

Sponsored by
BRIDGESTONE

MOTORCYCLE

FOR THE LOVE OF THE RIDE

SPORT & LEISURE

**National
Parks**

Snowdonia and the Brecon Beacons



In association with



bikerheadz

bikerheadz.co.uk

LET'S CONNECT

Check out [bikerheadz.co.uk](https://www.bikerheadz.co.uk) and browse our portfolio of world-class brands and where you can get your hands on them. We've also got you covered on social media too. Give us a follow on Facebook and Instagram plus see our YouTube channel for in-depth product reviews.

   @bikerheadz

SCAN ME



192 PAGES OF THE BIGGEST BRANDS IN BIKER GEAR. DOWNLOAD YOURS TODAY!
Download the new catalogue from our website or pick one up from your local dealer.

[bikerheadz.co.uk](https://www.bikerheadz.co.uk)



bikerheadz
FUELLED BY TRANAM

Welcome to Wales

CONTENTS

- 4 **This is Snowdonia**
- 8 **Ride 1, Snowdonia**
- 12 **Ride 2, Between the Parks**
- 14 **This is the Brecon Beacons**
- 16 **Ride 3, Mountain Road**
- 20 **Ride 4, Gospel Pass**
- 24 **Getting the kit right**
- 28 **Big ride - combined route**

The two Welsh National Parks that we are focussing on in this supplement epitomise the variety of dramatic scenery and spectacular riding roads that Wales has to offer any discerning motorcyclist.

From vast open moorland to upland peat bogs, via ancient woodlands, craggy mountain tops and vertiginous valleys, there's little wonder why this part of the UK is so popular with motorcyclists – both those who are visiting for a long day ride, or those who are spending a little longer to truly discover the region.

In this supplement, we have included a route in each of the Brecon Beacons and Snowdonia, a route between the two, and a long ride that combines the best of the two parks plus the incredible scenery that also exists between them.

And for those of you who are struggling with how to pronounce some of the adjective-heavy place names, take a look at this website – www.cuhwc.org.uk/Resources/unofficial-guide-pronouncing-welsh-place-names – and then go and explore the beauty of Wales!

Enjoy the ride!

Dave Manning,
Motorcycle Sport & Leisure
Feature Writer

MOTORCYCLE

FOR THE LOVE OF THE RIDE SPORT & LEISURE

EDITOR: Mikko Nieminen
mnieminen@mortons.co.uk
WORDS: Mike Cowton, Dave Manning
DESIGNER: Michael Baumber
PRODUCTION EDITOR: Mike Cowton
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR: Dan Savage
PUBLISHER: Tim Hartley

PHOTOGRAPHY:
Gary Chapman, iStock

FREE WITH OCTOBER 2021 ISSUE OF
MOTORCYCLE SPORT & LEISURE MAGAZINE

WEB: mslmagazine.co.uk
TWITTER: twitter.com/MSLmagazine

EDITORIAL ADDRESS:
MSL Magazine, Media Centre, Morton Way,
Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6JR

WEBSITE: www.mslmagazine.co.uk
GENERAL QUERIES AND BACK ISSUES:
01507 529529 24-hr answerphone
help@classicmagazines.co.uk
www.classicmagazines.co.uk

CUSTOMER SERVICES NUMBER: 01507 529529
TELEPHONE LINES ARE OPEN:
MONDAY-FRIDAY 8.30AM-5PM

DISTRIBUTION:
Marketforce (UK) Ltd, 3rd Floor
161 Marsh Wall, London E14 9AP
Tel 0330 390 6555

PRINTED:
William Gibbons & Sons, Wolverhampton
The publisher accepts no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts or photographs. If you are sending material to us for publication, you are strongly advised to make copies and to include a stamped addressed envelope. Original material must be submitted and will be accepted solely on the basis that the author accepts the assessment of the publisher as to its commercial value. © Mortons Media Group Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage retrieval system without prior permission in writing from the publisher. ISSN: 1478-8390
MOTORCYCLE SPORT & LEISURE (USPS:001-522) is published monthly by Mortons Media Group Ltd, PO Box 99, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6LZ UK.

For all overseas subscriptions please visit
www.classicmagazines.co.uk/subscription/
MSL/motorcycle-sport-leisure

classic
magazines

MORTONS
MEDIA GROUP LTD
Independent publisher since 1885



Having trouble finding a copy of this magazine? Why not Just Ask your local newsagent to reserve you a copy each month?

Welcome to Snowdonia

Ride a network of wide, sweeping roads through an area of intrigue encapsulated in haunting landscapes. It's time to turn the myths into reality in North Wales.



Snowdonia facts

- Home to Wales' highest mountain, Snowdon, reaching 1,085 metres (3,560ft)
- The English name 'Snowdon' comes from the Saxon term 'Snow Dun', which means 'Snow Hill'
- Public footpaths extend across 1,497 miles
- Wales' longest established National Park (1951) is also the third largest National Park in the UK
- Snowdonia is home to Wales' largest lake, Bala
- The area has a lily named after it. The Snowdon Lily is an elegant, arctic-alpine plant which has beautiful white flowers and grass-like leaves
- The region is plagued with myth and legend



Situated on the west coast of Britain, covering 823 square miles of differing landscapes, Snowdonia National Park is a living, working area, and home to 26,000 people. As well as being the largest National Park in Wales, Snowdonia also boasts the second highest mountain in the UK, Mount Snowdon. This major attraction daily witnesses hikers trudging their way over mammoth boulder fields to reach the summit, whilst others take the far more relaxed, easier option of the Park's historic Snowdon Mountain Railway, which runs from Llanberis. Those that make the ascent by boot or track are treated to stunning views across the sea to Ireland.

