



Aberystwyth & Mid-Wales

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Ynyshir Hall (p201)
- ➔ Carlton Riverside (p206)
- ➔ Checkers (p216)
- ➔ Drawing Room (p207)
- ➔ Ultracomida (p196)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Harbour Master (p192)
- ➔ Beudy Banc (p200)
- ➔ Glandyfi Castle (p200)
- ➔ Gwesty Cymru (p195)

Why Go?

Bordered by the dramatic landscapes of two national parks, Mid-Wales is often overlooked. Yet this region of plunging coastline, wooded river valleys and small market towns is something of a well-kept secret. As devotees of the bilingual detective series *Hinterland* (or *Y Gwyll*, filmed throughout the region) know, this is Wales at its most rural, a sweep of undulating hills that the Industrial Revolution bypassed. Criss-crossed with country lanes and dedicated cycling and walking routes, it's an excellent area to explore under your own steam.

Apart from exuberant, student-populated Aberystwyth, you won't find much excitement in the urban areas, but in any case, it's the places in between, and the people who live in them, that are far more interesting. From struggling farmers to pioneers of sustainable development and the weird and wacky minds of Britain's smallest town, the region reveals more about the Welsh than you may ever have imagined.

When to Go

- ➔ Long days and the promise of fine weather make June to September the best time to tackle long-distance walking routes such as Offa's Dyke Path (p211), while the wonderful foliage colours make autumn perfect for walking or cycling the wooded trails around the Elan Valley.
- ➔ Festivals abound in the summer months with oddballs taking part in some of the weirdest sporting events on the planet in Llanwrtyd Wells in May, June and July; a massive celebration of rural life at the Royal Welsh Show (p206) at the beginning of July; and a look back in time at the Victorian Festival (www.victorian-festival.co.uk) in Llandrindod Wells in late August.



Aberystwyth & Mid-Wales Highlights

1 Cardigan Bay (p189)
Kayaking with dolphins and seals along this gloriously rugged stretch of coast.

2 Cambrian Mountains (p203)
Enjoying the splendid isolation and utter tranquillity of the Cambrian Mountains' deserted moorlands.

3 Elan Valley (p204)
Exploring mighty Victorian dams and picking wild berries in this lovely valley.