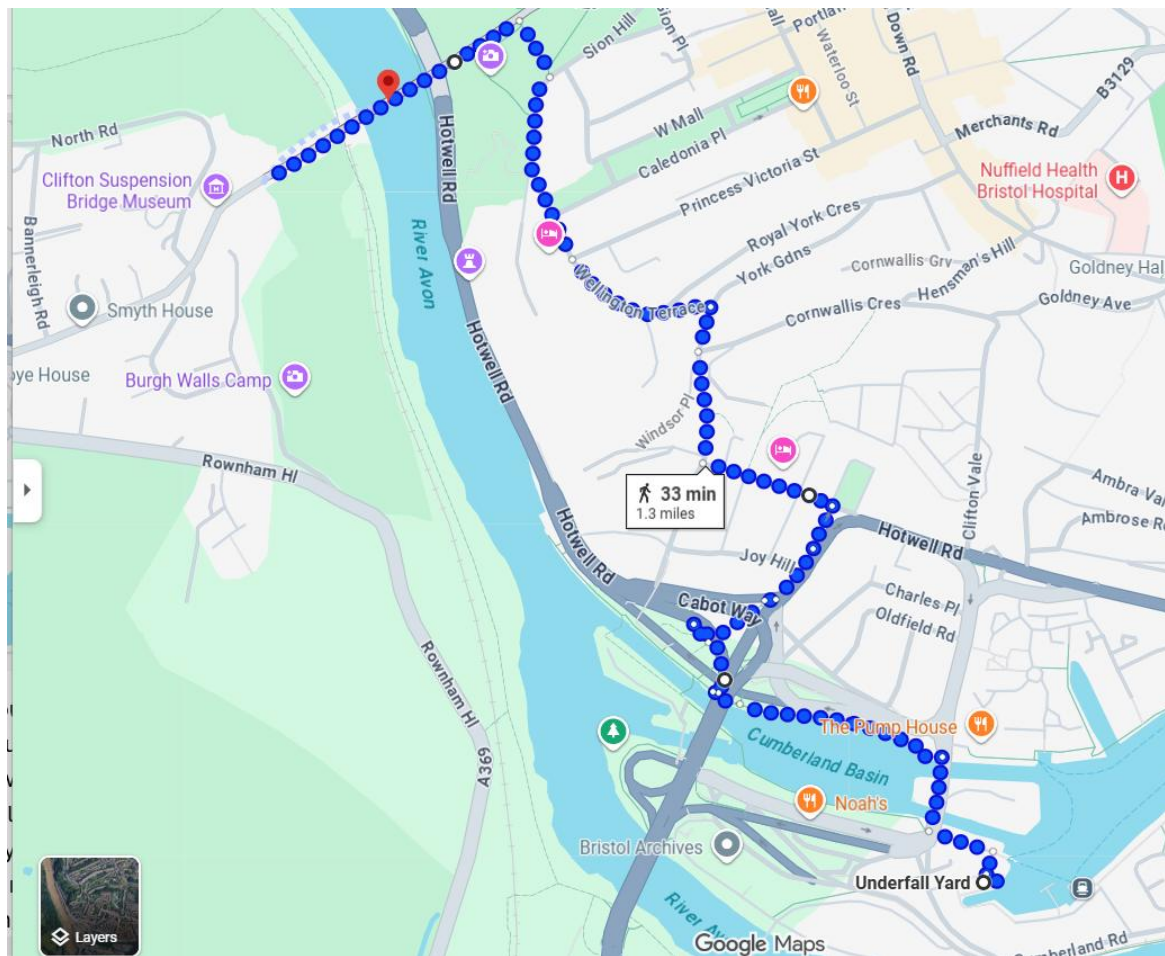
Turn right to walk along the harbourside in front of M Shed, past the historic cranes and the berth of the Matthew (<https://matthew.co.uk>), and continue (for quite some way) until you reach the Great Western Dockyard, home of Brunel's SS Great Britain (<https://www.ssgreatbritain.org>).

