



RIVER TAWE
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Craig y Nos Country Park and Penwyllt Walk



Portrait by Franz Xaver Winterhalter in Public Domain

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Craig y Nos Country park is open every day except Christmas day and has 40 acres of grounds to explore, with easy and accessible paths. There is also a good cafe and some artists' studios. This was once the grounds of Craig y Nos Castle, which is now a hotel and wedding venue. In 1878 until 1919, it was the home of Dame Adelina Patti, a world-renowned Opera Singer. From 1922 until 1959, it was used as a TB hospital. A small exhibition is usually housed up near the castle, in winter it tends to be about the castle's use as a TB hospital and in summer about the extraordinary life of Dame Adelina Patti.

She extended the castle massively and even had a miniature copy of La Scala in Milan built, it is now a grade one, Listed Opera House, and is well worth a look.

Park: The pay and display car park entrance is on the A4067 from Swansea, past Abercrave and Pen-y-cae. Turn right just after Craig-y-Nos castle. Postcode for sat nav: SA9 1GL. Hourly T6 Bus service from Brecon and Swansea except Sunday. For a free parking option, there is a layby on the right before the castle. Within this valley is also Dan Yr Ogor Showcave Centre and the Cribarth Hill, known as the Sleeping Giant, which looks remarkably like one from Ystradgynlais.

For an easy mountain walk, drive from Craig Y Nos drive back towards Ystradgynlais and take the first turn left, left again and follow the road all the way up the hill past a quarry and into a large car park. You will see a disused railway station, part funded by Dame Adelina Patti in 1861, from there she would take her own railway carriage attached to any train, so she could travel in style to and from her castle at Craig Y Nos.

Part of the UNESCO Fforest Fawr Geopark, Penwyllt is home to The South Wales Caving Club, based in a row of terraced miner's cottages and of course, hidden beneath your feet is the massive Ogor Ffynnon Ddu Cave System. You can walk some of the way along the Old Brecon to Swansea Railway Line, back towards Ystradgynlais before the line becomes overgrown, and the views down the Swansea Valley will be stunning. Always let us know if planning to adventure as the weather can turn extremely quickly. There are several pubs in the area providing excellent food and drink.

