



SOUTHEAST WALES & BRECON BEACONS

3 PERFECT DAYS

♥ DAY 1 // FOLLOW THE RIVERS

Spend the first part of the day exploring the lower Wye Valley, starting at the impressive castle at Chepstow (p74). Head upstream to the ghostly remains of Tintern Abbey (p77) and then continue through the wooded gorge, crossing in and out of England, until you reach Monmouth (p78). Have a quick look around but don't stop just yet. Instead, follow the River Monnow to either Skenfrith (p82) or Grosmont (p83): they're both wonderfully isolated hamlets, each with an ancient church, castle, good place to sleep and, of course, a village pub.

♥ DAY 2 // SPLENDID ISOLATION

Continuing on roads less travelled, take the A465 to Llanfihangel Crucorney (p90) and journey through the heart of the Black Mountains on the lonely road traversing the Vale of Ewyas (p90). Llanthony Priory's photogenic ruins are worth a visit. Continue over Gospel Pass, soaking up the moody moorland vistas. Drop anchor in charming Hay-on-Wye (p90), spending the afternoon rummaging through secondhand bookshops and antiques shops. Have dinner at one of the excellent pubs then check out whatever's happening at the Globe.

♥ DAY 3 // FOOD FIRST

Have a quick wander around Brecon (p97) in the morning then continue towards Abergavenny (p83). Some of Wales' best eateries lurk in country lanes along this route, so book for lunch and dinner. You can spend the afternoon walking off the calories, but if that sounds too physical, head to World Heritage-rated Blaenavon (p104). Consider Crickhowell (p94) as a place to spend the night.

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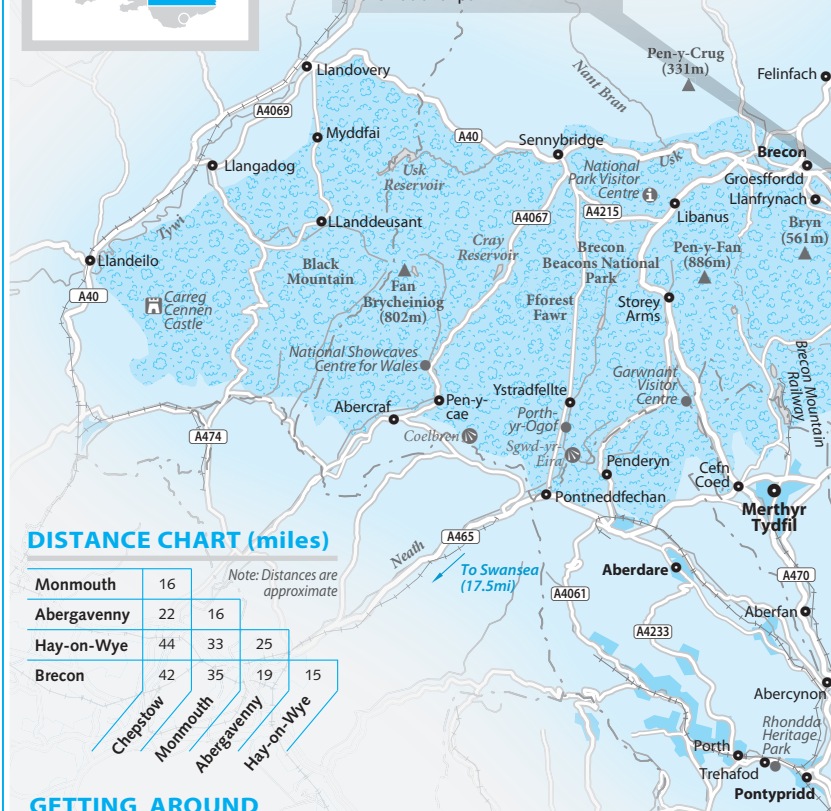


VALE OF EWYAS p90

Soak up the tranquility of this remote cleft in the Black Mountains

CRICKHOWELL p94

Settle into village life in the heart of the national park



DISTANCE CHART (miles)

Note: Distances are approximate

Monmouth	16			
Abergavenny	22	16		
Hay-on-Wye	44	33	25	
Brecon	42	35	19	15
	Chepstow	Monmouth	Abergavenny	Hay-on-Wye

GETTING AROUND

The main roads follow the river valleys up into the heart of the Brecon Beacons, including A470 along the Taff and A4042/A40 along the Usk. Cardiff trains head to Abergavenny (and on to Holyhead), Chepstow (en route to London) and Merthyr Tydfil. Regular buses connect the major towns, while the Brecon Buses have Sunday services to most corners of the national park. For bus and train timetables and journey planners, see **Traveline Cymru** (☎ 0871 200 22 33; www.traveline-cymru.info).