



Oxwich Bay and Slade Walk, Gower

Description:

A very picturesque walk around Oxwich point all the way to Slade bay, varied scenery and fantastic views up and down the Gower Peninsular.

Distance covered: 4 miles **Average time:** 2 hours **Terrain:** Easy under foot but some steep climbs including a big flight of steps.

Directions:

Take the south Gower road (A4418) turning off at the signposted junction for Oxwich. Park in the large supervised beach car park.

In the west corner of the car park you will see the Oxwich bay hotel. make a b line for the hotel and when you get to it turn left along the small lane heading for the church nestled in the woods a little way further on.



History of Oxwich Church:

The church named St. Illtyd's was built in the 13th century occupying the site of an earlier church dating back to the 6th century, the tower is a later 14th century addition and houses the bell, which also dates back to the 14th century. It bears the inscription "Sancta Maria ora pro nobis" which translates 'Pray for us St. Mary'

If you venture inside the church you will find a recess known locally know as 'Doolamur's Hole, in the recess you will discover the effigies of a knight and his lady, there is some dispute over who the effigies represent the most common belief is that they were two members of the De La Mere family who owned Oxwich Castle and tragically drowned in Oxwich Bay in the early 14th century. Others

maintain that the style of the armour is distinctly 15 century and that they are more likely effigies of Sir John Penres and his wife Margaret Fleming, who held the manor of Oxwich during that period.. Local stories tell of the churchyard being haunted by a ghostly white horse 'ceffyl dwr' water horse in Welsh. The horse is said to disappear into an ancient dried up well which you can find at the top of the church yard if your brave enough.

Once you have finished exploring the church continue past the church and out along the point, after a way you will find a hard climb up _____ ? steps(the space is for you to fill in the number of steps, there's lots)

Once at the top of the steps turn left the path follows the boundary of the fields before dropping down once more to the cliff top. Look out at low tide for the shipwreck of the Solar jutting out of the surf close in to the rocks about half way out along the point.

Follow the path out around the headland , again at low tide you may see a boiler from one of the many wrecked steam ships in a rocky crevice at the low water mark.

Keep following the path which follows the edge of the cliff (don't ascend the path which takes you up onto the top of the headland), eventually you will reach the small bay of Slade (there is only sand here at low tide so keep your eyes peeled if the tide is high!). At the head of the beach you will see a small valley rising up the headland follow the path up the valley until you meet a track and have the opportunity to turn right on the tarmac lane. Follow the lane all the way (approx 1 mile) back down to the car park in Oxwich village.

History of Oxwich Castle:

As you descend the hill look out for the entrance to Oxwich castle on your right (it is open to visitors for a small fee for most of the year) the castle is a beautiful mock-fortified mansion built in part by Sir Rice Mansel (1487 – 1559) a local man who transformed his families fortunes by taking advantage of opportunities to gain power and status given to the Welsh gentry with the accession of the Tudor king Henry VII (1485 – 1509), and the Act of Union between England and Wales in 1536. The building was later reworked and extended by his son Sir Edward Mansel who added the now ruined east wing to in all the construction continued between 1520 and 1580. Evidence suggests that the building replaced an older stronghold. By around 1632 the Mansels moved to their principal seat in Margam leaving the east range of the house to fall into disrepair. The south range continued in use as a farm house.

Oxwich Bay and Slade Walking Map:



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