



Three Cliffs Bay

Carmarthen Bay and the Gower

“The Gower peninsula boasts some of the most beautiful and interesting landscapes along the Welsh coastline. The bays and coves are plenty and in places the sandy beaches can stretch for miles attracting many locals, surfers and tourists. The area is also rich in its natural features and wildlife providing yet another reason why it is a must visit.”

Wales Coast Path Officer.

From Swansea to Rhossili

The Gower Peninsula is an area of outstanding natural beauty with craggy coves, white sands, crashing seas and an ever-present sense of ancient history.

Enjoy this 3-day adventure by basing yourself at Swansea, alternatively stay en route near the settlement at the end of each day.

Getting there

Swansea has excellent train connections with direct routes from London Paddington, Bristol, Manchester, Cardiff Central and Newport South Wales.

Suggested base

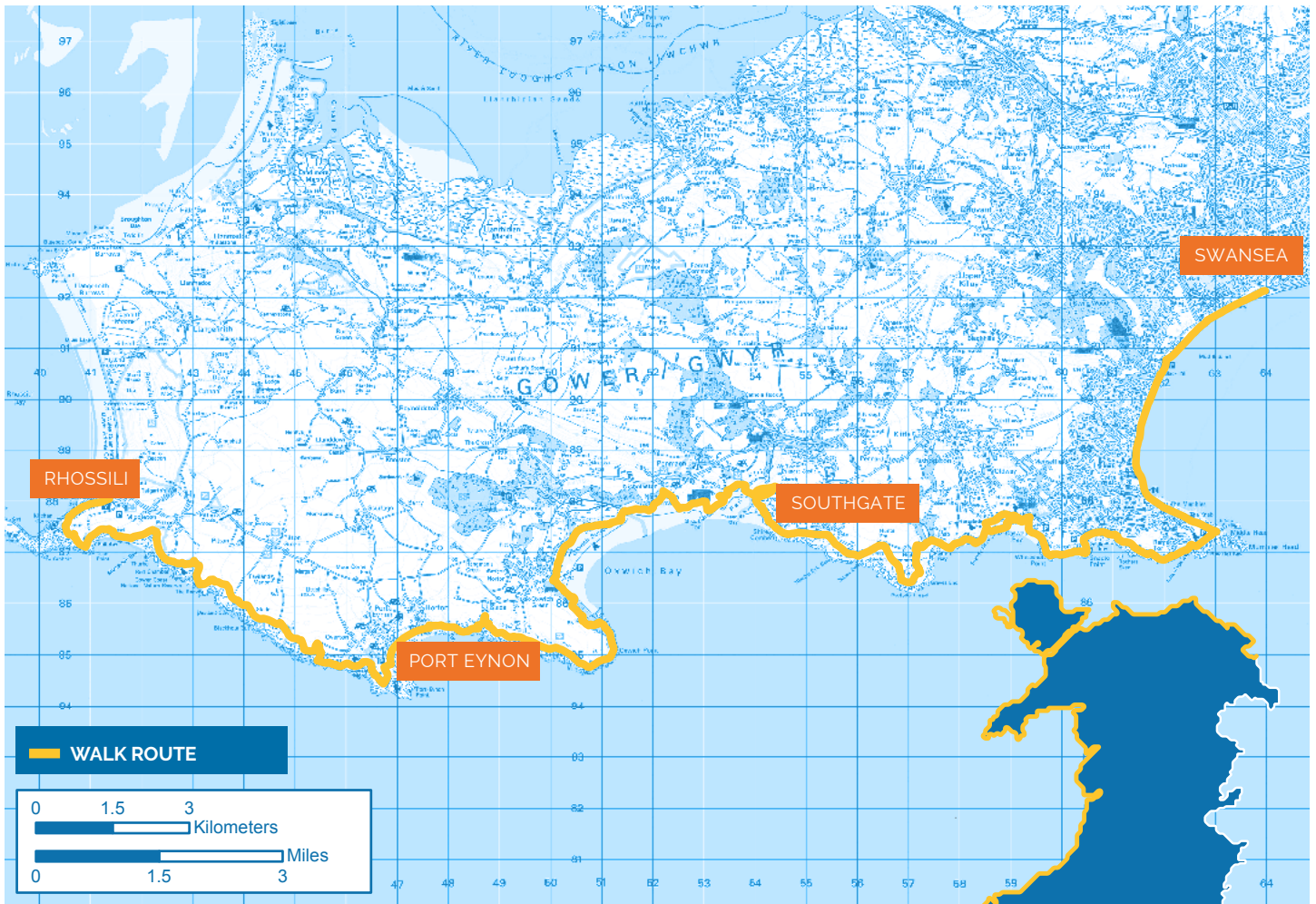
Swansea is a vibrant city with excellent transport connections and interesting places to visit, making it an ideal centre from which to explore the rural bliss of The Gower Peninsula.