Turn left up Gas Ferry Road, past McArthur's Yard, following the blue signposts for the harbourside walk as you cannot walk through the Great Britain site but have to cut around it to emerge at the marina.

Continue along the waterside path to Underfall Yard, where the sluices designed by Brunel to regulate the silt in the harbour still operate to this day (<https://underfallyard.co.uk/>); head through the Yard and out into Merchants Road, turn right and you will find yourself near the Nova Scotia pub.

Cross the river on the little bridge beside the old Dock Cottages heading towards the Pump House pub. At the exit from the Pump House car park turn left, cross the road and head along the edge of Cumberland Basin. (Note: if you are walking at a time when Underfall Yard is closed, you will come out of the harbour walk to join the main Cumberland Road and walk along Avon

Crescent towards the Nova Scotia and pick up the route from there.) You are now on Hotwell Road.



Continue along the side of Cumberland Basin to pass under the elevated roadway. You can detour on the left to visit 'Brunel's other bridge' (<https://www.brunelsotherbridge.org.uk>) by crossing the footbridge over the lock.

When you have rejoined the main road, cross it where there is a dropped kerb with tactile paving: this will lead you onto the Piazza with the flyovers criss-crossing overhead. Pause to admire the street art of the Revolutionary Road on your right and head straight ahead to the large light-controlled junction with the Rose of Denmark pub on the right: this is Dowry Parade.

At the pedestrian crossing, cross the small road coming in on your left and stay on the left-hand side of Dowry Parade, cross the foot of Joy Hill (follow the railings to cross safely but don't go up that hill) and walk on a short way further until the main road bends round to the right. You will take the little road on the left, up **Hope Chapel Hill**, past the Grade II-listed Hope Chapel (apparently built to save the people of Hotwells the steep climb up to places of worship in Clifton).

Hope Chapel Hill will meet Granby Hill – turn right, and continue along this road past Cornwallis Crescent.

Granby Hill then becomes York Gardens; soon you will turn left into Wellington Terrace. Keep following the road, which will in turn become Sion Hill after passing the foot of Princess Victoria Street; soon you will have the welcome sight of the bridge directly ahead of you.

After passing the Avon Gorge Hotel you will pass the top entrance to the historic Clifton Rocks Railway (<https://www.cliftonrocksrailway.com/>). Finish your walk by crossing the grass to the Clifton end of the bridge (or, if you prefer, stay on Sion Hill – a slightly longer way, but paved). There are public toilets and a little refreshment kiosk here.

