

22 POWYS FAN Y BIG & THE BEACONS

▶ Distance: 10 miles/16.6km ▶ Time: 5 hours ▶ Grade: Challenging

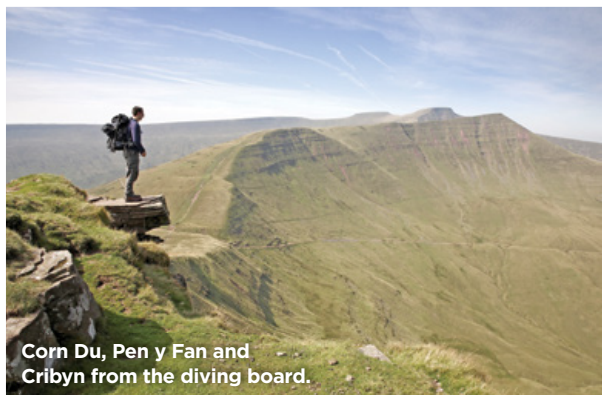


PHOTO: MATT BOTWOOD (CSTOCK) / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

Corn Du, Pen y Fan and Cribyn from the diving board.



CHOSEN BY... JENNY WALTERS

The Diving Board is an airy slab of rock on the summit of Fan y Big where the land curls down from your boots into a deep valley and layers up over Cribyn to Pen y Fan and Corn Du. This walk heads first for the high-dive views – arguably the best in the Brecon Beacons – before climbing up into the panorama and ticking off those summits. The full route is a spectacular and long hill day with plenty of challenging climbs; a shorter but still gorgeous walk descends after Fan y Big, following a clear track from point 3 to point 6, to miss out the highest beacons and steepest terrain.

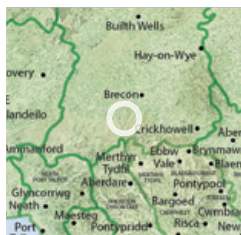
1 Start

Go through gate beside cattle grid and turn R up stepped path with fence to R and stream to L (marked as Beacons Way on map). Stick with clear path as it climbs onto open hillside, bearing slightly R up Craig y Fan Ddu to then walk along R-hand edge of its summit, with deep valley down to R. Continue to point where stream, Blaen Caerfanell, tumbles off cliff.

2 1 mile/1.8km

Don't cross stream; instead turn L on fainter path to head SW across peat to reach cairn, then turn R to keep with path, now heading NW towards highest part of ridge ahead, with Pen y Fan and Corn Du on

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking

Free car park on lane north of Merthyr Tydfil, between Pentwyn and Talybont Reservoirs, grid ref SO056175.

Is it for me? Lots of steep ascents and descents; rocky paths, some loose underfoot

Stiles None

PLANNING

Nearest town

Merthyr Tydfil

Refreshments None

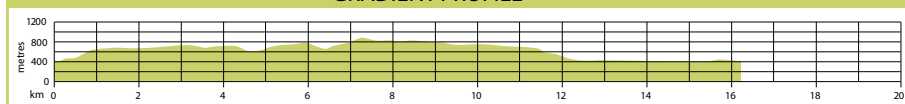
Public toilets None

Public transport None

Maps OS Explorer OL12; Landranger 160

skyline. When you reach broad path around edge of Cwm Oergwm, turn L to follow it down into small dip, keeping R as you climb again to follow edge above Cwm Oergwm to the top of Fan y Big and

GRADIENT PROFILE



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► OS Explorer map OL12 ► Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/mapshop

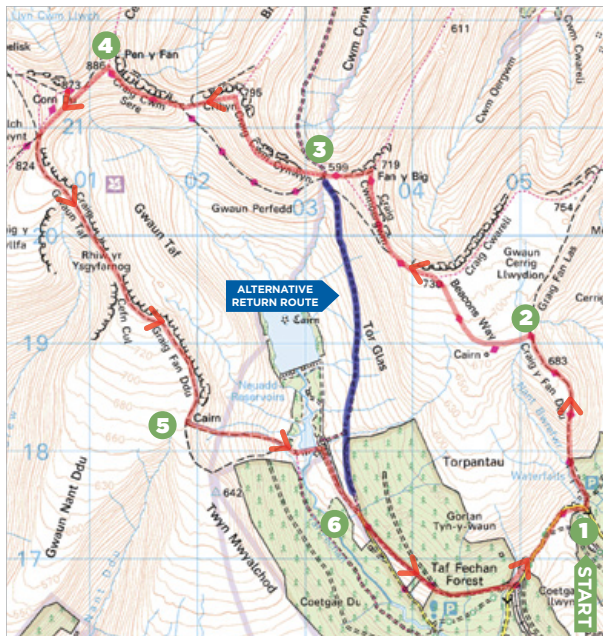
its famous Diving Board over Cwm Cwynwyn. After admiring the incredible view, take the path to L, dropping W along edge of Cwm Cwynwyn to path junction in dip at Bwlch ar y Fan.

3 3 miles/5km

(For an easier 11km route, turn L here on wide track downhill, passing above Neuadd Reservoirs and along edge of conifer wood to rejoin the route at point 6.) Otherwise, keep straight ahead to climb Cribyn. The path is steep and can be loose underfoot initially, before it eases a bit and swings R to reach summit of Cribyn. Turn L to follow clear path steeply down to SW into next pass and then back up again to the top of Pen y Fan, marked by a cairn and National Trust sign.

4 4¼ miles/7.6km

Turn L on the wide path towards the neighbouring peak of Corn Du, keeping R at fork to climb stepped path to its summit, again marked by a cairn. Bear L to drop down to SW to path junction at Bwlch Duwynt. Go straight over, climbing slightly and swinging round onto Craig Gwaun Taf, with wide valley dropping down to L. Continue on the stony path ahead across Rhiw yr Ysgyfarnog and along Graig Fan Ddu to reach the cairn, 2 miles/3.2km from Bwlch Duwynt.



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5 7¼ miles/11.7km

Turn L to descend very steep rubble chute and then pick up path across boggy ground, bearing R to hit southern end of Neuadd Reservoirs. Go through gate and across dam wall, taking path down to R on far side, to pass building on R and up and through gate beside cattle grid. Follow tarmac lane ahead for 700 metres past ruined buildings on R to track junction. (This is where the shorter route from Fan y Big rejoins).

6 8½ miles/13.7km

Fork L onto Taff Trail with horse sign to contour round

hillside through a series of gates to join wider track. Continue ahead, later passing track in from R before curving round to meet lane. Turn L and follow it up one last hill and then down, forking L on track to return to car park. **CW**

TRAILZILLA ID: TZID30319

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