

BRON-Y-GRAIG'S BEST DAYS OUT

If you would like a copy of this information to take with you, please ask

These are all places which we know and can particularly recommend, and include suggestions for where to park and eat. More detailed brochures are at the front desk, and you can borrow maps, guides and walkbooks from the Drawing Room. Please do ask if you need any help. Drive times are approximate and we give postcodes below for satnav users.

NATURAL BEAUTY

1 hour
LL55 4TY

Snowdonia National Park - stunning glacial landscape and Snowdon Mountain Railway. If you plan to use the railway, buy your ticket as soon as you arrive in Llanberis as you may have to wait for a train. Betws y Coed is good for eating and shopping on the way back.

A5 to Betws y Coed and then Capel Curig. A4086 to Llanberis for Snowdon Railway. After Llanberis, head towards Caernarfon then turn left on minor road signed Waunfawr, then left on to A4085 to Beddgelert. To return, take A498 towards Capel Curig and turn right on A5.

1 hour
SY100BZ

Pistyll Rhaeadr – highest waterfall in Wales, secluded valley with a welcome tearoom.

A5 east towards Llangollen, after 5 miles turn right signed Vivod and follow signs for Glyn Ceiriog. Join A5400 and follow to Llanarmon DC and then Llanrhaedr-ym-Mochnant. Find Waterfall Street and follow for 4 miles to the Falls.

50 mins
LL39 1LJ

Cregennan Lakes – secluded lakes, high up with wide views of Mawddach Estuary. No services so take a picnic and enjoy the solitude.

A5 then A494 to Bala and then towards Dolgellau. Through Dolgellau, then take minor road to the left signed Cader Idris which climbs to Cregennan.

CASTLES

15 mins
LL20 8TG

Dinas Bran (Llangollen) – most romantic ruin with spectacular views, very steep walk

A5 to Llangollen, park beside the Ponsonby Arms (cross the river and turn right). From the car park, turn back to town and walk up the hill to the right, with a taxidermist on the corner. Cross the canal; there is a wooded footpath ahead of you with Dinas Bran School to the left. Follow this path which leads up to Dinas Bran. We recommend the Canal Wharf Café.

1h 15m
LL46 2YH

Harlech Castle – like a lifesize sandcastle, with grand coast views. The drive there is also enchanting. Harlech is a bit hit-and-miss for food.

A5 west, then turn left on A494 towards Bala. Then 4212 to Trawsfynydd. Turn right on A470 towards Porthmadog and then left on A496 signed Harlech. At Harlech itself either park in the town right next to the castle, or drive down a steep road past the castle and park near the golf course to walk through the dunes to the enormous beach.

55 mins
LL32 8LD

Conwy Castle – classic 13th Century castle in a medieval walled town. Also Plas Mawr, Aberconwy House & the Smallest House in Britain.

A5 to Betws y Coed, A470 through Llanrwst to meet A55, then follow signs for Conwy.

1hr 20m
LL55 2AY

Caernarfon Castle – the castle itself is impressive but claustrophobic and the town is disappointing. Not the one to pick if you only have time for one castle.

A5 through Betws y Coed to Capel Curig; left on A4086 to Caernarfon, passing through Snowdonia.

1hr 15m
LL52 0DP

Criccieth Castle – Smaller but classic castle, can be seen in an hour. Can be combined with a day on Criccieth beach, which is useful if the weather changes.

A5 west then A494 to Bala, A4212 to Trawsfynydd, right on to A470 and then A487 for Porthmadog. Go through Porthmadog and turn left at the roundabout on to A497, follow to Criccieth.

HERITAGE**35 mins
LL13 0YT**

Erddig House & Gardens – “Upstairs, Downstairs” personified with fascinating insights into life above and below stairs. Extensive country park and frequent children’s activity days.

A5 east to Llangollen, left on A483 towards Chester, junction 3 towards Wrexham and Erddig is signed on the right as you approach Wrexham

**1hr 10m
LL57
4HN**

Penrhyn Castle – Victorian gothic fantasy based on Durham Cathedral with huge “refrigerator” (stone tower once stuffed with ice)

A5 west almost to Bangor and Penrhyn is signed on the right

**25 mins
LL14 5AF**

Chirk Castle & Gardens – everything from dungeons to a Chinese Drawing Room, plus good food and romantic gardens. Quite a walk from the car park but there is a buggy service for guests with mobility problems. Nice café, also good food at the Hand in Chirk.

Afterwards if you fancy some leisure shopping turn right, carry on through Chirk and follow the road for a mile to find Moreton Park Garden Centre on the left.

