



The Cambrian Coast Line

One of the most scenic railway lines in the whole of Britain, the Cambrian Coast Line is a superb way to explore the beautiful and varied Gwynedd coastline.

Discover busy seaside resorts, tiny coastal villages, steam railways, vast sandy beaches and no end of views to remember.

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Tips for Travellers

Planning Your Journey

Trains are fairly infrequent (especially on a Sunday), so be sure to check the timetable before you set off. You can check for any temporary changes to train times by visiting www.nationalrail.co.uk or calling 0845 748 4950.

The full Cambrian Line timetable is available:

- From most staffed stations served by Arriva Trains Wales,
- As a PDF from www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk or www.networkrail.co.uk, and
- Through the post by ringing Arriva on 0870 900 0772.

Using a 'Request Stop'

Most of the smaller stations are request stops. To board at such a station, give the driver an appropriate signal in plenty of time, just like with a bus. To leave the train, speak to the conductor well before reaching your stop.

Changing Trains at Dovey Junction

Remember, Dovey Junction is a platform in the middle of a field! Occasionally timings mean you have to change trains there, but if there's a long gap between trains you're better off changing at Machynlleth.

Tickets and Fares

A **Cambrian Coaster Day Ranger** ticket offers unlimited travel along the line after 09.15 on a weekday, or all day on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday.

Adult.....	£9.80
Child (age 5 to 15 inclusive).....	£4.90
Railcard holder.....	£5.95

Prices subject to slight change, but correct at 23rd February 2012.

You can also buy **North Wales Rover** tickets valid on buses as well as trains, priced from £9 to £25 depending on how far you want to explore.

Tickets can be bought from staffed stations, or on board the train if you board at a station without a ticket office.

Good value **Off Peak Day Return** tickets are also available for simple return journeys. Groups of three or more adults travelling together should ask about **GroupWales** tickets which offer further reductions.

If you wish to visit Portmeirion, or to travel on any of the many steam railways along the route, do show the ticket office your mainline railway ticket, as they may give you a discount.

For the latest prices, and fares from further afield, consult www.nationalrail.co.uk or call 0845 748 4950.

Where's My Train?

You can check if your train is on time using Live Departure Boards on your mobile phone:

Mobile Internet

Visit the National Rail site at www.nationalrail.co.uk – it works on smart phones and older models alike.

By Text Message

Text 'dep' then a station name to 84950 for details of the next trains due and how they're running (25p/message).

Bus Links

For bus times, call Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.info. Useful bus routes include: **X32 Aberystwyth-Machynlleth-Dolgellau-Porthmadog-Bangor** and **X94 Barmouth-Dolgellau-Wrexham**

Hotels and Accommodation

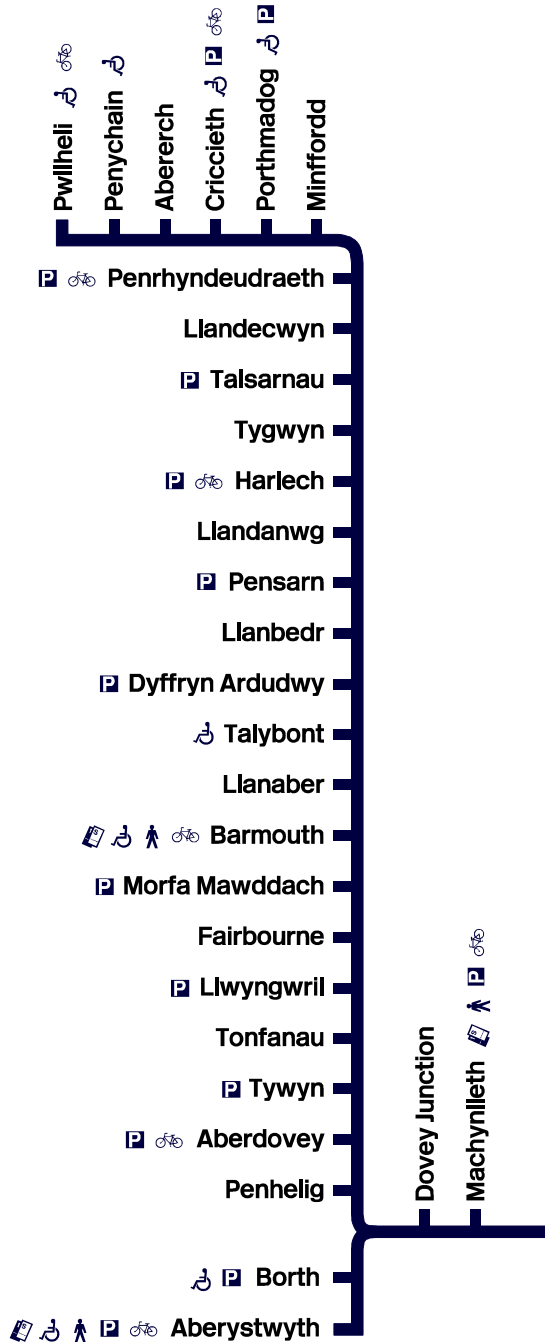
Need somewhere to stay along the route, or anywhere else in the UK?

