

Dyma
Sir Gâr
darganfodsirgar.com

This is
Carmarthenshire
discovercarmarthenshire.com

The county town, Carmarthen, makes an ideal base for combining two of Carmarthenshire's most scenic, moderately challenging road routes, tracing secluded river valleys and bracing coastal trails, for a weekend of wild landscapes and indulgent eating and drinking.

Combining two of our online mapped routes, we've curated a tempting weekend break, with brief directions to help you explore the region, and ideas for places to stay, eat, drink and visit.

Day 1: **Tywi Valley Tour of Castles**
Distance: 95km/59 miles
Estimated Time: 4 to 7 hours

Coast & Castle Weekend

This lovely ride, packed with historical and natural gems, is a tale of two valleys. Set out north-east from Carmarthen along the Towy Valley towards Llanarthne, where **Wright's Food Emporium** is impossible to ignore – pause for a coffee at least, though only the strongest-willed will leave without filling panniers with treats from the deli. Continuing along the valley, the skyline is dominated first by the distinctive shape of **Paxton's Tower**, an early 19th-century folly built in honour of Lord Nelson, then the broken walls of 13th-century **Dryslwyn Castle**. Nearby, the **National Botanic Gardens** and **Aberglasney**, both short detours from the route, are alluring highlights for the horticulturally minded. Towards Llandeilo, imposing **Dinefwr Castle** guards a meandering bend in the Towy.

Llandeilo itself, its colourful houses tumbling picturesquely down the hillside, has become a gastronomic hotspot – there's more great coffee and deli treats at **Ginhaus**, and filling brunches at The Hangout; for a sugar boost, try **Heavenly Chocolate Emporium**. Continue north-east, past the ridge above Bethlehem topped with the double Iron Age hillfort of Garn Goch Y Gaer Fawr, to Llandovery; here, under the glowering gaze of the castle ruins, numerous cafés and pubs offer fuel for cyclists – the excellent barista at **Penygawse Victorian Tearooms** can even write your name in the foam on your latte.

Duration: Two to three days
Total Distance: 157km/97 miles
Base: Carmarthen
Difficulty Rating: 5/10



Veering north and then west from Llandovery, you'll work off some of those calories with the climb out of the Towy Valley, rewarded with spectacular views. The landscape becomes more wooded as you descend into the Cothi Valley, passing little Abergorlech and Brechfa, both access points for exhilarating mountain-bike trails in **Brechfa Forest**; the **Forest Arms** is the cosiest of stone-built pubs for a refreshing pint or something more substantial.

There's another testing climb over the ridge between the valleys to return to the Towy and turn right to retrace your route to Carmarthen.

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Day 2: Carmarthen Bay Coastal

Distance: 62km/38 miles
Estimated Time: 2.5 to 5 hours



Though the route officially begins in Pembrey Country Park, it's easy to join at Cwmffrwd, 5km/3 miles south-east of Carmarthen. Initially a leisurely ride along rolling country roads, you're soon faced with steep and long ascents till you reach **Pen y Mynydd** – a village aptly named 'Top of the Mountain' – and gratefully enjoy the steady descent towards Llanelli. Detour here to visit the impressive **Plas Llanelli**, the finest Georgian house in Wales (with a respected restaurant), and treating yourself to a coffee or snack at **St Elli's Bay**, before bearing right to skirt Carmarthen Bay along the blessedly flat **Millennium Coastal Path**.

The gentle undulations of this traffic-free trail mean you're able to look around and enjoy the sights: the wildfowl flocking in **Sandy**

Water Park; the pathside plaque at Pwll marking the spot where aviatrix Amelia Earhart landed after her first trans-Atlantic flight in 1928; kestrels and meadow pipits hovering and flitting in **Ashpits Pond Nature Reserve**. Burry Port offers industrial heritage and more opportunities to refuel – the cakes at **Whitford's**, near another Earhart memorial, are sinfully enticing, and **Daisy's Little Coffee Shop** lies just to the west at the entrance to **Pembrey Country Park**; head inside the park to find **Yr Orsaf**, serving all meals and sinfully indulgent afternoon teas.



Heading inland, one of South Wales' most impressive fortifications looms at **Kidwelly Castle**: the mighty medieval fortress that made a cameo appearance in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. The route skirts the coast, providing sweeping views across the Towy estuary to the tumbledown but hugely atmospheric ruins of **Llansteffan Castle**, its 12th-century walls encompassing an Iron Age fort. You're almost back at base in the county town, ready to toast your weekend roaming the valleys, hills and coast of Carmarthenshire.

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Where to stay

Cyclists are spoilt for choice in Carmarthenshire, with a range of bike-friendly accommodation options across the county, from welcoming hotels and pubs in lively market towns to self-catering apartments and cosy cottages, all with secure storage, some offering wash-down facilities, dry rooms and information on the best local routes. Search the full range of accommodation online at: discovercarmarthenshire.com/staying/

How to get here

Carmarthen is 34km/21 miles from the western end of the M4 near Swansea. Carmarthen Railway Station is under two hours by train from Cardiff, and accessible from across the UK via Newport.



Cycle repairs

County Cycles, Cross Hands
Excellent, friendly bike shop
20km/12.5 miles east of
Carmarthen, housing a
wonderful café, Bean on a Bike.
county-cycles.com

Beiciau Hobbs Bikes,

Carmarthen.
Handy bike shop offering
repairs and services.
[facebook.com/BeiciauHobbsBikes/](https://www.facebook.com/BeiciauHobbsBikes/)

On Your Bike, Llanelli

Sales, repairs and maintenance in central Llanelli.
onyourbikellanelli.com

What to see & do

National Botanic Garden

Extensive site with a
fascinating bird of prey
centre.
botanicgarden.wales

Plas Llanelli

Wales's finest Georgian
building, with fascinating
displays and period rooms
and a well-regarded
restaurant.
llanelli-house.org.uk/

Aberglasney

Lovely heritage gardens
surrounding a 500-year-old
Grade II* listed mansion.
aberglasney.org/

Dinefwr

Beautifully landscaped deer
park and ruined castle
surrounding 17th-century
Newton House with
appealing café.
nationaltrust.org.uk/dinefwr

Kidwelly Castle

Mighty medieval bastion with
well-preserved towers and
walls.
cadw.gov.wales/visit/places-to-visit/kidwelly-castle