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## Croeso! Welcome!

So, what can you do while you're here? We have a few suggestions here but you'll no doubt want to explore and discover new places and activities. Whether you want to relax in peace and tranquility, laze on a beach, climb a mountain, or learn about the history and Welsh culture, it's all here and there is something for everyone of all ages and abilities.

We've first organised this guide into local areas where you might be staying, and then some more general places to visit and activities.

### **HARLECH**

Harlech is a charming little town on the Welsh Cambrian Coast and on the edge of the Snowdonia National Park (known as Eryri in Welsh). Of course the most prominent feature is Harlech Castle, which is well worth a visit. The castle can be seen for miles around and views from the castle and surrounds are stunning. You can see across the sea to the Llyn Peninsula, the Italian-style village of Port Meirion, and the vast beach and sand dunes.

The town has plenty of little shops to explore, an art gallery, and an abundance of places to eat. We recommend **Y Groser** (The Grocer's) in the High Street, for it's delicatessen, wines and Welsh cheeses, as well as locally sourced groceries. Another place we love is **The Lion** pub a little way past **Galeri Harlech** on the High Street, where you can have a meal and drink while enjoying a panoramic view across lower Harlech, the beach and dunes, and the ocean. If you're staying at **Fron Hyfryd** these places are very close by.

A feature of Harlech town is its winding lanes and *very* steep hills! Several lanes are 1 in 3 and the claimed steepest hill in the world goes down from the convenience store **Seasons and Reasons**, just above the castle.

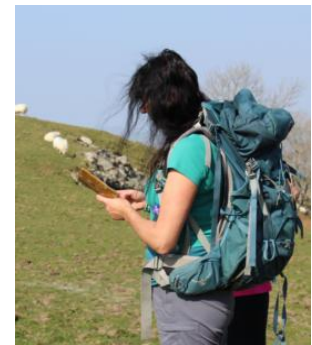
## Harlech Castle

Harlech Castle is over 700 years old, but the visitor centre and restaurant have been quite recently refurbished and it's a great place to eat. While exploring the castle the views are amazing!



## Rambling, Mountain Walking

To the east of Harlech are the Rhinog Mountains and beautiful surrounding hills and valleys. The roads are narrow and winding but very worthwhile negotiating to see the hills, rock outcrops and lakes. Rambling on the foot hills is generally quite safe but you can climb to over 2,000 feet (600 metres) if you enjoy a challenge. Whether you climb to the summits or just wander in the foothills the views are still amazing. We love the area because not only is it close to where we live (and close to where your staying), but it isn't crowded.



A friend visiting from New Zealand wanted to climb Snowdon, but she was put off by the need to get a bus from Nant Peris to start the climb, but then we suggested just walking out of our back door into the Rhinogs and we all had a wonderful and peaceful day out, stunning views and a few challenges with navigation! Our friend was most surprised and impressed.

For those who want to observe the natural flora and fauna, Coed Crafnant will be worth a few hours walking the forest and heath land.



## Harlech Beach

Harlech has a huge beach, which is easy walking distance (0.8mi, 1.3km) from the town centre, or you can drive to the pay and display car park among the dunes. The beach road leads off the A496 near the railway station, the school and a convenience store. The beach has an area for dogs, and a dog-free area to accommodate everyone's preferences. The beach has plenty of sand which goes out a long way at low tide. It is safe for children, and if you forgot them you can get a bucket and spade at **Seasons and Reasons** in the High Street



## Golf

On the way to the beach, look out for golf balls! The road goes through the Royal St David's Golf Course. It boasts one of the best links golf courses in the UK and ranked within the 'Top Fifty' British golf courses, and it was second in the Top Fifty Welsh golf courses.

## Llanfair

Llanfair is a village one mile south of Harlech and there are interesting places to visit.

There are the **Llanfair Slate Caverns** (<https://www.llanfairslatecaverns.co.uk/>) Explore the tunnels and savour the geological and mining history. You can also savour the cave-aged cheese.



**Llanfair Farm Park** (<https://childrensfarmpark.co.uk/>) is especially attractive for younger children. They can get up close to many animals, like Shetland ponies, lambs, goats and rabbits. There are ppy areas, go karts, tractors and mini diggers as well as crazy golf. And for those wanting a technical challenge there is a mini climbing wall.

## Llanbedr

Llanbedr is 3 miles south of Harlech, a picturesque little village with little bridge over a fast running stream. It is beautiful but be prepared for a little traffic jam sometimes as the bridge is only one vehicle wide. We recommend the **Victoria Inn** (known locally as The Vic), because they have great food at reasonable prices and you can sit out in the gardens beside the river.