Visit: www.aberystwyth.org.uk/hotels



Crossing Barmouth Bridge

Your Route Guide



Station Facilities Key

- Ticket Office**
At other stations, buy tickets on train.
- Wheelchair accessible**
Station designated as accessible by Arriva Trains Wales. Other stations may be accessible with assistance.
- Toilets at station or immediately adjacent**
Public toilets also available in many of the towns and villages served by the railway.
- Station car park**
- Bicycle parking**

Aberystwyth

'Aber' is Mid Wales' main seaside resort, a long-established university town and an important administrative centre at the heart of Cardigan Bay.

The town features a mix of unusual attractions such as an electric **cliff railway**, a Victorian **camera obscura**, Wales's **National Library** and a sweeping **promenade** and beach.

This characterful town also enjoys a great variety of pubs, cafés, restaurants and intriguing specialist shops.

For the fullest information about this excellent town, visit www.aberystwyth.org.uk

Borth

A village resort that comes to life in the summertime when its sprawling caravan parks fill with holidaymakers.

The sand and shingle beaches are popular with families and just five minutes from the station. At low tide you may also see the remains of an ancient submerged forest, which some like to say are all that's left of **Cantre'r Gwaelod**, a legendary Welsh land lost to the sea through the carelessness of its night watchman.

Within Borth you'll also find the **Animalarium**, a zoo in miniature with a mixture of exotic and domestic species.

Dovey Junction

Once equipped with a signal box and a station buffet, this windswept station is now little more than a platform in the middle of a field.

Should you fancy hopping off the train here for novelty value, comparative civilisation can be reached using the path from the end of platform 2, though you will get odd looks from fellow passengers.

A twenty minute walk from the station (turn right upon reaching the main road) takes you to the village of Eglwysfach for the **Ynyshir Nature Reserve** or, a little further on, the picturesque **Dyfi Furnace**.



The Dyfi Furnace

Machynlleth

A typical Mid Wales market town that has managed to hold on to its own individual character.

The town centre bristles with small-town shops, pubs and

cafés, with barely a chain store in sight. Traditional bakers, butchers and household stores stand side-by-side with more unusual shops selling crafts, souvenirs and antiques.

Places to explore include the **Tabernacl** art gallery, housed in a former chapel, and the home of Owain Glyndwr's 15th century **parliament**.

A short bus ride north can take you to the **Centre for Alternative Technology**, a pioneering project that's been promoting more environmentally-sensitive living since the 1970s. Now a leading tourist attraction, with its own water-powered cliff railway.

Penhelig and Aberdovey

Two stations located at either end of **Aberdovey** (Aberdyfi).

Aberdovey is a small resort popular for sailing, with a couple of interesting little shops and has a handful of places to eat and drink, too.

The large sandy beach and dunes near Aberdovey station enjoy superb views across the **Dovey Estuary** to Ynyslas. Also worth an explore is the estuary path which clambers along the rocky banks of the Dovey (or Dyfi) River from the gardens by Penhelig station.