Aside from the spectacular mountain scenery, Snowdonia is also home to an extensive network of trails, over 100 lakes and craggy peaks including Cader Idris and Tryfan. Travel here by bike and you will find yourself in a unique landscape of no fewer than nine mountain ranges covering around 52 per cent of the Park, with many peaks reaching over 915 metres (3,000 feet). Contrasting with this stunning backdrop are steep river gorges, waterfalls and green valleys. Oak, ash, rowan and hazel woodlands are scattered throughout the Park, whilst the beautiful Dyfi, Mawddach and Dwyryd estuaries contribute to the overall diversity.

Easily accessible by bike, many will travel the northern coastal A55 (watch for the speed restrictions) which begins at junction 12 at the southern end of the M53 motorway near Chester. The A55 crosses the River Dee and the border into Wales, passing close to Broughton, Flintshire, and passing north of Buckley, Penryffordd and Northop.



There is little wonder that Snowdonia remains so popular with bikers, particularly around the favoured spots of Bala and Betws-y-Coed. The latter village lies in the Conwy valley, located in the historic county of Caernarfonshire, right on the boundary with Denbighshire, in the Gwydir Forest. It is favoured by many for an overnight stay with its abundance of B&B establishments, cosy pubs and eateries in the main street, Holyhead Road. Little wonder, then, that Betws-y-Coed is North Wales' most popular inland resort and accommodation provider. Incorporate some fabulous mountain roads such as that which runs from Betws-y-Coed to Blaenau Ffestiniog and you will have found Nirvana.

Getting there

There's quick, straightforward access from the northwest along the M56 and A55. If you are approaching Snowdonia from the Birmingham direction, the A5 is a popular route.

Motorway links with the Midlands are good too, and the the M6, M5 and M1 also bring Snowdonia's mountains and coast within easy reach of the south of England.



Find out more

If you want to find out more about Snowdonia National Park, here are some good places to start:

- www.snowdonia.gov.wales/home
- www.visitsnowdonia.info
- www.visitwales.com
- www.nationalparks.uk/park/snowdonia

In your September and November editions of **MOTORCYCLE**

FOR THE LOVE OF THE RIDE

SPORT & LEISURE



Don't miss the Lake District guide in our September issue, or the Dartmoor and Exmoor guide in the next one.



To order old and new issues of
Motorcycle Sport & Leisure head to
classicmagazines.co.uk/pre-order-msl

Alternatively, scan the QR code on this page and order your next copy today.
We will send it directly to you! No need to don a face mask and nip out to the shops.

or scan me
with your
camera phone!



A Lap of Snowdon

Flanked by the enormous bulk of Wales' highest mountain, here's how to enjoy different perspectives of the summit

What could be better than enjoying a ride around the enormous bulk of Mount Snowdon? Starting from Caernarfon, join the A4085, which will take you into the foothills. As you crest the hill having past Rhyd-Ddu, make sure you glance up left over the mountain's flanks and you should be able to spot the summit café if it's a clear day. Having arrived

in Beddgelert, head left along the A498 and left again for a different perspective of the summit, this time being more jagged and triangular, and set amongst a horseshoe of cliffs.

Once at Pen y Gwryd turn left and you will ride through Llanberis Pass. It is here, at Pen-y-Pass, which marks the start of Mount Snowdon's most popular hiking routes. From here it's a pleasant ride downhill to Llanberis and back to Caernarfon. A lap of Snowdon is just a little taster of what this area has to



While you're there...

If you have allowed yourself enough time, and you fancy a walk up Snowdon, the quickest routes are from Pen-y-Pass, or you could always let the train take the strain from Llanberis, where you will also find the National Slate Museum. In Caernarfon, it would be a shame not to visit the magnificent castle.

Once in Beddgelert it's worth travelling a further 10 miles south to visit the tourist village of Portmeirion in Gwynedd. It was designed and built by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis between 1925 and 1975 in the style of an Italian village, and is now owned by a charitable trust. In addition to its architectural heritage, stunning setting and sub-tropical gardens, you will find shops, cafes and restaurants, and an authentic Italian-style gelateria.

www.portmeirion.wales

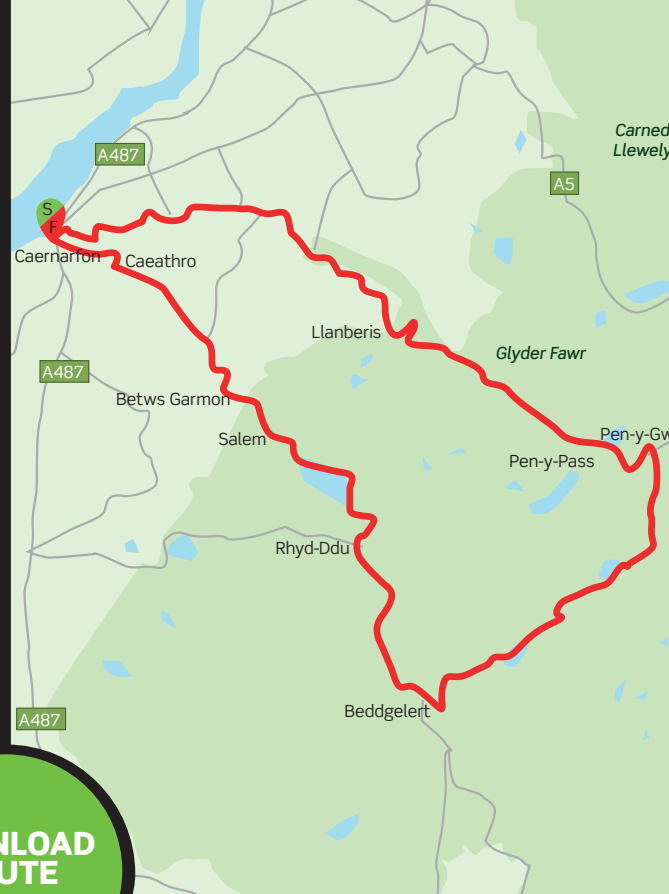
If you fancy heading underground, pop along to the Victorian Sygun Copper Mine in Beddgelert. The mine closed in 1903 but was renovated and reopened as a tourist attraction in 1986. Once a main supplier of minerals in Wales, today the mine focuses on audio-visual tours of the underground working.