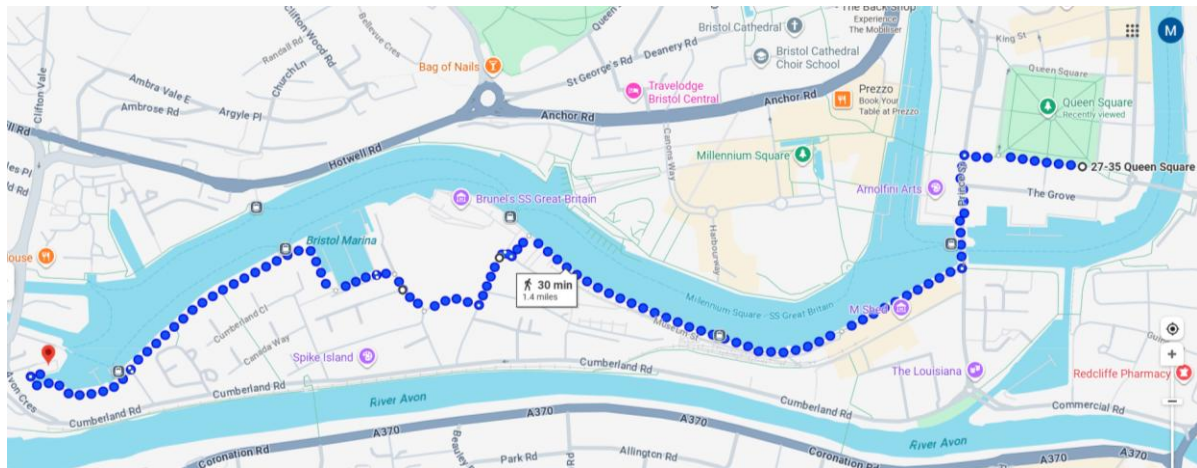
Distance: approx. 3 miles

Time: approx. 75 minutes

Route 3: For Brunel Aficionados

Option B – The Longer, Winding Road

Temple Meads incline – Redcliffe Way – Queen Square (side) – Prince Street – Prince Street Bridge – Wapping Wharf – harbourside path past SS Great Britain, Baltic Wharf and Underfall Yard – Cumberland Basin – A4 Hotwell Road/Portway, passing under the Bridge – **Bridge Valley Road (steep)** – Clifton Down – Bridge (Clifton side: walk across the Bridge to access the Museum)



Start by following the route to Queen Square detailed above.

Carry straight ahead along the side of the square, which will lead you to the pedestrian crossing on Prince Street; cross carefully, noting that there is a separate roadway for cycles with its own crossing lights, then turn left, passing the Shakespeare pub and the Arnolfini Arts Centre (<https://arnolfini.org.uk>) on your right.

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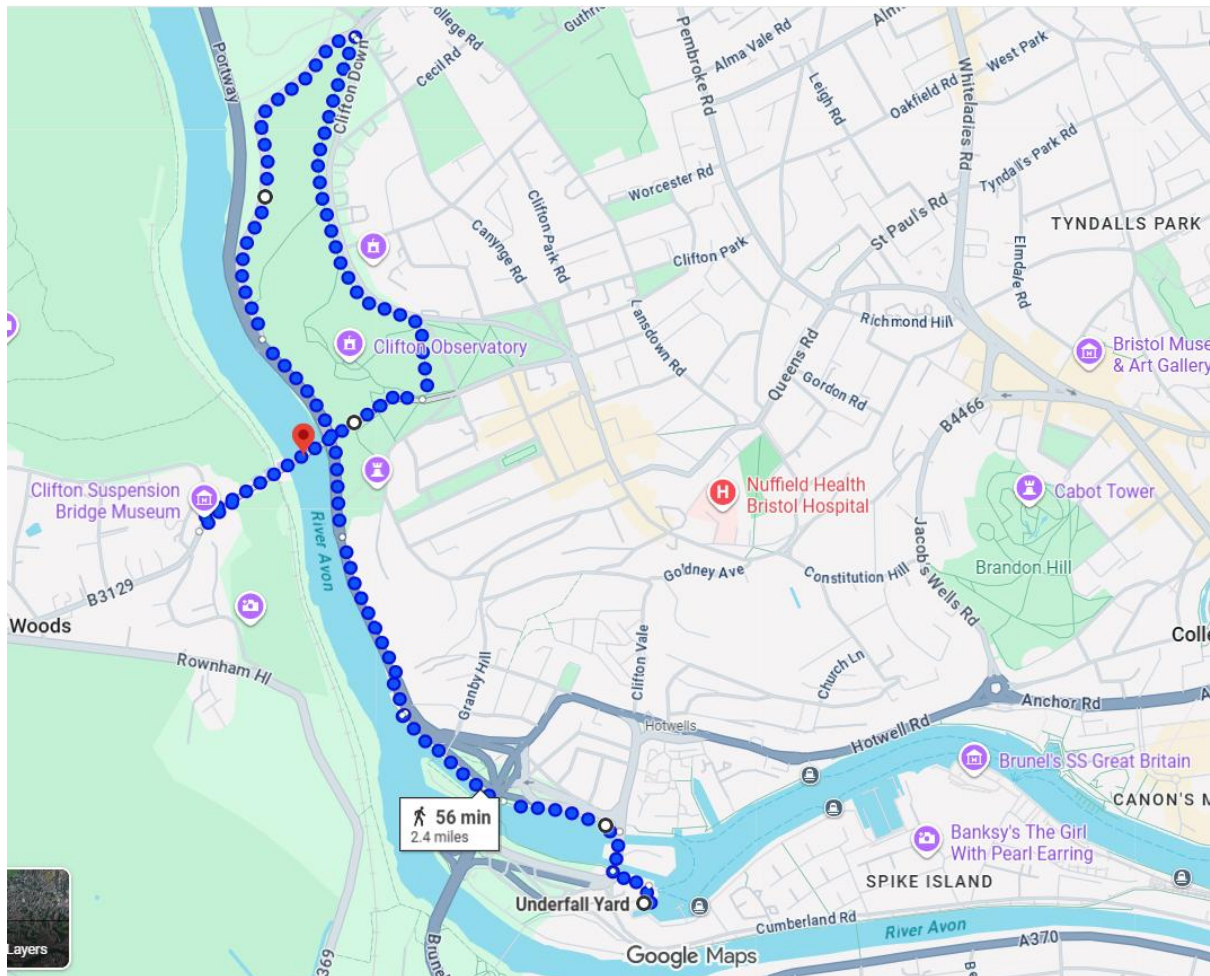
Turn right to walk along the harbourside in front of M Shed and past the historic cranes and the berth of the Matthew (<https://matthew.co.uk>), and continue (for quite some way) until you reach the Great Western Dockyard, home of Brunel's SS Great Britain (<https://www.ssgreatbritain.org>).