Accommodation

Accommodation for every type of stay can be found here: visitswanseabay.com/listings/where-to-stay/

Eating Out

Swansea has a vast and varied selection of cafes, restaurants and takeaways: visitswanseabay.com/listings/food-drink/



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Terrain

The Wales Coast Path follows many different types of surface from flat sandy beaches to rugged cliff-top paths. You should wear clothing appropriate to the terrain and to the predicted weather. For more safety advice go to our website:

walescoastpath.gov.uk/plan-your-visit/wales-coast-path-safety-advice/?lang=en

Difficulty

This part of the Welsh Coast has some steep inclines and descents and so a good level of fitness is required.

Public Transport

Details of transport are with each walk, but please check for times on Travel Line Cymru traveline.cymru or National Rail nationalrail.co.uk or Transport for Wales tfwrail.wales

Baggage Handlers

For those wanting to stay en route, take the strain out of the journey by using luggage handlers to transfer your luggage to your next stop.

walescoastpath.gov.uk/plan-your-visit/planning-carrying-help/?lang=en



Swansea to Southgate 10.5 miles

Leave the city behind and walk your way into an area of outstanding natural beauty where tarmac gives way to gorse lined paths and Swansea Bay leads to crashing seas off rocky headlands.

Start

Start the walk at any point on the wide sweeping promenade of Swansea. There will be the busy A4067 behind you and before you a fabulous panorama of Swansea Bay.

Follow the seafront path towards The Mumbles, the vibrant village where you'll find Oystermouth Castle, a Victorian Pier and a lighthouse dating back to the 18th Century. Although you haven't been walking long, it would be a crime not to pause and absorb the atmosphere of this lovely part of Swansea.

Setting off again the path will take you around craggy Mumbles Head and a series of pretty bays including Llangland Bay with its colourful beach huts from the 1920's (there are toilets here if you need them). Grey seals are a common sight along this stretch so look out for their heads bobbing in the sea. The rock formations here are of geological importance and have been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Surfaced paths ensure you'll make swift progress to reach popular Caswell Bay. If the tide is high at this point you have to follow a short road walk as you won't make it across the bay.

The diversion picks up the path at the other side of the bay, above Brandy Cove and you'll cross open fields and venture down into this delightful valley which, if you're there at the right time of year, will be scented with bluebells and wild garlic.

From Brandy Cove, the path follows sloping cliffs and is more uneven than previously experienced. If you're in luck the gorse will be in full bloom on this stretch as you descend to remote and often deserted Pwlldu Bay. Here you'll find a clear, deep ford, but fear not, also a traditional old footbridge so your feet remain dry! The other side of the bay leads upwards through woodland and dry stream paths until you reach the top. Here, in the clearing, there are views which, should you have caught your breath back after the climb, will take it away again.

The path now continues along natural paths around Pwlldu Head and skirts the wide bowl of Deep Slade; ahead you can see the settlements of East Cliff and West Cliff which sit at the bottom of the village of Southgate. Discover the several cafes here as a great end to a fabulous walk. You'll catch the bus back to Swansea a little way up the main road to the village of Southgate.