www.syguncoppermine.co.uk



Recommended ride in Snowdonia

BRIDGESTONE



**DOWNLOAD
ROUTE**

www.mslmagazine.co.uk/maps

offer. You can easily extend the ride by heading to Betws-y-Coed on the A4086 and the A5. From this beautiful, but busy town you have a couple of great options if you want to return to Caernarfon. You can take the A470 to Blaenau Ffestiniog over the Crimea Pass and enjoy the faster road with the dramatic slate-stone scenery. Or you can carry on a little further east on the A5, then take a right towards Ysbyty Ifan on the B4407. This is a much smaller road, with lovely mountain views.

At the end of the road turn right towards Ffestiniog and Beddgelert if you want to return to Caernarfon, but don't miss the Cwm Cynfal viewpoint soon after you have joined the B4391.



Ten highest mountains in Snowdonia

1. Snowdon at 1085 metres (3560 feet)
2. Carnedd Llewelyn at 1064 metres (3491 feet)
3. Glyder Fawr at 1001 metres (3284 feet)
4. Y Garn at 947 metres (3107 feet)
5. Eidir Fawr at 924 metres (3031 feet)
6. Tryfan at 917 metres (3008 feet)
7. Aran Fawddwy at 905 metres (2969 feet)
8. Y Lliwedd at 898 metres (2946 feet)
9. Cader Idris at 893 metres (2930 feet)
10. Moel Slabod at 872 metres (2861 feet)

ICONIC OUTERWEAR SINCE 1950



f y i @bikerheadz

SCAN ME



KALLAVESI



When you buy a Rukka, you aren't just making a smart decision. You are buying 70 years of expertise, perfecting the art of creating world-class functional motorcycle outerwear, backed by a 6-year* warranty.

(*subject to online registration)

IT'S A RUKKA. JUST RIDE.



bikerheadz.co.uk



All Rukka armoured outerwear includes a 6 YEAR WARRANTY.

Llanwrtyd Wells to Tregaron

While this is outside of the two National Parks, adrenalin junkies will love this mad ride, taking in the Devil's Staircase across wild, desolate moorland



Should adventure bikers fancy a desperately lonely stretch of rough single track which runs from Llanwrtyd Wells to Tregaron, then this should suit admirably. You will pass through a brutal, wild landscape of moorland, pine forests, streams and escarpments, and as you reach the middle you will encounter a steep series of hairpins, appropriately called the Devil's Staircase. You will be covering around 20 miles where every single one will require concentration, and you are more likely to come across more sheep than people, so if you like the feeling of being in the middle of nowhere and love a challenge,



While you're there...

Having ridden westwards up the steep Devil's Staircase to cross Abergwesyn Pass, this is where you can stop and can access Abergwesyn Common. The commons are rich in archaeology, from Bronze Age ritual sites to deserted medieval villages. Wherever you take a stroll you're likely to come across a cairn (stone circle) or standing stone and other evidence of human activity dating back thousands of years.

At Abergwesyn Common birdwatchers should make sure they are carrying binoculars in their panniers because wildlife is plentiful here. Look out for Red Grouse amongst the heather, and Lapwing, Golden Plover and Red Kite.

Visit the Red Kite Centre and Museum on Dewi Road in Tregaron, a vibrant, welcoming institution about the Red Kite, local wildlife and village history. The permanent displays attempt to deepen the understanding of the history and culture of the county to the community of Ceredigion and its visitors.

www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMFQ22_Red_Kite_Centre_and_Museum_Tregaron_Ceredigion_Wales

then this is definitely one for you. Don't expect it to be a fast ride, and it might be preferable to tackle it on a trail bike, but the scenery makes up for everything, whatever you ride. Many a biker enjoys the run from the southern end as the hairpins are that much more fun, and there is an excellent section of road up the Abergwesyn Valley for a small sports bike, but adrenalin junkies should tackle the ride both ways.

There is also a lovely detour to Llyn Brianne from the Devil's Staircase if you fancy some stunning lake views with nobody around. You can head down to the Dam at the south end of the lake and return to the Devil's Staircase, or continue southwards towards more adventures...

**DOWNLOAD
ROUTE**

www.msllmagazine.co.uk/maps



Welcome to the Brecon Beacons

Four distinct regions and routes to suit every ability

The Brecon Beacons National Park boasts an array of great roads within its 520 square miles, whether they be smooth and fast or tight and twisty, so there's something to suit every level of rider. One favourite is the Black Mountain Road, followed closely by the Gospel Pass, which takes you through and across many an unspoilt landscape. Both offer a series of tight switchbacks and flowy bends with plenty of stopping places for photo opportunities or turning places. And both are covered in this guide.

The National Park is, in fact, home to some of the most beautiful scenery in South Wales, full of grassy

moorland, tranquil reservoirs, stunning waterfalls and high mountain plateaus. There are four distinct regions: Mynydd Du, the most westerly and most remote section of the park; Fforest Fawr, a series of isolated hills; the Brecon Beacons, home to Pen y Fan, the highest peak in South Wales; and the Black Mountains, a group of old red sandstone hills. If you fancy a motorcycling challenge, then look no further!

