

At the “Cwm Rheidol” sign, just below on the left, are two stone pillars that once supported a trough, carrying water from a leat to power the machinery at mine workings lower down. The workings have all but disappeared and the spoil heaps are covered with shrubs and trees.

Past the filter beds a concrete footbridge crosses the river on the left at a deep fissure carved into the rock. Climb steeply left to enter the Nature Reserve once again and continue on the lower path at an easier gradient. From a large oak tree, the mine workings opposite can now be distinguished. The path enters conifers once more immediately after passing a ruin. The river is close by now and the course of the leat can be seen below on the left. Pass a stand of American red oaks then, at a junction, take the right fork and climb the steep path traversing the bank through noble fir trees.

Take a sharp right then left turn, leading to the railway line which weaves a more gentle course up the valley. Cross the line with care and take the left track which contours the valley in a fine location, looking down and across to the route just taken.

Steep waterfalls tumble down into the valley below as the path steers into the woods to cross a tributary further upstream. At the footbridge, the remains of an old turbine house that once gave power to some Devil’s Bridge residents in years gone by can still be seen.

A steep climb leads out to the upland pasture once more, the three tops of Ty’n y Castell behind. As the path skirts the woodland edge, make for a kissing gate in the corner next to the railway line. Steep zigzags through birch trees lead to an exposed traverse above the railway track. Swing right into a field where a giant waymark post points to the road, which is reached through a wooden gate beside a bungalow.

Turn left towards the village, pass by the war memorial to reach the shops and the railway station. The hotel is lower down by the famous three bridges.

Cover image: Nant yr Arian (© DJG Owen)

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Borth to Ystwyth Trail Path NANT YR ARIAN to DEVIL'S BRIDGE Section 3 of 6



Distance & time: 10km (6 miles); 4 hours.

Terrain: Remote upland pasture, moorland and wooded valley.

Suitable for: Experienced walkers as there are very steep sections around the Rheidol Valley. There are remote sections of upland pasture and moorland.

Grade: This walk may involve steep ascents and descents but not prolonged. **This is a grade B walk** graded according to the following criteria:

- A Strenuous: Ability to walk on rough terrain for up to 6 hours with a light rucksack
- B Moderate: Ability to walk on rough terrain for up to 4 hours with a light rucksack
- C Easy: Ability to walk on rough terrain for up to 2 hours with a light rucksack

Start: Bwlch Nant yr Arian SN 718 813

Finish: Devil's Bridge

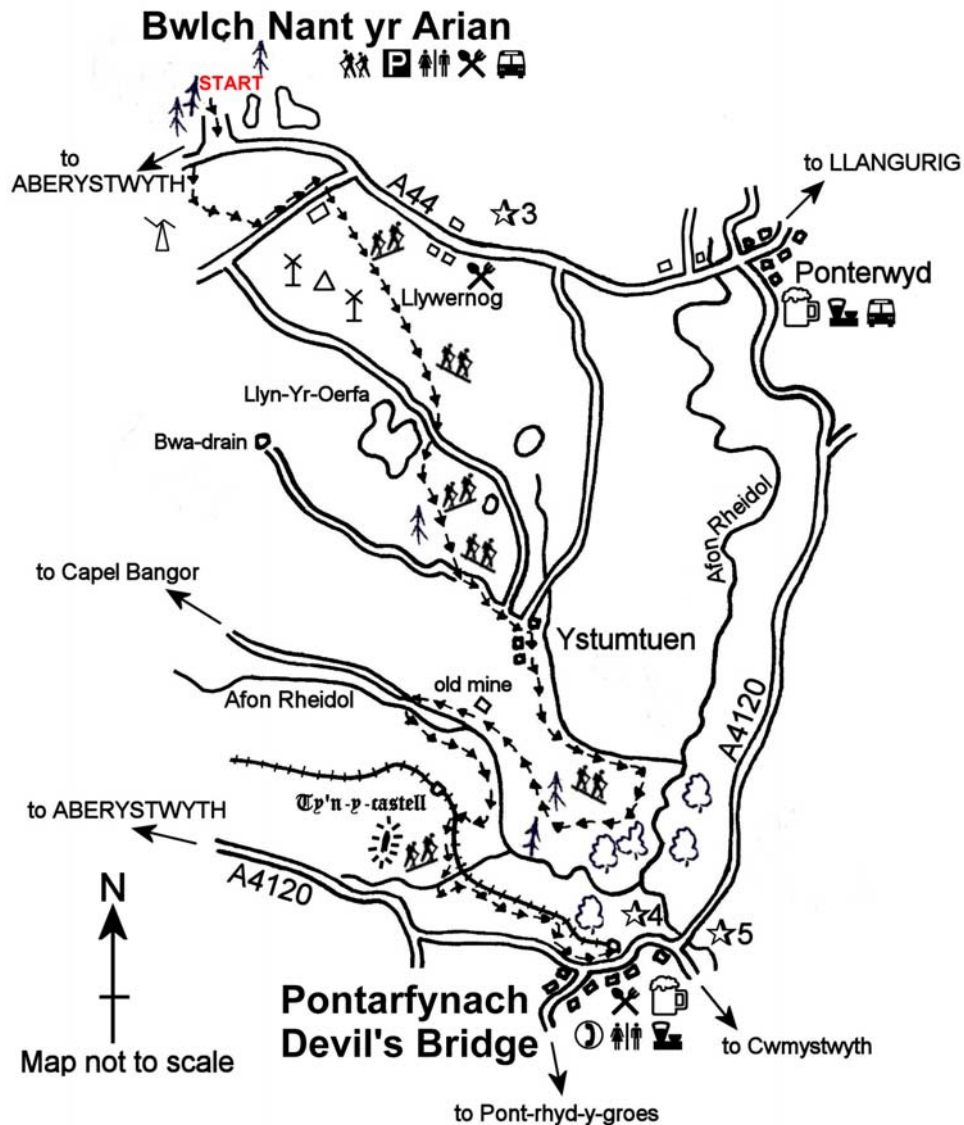
Refreshments: Bwlch Nant yr Arian and Devil's Bridge

