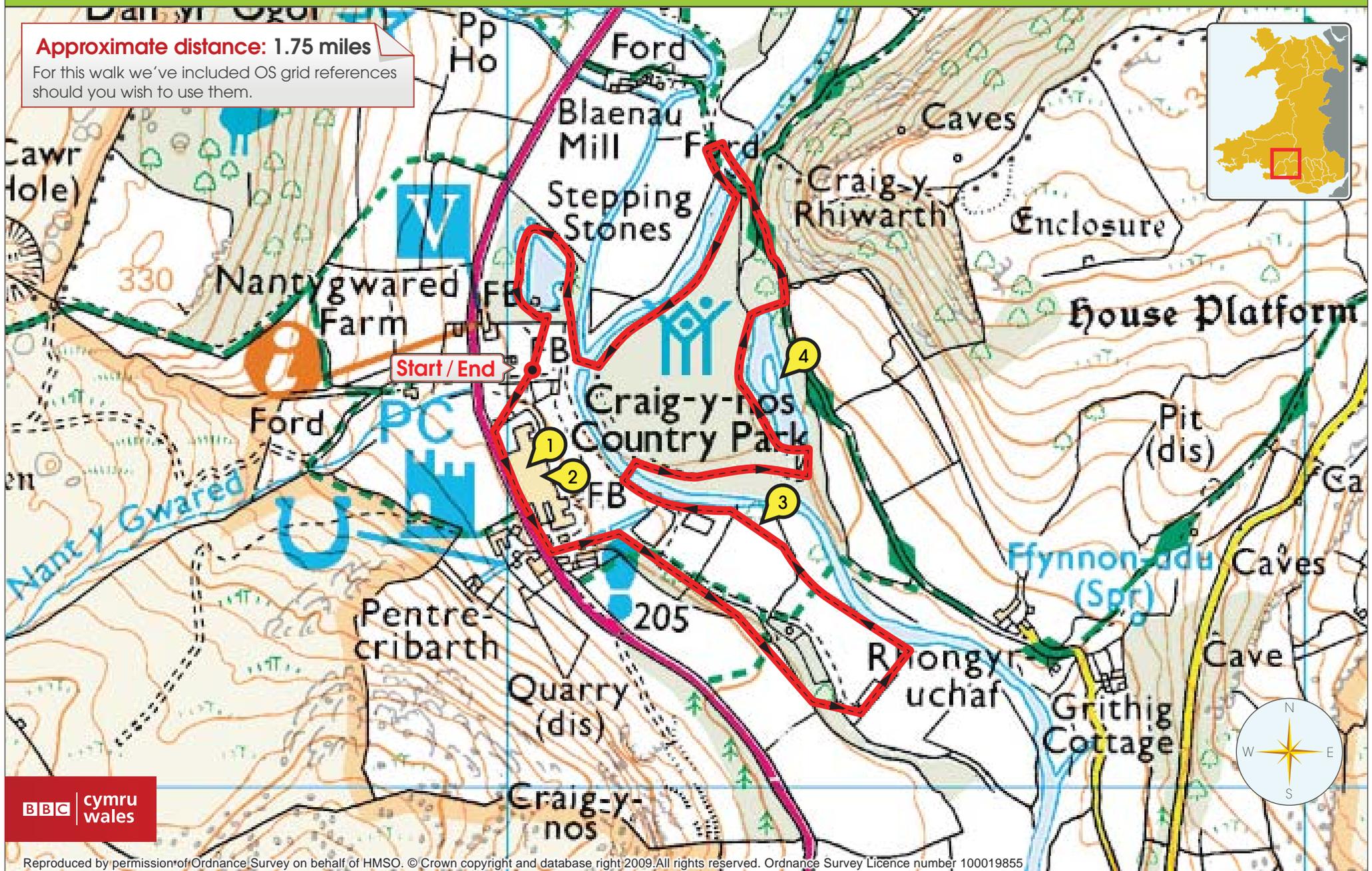


# Weatherman Walking

# Craig Y Nos

**Approximate distance:** 1.75 miles

For this walk we've included OS grid references should you wish to use them.



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The Weatherman Walking maps are intended as a guide to help you walk the route. We recommend using an OS map of the area in conjunction with this guide. Routes and conditions may have changed since this guide was written. The BBC takes no responsibility for any accident or injury that may occur while following the route. Always wear appropriate clothing and footwear and check weather conditions before heading out.

## Weatherman Walking

## Craig Y Nos

**Start:** Craig y Nos Country Park Car Park, Pen-y-cae, Swansea SA9 1FD (open every day except Christmas day)

**Starting ref:** : SN 84018 15533

**Distance:** Approx. 1.75 miles

**Grade:** Leisurely

**Walk time :** 1 hour

**Parking:** Pay & Display

This short, beautiful walk has you following in the footsteps of the great Coloratura Soprano Madame Adelina Patti in her beloved former country estate of Craig y Nos. You will see for yourself why a woman who could have lived anywhere in the world chose this corner of the Brecon Beacons to spend the last 40 years of her life.