Return to base

Catch the number 14 – Pennard - Swansea bus from Southgate Road just before the Post Office. The journey takes 30 minutes and leaves approximately every hour. Please check times before you set off.



Southgate to Port Eynon 9 miles

Through sand dunes and nature reserves, past castles and over stepping stones, this walk explores the best of the coast

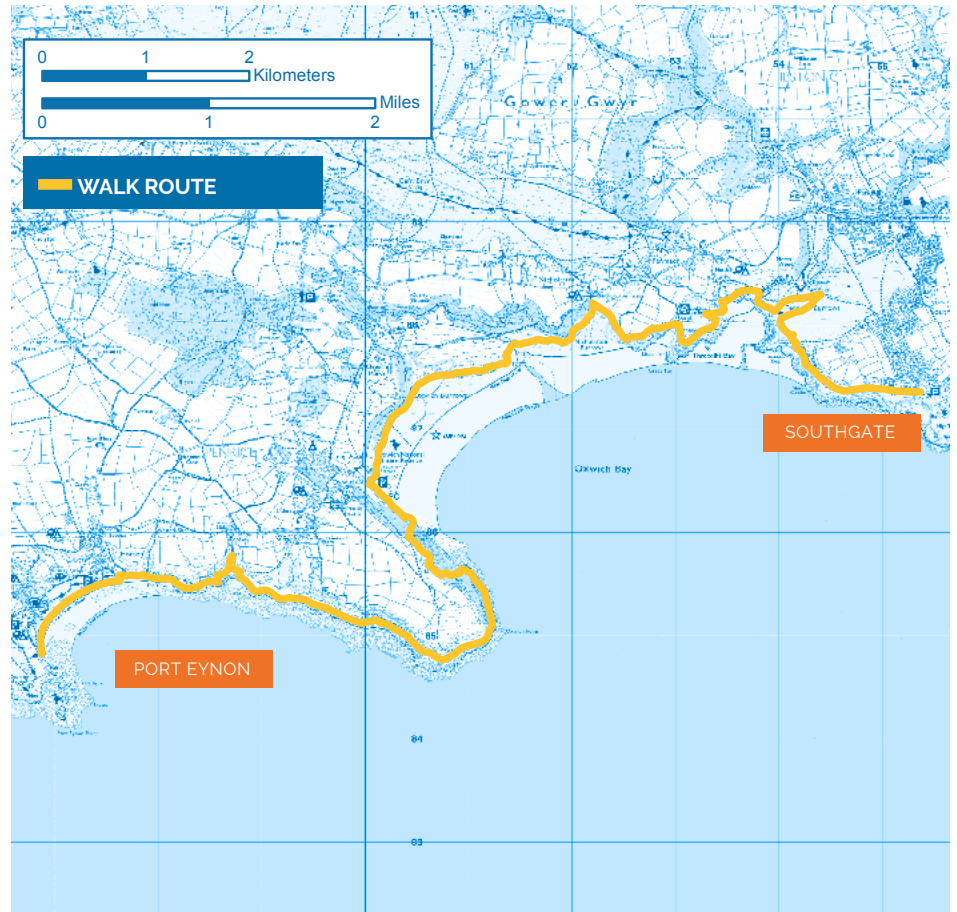
Start

Make your way from the bus stop to the National Trust Car Park at the cliff top. With Southgate behind you, turn right along the open and airy cliff top path. With Southgate behind you, turn right along the open and airy clifftop path to reveal the stunning expanse of the Three Cliffs Bay, separated by a stream and an outcrop of rock. Follow the Wales Coast Path signs down through the maze of dunes and desire lines. As the path descends into the valley it reaches Pennard Pill; the stream across the bay. Here's hoping your balance is good, as you make your way across the stepping stones to the other side. Don't worry, the flat stones are large, and you'd have to try very hard to fall in!

