VALE OF GLAMORGAN
COAST • COUNTRYSIDE • CULTURE

ARFORDIR • CEFN GWLAD • DIWYLLIANT
BRO MORGANNWG

Approximate walk time: **2.5 hours** for each walk

Coast and Lighthouse Walk

Marcross, Atlantic College and Lighthouse Walk
(4.5 miles / 7 km)

Monknash, Lighthouse and Marcross Walk
(4 miles / 6.5 km)

VALE TRAILS • LLWYBRAU'R FRO • WALK 2 TAITH

WALKING IN THE VALE

Walking in the Vale of Glamorgan combines a fascinating 60 km stretch of the Wales Coast Path with the picturesque, historic beauty of inland Vale. Along its rugged coastline walkers can discover the last manned lighthouse in Wales (automated as recently as 1998), a college unlike any other at St. Donats and 16th Century walled gardens at Dunraven Bay, plus the seaside bustle of Barry and Penarth. Whichever direction you are walking look for 6 at regular points along the way.

Inland, walkers will find the historic market towns of Cowbridge and Llantwit Major, as well as idyllic villages such as St. Nicholas and St. Brides Major, where the story of the Vale is told through monuments such as Tinkinswood burial chamber and local characters like Iolo Morganwg, one of the architects of the Welsh nation. Our series of 5 coastal and 5 inland Vale Trails will help you get to the very heart of this fascinating area.

This pair of circular routes combine the spectacular, breathtaking views along the Glamorgan Heritage Coast with rural farmlands and the ancient woodlands of St Donat's Castle. Enjoy the varied scenery and historical sites, including Nash Point Lighthouse, Marcross Church and Atlantic College.

The Monknash Coast is a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its sequence of limestone deposits and its eroding hard coastline and cliffs. They have been shaped over thousands of years to form the four and a half kilometre stretch of coastline between Cwm Nash and St. Donat's Point which allows an understanding of how the present coastline has evolved.

THE COUNTRYSIDE CODE

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under close control.
- Consider other people.

Footpaths / Llwybrau · Bridleway / Llwybr ceffyl
Restricted Byway / Cilffordd gyfyngedig · Byway / Cilffordd

Many thanks to Valeways and to Vale of Glamorgan Ramblers for their valuable contribution to Vale Trails and their continued support for these walks and leaflets.

creative RURAL COMMUNITIES

cerdded yng nghefn gwlad VALEWAYS countryside access & walking

LEADER

VALE of GLAMORGAN BRO MORGANNWG

Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig: Ewrop yn Buddsoddi mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe Investing in Rural Areas

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

THE ROUTE

1155 kcal Estimated calories: 70kg walking at 3mph

1370 kcal Estimated calories: 83kg walking at 3mph

Family friendly

visitthevale.com

Getting there Exit junction 33 M4 on to A4232. Follow signs for Airport then for B4265 Llantwit Major. Pass Llantwit Major and follow signs for Wick. Take left turn signed Marcross. Follow signs for Nash Point.

Terrain Mainly level footpaths, across fields and woodland with some short steep climbs. Parts may be overgrown in summer. Route includes stiles and narrow paths. Return section on quiet roads.

Distance Walk A is 4.5 miles. Walk B is 4 miles.

Map OS Explorer 151 Cardiff and Bridgend.

Parking Walk A: Nash Point car park (small fee – check gate closure time). Walk B: Road side near Plough and Harrow pub, Monknash (or paid car park on road to Cwm Nash beach).

Public Transport Trains and buses to Llantwit Major and buses only to the Horseshoe Inn at Marcross. For up to date travel information visit www.traveline-cymru.info

Refreshments & Toilets Kiosk and toilets at Nash Point. Pubs at Monknash and Marcross (see links for further information).

WALK (A) *Grid ref: SS916683 Postcode: CF61 1ZH*
Marcross, Atlantic College and Lighthouse Walk (4.5 miles)

Start at Nash Point Car park.

Start at Nash Point Car Park, exit onto the main road towards Marcross. Continue on the road, passing Marcross Church on your left **(1)**. Turn right just before Swn-y-Môr bungalow **(2)**. Follow the track and bear left towards a stile. Over the stile, stick to the footpath through the field, with the hedge on your left. The hedge turns sharply left twice. Ignore the footpath that leads off to the left at the second of these turns. Continue ahead, with the coast on your right, to reach a stone stile **(3)**. From the stone stile, keep left and follow the hedge to a gate onto a road. Here, turn right, passing The Elms **(4)**.

Go straight on through a gateway for about 100 metres to cross a stile on your left. Cross another stile opposite to enter a large field. Head diagonally right to a stile in a gap in the wall. Turn left along the path and proceed to the wall stile at the bottom of the field **(5)**. Cross this stile and follow the path left around the building to a second stile that gives onto a lane. Turn right, heading towards a gap between a garage and Park Farmhouse **(6)**.

Continue ahead to a gate that takes you into a woodland, along a rough, downhill track. *(Ignore main path off to the right)*. The path emerges onto a road with St. Donat's Church on the right **(7)**.

TIP Don't miss the rare 15th Century Calvary Cross in the churchyard.

Turn left, walk uphill with St. Donat's Castle on your right. Follow the road, as it bears left to the College grounds exit. Turn right at the main road, pass the College entrance, and pass through a kissing gate on the right, near a lay-by to enter George V playing field **(8)**.