From Park to Park

If you have started in Snowdonia and are making your way down to the Brecon Beacons, the fastest route from Betwys-y-Coed in Snowdonia to Abergavenny in the Brecon Beacons is via the A470, a run of around

Brecon Beacons facts

- Two-thirds of the area is comprised of old red sandstone rocks
- The highest point, Pen y Fan, is also the highest peak in southern Britain at 886 metres (2841 feet)
- The Park is made up of several areas including Powys, Carmarthenshire, Monmouthshire, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen
- The SAS uses the Brecon Beacons as one of its training grounds, due to its remoteness and unpredictable weather
- The Park was given status as an International Dark Sky Reserve in 2013, only the fifth location in the world to be given this status (and the first in Wales)
- The Brecon Beacons is home to Llyn Cwm Llŵch, the best preserved glacial lake in South Wales

Find out more

If you want to find out more about the Brecon Beacons National Park, here are some good places to start with:

- www.breconbeacons.org
- www.beacons-npa.gov.uk
- www.nationtrust.org.uk/brecon-beacons

132 miles. The route passes through Blaenau Ffestiniog, Maintwrog, east of Llyn Trawsfynydd and through Coedy Brenin Forest Park before reaching Dolgellau. The road then tracks down to Rhayadar, the first town on the River Wye and home to the spectacular dams and reservoirs of the Elan and Claerwen Valleys. Once having passed Builth Wells and Boughrood, the A470 becomes the A479 to Crickhowell and then the A40 to Abergavenny.

Getting there

The Brecon Beacons National Park is within easy reach of the M4, M50 and A40. For directions and an estimate of your journey time, check out the journey planners at www.theaa.com/route-planner or www.rac.co.uk/route-planner



Recommended ride in the Brecon Beacons

Black Mountain Road

If you fancy reaching jaw-dropping heights and extraordinary backdrops, just watch out for the sheep, because this is their land



No one can deny that Wales opens itself to some fantastic riding routes with stunning backdrops. One of the most popular and talked about is the Black Mountain Road in Powys along the A4069. Despite it running to only 15 miles, it reaches a jaw-dropping height of 1671 feet above sea level and is well worth ticking off your bucket list. Whichever way you look, either ahead, sideways or in your mirrors, enjoying twists, dips and rises whilst taking in the picturesque views, it is an extraordinary way to



While you're there...

Whichever way you decide to cover the route, don't forget to savour every moment, including Carreg Cennen Castle which lies a few miles west, and Dinefwr Castle and the independent shops of Llandeilo beyond that. Eastwards, the Carmarthen Fans, the highest peaks of the Black Mountains, drop into the legendary depths of Llyn y Fan Fach.

www.cadw.gov.wales/visit/places-to-visit/carreg-cennen

Gwenffrwyd-Dinal Nature Reserve is tucked away not far from Llandovery at the bottom of Llyn Brianne. From Llandovery, follow Cilycwm Road under a railway bridge to Rhandirmwym and stay on the east side of the river via the Ystraddffin Campsite to Gwendfrwd Dional. It can be a challenging ride down the lanes to the small car park and the reserve doesn't have a cafe or toilets, but don't let that put you off because afterwards you can always backtrack a few miles to the Royal Oak in Rhanditmwym or the Towy Bridge Inn by heading right at the triangular crossroads rather than continuing back the way you came into Rhandirmwym village.

www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/gwenffrwd-dinas/

Once at Gwenffrwyd-Dinal Nature Reserve, go in search of the cave of Twm Sion Cati, Wales' very own Robin Hood. Dinas Hill, where the cave is located, is a sheer wooded rise bounded by rivers on three sides and beyond moor and yet more moorland.



Recommended ride in the Brecon Beacons

BRIDGESTONE



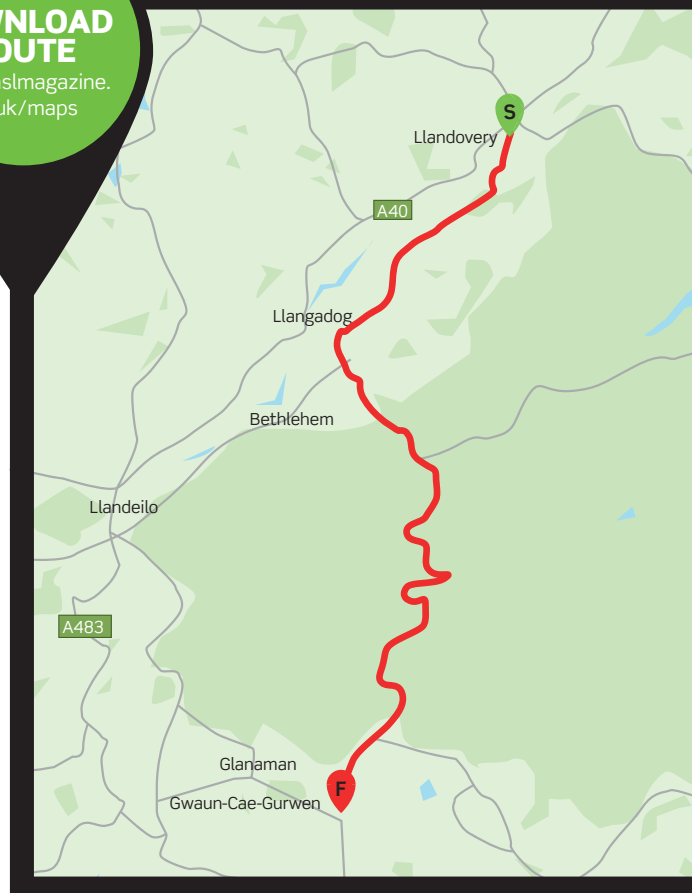
DOWNLOAD ROUTE

www.msllmagazine.co.uk/maps

enjoy the Brecons. This is where Jeremy Clarkson was famously filmed driving it, which is why it became known as 'the Top Gear road'. It is recommended that you tackle it from north to south, especially the hairpin known locally as Tro Gwcw, or 'Cuckoo Turn', although the views of the Tywi Valley are perhaps best viewed in the opposite direction. The paved road crosses the Black Mountains from Llandovery to Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen and includes some spectacular, if challenging, hairpins. Also, be aware of sheep which may well be roaming across the road, and don't forget the ice cream van at the top.

