

Weekend ride

BIKEPACKING THE PRESILI HILLS

• **Start/finish:** Clarbeston Road railway station, Pembrokeshire, SA63 4UH • **Maps:** OS Explorer OL35, North Pembrokeshire (1:25,000)
 • **Ride length:** 91km/56 miles • **Climbing:** 1,630m • **Bike type:** Best ridden on a mountain bike or a gravel bike with wide tyres for the boggier sections of the Golden Road • **Ride level:** Experienced riders used to remote and, at times, challenging terrain • **GPX file:** cyclinguk.org/weekender-preseli-hills

1 Llys-y-frân MTB trails

The man-made singletrack around the reservoir serves as a great warm-up. The trails on the eastern side are straightforward but can be missed out by staying on the gravel track around the reservoir. This route avoids the trails on the western side as they are more technical. There's a café and bike hub on site.

4 TY CANOL AND PENTRE IFAN

Ty Canol is part of the largest block of ancient woodland in West Wales. The route uses a permissive bridleway through the woods. It's waymarked but not shown on OS maps. Make sure to visit Pentre Ifan, an enormous megalithic structure that predates Egypt's pyramids.



5 Nevern

The Nevern Valley contains the ruins of Nevern Castle, St Brynach's Church, and the Pilgrims' Cross. Walk up through the avenue of ancient yews (including the famous 'bleeding yew') to see the huge 10th-century Celtic cross just outside the entrance to the church, as well as the even older Vitalianus Stone nearby.



2 THE GOLDEN ROAD

The route follows a bridleway almost the entire way along the ridge, past fractured piles of rock that jut up like huge fins. The indistinct 'road' may have once been used to transport gold mined in Ireland's Wicklow Mountains as far as Wessex in south-east England.

6 THE GWAUN VALLEY

The locals uphold a unique tradition here, celebrating New Year's Day (Hen Galan) on 13 January according to the old Julian calendar. No trip to the valley is complete without a visit to the legendary Dyffryn Arms, fondly known as 'Bessie's' (bring cash). Make sure to visit Tafarn Sinc, too – a community-owned pub in Rosebush.



3 Foel Drygarn hill fort

The Golden Road is bookended by two dramatic peaks: Foel Eryr ('Place of the Eagle') and Foel Drygarn ('Bare Hill of the Three Cairns'). It is well worth the short walk up to the latter's summit to explore the defensive hilltop enclosure, with its three huge cairns, double ramparts and panoramic views.