This is a circular route, and although very gentle we recommend sensible footwear as some of the paths are through woodland.

### Directions

**Starting in the car park, head towards Craig y Nos castle and walk in that direction. You will see a gravel path leading up to the castle. Follow this path up until you reach the main castle entrance.**

### 1 Craig y Nos Castle (SN 84050 15375)

Madame Adelina Patti purchased Craig y Nos Castle in 1878 for £3,500, a substantial amount of money at that time, and it was her home until her death in 1919. Over the course of those 40 years she spent over £100,000 on the estate, adding a north and south wing, clock tower, conservatory and private theatre, to name a few of the modifications! It was also the first private house in Wales to be wired for electricity. Craig y Nos means 'Rock of the Night' in Welsh. The castle is privately owned and is run as a wedding and accommodation venue, which means it's possible to peek inside.



Craig y Nos castle

## Weatherman Walking

## Craig Y Nos

Walk out of the main driveway of the castle and turn left. Be careful here as you are walking along a road.

Walk a short way along this road until you see a large horse-chestnut tree on your left. Immediately turn left here through the gate, walk straight ahead, and through the metal kissing gate at the end of the path.

Follow the steps down to your right. As you get to the bottom of the steps, turn right and follow the path along. To your right you will see Madame Patti's Garden Pavilion.



Take a left turn here, the horse chestnut tree

### 2 Garden Pavilion (SN 84050 15375)

This grade II listed building was built especially for Adelina Patti. She would perform summer concerts from here with her captive audience spread out on the lawn. It was also a changing area for her esteemed guests who would use it before playing a game of tennis or croquet.



Derek and Beverley at the garden pavilion

With the pavilion on your right, continue following the path along into the woodland. Half way along this track on your left you will see two trail markers pointing you left across the meadow. Follow these markers and head straight across the field, turning left when you get to the other side.

Just ahead of you to the right you will see a large oak tree with a knee-high stone marker.



Meadow trailmarker

## Weatherman Walking

## Craig Y Nos

### 3 Oak Tree (SN 84297 15325)

Madame Patti planted this tree on 6th June 1914. It was also the year of her last public performance, and as such is considered the most important tree in the whole estate. Her final performance was at the Royal Albert Hall where she raised money for the Red Cross to help victims of World War I.



The Oak tree planted by Adelina Patti in 1914

**Continue on straight through the gate ahead, keeping the river to your right until you reach a white metal bridge. On this bridge you may spot Adelina Patti's monogram. Cross the bridge and turn immediately right. Follow the path along keeping the river to your right, until you reach a wooden footbridge. Cross it, take a sharp right and follow the path as it curves to the left and up to and around the far lake.**

### 4 Far Lake (SN 84342 15487)

The Far Lake is one of two on the estate; both were dug out by hand. At one time Patti employed a team of 40 gardeners to maintain the lakes and tend to greenhouses full of exotic fruits, vegetables and flowers. Adelina Patti's second husband, French tenor Ernesto Nicolini, was a keen fisher and hunter and used the lakes to fulfil these passions. The lakes were stocked with trout and the island you can see in the middle of this one was tactically introduced to encourage wildfowl to nest at the lake so Nicolini could shoot them.



The far lake

## Weatherman Walking

## Craig Y Nos

Walk around the path alongside the lake. At the end of the path you will see a wooden bench and the path splits into 3. To your left is a beautiful Rhododendron archway. However, we are turning right here, onto the boardwalk. Follow the path ahead through the woodlands, making use of the stone slabs. You will eventually come to a small wooden footbridge over a small stream. Turn right and follow the along.



The boardwalk

Continue along this woodland path, which will take you into a clearing. Directly ahead of you is a lovely spot for a rest, with some rocks perfect for sitting on the bank of the river Tawe. To your right you can see another pretty footbridge over the river. Next, head left from the clearing, back towards the castle along the wide path this time. The river will be to your right. You are following in the footsteps now of the great Madame Patti, these trees were planted to remind her of Italy and she believed walking through and breathing in the pines would help her voice. Continue along the path until you reach a bridge crossing the river.



The river tawe



Bridge across the river

## Weatherman Walking

## Craig Y Nos

Cross the bridge and turn right. The path forks in two, stay left and walk towards the duck pond. As you reach the pond follow the path around to your right. Once you've nearly completed a loop and reached the wooden shelter, turn right and you will find yourself back in the car park where you started. Here you will also find a visitor centre, tea rooms and toilets.



The Duck pond



Derek and Beverley sat in Adelina Patti's private theatre