Ten highest mountains in the Brecon Beacons

1. Pen y Fan at 886 metres (2907ft)
2. Corn Du at 873 metres (2864ft)
3. Fan Brycheiniog at 802 metres (2631 feet)
4. Cribyn at 795 metres (2608ft)
5. Waun Rydd at 769 metres (2523ft)
6. Fan Hir at 761 metres (2497 feet)
7. Picws Du at 749 metres (2457 feet)
8. Fan Fawr at 734 metres (2408 feet)
9. Fan Gyhirych at 725 metres (2379 feet)
10. Fan y Big at 719 metres (2359 feet)





EXO-520 AIR
COVER

RRP:
£209.99



ADX-1
TUCSON

RRP:
£239.99

PREMIUM. WITHOUT THE PRICE.

[f](#) [▶](#) [@bikerheadz](#)

SCAN ME



In a Scorpion helmet, you'll find all the latest technology, along with the features you would expect from a high-end helmet brand... and some you hadn't even thought of. You'll find class-leading helmets that are backed by a 5-year warranty. What you won't find is a hefty price tag.

SCORPION. GET STUNG.



bikerheadz.co.uk



**All Scorpion helmets include
a 5 YEAR WARRANTY.**

Gospel Pass

Sitting at the head of the Vale of Ewyas, the highest road pass in Wales can be traced back to the Crusaders from the 12th century

The Vale of Ewyas, a long, narrow, steep-sided valley in the Black Mountains towards the eastern edge of the National Park, is followed by a winding, mostly single-track paved road known as the Gospel Pass. Beyond, the land slopes steeply down to the rolling farmland of the Wye Valley, while at either side rise the adjacent, flat-topped peaks of Hay Bluff to the northeast and Twmpa to the southwest. Most of the valley is part of Monmouthshire but the

northern few miles, including the pass, are in Powys, and the ridgeline to the east, extending south from Hay Bluff, marks the boundary between Wales and England. One tradition holds that the name of the pass is a reference to a visit over 2000 years ago by Saint Paul, who crossed this part of Wales whilst preaching the gospel. It is, however, more likely to derive from a band of Crusaders who visited this location in the 12th century.

The Gospel Pass lies just inside the eastern border of the Park and is the highest road in Wales, plus one of



While you're there...

Remote Llanthony, locked away in a dramatic location in the Vale of Ewyas beneath the brooding borderland Black Mountains that rise abruptly from this evocative ruin, still radiates a spirit of isolation and contemplation. Norman knight William de Lacy founded a hermitage here when he abandoned war and embraced religion. By 1118 Llanthony had become a monastery of Augustinian canons, which continued until it was suppressed in 1539. Although now a 900-year-old ruin, it's easy to see from these extensive remains that Llanthony was one of Wales' great medieval buildings. In particular, its former magnificence lives on in the surviving richly decorated red stonework and superb row of pointed archways, which frame a scene that has changed little since de Lacy's times. Break the journey here for refreshments in the café.

www.cadw.gov.wales/visit/places-to-visit/llanthyony-priory

Capel-y-ffin is a hamlet near the English-Welsh border, a couple of miles north of Llanthony. The name Capel-y-ffin comes from Welsh, and means 'chapel of the boundary', since it lies in the valley of the River Honddu close to the boundary of the historical dioceses of St David's and Llandaf, now Swansea and Brecon and Monmouth.

Originally served as a chapel of ease, it is dedicated to St Mary and was built in 1762. With an interior of just 26 by 13 feet (8 by 4 metres), the chapel is one of the smallest in Wales and reminded diarist Francis Kilvert of an owl.

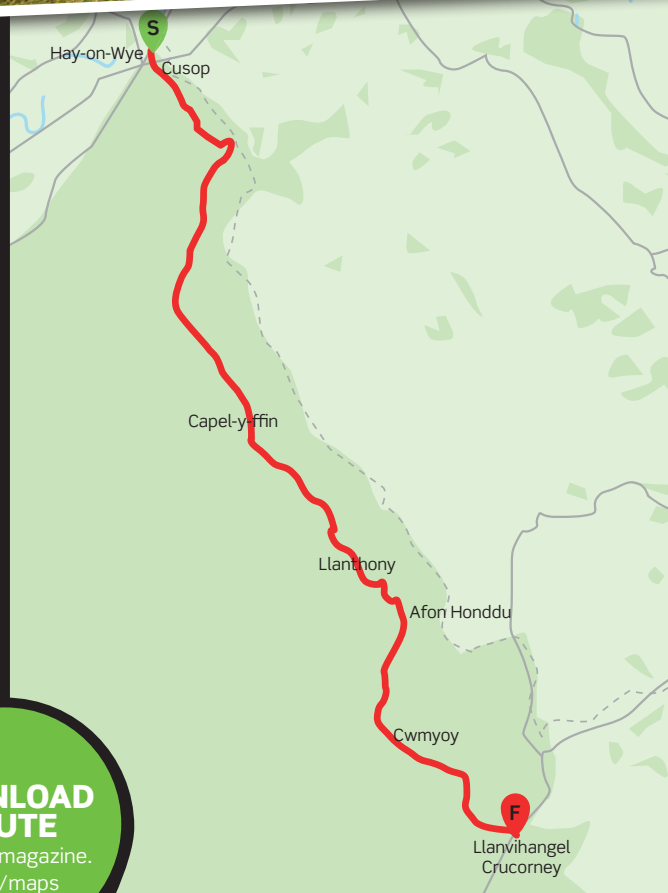
www.explorechurches.org/church/st-mary-virgin-capel-y-ffin



