

Exmoor Scenic Drives Guide

Five spectacular drives, with Bristol as your gateway

Route map: the five Exmoor scenic drives, from Porlock Hill and the Valley of Rocks to Tarr Steps and Dunkery Beacon, all reached from Bristol. (Map image to be added once finalised.)

The Drives at a Glance

Drive	Distance	Difficulty	Best for
Porlock Hill and the coast road to Lynmouth (A39)	~12 mi	Hard, very steep	Drama and sea views
Lynton, Lynmouth and the Valley of Rocks	~4 mi	Easy to moderate	Little Switzerland
The Lyn Valley circular (Watersmeet, Heddon Valley)	~21 mi	Moderate	Variety in one loop
Tarr Steps and the Barle Valley	~15 mi	Moderate, narrow	Ancient bridge, quiet lanes
Dunkery Beacon and the Doone Valley	~18 mi	Moderate, exposed	Highest point, big views

Safety Tips

Porlock Hill is the steepest A-road in the UK, up to 1 in 4 (25%) with hairpin bends and escape lanes. Not for caravans or heavy vehicles, use the Porlock Scenic Toll Road instead. Most Exmoor lanes are single-track with passing places and high hedges. Drive slowly, anticipate oncoming traffic, and watch for Exmoor ponies, sheep and walkers on the road. If towing, descend Porlock Hill from the Lynmouth side rather than climbing it. Fuel up in Minehead, Porlock, Lynton or Dulverton before heading onto the moor.

Bristol Airport Access Guide

Bristol is the natural gateway to Exmoor, with all the major car hire suppliers on site. It is around 90 minutes (about 67 to 79 miles) from the eastern edge of the moor at Porlock, via the M5 south to junction 24 or 25, then the A39 coast road through Minehead. A smaller, nimbler car is a real advantage on Porlock Hill and the tight moorland lanes.

Book your hire car at getcarhire.com/bristol.htm and compare all the main suppliers in one search, with insurance and taxes included.