



VALLEY OF THE ROCKS

Take the South West Coast Path out of Lynton to reach the Valley of the Rocks - it's less than a mile and the cliff top views are simply out of this world.

Jagged rocks point skywards and feral goats roam freely, and often quite hair-raisingly, on the jagged cliff edges of this spectacular dry river valley. Here are some of England's highest sea cliffs with views that take your breath away.

There's Mother Meldrum's Café, public toilets and a picnic area at the Lynton end of the valley.

FORELAND POINT

There's a clifftop walk from the top of Countisbury Hill up towards Foreland Point for views all around that will simply take your breath away.



COUNTISBURY HILL

Another highlight of this breathtaking ride is the spectacular 2½ miles long drop down to sea level at Lynmouth from the top of Countisbury Hill, 1,300ft above.

The gradient at the foot is 1 in 4, but only for a short distance.

PORLOCK HILL

Once a real test for early cars and their drivers' skills, our powerful open-top bus makes light(ish) work of the notorious 1 in 4 incline in parts of Porlock Hill and its scary hairpin bends - all adds to the thrill of this fantastic ride!

As the steepest A-road in the UK, this section attracts cyclists and runners looking for a challenge. The road climbs some 700 feet (over 220 meters) in just under a mile, winding from the village up to the hazy open moor stretching out ahead.



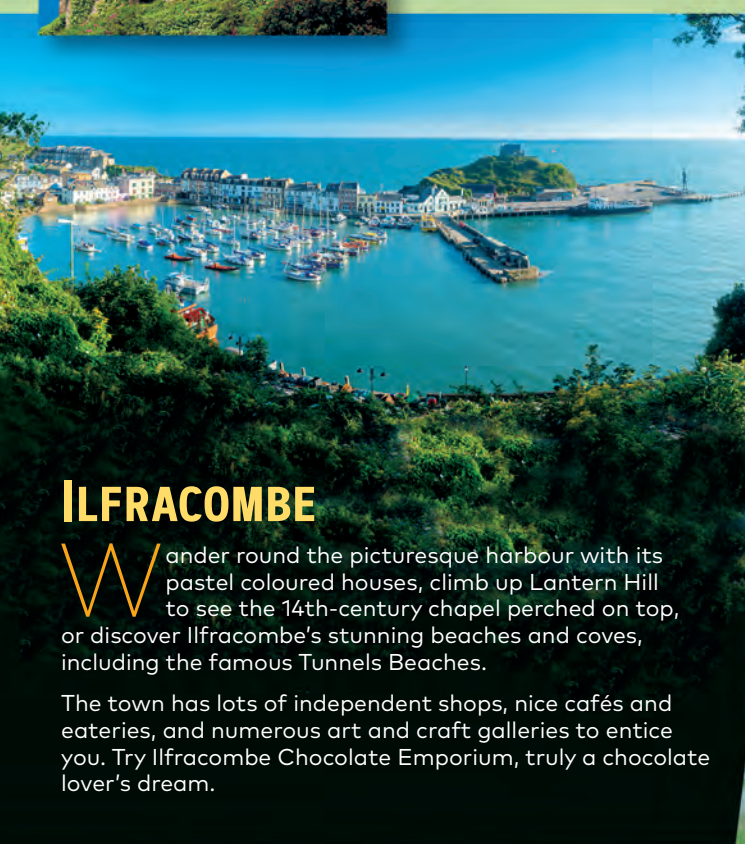
WATCHET

Overlooked by a 150 year old lighthouse, Watchet's ancient harbour is now a lovely marina, interesting to stroll round and boasting fantastic views across the Bristol channel. Several boats offer fishing trips.

Among the independent shops you'll find vintage and craft dealers, art shops and galleries; also studios in converted shipping containers on the quayside.

The Market House Museum tells stories of kings, queens, murderous knights, pirates, saints and even a famous singing sailor. And there's a boat museum.

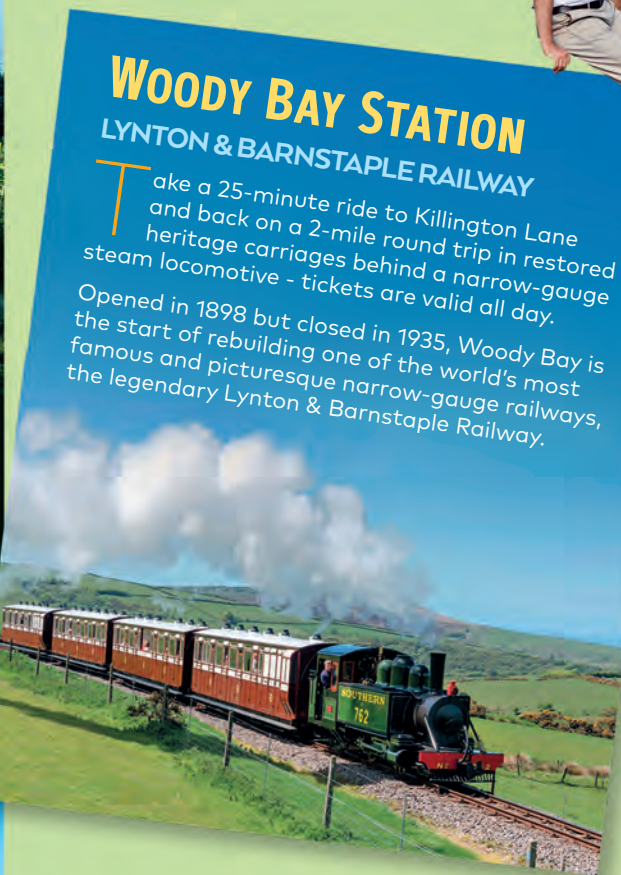
The West Somerset Railway station is right in the town.