View towards Aberdovey from the rocks near Penhelig

Tywyn

One of the larger settlements along the coast, Tywyn is another resort town with a busy high street.

The seafront, with its beach, crazy golf and amusement arcades is a few hundred metres from the station, past the two huge radio masts which relay BBC Radio Wales and BBC Radio Five Live to listeners along Cardigan Bay.

Tywyn's also the starting point for the **Talylyn Railway**, a preserved narrow-gauge steam railway that chuffs off into the hillside towards Abergynolwyn, seven miles away. The railway's calling points include the popular **Dolgoch Falls**.

Tonfanau

One of the country's least-used stations, Tonfanau came close to being closed in 1995. It doesn't really serve anywhere anymore, though perhaps it could be an OK picnic spot, what with the nice views of Tywyn.

All that you can see here are the remains of a long-gone **army base**. Built in 1938 and demolished in the mid 1980s, a couple of walls and some foundations remain.



Abandoned and derelict military buildings at Tonfanau

Llwyngwril

Another of Gwynedd's small coastal villages - some houses, a school and a couple of shops.

A climb up onto the hill behind the village offers a wonderful view out to sea, with the mountains of North Wales stretching into the distance. What's more, the view isn't spoiled by ugly buildings on the valley floor like at Harlech!

If you want to get off the train here and go for a wander, you'll find that Fairbourne's just under three miles' walk away. Tonfanau is around five miles away - the walk is sometimes pretty and sometimes dull, but it's always interesting to be the only person boarding there.

Fairbourne

The quieter neighbour to Barmouth, with a two mile stretch of sandy beach. To the south of the village, the beach is still edged with concrete wartime fortifications.

Fairbourne is the terminus of the miniature **Fairbourne & Barmouth Steam Railway**, which runs from the mainline station, along the seafront and then along a pier out into the Mawddach Estuary. From the pier, there's a summertime ferry you can catch across the water to Barmouth.

Morfa Mawddach

Once a railway junction with a route inland past Bala to northeast Wales, there's little to see here nowadays. Now, the old railway has been converted into a cycle path and it's possible to follow the **Mawddach Trail** along the estuary to Dolgellau.

You can also walk across the toll bridge shared with the railway as an alternative way to arrive in Barmouth. The views inland along the **estuary** are excellent on a clear day and walking gives you a bit more time to take everything in than when on the train.

Barmouth

Barmouth is one of the most popular destinations on the Cambrian Coast and during the holiday season it is very busy with tourists, primarily from the West Midlands.

It's not a huge resort, but it boasts all the usual attractions such as a big **sandy beach**, lots of fast food and ice cream places and amusement arcades. There are also a couple of

interesting shops to browse.

With several cafés, restaurants and pubs, Barmouth is a good place to stop off for a meal or a drink during your day.

Away from the bustling seafront, the town seems to be built almost vertically up the rocky hillside and there are lots of paths that lead to viewpoints high up above the town.

The open hillside of **Dinas Olau** was the first piece of land to be owned by the National Trust.



Barmouth viewed from the cliffs above

Llanaber

Llanaber is just past the northern end of Barmouth. This is further than most of the tourists get, but is within walking distance along the sea wall and beach.

It's not a great beach for exploring as it's all huge rocks - no good for stretching out on, but perhaps a nice quiet alternative to Barmouth for enjoying the sea and sun.

A cemetery just above the station has memorials to many of Barmouth's former residents.

Talybont

This small station serves the village of Tal-y-Bont, with its various caravan parks.

Dyffryn Ardudwy

Inland lies the village of the same name, which is home to some well-preserved **burial chambers** dating from around 3500BC.

A mile to the west lies **Morfa Dyffryn**, a sandy, dune-backed beach that stretches several miles along the coast. The beach is well known for its long-established and now officially-recognised kilometre-long naturist area.

Llanbedr

Places of note near to this tiny station include **Shell Island**, about two miles away. This little peninsula is noted for its variety of shells and wildlife, as well as its campsite.