Heading west the sand dunes make it hard-going uphill, but only for a short time and at the top you'll forget the effort as you look back across to beautiful Pennard Burrows, the meandering stream and the ruins of old Pennard Castle perched aloft.

This is where the beauty of the Wales Coast Path can be truly appreciated; behind and before you lie sparkling seas, unspoilt sands hemmed in by golden gorse clinging to craggy outcrops.

Inland now a little, through woods skirting dunes at Nicholaston Burrows and onwards, over a footbridge, to Oxwich Burrows. Oxwich Bay which has twice been named UK beach of the year and shelters Oxwich National Nature Reserve behind it. With a habitat made up of sand dunes, lakes, woodlands, cliffs and salt and freshwater marshes it's no wonder the reserve harbours a fascinating array of wildlife; from wild orchids and Bittern to Otters and Hairy Dragonfly - it's a fascinating landscape and well worth a visit.



The pretty village of Oxwich boasts 2 castles, many thatched cottages and a welcome beach front café where you might like a break.

Leaving Oxwich behind, you're on the last stretch to Port Eynon as you start the steep wooded climb past 14th Century St. Illtyd's Church. At Oxwich Point, the head of the small peninsula, the path leaves the woods and becomes gorse lined again. At a small bay called The Sands, a short, strange-shaped detour is now in place due to cliff erosion but soon joins the original line of path.

Pass by Horton and the Life Boat Station to arrive in Port Eynon, the most southerly point on the Gower Peninsula.

Port Eynon was once a centre for oyster fishing and there were suspicions of it being a smuggling centre – the suspicions must have been very strong as at one point it is believed that 8 excise men were stationed here. Now it is a blue flag beach, boasting seaside awards with, thankfully little sign of contraband!

At Port Eynon near the Youth Hostel catch your bus back to base at Swansea

Return to base Bus

Catch the number 118 - Rhossili – Swansea. The journey takes between 1 hour and 1 hour 15 minutes. There are only 4 buses a day so be sure to time your walk carefully and accordingly and check times before you set off.

Port Eynon to Rhossili

6.5 miles

Ancient history is never far away on this cliff top walk

Start

Facing the sea at Port Eynon turn right and follow the bay around until just before the Youth Hostel, where you turn right up a tree lined path.

The Wales Coast Path ahead is steep and takes you past old quarry buildings. At the top you'll get fabulous views of the nature reserve below at Port Eynon Point. The reserve is significant as a sea watching site and noteworthy birds are present throughout the year. The beginning of the year brings Red-throated and Great Northern Diver. Late summer large numbers of Manx Shearwater and Gannet are often seen.

Next along the cliff top you'll reach Overton Mere, a wide bay of limestone rocks, rock-pools, shingle and patches of sand. You'll hear the crashing of the sea on the rocky foreshore below if the tide is in.

At the near side of Overton Mere is Culver Hole, a cave between two rock faces with a masonry frontage. There is a staircase inside that leads up to four floors. Legend has it that it was once linked to the castle that stood above it and acted as a safe hideaway for smugglers – others say it was purely a dovecote. If you visit, you'll be able to confirm only feathered friends take refuge there! If you decide to visit, make sure you are aware of tide times.

Follow the gorse lined path across Overton and Long Hole Cliff, here there is another cave in the cliffside. Excavated in 1861, evidence was found of cave hyena, reindeer, woolly rhinoceros, mammoth, straight-tusked elephant and wild horse. Rest assured, you won't encounter any of those on your journey today!



Continue following the path where the names of the coves are as fascinating as the landscape itself: Common Cliff, Blackhole Gut, Foxhole Slade and Horse Cliff.

Just before Horse Cliff you will pass close to Paviland Cave which is where a partial human skeleton dyed with red ochre was found in 1823; initially named The Red Lady, the skeleton turned out to be that of a young man buried 33,000 years ago. The cave is not accessible from above and so unwise to attempt. It is only feasible at very low tide from below.

