



## Mid & South East Cornwall

### Lundy Bay & Doyden Point



Here's a quick there-and-back linear walk - rare for this column, which always prefers to find a circular route if possible. But the coastal glories to be found between Lundy Bay and Port Quin on the North Cornish littoral are too good to miss, despite the fact that there's no obvious return route inland.

Entering the leafy secret domain high above Port Quin Bay is somehow reminiscent of one of those Famous Five type adventures kids used to read sometime in the last century. The path that descends from the Pentireglaze lane in the north of the parish of St Minver Highlands seems to offer a promise of excitement and adventure.

You'll see the path across the lane from the National Trust car park, which offers an excellent base from which to explore the handsome stretch of coast that is centred around Lundy Bay.

If you look for this bay on the OS map you won't find it, however the chart does mention Lundy Hole which is a massive sea cave just to the west of the cove.

It is one of the first things you will see once you've walked down the leafy lane and passed the vertiginous walls of Markham's Quay - and it is exactly the sort of spectacular and adventuresome place you somehow expect to see down this magical lane.

Markham's Quay by the way, is nothing more than a cleft in the cliff-face. Legend has it booty used to be smuggled here, but whoever did such a deed would have required a good head for heights. It is known, however, that sand from the beach used to be hauled up the cliff face by horse-powered

*Basic walk: from the first National Trust car park on the lane that leads out to Pentireglaze near Pentire Point, follow path to coast path then east past Lundy Hole to Doyden Point and Port Quin - returning via same route.*

*Distance and going: four miles, good going, a few moderate ascents.*

*Recommended map: Ordnance Survey Explorer 106 Newquay and Padstow.*

pulleys. Lundy Hole is next door, and an awesome pit it is. Locals used to believe it was made by the Devil while he was pursuing St Minver. "Take care when visiting the site," warns a local National Trust leaflet, and quite rightly so.

Lundy Beach and neighbouring Epphaven Cove offer splendid sandy strands when the tide is out. When the tide is in bathers and beach-goers have to find a comfy space in the rocks.

The coast path links the two coves and then climbs the 200 heights of Trevan Point. The summit offers fine views on the entire sweep of Port Quin Bay - from The Rumps the island known as The Moulds in the west, to Kellan Head in the east.

The coast path now follows an old stone wall on its way east, and this is crowned by the finest swathe of sea pinks (or thrift) I have ever seen. It is the thrift equivalent of the Great Wall of China - I wouldn't be at all surprised to learn that you could see it from the moon.

Throughout this section of the walk you will be able to spy one of Britain's smallest castles. Wealthy Wadebridge businessman Samuel Symons built Doyden Castle in the late 1820s so that he and his friends could party to their hearts' content in the privacy of this wild and scenic bit of coast. The trust now runs the place as a holiday cottage and asks walkers to respect the privacy of its lucky occupants. Readers of a certain age might know the place from the TV programme *Poldark* in which the castle appeared as the home of Dwight Enys.

There was no evidence of occupancy the day I was there, so I wandered around the peninsula upon which it stands to enjoy the viewpoint of the deep rocky "fjord" that is Port Quin.

This is our final port of call before we turn on our heels and return from whence we have come. Port Quin is as comely a corner as you'll find anywhere along the north coast. Now it houses a handful of trust holiday cottages, but it was once a busy fishing port boasting a population of 94 living in 23 different homes.

Minerals were exported from the little harbour and the sheltered valley played host to several market gardens, though the annual pilchard season (August to December) is believed to have provided the lion's share of employment.

"The desertion of the village is curiously undocumented," says the Trust information leaflet, though I have heard a legend that claims the entire male population was wiped out in a terrible storm. Indeed, a maelstrom in the winter of 1697 did completely destroy the village's herring fleet, though it's not clear how many lives were lost.

You can mull over the riddle of Port Quin on the way back along the coast, happy in the knowledge that all the views you see walking in this direction are completely different to the ones you enjoyed on your way out.