

The Copper Coast Geopark

County Waterford, Ireland

Trail card - Stradbally

Walk 1 (c) - The cove

It is worth stopping as one walks downhill to look at the beautiful thatched cottage on the left. In 1992 it won a special award as the best thatched cottage in Ireland. At the foot of the hill is the bridge over the river Tay and immediately after it on the left a gate leading into the unique cove (see front cover photo).

The beach is long and narrow with the sea some distance out even at high tide. Bounded by interesting rocks on the right, its distinguishing feature is the way the river emerges from the trees and runs as a separate entity along the east side of the beach. Enquiries can be made locally about cliff walks here. The double lime kiln here dates to the agricultural improvements of the late 1700s.



> The double lime kiln (above), Ballyvooney (below)



Walk 2 - Ballyvooney circuit - about 1h

Go downhill from the sundial and take the first turn left. A suburban road leads down to Ballyvooney Bay where one may sit and enjoy the view before reading the information boards. Continue uphill along a quiet country road and straight on where it meets the main coast road. At this junction on the right is an award-winning garden. Turn left. There is little traffic to bother one as one dips into a tranquil valley and up again. A sharp turn left brings one back to Stradbally.



> Woodhouse

Walk 3 - The Durrow circuit - about 2h

Downhill and passing the Cove, a canopy of trees closes overhead. There is a record of 150,000 of such trees being planted here in the 1740s and many of these are the originals. They were part of the Uniacke Estate and the main residence, Woodhouse, may be glimpsed at in the Tay valley on the right and through the spectacular wrought iron entrance on the top of the hill.

The quiet road continues through farm-land and at the next cross-road, turn right and bear right again on the main coast road. On the left is a dramatic rail bridge, crossing the steep Dalligan river valley. The disused Waterford-Dungarvan line comes close to the walk opposite the pub at Durrow and one can see where it disappears into a tunnel here. The line is being converted into a signposted walk.

Proceeding through open countryside for a while one re-crosses the river Tay and beyond it is a small disused quarry with a mass-rock. Immediately beyond are the mature trees of the Woodhouse estate followed by the quarrying of greenish volcanic andesite. The next turn right and right again leads back to Stradbally via the Catholic church and the Barron hall (see plaques on walls for explanations).

Cover photo: Stradbally cove

Photo credits: Richard Cutbill (cover, Woodhouse), Sophie Prêteseille (all others)



For Further Information

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a story captured in stone



> Walk 1 - Short walks from the village

Start at the Geological Sundial in the square. Check the time and learn a little about the rocks of the Copper Coast from the pedestal.



> The Geological Sundial in the square

> Walk 1 (a) - The village

The prettiness of the village strikes all visitors and indeed it has had a remarkable run of successes in the "Tidy Towns" competition, as well as representing Ireland in the Entente Florale of 1990, being gold medal winner in 2002. A number of the houses here are listed for preservation. Walk anywhere to enjoy its charms but do respect people's privacy and desire to keep the village litter free.

> Walk 1 (b) - Medieval and modern church

A short walk westward from the village street, past some nice houses brings one to St James churches. The present Church of Ireland dates from the early 1800s and is typical of such churches built for £500 each out of a fund called "First Fruits". The ruins beside it date from several periods. The tower appears to have been rebuilt, because the lower masonry is much better than the rest. It was probably the priest's residence during a time of warfare that ravaged the area between about 1450 and 1550. It is attached to the oldest part of the church (the chancel), probably built in the 1200s to judge from the round headed windows. The main body of the church, the nave, was added later and the entire building fell into disuse after the reformation in the mid 1500s. Burials then took place in the ruins. The churches are sign-posted from the village and beautifully set amongst mature trees. However, the ruins themselves are dangerous and it is safer to view them only from the outside.



> The ruins of the medieval church

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