Public Toilets: Bwlch Nant yr Arian (Summer 10-5; Winter 11-dusk) and Devil's Bridge

Public transport: ☎ Tourist Information Centre 01970 612125 or ☎ Traveline Cymru on 0870 608 2608.

Maps: OS Landranger 135 Aberystwyth & Machynlleth; OS Explorer Map 213 Aberystwyth & Cwm Rheidol

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Cross the main road from the Forest Visitor centre with care. Cross a stile and, crossing the track that leads to a mast, climb up to the ridge on the skyline,. Follow the ridge up, keeping to the left, the eastern flank. Contour left to a waymark post in a dip. Go left, with the turbines ahead of you, over another small ridge to a stile beside a gate.

Continue down to another stile and turn left on the minor road towards an electricity substation. Just below this a track leads down right to a stile. Follow the track which fords a stream to another stile on the near horizon. The overhead cables take electricity generated from the Rheidol Power Station and the wind turbines above into the national grid.

Follow the track taking a rising traverse up the hillside. The track meets a fence and follows it for a while just below the turbines. A worthwhile diversion here - for it is open access land - is to head up to the trigonometry point on the hill to your right for a stunning panoramic view of the area. Below, to your left, is the small hamlet of Llywernog with its mining museum. Where the fence loses height and heads towards a shelter belt, veer off right and make for a stile on the immediate horizon. Strike out to cross the ridge, the turbines to your right.

Pass by a pond nestled in the hillside and drop down left along a delightful ridge to gain a lane that descends steeply to the road. Go straight ahead to cross the dam that contains Llyn-Yr Oerfa. Once across, take the left fork and follow the obvious track which contours the hillside. Where the track swings up right, cross the stile and follow a rough path left below conifers. At a corner, where three fences meet, cross a stile on your left and follow the path alongside, but now outside of, the plantation. Pass through another stile in a fine location offering views over Devil's Bridge and beyond. Descend steeply to the road below, aiming for a stile beside a small square windbreak of conifers.

Proceed left down the lane towards the village of Ystumtuen. Just after you pass the village sign, turn right at the junction and follow the road down through the farm Penrhiw. After the tarmac ends, continue along the track to begin the long descent into the Rheidol Valley.

The river Tuen lies below on the left. It eventually enters the Afon Rheidol at a steep waterfall. Go straight on through a gate at a junction. A prominent hill fort, Ty'n y Castell, comes into view on the right, on the other side of the Rheidol valley. Follow this delightful path down until a stile is reached in the corner, at the top of an oak woodland, next to the ruins of a dry stone wall.

Enter the Coed Rheidol National Nature Reserve and follow the fence down right with the famous Mynach Falls opposite. Take care on the narrow path through stunted sessile oaks. Leave the Nature Reserve at a stile and descend steeply down through pine trees to meet a good track leading right with the river below on the left. The house in a field below on the left was traditionally built using wattle and daub with lime render, the oak frame is hewn from trees chosen from the surrounding woodland. Continue down, the river to the left, past stone cottages on the right, until the roar of the river increases and the tack surface turns to tarmac.