



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



South west Wales itinerary: the Wales Coast Path

The Wales Coast Path launched in 2012 and stretches along 870 miles of stunning landscape, passing many historic sites and places of interest along the way, including some of Cadw's fascinating castles and palaces.

If you're in south west Wales follow the coastal path to **Kidwelly Castle** and **Laugharne Castle**, to learn about the stories of the Lords of the Southern March and the effect their activities had on the making of Wales, or discover the extent of the wealth and power medieval bishops enjoyed at **Lamphey Bishop's Palace** and **St David Bishop's Palace**...



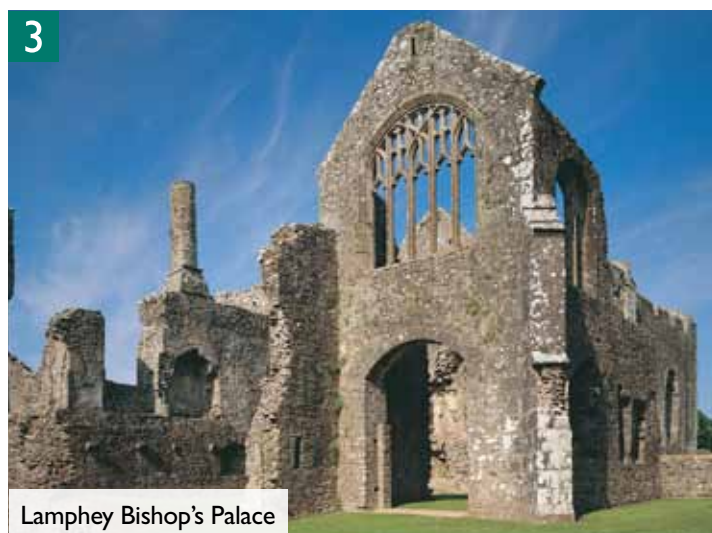
Kidwelly Castle

Kidwelly Castle is a chronicle in stone of medieval fortress technology. This strong and splendid castle was developed over more than three centuries of Anglo-Welsh warfare. The half-moon shape stems from the original 12th century stockaded fortress, and is defended by the River Gwendraeth on one side and a deep crescent-shaped ditch on the other. In 1136 Princess Gwenllïan (wife of the Welsh lord of Deheubarth) died in battle against the Normans who held Kidwelly at the time. If you want a truly medieval moment, catch a glimpse of Kidwelly shrouded in early morning mist.



Laugharne Castle

Picturesque **Laugharne Castle** stands on a low ridge overlooking the wide Taf estuary, and is one of a string of fortresses controlling the ancient route along the south Wales coast. The north-west tower's unusual stone dome roof is a towering feat not to be missed, nor are the spectacular views from the battlements. In more recent years it has become a site of inspiration for some of Wales's literary greats. Dylan Thomas wrote his series of short stories, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog* and Richard Hughes wrote his novel, *In Hazard*, in the castle's gazebo.



Lamphey Bishop's Palace

A site born from the vision of the dynamic Henry de Gower, the bishop of St Davids from 1328 to 1347, **Lamphey Bishop's Palace** was the retreat of choice for medieval bishops seeking solace from the everyday stresses of Church and State. Lamphey's gilded existence came to an abrupt end when it was handed over to Henry VII in 1546. Its great hall and inner gatehouse are particularly fine architectural achievements. It is also a site of more modern history, used as a base for RAF and US Army units during World War II.

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St Davids Bishop's Palace

Henry de Gower was also responsible for **St Davids Bishop's Palace**, the most impressive medieval bishop's palace in Wales. The whole site sends shivers down the spine, evoking a period when religion was the order of the day and bishops were powerbrokers par excellence. The palace is lavishly decorated with finely carved stonework. Check out the great hall, the most impressive chamber in the palace, which created the perfect backdrop for banquets. And be sure to explore the extensive undercrofts and majestic porch, an entrance befitting the majesty of such an iconic building.

While on the Wales Coast Path other sites to look out for include **Llansteffan Castle**, the **Carew Cross** and **St Non's Chapel**.

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The journey time from Kidwelly – Laugharne is approx. 30 minutes, from Laugharne – Lamphey approx. 40 mins and from Lamphey - St. Davids is approx. 55 minutes