If you drive from the A496, past the Vic, the road leads off into beautiful countryside, with narrow roads winding up into the hills. Stop by the stream, listen to the waterfalls, admire the lakes. Just cruise around, take your time, and stop when you find something interesting. You'll come across a sign directing you to **Nantcol Waterfall**. There is an admission fee for the car at the waterfall, but just cruising around the country lanes is of course free. Sometimes you'll come across gates along the road, but you can go through. Just close the gates behind you.

**The Church in the Sand**, near Llanbedr, may be worth a visit. St Tanwg's, Llandanwg is a grade I listed early medieval church. Restored in 1884 and 1987 the Church is a very atmospheric building retaining many medieval characteristics and features. This church is mentioned in the description of the Wales Coast Path (<https://www.walescoastpath.gov.uk/>) in the section Harlech beach car park to Llanbedr via Llandanwg.

The church is about 20 metres from the mean high water mark, among the dunes.



## Shell Island

This is ideal for children. It is only an island at high tide. Three beaches, 350 acres, massive sand dunes, two hundred varieties of shells, marina, picnic areas.

Admission fee per car around £5. Directions: The road to Shell Island leaves the A496 at the little bridge in Llanbedr.

As well as shells there are some great rocks for building finely balanced rock towers! While at Shell Island you'll often see gliders being towed up from the airfield



Glider tow

Shell Island parking



Rock towers

## Llyn Cwm Bychan

From the little bridge in Llanbedr turn off the A496, past the Victoria Inn. Keep going to the end of the road. The public car park is just a field with an honesty box for parking fees. This is one of the most delightful drives you could imagine, with the narrow lane following the river all the way up to the lake. Keep a look out on your left for a lovely waterfall with easy access alongside.

## Roman Steps

Leave the car in the car park mentioned above and follow the signs. It is worth looking it up online before going. The full circular walk will take about three hours and has astounding views.

## Dyffryn Ardudwy

Dyffryn is two miles south of Llanbedr and if you're staying at Streamside your excursions will be from here, and it's a very convenient base.

## Short Scenic Country Drive

Only a few meters from the driveway to Ael Y Bryn, the former hotel, is a junction on the A496. The road name is Ffordd y Briws. Follow the lane in a semi-circular route and it will bring you out on the main road in Llanbedr. You will encounter a few farm gates to keep the sheep in, but it is a public road. Close the gates behind you.

Nantcol Waterfall is worth a look, so look out for the signs. There are fantastic views over the bay and peninsula. You could spend about an hour and a half and call at the Victoria Inn in Llanbedr.