You'll continue to The Knave, a triangular slab of rock pointing skywards and on to Mewslade Bay, where at low tide you can venture down to the beach, although a little rock scrambling may be needed.

Coming into sight in the distance, will be Worms Head, a rocky outcrop and small tidal island so called because it is shaped like a giant dragon (the old English word Wurm means Dragon). It marks the most westerly tip of Gower. Rhossili Down is also on the horizon but before you get there the path takes a loop around the coast for you to meet the dragon!

At low-tide, the causeway can be crossed to Worms Head and access is open for 2.5 hours either side of low tide. If you're lucky and time and legs allow, you may want to divert from the walk to investigate.

The vibrant seaside village of Rhossili, with 3 miles of award-winning white sands is now not far ahead of you. But history has not quite left you, because as you begin the final stretch into the village and the adventure of surfing and shops, the remains of an Iron Age Fort appear to your left reminding you that along this stretch of the Gower history and the present walk hand in hand.

Make your way into the village for refreshments and your bus back to base.

Return to base

Catch the number 118 - Rhossili - Swansea bus from the stop close to the Worm Head Inn. The bus runs between every hour and every 1 hour 30 minutes. The journey takes between an hour and an hour and 20 minutes. Please check times before you set off.



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Additional Attractions for your stay

Oystermouth Castle

Oystermouth Castle sits splendidly on the hill in Mumbles, with stunning views overlooking Swansea Bay. Explore parts of the castle that have been hidden away for centuries and learn about the castle's exciting history. Features include ancient graffiti art from the 14th century, private staircases leading from vaults to previous banqueting halls and a 30-foot-high glass bridge. Events are held throughout the year.

swansea.gov.uk/oystermouthcastle

Oxwich Bay to Worms Head Boat Trip

Experience fantastic wildlife encounters on a round trip from beautiful Oxwich Bay to magnificent Worms Head, the tidal island at the western tip of Gower.

Along the way take in Gower's stunning coastal scenery from a unique perspective. Listen to stories about historic caves and smugglers haunts.

Keep an eye out for the regularly seen harbour porpoise and playful common dolphins amongst diving gannets. At Worms Head, delight in the sights and sounds of hundreds of seabirds during nesting season, seals basking on the rocks or dozing in the water and the chance to experience the spectacular blowhole at high tide. Advanced booking is advised.

gowercoastadventures.co.uk

National Waterfront Museum

The National Waterfront Museum in Swansea tells the human story of Welsh industry and innovation now, and over the past 300 years. Using a mix of modern interactive technology and real objects, the Museum brings the past right to the present. With 15 themed galleries to explore, which all tell a different story of Welsh history, the exhibitions enable you to experience and understand for yourself the fascinating story of industrial Wales.

museum.wales/swansea/



Three Cliffs Bay



Oxwich



Dylan Thomas boathouse/writing shed

Oxwich National Nature Reserve

Oxwich National Nature Reserve is situated on the south coast of Gower, just 11 miles from Swansea. The reserve is made up of a bewitching mix of beach, sand dunes, lakes, woodlands, cliffs and salt and freshwater marshes – in fact, it's rare to have so many different habitats in such a relatively small area in the UK.

Many visitors are drawn to the wonderful beach, but there's a wildlife oasis just waiting to be explored a little way inland.

naturalresources.wales/days-out/ places-to-visit/south-west-wales/oxwich-national-nature-reserve/?lang=en

Dylan Thomas boathouse/writing shed

The Boathouse offers wonderful views of the Taf estuary and the Gower beyond. It was Dylan Thomas, however, who made the Boathouse iconic. It is the building most closely associated with him and the stability of a permanent home meant he enjoyed a creative renaissance. He worked in the Writing Shed above the Boathouse with its remarkable and inspiring views of three estuaries.

dylanthomasboathouse.com/