



PEMBROKESHIRE

3 PERFECT DAYS

♥ DAY 1 // LOOP THE LIP

Spend the day looping around Pembrokeshire's southern lip, stopping to hang out at the beach if the weather's agreeable. Start at Tenby (p139), carry on to Manorbier (p147), stop for a cuppa at Ye Olde Worlde Cafe (p149), pop down to St Govan's Chapel (p150) and the Green Bridge of Wales (p150), watch the waves crashing at Freshwater West (p150), then loop back to Pembroke (p150). Of the five castles in the immediate vicinity, Pembroke Castle is the most impressive, so allocate at least an hour to explore.

♥ DAY 2 // ST DAVIDS DAY

Head straight for St Davids (p157), checking out the pretty harbour at Lower Solva (p161) on the way. Spend the day soaking up the charms of this tiny city, including St Davids Cathedral (p157) and landscape gallery Oriel Y Parc (p160). Stroll down to St Non's Bay (p161) to visit the holy well and ruined chapel and watch the surf pummeling the cliffs. Drive down to Whitesands Bay (p162) and take a walk around St Davids Head (p163).

♥ DAY 3 // ANCIENT STONES, GOOD FOOD

Aim to reach Newport (p168) by lunch, factoring in a few stops on the way such as Porthgain (p164), Carreg Sampson (p164), Pwll Deri (p164) and Strumble Head (p165). Check into your accommodation (p335) and book for dinner (p169); for a small town, Newport has excellent sleeping and eating options. Little Carreg Coetan (p169) is a good teaser for the mysterious sites nearby. Visit its big sister Pentre Ifan (p170), Iron Age fort Castell Henllys (p171) and Nevern's bleeding yew and Celtic crosses (p170).

SOUTH PEMBROKESHIRE

South Pembrokeshire boasts some of Wales' best sandy beaches and most spectacular limestone formations and makes an impressive starting point for the Pembrokeshire Coast Path. Once known as Little England Beyond Wales, it was divided from the north by the Landsker Line – a physical and then a linguistic barrier roughly following the old Norman frontier. The divide is less pronounced now, but there's a noticeable English feel to places like Tenby, especially in summer, when the masses descend with their buckets and spades, building miniature replicas of the castles their ancestors once used to keep the Welsh at bay. Those sturdy fortifications are still visible in Tenby, Manorbier, Carew and Haverfordwest, reaching their apotheosis at Pembroke Castle.

TENBY (DINBYCH Y PYSGOD)

☎ 01834 / pop 4900

Perched on a headland with sandy beaches either side, Tenby is a postcard-maker's dream. Houses are painted from the pastel palette of a classic fishing village, interspersed with the white elegance of Georgian mansions. The main part of town is still constrained by its Norman-built walls, funnelling holidaymakers through medieval streets lined with pubs, ice-creameries and gift shops. In the off-season, without the tackiness of the promenade-and-pier beach towns, it tastefully returns to being a sleepy little place. In the summer months it has a boisterous, boozy holiday-resort feel, with packed pubs seemingly all blasting out Status Quo simultaneously.

Tenby flourished in the 15th century as a centre for the textile trade, exporting cloth in exchange for salt and wine. Clothmaking declined in the 18th century, but the town soon reinvented itself as a fashionable watering place. The arrival of the railway in the 19th century sealed its future as a resort, and William Paxton (owner of the Middleton estate in Carmarthenshire, now home to the National Botanic Garden of Wales; p132) developed a saltwater spa here. Anxiety over a possible French invasion of the Milford Haven waterway led to the construction in 1869 of a fort on St Catherine's Island.

Among those who have taken inspiration or rest here are Horatio Nelson, Jane Austen, George Eliot, JMW Turner, Beatrix Potter and Roald Dahl. The artist Augustus John was born here, and he and his sister Gwen lived here during their early life.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

EMERGENCIES // Police station (☎ 0845 330 2000; Warren St)

TOURIST OFFICES // National park centre (☎ 845040; South Pde; 🕒 9.30am–5pm daily Apr–Sep, 10am–4.30pm Mon–Sat Oct–Mar) **Tourist office** (☎ 842402; Upper Park Rd; 🕒 9.30am–5pm Mon–Fri, 10am–4pm Sat & Sun Easter–Oct, 10am–4pm Mon–Sat Nov–Easter)

ORIENTATION

The town's main landmark is the prominent headland of Castle Hill, site of the Norman stronghold. Tenby Harbour lies to its west, with the old town rising steeply above it. The old town is bounded to the west by the city walls, which run north–south along South Pde and St Florence Pde.

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