## Talsarnau

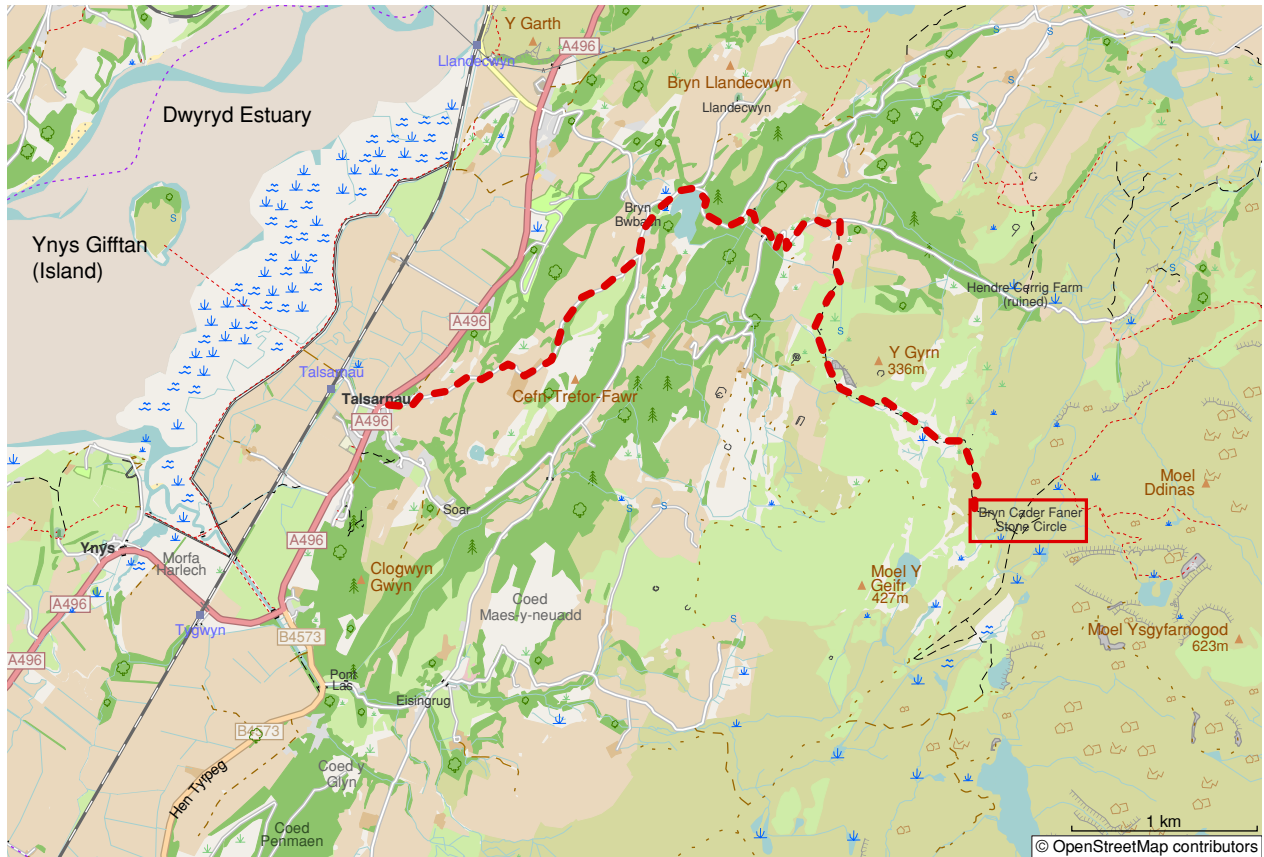
There isn't really much to see in Talsarnau itself, but it is very convenient base for venturing out, both in the local area, and out into Snowdonia and the Llyn Peninsula. There is a pub, the **Ship Aground**, which is good for a pint and pretty good meal. Next to the pub is a garage called **Red Performance**, so if you need a tune-up or tyres, call in. For those on the road travelling through there is the **Pit Stop** snack bar next to the garage where you can sit outside and munch your lunch.

## Bryn Cader Faner

The ruins are believed to date back to 3000 years BC and the walk is beautiful. You can either walk all the way, or drive to Llyn Tecwyn Isaf and park there to start the walk.



This walk is about 8 miles to the stone circle and back, but you could return by a different route. It's wise to have a good map.



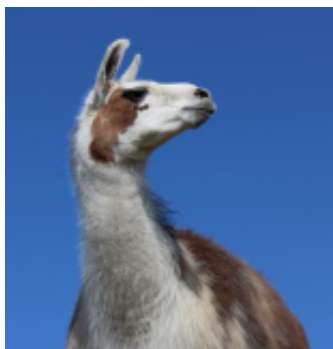
All the little roads and footpaths in this whole area are worth exploring and if you're staying in Talsarnau you can leave the car in the car park. Although the walks are not mountaineering, it is wise to check the weather forecast and go prepared. The views are stunning but you can also be up in the clouds, so planning is vital.



Starting up the hill from Bryn Street



On the way to Bryn Cader Faner you will come across this beautiful little lake. ➤



Near Moel-y-Geifr, east of Eisingrug, you might see the lamas. The kindly farmer will tell you how you can have the best chance of seeing these majestic creatures as well as advise on the route through the farmland as it isn't very obvious. The lamas are not dangerous, but apparently you should not look them in the eye.

## Dwryd Estuary

From Talsarnau, take the road to the railway station, cross the track and you can walk across the salt marsh to Ynys Giffan (Giffan Island) at low tide. It can be quite a challenge to find your way across the deep sandy channels in the marsh but it is safe enough, although you might get wet feet. On the island is a derelict house and around the island the sands continually shift around, sometimes making pools of warm water for paddling and maybe a swim.



This is a sunset view across the estuary and Ynys Giffan from just above Talsarnau, on the route to the little lake and on up to Bryn Cader Faner.

At low tide you can walk almost all the way across the estuary to Port Meirion. There is just a narrow channel where the River Dwryd flows out to the sea, but beware of the strong current as the tide goes in or out. We have swum across but would not advise others to do so.



Estuary walk, Snowdon in the distance



Port Meirion from the estuary at low tide

## Port Meirion

This Italian-style village is worth a visit, and if you are there the first weekend in May you might see us at the Steampunk festival. In the first weekend in December there is a craft and food fair.

The architect, Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, was an ardent environmentalist who wanted to create a functional and attractive private village that would act as 'propaganda for good manners'. It opened in 1926.