Turn left up Gas Ferry Road, past McArthur's Yard, following the blue signposts for the harbourside walk as you cannot walk through the Great Britain site but have to cut around it to emerge at the marina.

Continue along the waterside path to Underfall Yard, where the sluices designed by Brunel to regulate the silt in the harbour still operate to this day (<https://underfallyard.co.uk/>); head through the Yard and out into Merchants Road, turn right and you will find yourself near the Nova Scotia pub.

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Crescent towards the Nova Scotia and pick up the route from there.) You are now on Hotwell Road.



Continue along beside Cumberland Basin, passing under the elevated roadway. You can detour on the left to visit 'Brunel's other bridge' (<https://www.brunelsotherbridge.org.uk>) by crossing the footbridge over the lock.

When you rejoin the main road, stay on the river side of the road, not crossing over to the city side. You have a grand view of the river and the Suspension Bridge directly ahead of you; you will see the remains of the old steamer platforms, now derelict, and you will also pass opposite the lower entrance of the Clifton Rocks Railway (<https://www.cliftonrocksrailway.com/>).

Follow this road until you pass under the Suspension Bridge; you are now on the Portway. This is a busy road route, but there is a wide pavement alongside the river.

Shortly afterwards, you will cross the road at the pedestrian lights at the foot of **Bridge Valley Road**. Take this road to the top – it is a pleasant climb, and not as steep as some of the other routes.

At the top there is a four-way road junction: you will turn right on to Clifton Down, crossing the road carefully at the traffic islands. This beautiful road starts by doubling back on the way you've just come, then opens out lined with some of the city's most splendid and palatial Victorian buildings.

Follow the road up a slight incline as it curves to the left, then bear round to the right on to Observatory Road.