Recommended ride in the Brecon Beacons

BRIDGESTONE

the most scenic in the UK. Abergavenny and Hay-on-Wye lie at either end and make for great stopovers. The single track road runs for 22 miles with an average 1 in 4 gradient. The seemingly unnamed road up the Vale of Ewyas branches off the A465 five miles north of Abergavenny at Llanvihangel Crucorney and heads north along the valley floor close to the Afon Honddu, a small river. After six miles it passes the evocative ruin of Llanthony Priory, beyond which the road is a little less used, narrower and nearly all single lane, albeit with regular passing places. After 10 miles it reaches a junction at Capel-y-ffin, at the mouth of a small side valley to the west, then after 11.6 miles as the gradient increases the road leaves the woods and farm fields beside the river and enters open moorland, climbing yet further over the next half-mile to the pass. The land is much steeper beyond and the road takes a slanting, downwards route cutting across the slope to the north then descending more gently towards Hay-on-Wye. If Hay happens to be your starting point, the quiet route south to reach the Gospel Pass takes a bit of navigating down side streets on the edge of town. Once on the slow climb out of Hay, you are quickly on pretty much a single track road with hedgerows obscuring much of the view. Five miles later and the road opens out on a spectacular plateau 500 feet above sea level, revealing a stretch of hills and valleys as far as the eye can see. Once over the Pass and into Abergavenny, the pleasant market town offers plenty of refreshment places and B&Bs.



**DOWNLOAD
ROUTE**

www.msllmagazine.co.uk/maps



READY TO UPGRADE

BOTH YOUR BIKE AND YOUR
RIDING EXPERIENCE?

- Grab Rails
- Sports Racks
- Engine Bars
- Radiator Shields
- Paddock Stands
- Luggage Carriers
- Soft Luggage



Free Dry Bag with every purchase over £50

*Use Code VERSAFREE in the basket**

**Not including Sale items - whilst stocks last*

With nearly 500 premium accessories covering a wide range of bikes, we're ready when you are:

www.renntec.com Tel: 01202 826722



RENNTec[®]

READY FOR ANYTHING.



*Designed and
manufactured in
the uk*

Get your riding kit right

Getting your clothing right for any bike trip is paramount, and that applies to good weather as well as bad.

While we were lucky enough to experience some incredibly warm and sunny weather during our trip to Wales, fortunately we'd all chosen some clothing that proved to be ideal for the record-breaking temperatures that we experienced. Of course, Wales is in the UK and, as a consequence, climatic conditions can be changeable. It's not unheard of for there to be some rather considerable levels of rainfall in the hills and valleys of glorious Cymru. So, at the very least, carry waterproofs of some kind, and base layers are a good idea, as well as a removable liner or additional layers to add/remove. While it can be baking hot sunshine on the coast or in the valleys, head up into the heights of Snowdonia and the temperature drops rapidly. And conditions can be vastly different from the west side of Snowdonia to that further south and into the Brecon Beacons.

Of course, while we've highlighted some ideal summer riding kit here, Wales isn't just open for the more clement months. There's actually one of the biggest winter rallies held in Snowdonia each year, with the Dragon Rally having been organised every year (with the exception of Covid interference) since 1962. The 60th anniversary event is planned for February 2022, and while the weather may not be quite as clement then, the scenery is just as dramatic in winter as it is at the height of summer.

Jacket and trousers

Many modern jackets have the options of removable liners and easily accessible vents. Although a summer jacket designed purely for riding in warm and dry weather will always be the most comfortable – thanks to mesh panels allowing an easy flow of cool air through the jacket – they're going to let in just as much water as air if it does happen to rain.



SEGURA OSKAR JACKET
£134.99

SCORPION EXO TECH HELMET
£289.99

BERING ROCKET GLOVES
£69.99

PMJ DEUX JEANS
£229.99

Bridgestone Battlax T32 tyres

With a compound and tread pattern designed for long miles in all weather conditions, the Bridgestone Battlax T32 is ideal for covering lots of ground throughout the Welsh National Parks, and through the stunning countryside in between, too.

We fitted them to three of the grand tourers that we used to explore the

National Parks of Wales, while the fourth ran on slightly sportier Bridgestone Battlax S22 tyres. Both performed well throughout the journey.

Being a sports touring tyre, not only does the T32 have longevity in mind, but also an ability to offer a sporting aspect, whilst being capable of dealing with any climatic conditions that could

be encountered whilst touring.

As part of the Battlax range, the T32 has been developed to have a 7% shorter stopping distance in the wet than its predecessor, with a 13% larger contact patch on the rear, too. The design includes the new 'Pulse Groove' pattern, said to improve water dispersion without affecting dry grip.

**SCORPION EXO 520
HELMET**
£209.99

**BERING MALIBU
MESH JACKET**
£169.99

**RUKKA FORSAIR PRO
JACKET**
£399.99

**SCHUBERTH S2
SPORT HELMET**
£469.99

**BERING KX2
GLOVES**
£49.99

**RACER GUIDE
2 GLOVES**
£94.99

**BERING YUKON
GORE LAMINATE
TROUSERS**
£499.99

**FALCO MIXTO 3
BOOTS**
£244.99

PMJ DEUX JEAN
£229.99



While armoured jeans were our garments of choice, textile or even leather trousers would've been acceptable if there was sufficient venting. Thinking about it, they would have been somewhat more weatherproof if the weather had turned.