Walk towards the coast, with the woods to your right, through a wooden gate to reach the Wales Coast Path. Go through a kissing gate on your right into woods. Keep right along the Wales Coast Path that gradually swings left with incredible views of Atlantic College and the coastline **(9)**. Pass the college **(10)**, the path then leads into a second wood. Bearing left at the fork, enter a field with the lighthouse ahead **(11)**. Continue along the cliff top towards the lighthouse complex. Join the metalled track and return to Nash Point car park.

There is a possibility of livestock in some fields. Please keep dogs on a lead and follow the Countryside Code.

WALK (B) *Grid ref: SS919706 Postcode: CF71 7QQ*
Monknash, Lighthouse and Marcross Walk (4 miles)

Start the walk at the Plough and Harrow pub, Monknash (1)

Alternatively, start at the Monknash Car Park, turn left (2) then follow the tarmac road until you reach woodland. Turn left, cross the stile (3) and continue the walk from here.

With your back to the pub, turn right to follow the road to the coast. Pass the campsite on your right, cross the stile on the right further along the road, walking diagonally left across the field to cross a stone stile in the corner. Go straight ahead with the hedge on your right to cross another stone stile onto a road. Turn left onto the road then immediately right over a stile **(3)** into the nature reserve. Continue through luscious woodland alongside a stream **(4)** until you reach the beach **(5)**. Turn left up a steep hill along the Wales Coast Path to reach a stile at the top. Follow the Coast Path, towards the lighthouse. Follow the path as it leads downhill to a footbridge.

You can take a short detour here for refreshments at the kiosk and a visit to the lighthouse.

Keep an eye out for Peregrine falcons nesting in the cliffs here.

Cross the footbridge and bear left, crossing the stream twice via stepping stones **(6)** to enter an enchanting wooded nature reserve. Take the left path which meanders through the woods to eventually bear right over a wooden footbridge onto the Marcross Road **(7)**. Turn left here and follow the road past the Holy Trinity Church **(8)**, with its historic leper's window, to reach the Horseshoe Inn at the main road junction. Turn left here and follow the road all the way back to Monknash. Once past the village sign, take the left turn at a wooded fork in the road to reach your start point at the Plough and Harrow pub.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Glamorgan Heritage Coast

The Glamorgan Heritage Coast is a particularly special 14 mile / 22.5 km stretch of coastline awarded Heritage Coast status in 1972. Extending from Aberthaw to Porthcawl, it features dramatic cliffs, amazing rock formations and is rich in wildlife.

St Donat's Castle and Arts Centre and Atlantic College

The 12th Century St. Donat's Castle has had many notable owners, including newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst (the inspiration behind Citizen Kane) who bought it in 1925. Visitors to the parties hosted at the castle included Charlie Chaplin and John F. Kennedy. Today it is home to UWC Atlantic College, which has seen more than 7,500 students from over 100 countries pass through its doors since it was founded in 1962. A thriving arts centre, with a year round programme of events, is housed in the medieval Tythe Barn of the castle.

Nash Point Lighthouse

Built in 1832 as a response to the wreck of the 'Frolic' with the loss of 40 lives. The western light is now decommissioned but the eastern one is still working, albeit unmanned. You can take a tour of the lighthouse. See further information below.

Holy Trinity Church Marcross

Originally 12th Century with a Norman font, south doorway and chancel arch. There is also a 'leper window' on the south side of the chancel.

St Donat's Church

This also has a Norman font but most of the building is 14th Century. In the churchyard is a rare 15th Century Calvary cross.

Plough and Harrow Pub

Built in 1383 as a grange for a local monastery, this local treasure has a long and colourful history. Over the centuries it was used by monks for storage, but also as a mortuary for the bodies of sailors lured to the hazardous coast by the infamous 'Wreckers of Wick'. Perhaps not surprisingly the pub is well known locally for its ghosts.

WALK A

1

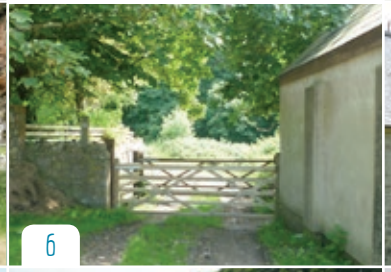
2

Views over the fields to the lighthouse

3

4

5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11

WALK B

1

2

3

4

5

The beach as you leave the woods

Views of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast

6

7

8

OTHER VALE TRAILS FOR YOU TO EXPLORE

COASTAL WALKS

1 **Ogmore By Sea Walk**
St. Brides Major

2 **Coast and Lighthouse Walk**
Llantwit Major / Nash Point

3 **Celtic Crosses and Coast Walk**
Llantwit Major

4 **Park and Seaside Walk**
St. Athan / Rhoose / Barry

5 **Coast and Pier Walk**
Barry / Sully / Penarth

INLAND WALKS

6 **Salmon Leaps Walk**
Dinas Powys

7 **Haunted Field Walk**
St Nicholas

8 **Magical Forest Walk**
Peterston-Super-Ely

9 **Iolo Morganwg Heritage Walk**
Cowbridge

10 **Ewenny & Spring Flowers Walk**
Llandow / Ewenny

LINKS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

trinityhouse.co.uk Tel 07850 047721
(for Nash Point lighthouse visiting times)

ploughandharrow.org Tel 01656 890209

stdonats.com (St. Donats arts centre)

theshoesmarcoss.co.uk (The Horseshoe Inn)

valeways.org.uk valeofglamorganramblers.co.uk

perfectpitchcamping.co.uk

For more information on Vale Trails, or for a full list of accommodation, attractions and activities nearby

visitthevale.com

Images courtesy of Treganna Design