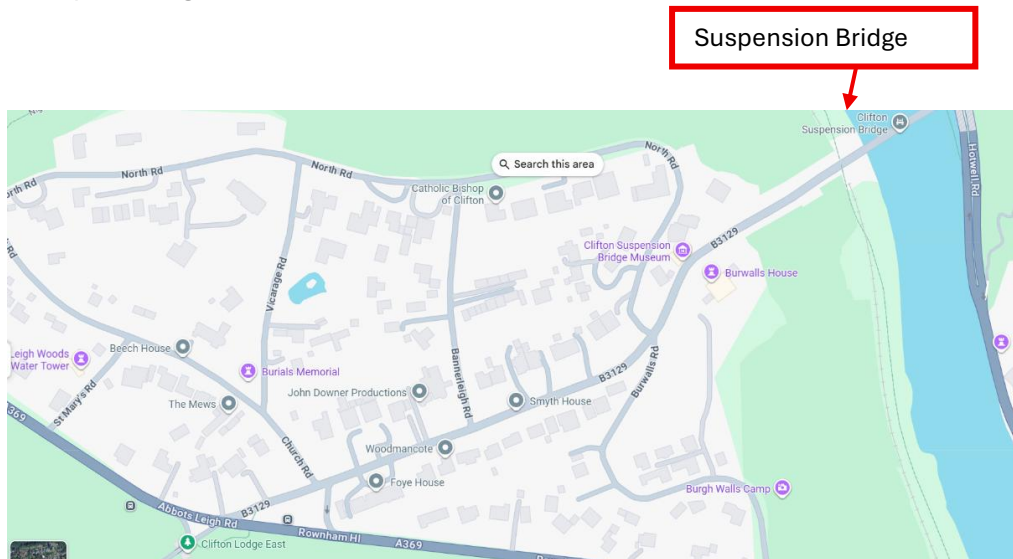
This short road meets a four-way junction, with the bridge approach road on your right. There are public toilets and a little refreshment kiosk just before the bridge itself.

Distance: approx. 4.2 miles

Time: approx. 100 minutes

Public transport back to Bristol

The **X4** bus leaves from the Leigh Woods end of Bridge Road, towards Bristol city centre: approx. every 20 minutes (less frequent on Sundays and Bank Holidays). This is a good option if you also wish to explore Leigh Woods or Ashton Court.



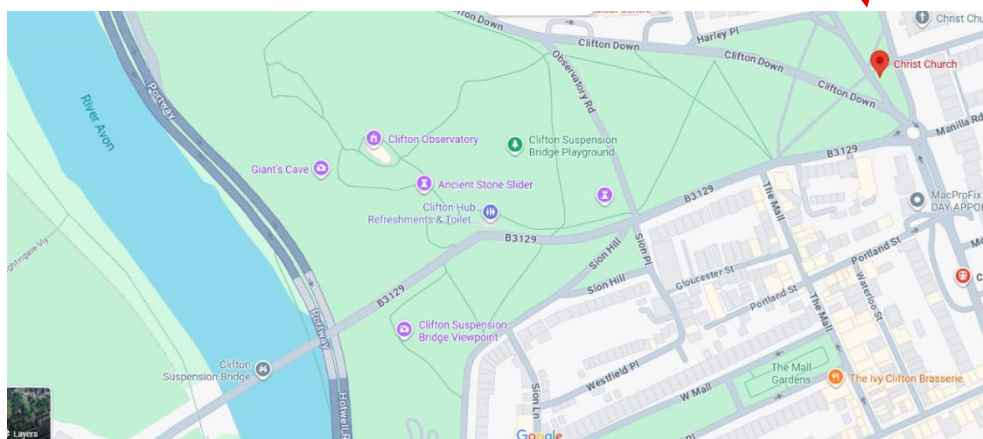
Bridge Road bus stop, service X4 to Bristol city centre

If you would like to explore the shops and cafes of Clifton Village, there are two buses you can catch. Clifton Village also has a taxi rank - but if you prefer to call or use an on-demand taxi app, you are more likely to get a taxi from this side of the bridge.

No. 5 bus from Christ Church on Clifton Down towards Bristol city centre: approx half-hourly

No. 8 bus from Christ Church on Clifton Down towards Bristol city centre and Temple Meads station: approx quarter-hourly

Christ Church, Clifton Down bus stop, services 5 and 8 to Bristol city centre (service 8 on to Temple Meads station)



Suspension Bridge