While the forecast had suggested that we would be experiencing a heatwave, there was also a chance of thunderstorms. As it happened, the record temperatures set roads melting and had the Snowdonia National Park Authority sending out their gritting lorries to spread limestone dust on the roads to cover the melting tar. We still made sure that we had packed our waterproof kit – just in case.

Helmet

While just about any helmet is suitable, as long as it fits and is comfortable, the baking heat of mid-July showed that a lid with good ventilation was vital. We were also happy to have incorporated drop-down visors on the helmets, allowing the main visor to be left open for best ventilation. Those with flip-front helmets also found that leaving the front open aided cooling at a standstill or slow speeds. We also discovered that an elasticated neck tube not only provides warmth in cooler conditions, but if soaked in water before a ride, the water evaporates and removes heat from the neck and head, helping to delay the onset of heat exhaustion and dehydration.



Not getting lost

While part of having an adventure in somewhere you don't know is exploring and, inevitably, getting lost, there comes a time when you need to not only know where you are, but also where you're going. After all, if you're staying overnight, you'll need to be able to find your hotel, B&B, hostel or campsite at the end of a day's riding. While a printed map may never lose its signal, it's not especially easy to read while riding, gets blown away by the wind and isn't much fun in the rain, so satellite navigation is a good choice.

We had a TomTom Rider 550 (£399.99) fitted on to the Kawasaki, via the neat optional satnav mount that bolts to the front petrol tank mount, and charged via the bike's own electrical system.



Gloves

In summertime, short gloves are often the preference, but bear in mind that they still need a secure wrist fastening to ensure that they stay in place in the event of a fall. Textile or leather are suitable for warm weather, as both can be found with perforated panels.

Accessories

While the three bikes that we used for this particular trip all had hard panniers, it's still worth putting your luggage in waterproof bags to ensure that everything remains bone dry for your arrival at your destination. Even if your panniers are guaranteed to be 100% waterproof, using bags in the panniers makes life a whole lot easier to organise your luggage.

Spending long days in the saddle, regardless of speed, can play havoc with your hearing, and even if you have the quietest of helmets, it's worth wearing earplugs of some kind. So, as we don't want to be resorting to hearing aids at some point in the future, we had Pinlock multi-use plugs (£19.99 for a handy carry-pack). Bespoke-fit custom plugs, or even single-use foam plugs will also give you protection from hearing damage.

More information and choice of great kit at bikerheadz.co.uk

Cool Covers

Made in
the UK

As used
on the
BMW R1250RT,
ridden
within this
supplement



Approved
supplier to

KTM &

Husqvarna
MOTORCYCLES

Cool Covers

As reviewed by
the Editor of

MOTORCYCLE

ON THE LIFE OF THE ROAD SPORT & LEISURE

- Permanent cooling whilst driving with the airflowing between you and your seat
- Keep your bottom dry when it rains
- Doesn't heat up even in bright sunlight, unlike normal motorbike seats
- UV resistant
- Easy to install without any tools
- Easily washable
- Looks great!

Cool Covers are 98% permeable for permanent cooling whilst riding

Air flows between you and your seat. It doesn't heat up in the sun and keeps your bottom dry when it rains. Cannot be compressed so creates a massage-like effect, reducing symptoms of fatigue.

For further information call +44 7958 544609 • Email info@coolcovers.com

Cool Covers Limited, Unit 4a, Station Industrial Estate, The Homend, Ledbury,
Herefordshire HR8 1AR UK

www.coolcovers.com

Recommended ride: Do it all in one

The best of both Parks in one ride

Although there is some considerable distance between Snowdonia and the Brecon Beacons, a decent full-day ride can be constructed by combining not only the best parts of both National Parks, but also by including some of the superb roads that exist around and between the Parks.

Starting from Betws-y-Coed, ride towards Caernarfon on the A5, turning left on to the A4086 at Capel Curig, heading ever upward, past the Llynau Mymbyr and Nant-y-Ilys lakes, with the option of turning right and heading over the Pen-y-Pass to Llanberis if you fancy either of the options of climbing Snowdon (walking or by train). Continuing on the A4086, drop down to picturesque Beddgelert, leaving on the A498 and then A4085 through ancient wooded valleys alongside whitewater streams.

Turning left on to the A487, the scenery opens up, as does the road, joining the A470 past the Trawsfynydd Dam and hydroelectric power station and thence through Coed-y-Brenin forest park. There's some stupendous mountain biking here, if you fancy some self-powered two-wheel action.

After passing through Dolgellau on the A470, bear right on to the A487, heading for Machynlleth. This is the road that takes you through various valleys that are colloquially known as the Mach Loop, famous for the pictures of military aircraft flying at low altitude. The planes only fly from Monday to Friday, and not on





