



Manorbier circular walk, Pembrokeshire

Unspoilt coastline featuring a 12th century castle, Mesolithic burial chamber and church with deep Celtic connections.

"Different to the other walks along the south coast, with dramatic red sandstone cliffs (in contrast to the limestone of Stackpole and Bosherton) and the pretty, historic village of Manorbier."

LIBBY TAYLOR, SENIOR NATIONAL PARK RANGER
(PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK)

Start and Finish:

Manorbier beach car park.

Distance:

3 miles or 5 km circular walk.



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Manorbier castle overlooking St James the Great church



Manorbier

Along the way...

This circular walk starts in the shadow of Manorbier's magnificent 12th century castle. Your first step is to visit St James the Great church, by heading out of the car park's bottom left corner and taking a left over a small stone bridge and left again along a wooded lane.

From the church you can either retrace your steps to the beach or continue through the churchyard to join the Wales Coast Path at King's Quoit, a Mesolithic burial chamber with mighty capstone.

As you travel along the coast, you'll walk through some of Pembrokeshire's wildest and most remote-feeling landscape, with stunning sea views of Stackpole behind you and Caldey Island out in front.

If you have time it's worth taking a detour down a steep path down to Presipe beach to get a better look at the fossil-rich red sandstone cliffs (or you can head north inland here on the public right of way if you feel like a shorter walk).

From Presipe, carry on along the path until it joins the road. Here turn left for a short distance along the road before turning left again before turning off onto the footpath just before the children's play area and following it back to Manorbier.

About the Sacred Heritage Place:

The early Celtic Christians' knack for picking the most striking and inspirational spots for their churches is clearly illustrated by St James the Great church's setting overlooking the sea and sands of Manorbier beach.

It was founded as a monastery in the 6th century by St Pŷr, the first abbot of Caldey Island and a man who left lasting marks on this part of Pembrokeshire – Manorbier in Old Welsh means 'belonging to Pŷr', while Caldey's Welsh name is 'Ynys Bŷr' or 'Pŷr's Island'.

The stone church with prominent west tower that stands here today was rebuilt in the 12th century, at the same time as neighbouring Manorbier Castle was erected by the de Barri family. It's notable for its long nave, a distinctive Anglo-French feature which reflects the Norman influence on Pembrokeshire after their invasion in 1093.

Inside you'll find a medieval painted porch roof, a scalloped Norman font and the effigy of a knight (a de Barri of Manorbier Castle) which dates to 1325. There are also more modern features, including stained-glass windows created by Mrs P. Hughes of Manorbier Newton. Depicting the landscape and the sea, they are a clear and colourful link with the church's Celtic roots.

Need to know:

You'll find parking, public toilets, shops, cafés and a pub in Manorbier.

You can also travel via the 349 bus service or catch the train to Manorbier station, about 1.5 miles or 2.4 km from the start of the walk.