



Snowdonia & North Wales

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Best Castles

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Best Heritage Railways

- ➔ Ffestiniog Railway (p753)
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Why Go?

Rugged mountain trails, historic train lines, World Heritage castles and rejuvenated seaside towns ensure North Wales holds its own against attractions down south. The region is dominated by Snowdonia National Park, where mighty peaks scrape moody skies. Protected by such a formidable mountain shield, it's little wonder that the less-visited Llyn Peninsula and the ancient island enclave of Anglesey have retained their traditional language and culture. In fact, the whole region feels properly Welsh: you'll hear the language on the street, see the Celtic legacy in the landscape, and soak up the cultural pride in galleries, museums and attractions, all the way from the beaches of the North Coast to the river-threaded heartland of northeast Wales. In many ways, North Wales distills the very essence of Welshness – just don't mention that to the folks in Cardiff.

When to Go

- ➔ May is the driest month and Llandudno celebrates the warming weather with its Victorian Extravaganza festival.
- ➔ May to September arguably gives you the best hiking weather, but the warmest months – July and August – bring crowds.
- ➔ The Snowdon train runs to the summit between Easter and November.
- ➔ In July you can shuttle between the beaches and Llangollen's International Musical Eisteddfod and Fringe Festival.
- ➔ Late autumn and early winter bring the heaviest rains, while late winter and early spring are particularly raw and bracing.



Snowdonia & North Wales Highlights

1 Exploring the coves, cliffs and neolithic remains of **Anglesey** (p754)

2 Climbing **Snowdon** (p739), Wales' highest peak – or cheating by taking the rack-and-pinion train to the top

3 Sailing across **Pontcysyllte Aqueduct** (p764), Britain's latest World Heritage Site

4 Disappearing underground into the slate caverns at **Blaenau Ffestiniog** (p736)

5 Witnessing the fearsome beauty and strength of **Caernarfon Castle** (p746)

6 Taking an unforgettable coast-to-coast journey on the narrow-gauge **Welsh Highland Railway** (p753)

7 Revelling in all things Victorian – pier, promenade and Mr Punch – at the seaside resort of **Llandudno** (p758)

8 Gazing towards the holy island of Bardsey from end-of-the-world headland **Braich-y-Pwll** (p750)