Also nearby is the site of **RAF Llanbedr**, an airfield constructed during World War II and used in more recent times for testing of unmanned aircraft. Closed since 2004, the Welsh Assembly Government is seeking a commercial use for the site.

Pensarn

This small halt lies alongside the estuary. Being only about a mile from the adjacent stations of Llanbedr and Llandanwg, it may be a good end-point for a short walk.

Llandanwg

The station here provides easy access to a village with a popular little beach, as well as a small 13th century church.

Harlech

The well-known **castle** at Harlech is a magnificent landmark, perched high up on the hillside looking out to sea. If you wish, you can pay to go inside and explore the remains, as well as admiring the exterior from outside.

If you've made the steep climb up to the castle, you can also explore the village - there are a couple of small shops that could be worth a browse, and there's also a **viewpoint** looking out over the Irish Sea that is **mentioned in the Welsh 'Mabinogion' legends**.



Harlech's mighty castle looms large

Tygwyn

A particularly quiet station at a rural level crossing. Within walking distance of Talsarnau station, either along the main road or footpaths through nearby fields.

Talsarnau

Serves the little village of the same name. Various footpaths cross the hillside behind the village.

Take the path in the opposite direction to the village to the estuary for a view of **Portmeirion** village, clinging to the hillside across the water. It's also possible to walk across to **Ynys Giffan**, an uninhabited island in the estuary—although be aware that the tides can make this dangerous and even impossible at times.

Llandecwyn

A particularly tiny station—small enough that only one door of the train will fit on the platform. Located on a sandy estuary, just across the road bridge from Penrhyndeudraeth.

Also within walking distance of Talsarnau station.



The tiny little Llandecwyn station

Penrhyndeudraeth

The station serves a large, though not especially touristy, village uphill from the station with a few local shops. The sandy estuary here is rather spectacularly punctuated by the huge electricity pylons which march off in the direction of Trawsfynydd.

The former explosives works which closed in 1997 has now become a nature reserve noted for nightjars

Also within easy walking distance of Minffordd station.

Minffordd for Portmeirion

Minffordd station has an interchange with the Ffestiniog Railway from Porthmadog to Blaenau Ffestiniog—although most visitors would choose to board at Porthmadog instead of here.

Close to the station is the Garth Quarry, which has existed since 1870 and still supplies stone for roads and railways.

This is also the closest station to the colourful, dream-like village of **Portmeirion**, which is just a mile away. Built by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis between 1925 and 1975, this truly delightful Italianate village is a glorious jumble of attractive colourful buildings arranged around a central piazza.

Portmeirion is well worth the modest admission charge for a day visit, with buildings and gardens to explore, as well as shops and places to eat. It's also possible to stay in the hotel or one of the village houses here.

Porthmadog

A small but busy little town with a marina and harbour and a thriving Welsh community.

The town was founded following William Madocks's building of the **Cob**, a sea wall used to reclaim land from the sea.

Two separate narrow-gauge steam railways start in the town. The **Ffestiniog Railway** travels over 13 miles through the mountains to Blaenau Ffestiniog. Meanwhile, the **Welsh**

Highland Railway now connects through to Caernarfon, 28 miles away.

Criccieth

A pleasant, large village neighbouring Porthmadog.

Visit to walk along the seafront and beach, remembering to pick up an ice cream from locally-famous Cadwalader's (also found in Porthmadog).

Criccieth Castle is perched on a hill above the beach and although somewhat smaller than Harlech's it's still quite a nice, picturesque little place.



Colourful street scene at Portmeirion

Penychain

This station once served a large Butlins holiday camp. Now, it serves a caravan park and the smaller Haven park.

Abererch

Small station situated close to the village's beach on the Llŷn Peninsula.

Pwllheli

Pwllheli is a busy and strongly Welsh-speaking market town on the Llŷn Peninsula.

The town has the usual collection of shops and a market, along with two beaches and a marina.

Welsh-nationalist party Plaid Cymru was founded in the town in 1925.