

Pennan, Crovie and Gardenstown Itinerary

An itinerary which will take you through three picturesque fishing communities clinging below steep cliffs.

1. Pennan

The sparkling blue waters of Pennan Bay ebb and flow, in and out, of the tidal harbour. The cliffs behind provide a dramatic backdrop to one of the prettiest of Scottish coastal villages. Pennan is fondly associated with the film 'Local Hero' starring Burt Lancaster which was filmed here in the 1980s and which still has the listed red telephone box used by Lancaster in the film. Fans from all over the world still come to be filmed in it making a call. Visit the Pennan Inn, directly opposite the famous red phonebox. Enjoy a snack or coffee in the cosy bar or a delicious meal in the newly refurbished Smugglers' restaurant.

2. Cullykhan Bay

Head slightly further down the coastal path until you come across the stunning Cullykhan Bay, a popular sandy bay to the west of Pennan.. On a promontory above the bay lie the remains of the Bronze Age Fort Fiddes which has been described as one of the earliest industrial site in Europe. Archaeologists have found beads which suggest that the fort traded with continental Europe possibly as far back as 700 BC. From Fort Fiddes one has spectacular views over the sheer cliff face of Lion Head and the deep cliff side gash of Hell's Lum which leads to a sea tunnel drilled through solid rock. Cullykhan Bay is signposted off the B9031 and there is a car park with footpaths to the beach and the fort. There is also a rougher path, requiring care, to Hell's Lum.

3. Crovie

A short drive will bring you to the small village of Crovie. This picturesque, seaside village comprises a single row of sea front houses. The village is situated on such a narrow ledge that any cars have to be left at the south of the village making Crovie a tranquil escape from the every day hustle and bustle.

4. Gardenstown

Head south to Gardenstown, a small seaside village full of steep winding streets. On the hillside to the west, and visible from most parts of Gardenstown, are the remains of the Church of St John the Evangelist. This predates the village, being built in 1513, and celebrates an even earlier event, the defeat of the Danes here in 1004. On a warm day you can fish from the sea wall, enjoy a stroll along the water's edge or simply sit and enjoy the peace and quiet.



5. Troup Head

Sir David Attenborough described Troup Head as 'a world class bird reserve'. Troup Head is one of only two mainland gannet colonies in the UK and features dramatic, expansive panoramic views along the Moray Firth and beyond. This important seabird colony contains significant populations of fulmars, gannets, shags, kittiwakes, guillemots, razorbills and there are even some puffins. You may also see the famous Moray Firth dolphins, minke whales and an abundance of natural wildlife.