

Walk 9 Dolforwyn Castle & Abermule
8 miles/12.9 k 9.7 miles/15.6 k if you include
Abermule 6 miles/9.7k one way
3 hours plus Castle & Abermule time
Moderate

1 Begin at the Waggon and Horses at the junction of Lower Canal Road and Dolafon Road. Cars can be parked nearby. Walk east along Canal Road towards Llanllwchaiarn. Where the pavement finishes you will need to walk along the road. *Pass Llanllwchaiarn Church on your right, which was built in 1814 on a site dating back to the 6th Century and has a famous art deco, stained glass window and a carved rood screen but is rarely open except for bi-weekly services.*

The road meanders uphill to a red brick house, Tynybitfel, 1.4 miles from the start. Continue walking along this road, passing the left hand turning to Lower Gwestydd Farmhouse and onwards for another 0.7 miles, to a T junction with the B4389 at the end (SO 136940).

2 Turn right toward Welshpool, then take the lane immediately on the left, leading uphill. *At the top you will pass an impressive red brick farmhouse, Aberbechan Hall, where Rowland Fernyhough, the international show-jumper, grew up.* Go past the next farm, Pwllcoch, and continue following the road downhill, around a sharp right-hand bend passing a house called Whym. At the top of the next rise you will see a fingerpost pointing up into the woods on your left (SO 149947).

3 Enter through the gap in the hedge and follow the steep footpath up through the wood. At the top go through two pedestrian gates passing in front of a cottage (SO 151949). Continue straight on, following the path up the bank to reach Dolforwyn Castle.

4 *This castle was built in 1273-1277 by Llywelyn the Last. See www.castlewales.com/dolforn.html for its description and history. Information on the excavations can be found at <http://www.castlewales.com/dolforn1.html>.* Once you have looked around this impressive monument, retrace your steps to leave the castle the way you entered. When you see the first pedestrian gate (SO 151949) instead of going towards it continue on the main grass track to your left and downhill.

5 At the bottom of the hill you will come out on the road. Turn right and continue until you see a fingerpost on your left pointing to Abermiwl (SO 149947). Go through the gate here and walk downhill keeping the field hedge on your left. Continue until you reach a Bridleway fingerpost (SO 150946) where you bear right. At the bottom of the field go through a gate on to a tarmac lane.

6 Turn left and immediately right to cross the bridge over the end of the canal lock. Once across the canal turn right to follow the towpath back to Newtown and the Waggon and Horses.

To take a detour into Abermule or to catch a bus back, turn left here (SO 152944) and walk along the towpath until you come to a fingerpost (SO 162952) showing that Berriew is 5 miles ahead, Newtown is 5.6 miles behind and Abermule is 500 metres to your left. *Here you will see the road bridge over the River Severn which has the inscription "This Second Iron Bridge constructed in the county of Montgomery was erected in the year 1852".* Abermule has a shop and a pub, the Abermule (01686 630117) which is open daily except Tuesday. The detour will add 1.7 miles onto the walk. You can also catch either the 71 or X75 bus from Abermule back to Newtown. The main stop is on the same side of the road for both directions, near

the village shop. Buses go every couple of hours every day except Sundays. For current schedule information see the notice board at the stop, call Traveline Cymru at 0871 2002233 or visit the web site, www.traveline.cymru/. To return to the walk, retrace your steps across the bridge to the canal.

7 Either from the Abermule detour or the lock below the castle, continue along the canal toward Newtown, eventually passing the Pwll Penarth Nature Reserve on your left. *This reserve is operated by the Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust and there are two hides available for bird watching. Details of the reserve, including a map, can be found at www.montwt.co.uk/pwll.html*

8 *You will again pass Llanllwchaiarn Church on your right, and the 'Old Pump House' on your left. The Pump House took water from the Severn to supply the head of the canal. It was originally operated by a water wheel, later by steam and eventually by a diesel engine. It ceased operation in the 1940s.* Go through the gate after the Pump House, taking the upper path along the flood defence bank. Go through the gate on the right on to Dolafon Road. Turn right which will bring you back to the Waggon and Horses on your right.

Waggon and Horses

This local pub run by Neil and Jackie offers excellent bar service with real ale and meals in their Garden Restaurant. The opening hours are:
Monday to Thursday - from 6 pm
Friday - 12-2, then from 5 pm
Saturday and Sunday - all day from noon
Open lunchtime during the week by arrangement, phone 01686 625790

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