ILFRACOMBE

Wander round the picturesque harbour with its pastel coloured houses, climb up Lantern Hill to see the 14th-century chapel perched on top, or discover Ilfracombe's stunning beaches and coves, including the famous Tunnels Beaches.

The town has lots of independent shops, nice cafés and eateries, and numerous art and craft galleries to entice you. Try Ilfracombe Chocolate Emporium, truly a chocolate lover's dream.



WOODY BAY STATION LYNTON & BARNSTAPLE RAILWAY

Take a 25-minute ride to Killington Lane and back on a 2-mile round trip in restored heritage carriages behind a narrow-gauge steam locomotive - tickets are valid all day. Opened in 1898 but closed in 1935, Woody Bay is the start of rebuilding one of the world's most famous and picturesque narrow-gauge railways, the legendary Lynton & Barnstaple Railway.

COOMBE MARTIN WILDLIFE & DINOSAUR PARK

Nestling in a valley with cascading streams and waterfalls, Devon's very own prehistoric park is home to an abundance of exotic and indigenous wildlife plus the very latest in Dinosaur animatronics!

It's home to exotic animals including African lions, baboons, lemurs, sea lions, penguins, meerkats and rare, white Hudson Bay wolves.

There are free daily animal talks and don't forget that T-rex and his friends wake up every hour, on the hour! There's a play area for kids and a café and shop.

WATERMOUTH BAY

With outstanding views from the cliffs around this sheltered harbour, here you can see porpoises, dolphins and seals when the tide is right.

Opposite the harbour is Watermouth Castle, transformed into a family theme park with a museum of musical instruments and toys and delightful gardens.



LYNMOUTH

Rows of picturesque fishing cottages, cafés and interesting shops cluster around the pretty harbour at the mouth of the West Lyn river.

On the quay at the end of the harbour is the Rhenish Tower, built in the 1860s to store salt water for indoor baths but later fitted with a light to act as a beacon.

See the other side for some of the fascinating stories from Lynmouth's history.

LYNTON

High above Lynmouth is Lynton and the best way to get there (and great fun, so long as you have a head for heights) is to ascend on the cliff railway.

Opened in 1890, it is thought to be the highest and the steepest totally water-powered railway in the world. The views as you glide heavenwards are amazing. Lynton is an unspoilt town with some excellent independent shops and an impressive town hall.

To learn more about the area, visit the Lyn and Exmoor Museum.



the tale of Lorna Doone

This novel by R D Blackmore was published in 1869 and set around the East Lyn Valley, or Doone Valley as it has become known. It tells the story of John Ridd, a farmer who finds love amid the religious and social turmoil of 17th-century England.

He makes his way to the valley of the lawless Doones, where he is discovered by the beautiful Lorna. They form a bond that inspires John to rescue his beloved from his nasty archrival, Carver Doone, only for her to be shot dead at the altar on their wedding day.

Blackmore's grandfather was Rector of Oare church, which is where the doomed marriage takes place. You can explore the Doone Valley along miles of waymarked footpaths. There's a circular walk which takes in sites linked to the novel.



PORLOCK

Lying between the high rolling hills of Exmoor and the Bristol Channel sea, Porlock's main village street twists and turns between characterful cottages, traditional locally-owned shops and galleries, pubs and irresistible tearooms.

So why not enjoy a very West Country tradition in one of them, a delicious cream tea with homemade scones served with thick clotted cream and strawberry jam (cream on first, mind!), washed down with a pot of tea - scrumptious!



MINEHEAD

A flower-bedecked prom lines the fine beach. There's a fishing quarter and historic harbour and, on the hill rising steeply behind the town, a 14th-century church with much-photographed historic Church Steps.

The main shopping street is a tree-lined avenue. Right by the front is Minehead Station, the end of the line for the West Somerset Railway, a 26-mile branch with both vintage steam and diesel trains throughout the season.

DUNSTER

One of England's most intact medieval villages with a rich history is a short walk from the bus stop, but well worth the detour.

The National Trust's Dunster Castle, high on the hill overlooking the village with incredible views stretching over Exmoor and the Bristol Channel, was an ancient feudal stronghold turned into an opulent country home for the Luttrell family in the 19th century. Discover magnificent stables, subtropical gardens and a working watermill.

Dunster also has a dovecote, tithe barn and a church with the longest rood screen in the country. You'll find plenty of tea rooms, gift shops and restaurants.

Right in the middle of the village is the impressive 17th-century Yarn Market, where village merchants once traded wool and cloth.