A5 through Llangollen and then follow A5 to Chirk. Turn right at the war memorial.

**1hr 5m
LL48 6ER**

Portmeirion – an eccentric’s recreation of the perfect Italian village; scene of The Prisoner – little shops and gentle winding walks, selection of eateries plus tempting Portmeirion Pottery Seconds Shop. Go out of season for real bargains on entry tickets. You may wish to combine this with a visit to the Steam Railways at Porthmadog, only a few miles further on.

A5 west out of Corwen, then A494 to Bala, A4212 to Trawsfynydd, right on to A470 and then A487 towards Porthmadog. Portmeirion entrance is on the left in the village of Minffordd

**15 mins
LL20
8DD**

Valle Crucis – serene ruined Cistercian Abbey with fishponds and well-preserved chapter house. The café at the nearby camp site is not recommended.

A5 east towards Llangollen, after 6 miles turn very sharp left on minor road at Berwyn Station (tall half-timbered building) and cross narrow river bridge, going under the Llangollen Railway line. Turn right at first t-junction, then left at next T-junction on A542 which passes Valle Crucis. For a circular route back to Bron-y-Graig, turn right out of Valle Crucis and follow road over the spectacular Horseshoe Pass, then left at roundabout on to A5104 which joins A5 to bring you back to Corwen.

**5 mins
LL21 9BT**

Rug Chapel & Llangar Church – Rug is a tiny gem: a 17th Century private chapel with intricately-painted and carved decoration over every surface. Llangar is a medieval church all alone in the fields with an impressive graveyard and a wallpainting of a magnificent skeleton.

A5 west out of Corwen, turn right on the A5104 towards Chester and Rug is 500 yards on the left.

GARDENS & FARM PARKS**45 mins
LL28 5RE**

Bodnant Gardens – World-famous gardens with a selection of walks from easy to demanding. Excellent garden shop & café. Take a snack if you plan to do the whole garden.

A5 to Betws-y-Coed, A470 towards Conwy; Bodnant is signed on the right at the top of a steep wooded hill. On your return instead of using the 470 continue on past Bodnant and link with the B5113 to Nebo, eventually rejoining the A5 at Pentrefoelas. You will enjoy splendid views on a high singletrack road

**25 mins
LL14 3PT**

Ty Mawr Farm Park – pleasant farm park under the stunning Pontcysyllte Aqueducts. Walks, BMX trail, llamas, guinea pigs, rabbits and chickens. Excellent for families. Cafe

A5 east to Llangollen, continue on A5 through Frontcysyllte, turn left on to B5434 signed Trefor and Cefn Mawr, follow signs to Ty Mawr Country Park

SEASIDE**1hr 15m
LL520HU**

Criccieth – quiet seaside resort, with sand & shingle beach and rockpools. Easy parking right next to the promenade. Excellent for beach photography. Several decent places to eat – we like the Blue China Café on the seafront.

A5 west, then A494 to Bala, A4212 to Trawsfynydd, right on to A470 and then A487 to Porthmadog. Turn left at the roundabout on to A497, follow to Criccieth.

**1hr 25 m
LL45 2PJ**

Shell Island – popular, retro camping island famous for the variety of shells on its beaches. Seabirds and wild flowers in the huge sand dunes. Restaurant, bar and little shops.

A5 west, then turn left on A494 towards Bala. Then 4212 to Trawsfynydd. Turn right on A470 towards Porthmadog and then left on A496 to Harlech. Follow A496 to Llanbedr and turn right.

**1hr 15m
LL49 9YH**

Black Rock Sands (Morfa Bychan) – best beach for families and those who don't like to walk as you can park on the sand (£4.00/day in summer 2011). Huge wide beach with rockpools, shallow bathing and specified areas for boats and jetskis. Good for swimming. Beachguards, snack bar, toilets, ice-cream van. In the winter its ideal for sailboarding, sandyachts etc and parking is free (toilets closed).

A5 west out of Corwen, then A494 to Bala, A4212 to Trawsfynydd, right on to A470 and then A487 for Porthmadog. Go through Porthmadog (traffic bottleneck) and turn left in the middle of town just after the little park. Signs say Morfa Bychan so do not look for Black Rock Sands.

This alternative return route avoids delays in Porthmadog which are possible in high summer: When you leave the beach, bear LEFT on a very minor road through a caravan park. Through a wood to rejoin the A497, turning right towards Porthmadog but then LEFT to Tremadog. Take A498 through Beddgelert to Capel Curig, then rejoin A5 through Betws y Coed.

SHOPPING**15 mins**

Llangollen – gift and tourist shops all along the main street

A5 to Llangollen, turn left just after Dobson & Crowther printers to avoid main street holdups and get straight to the main car park and another smaller car park near the river.