Recommended ride: Do it all in one

BRIDGESTONE

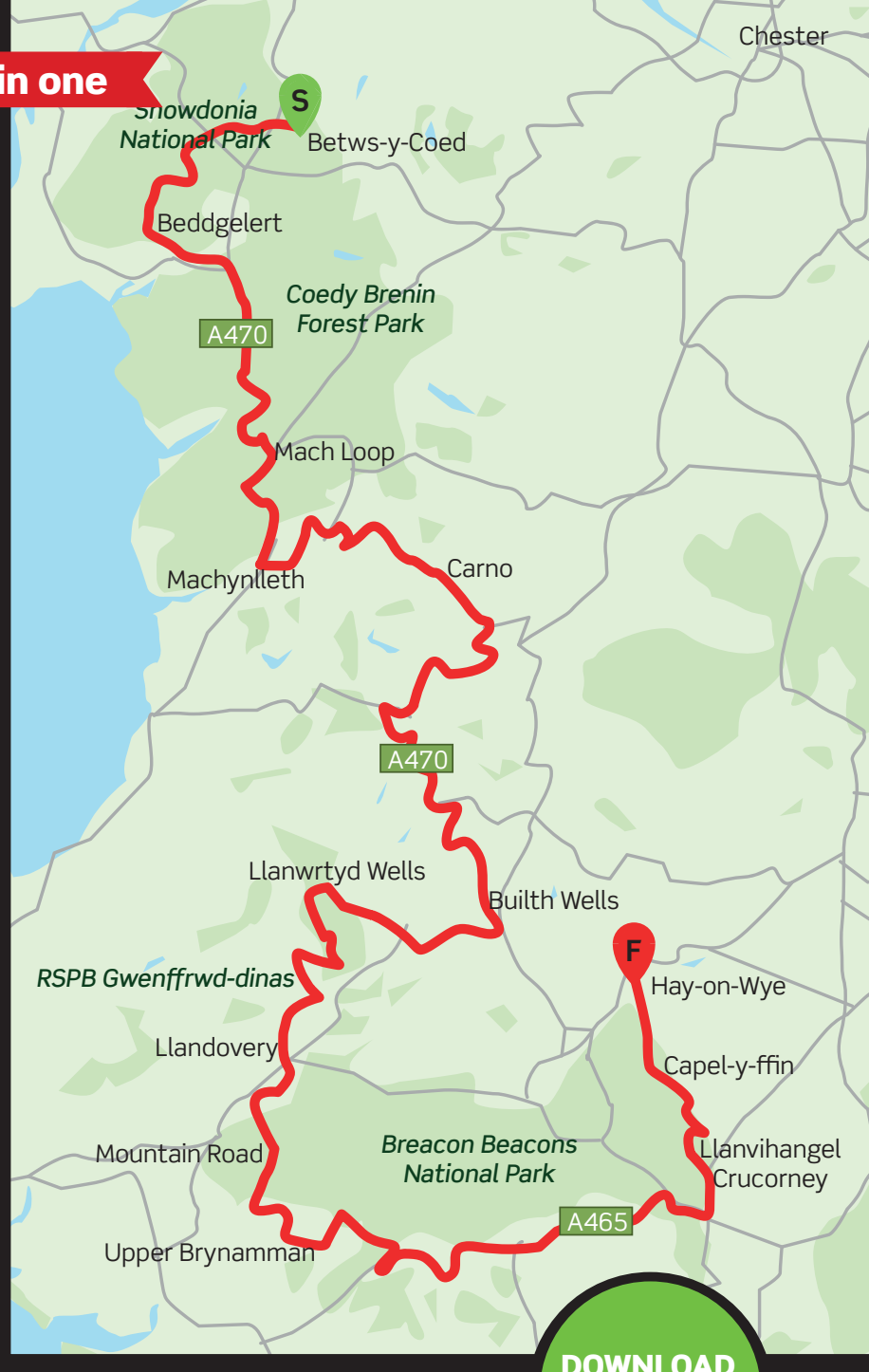
Bank Holidays, and even if you don't go to the effort of climbing up the valley sides to get a viewpoint that is actually higher than the planes flying through the valley, it's still an impressive spectacle!

Upon reaching Machynlleth, join the A489, and then the A470, a fast and flowing route through Llandiloes, Llangurig and Rhayader to Builth Wells, which is a useful watering spot for bikes and riders alike, before heading out on the A483 towards Llanwrtyd Wells. When in Beulah, take the right-hand turn just after the B4358, to head for Abergwesyn and then the Devil's Staircase. This incredibly quiet road through a stunning landscape is something of a secret, so don't tell your friends, but enjoy it in secrecy! The road splits, so follow to the left, past the picturesque Llyn Brianne reservoir and then the Celtic rainforests of the Gwenffrwd-Dinas RSPB Reserve, before eventually rejoining the A483 and into Llandovery.

Riding out of Llandovery on the A4069 takes you to the Black Mountain Road, aka 'the Top Gear road', as detailed on pages 16-18, which will take you through the Brecon Beacons to Brynamman, the southern edge of the Brecon Beacons and a mere spit away from the south coast of Wales.

From here, you can ride the more congested and speed limited roads eastwards via Ystalyfera and Glynneath, on to the A465, via Hirwaun and bypassing Merthyr Tydfil and Ebbw Vale, on to Abergavenny, and then continuing on the A465 before turning left at Llanfihangel-Crucorney and on to the bottom end of the epic Gospel Pass (see pages 20-22).

After completing the Gospel Pass, it is only a couple of miles into the centre of Hay-on-Wye, known not only for its multitudinous bookshops, but also the pleasant cafes, pubs and restaurants just waiting for your trade after a long day in the saddle.



**DOWNLOAD
ROUTE**

www.mslmagazine.co.uk/maps



Slinky Glide

The free flowing cable

- Anti vibration, free flowing action
- Freeze & seize resistant compound
- Huge range of fitments

control cables for 70's to present day motorcycles



Slinky Glide's New Speedometer & Tacho Cable Repair Kit

This kit uses your genuine outer cable suitable for most mechanical speedometers & tachos.
Contents: inner cable (1.5 M x 3.2Mm dia) three different drive heads, crimping tool & instructions included



THREE DIFFERENT DRIVE HEADS

only £5.60
Part No. 181-104



Also Slinky clutch & throttle repair kit

Slinky's cable repair kits come in a handy travel-size container. Suitable for most clutch cables and throttle cables.



PRICE MATCH PROMISE

wemoto.com

Tel: 01273 597072
Southwick, West Sussex,
BN42 4EN, United Kingdom

BRIDGESTONE



BATTLAX ADVENTURECROSS AX41



JUST GET
OUT THERE
ANYTIME.
ANYWHERE.



Bridgestone Europe NV/SA, UK Branch
www.bridgestone.co.uk

@Bridgestonemoto  
www.grippingstories.com

Spain