45 mins

Chester – roman and medieval town with the famous shopping “Rows”. Multi-storey car parks in the city centre can be expensive so we recommend park-&-ride. Chester also has a huge Zoo and it is possible to park there, leave non-shoppers at the Zoo and park-&-ride into town.

Left out of Bron-y-Graig on the A5, go through the town and turn right on to A5104 for Chester.

After 20 miles, turn right on to A55 signed Chester. Cross over roundabout junction with A483 heading for Chester Business Park and the park-&-ride is on the left.

For Zoo park-&-ride, stay on A55 until the junction with A56, signed for the Zoo.

**55 mins
CH65 9JJ**

Cheshire Oaks Designer Outlet – largest designer outlet in the UK. Plenty of places to eat as well as a VUE cinema for those who can't face the shops.

Left out of Bron-y-Graig on the A5, go through the town and turn right on to A5104 for Chester.

Follow A5104 until it joins the A55, turn right for Chester. From A55, just outside Chester bear left signed M53 and Cheshire Oaks is signed off Junction 10.

RAILWAYS & CANALS**15 mins
LL20 8SN**

Llangollen Railway – beautiful wooded valley journey; lots of events for children including Thomas the Tank. Trains run between Llangollen and Carrog (coming to Corwen soon we hope). If you catch the train from Carrog then parking is much easier.

www.llangollen-railway.co.uk 01978 860979

A5 to Llangollen, turn left just after Dobson & Crowther printers to avoid main street holdups and get straight to the main car park and another smaller car park near the river.

For Carrog, A5 towards Llangollen for 1.5 miles, turn left at small crossroads in Llidiart y Parc and railway parking is just after the railway bridge.

**1 hour
LL49 9NF**

Ffestiniog Railway and Welsh Highland Railway – both converge at Porthmadog which does get congested so we give below directions to the other end of the line at Blaenau Ffestiniog.

www.festrail.co.uk 01766 516000

A5 out of Corwen, then A494 to Bala, A4212 to Trawsfynydd, right on to A470 and then A487 for Porthmadog: there are car parks either side of the main street.

Alternatively follow the above directions but turn right before reaching Trawsfynydd on to B4391, then right on to A470 for Blaenau Ffestiniog.

**15 mins
LL20 8TA**

Llangollen Canal & Pontcysyllte Aqueduct – Britain's tallest navigable aqueduct at 126 feet high is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Horsedrawn and powered boat trips along the canal and over the aqueduct – you can walk over as well. Trips from the Canal Wharf in Llangollen, which also has excellent café food and good pocket money gifts.

www.horsedrawn.boats.co.uk 01978 860702

A5 east to Llangollen and park in one of the town's 3 car parks – turn left just after Dodson & Crowther Printers on the A5 to avoid the busy main street and get straight to the car parks.

WALKS, CYCLING, FISHING, KARTING & QUAD BIKES

Corwen walks – peaceful riverside and hill walks including Caer Drewyn iron-age hillfort which you can see from Bron-y-Graig. Two long distance footpaths – Dee Valley Way and North Berwyn Way. Leaflets available at the front desk.

**25 mins
LL11
3AA**

Coed Llandegla Bike Trails – suitable for all abilities, with bikes to hire, forest visitor centre & café. Also waymarked walks including to the RSPB Grouse Hide on Esclusham Mountain. Trout fishing and cream teas at the fishery opposite.

www.coedllandegla.com 01978 751656

A5 west through Corwen then turn right on A5104. At the Crown Hotel crossroads, turn right on A525 towards Wrexham; Coed Llandegla is about 3 miles further on the right.

**30 mins
LL21 9TT**

Llyn Brenig – reservoir with visitor centre, fishing, adventure play area, walks and bike trails.

www.hiraethog.org.uk 01490 420463

A5 west out of Corwen, stay on A5 till Cerrigydrudion, turn right through the village, then follow B5401

**15 mins
LL210RU**

Glan y Gors Karting Circuit – largest in North Wales. Competitions and Arrive-n-Drive.

www.gyggkarting.co.uk 0800 756 7726

A5 west out of Corwen, follow for 8 miles; Glan y Gors is on the right after a long hill.

**15 mins
LL21 0RE**

Adventure Mountain & Ewephoria (Llangwm) – quad-bikes treks for kids and adults, sheepdog centre, indoor play area and good café.

www.adventure-mountain.co.uk 01490 420008

A5 west out of Corwen, follow A5 till you see Country Cooks on the right; Llangwm turning is on the left.