

## Walk 1.

**The Painswick Valley and Painswick Beacon.** Distance, 5 miles, allow 2.5 hrs

Walking boots or shoes with good grips are recommended, as paths can become slippery when wet. Visitors to the Rococo Garden can leave their cars in the car park to undertake this circular walk.



Painswick Valley



Painswick Beacon

This walk takes you through the beautiful village of Painswick and progresses up the peaceful Painswick Valley. The footpath traces the route of the stream in the valley bottom, past historic old mills and culminates in ascending the heights of Painswick Beacon to enjoy magnificent views over the Severn Vale, Forest of Dean and Wales.

*On emerging from the Rococo Garden entrance, turn right and head down into Painswick village.* It is well worth a stroll around 'The Queen of the Cotswolds' with its mixture of elegant houses, Inns, shops and picturesque cottages.

There are reputedly 99 Yew trees in the churchyard and tradition maintains that the Devil will not allow 100. In the churchyard, with its magnificent Tombs and Yews, a 'Clypping' or 'embracing the church' service takes place once per year. The children of the village encircle the church, join hands and sing a traditional hymn. Following this the children are given a Painswick Bun and a coin. This is a substitute for 'Puppy dog pie', a traditional pie baked on Painswick Feast Sunday, in which the pastry is supported by a china dog. The local origins of 'Puppy Dog Pie' are varied but most are based upon a story of a group of people from Stroud visiting in Painswick. Their host having no meat for them slaughtered his dog for the pie filling. When discovered, this caused hostility between the two neighbours and Stroud from thenceforth used the nickname of Painswick 'Bow-Wows' in a derogatory way to refer to Painswick's inhabitants.

*From the Arts and Crafts Gallery in Bisley Street, continue downhill into Vicarage Street. Ignore the right fork signposted Sheepscombe and after walking uphill for 100 yards take the bridleway track on your right. Continue along this track with lovely views towards Saltridge Hill on the opposite side of the valley. Continue up the valley past Highgrove and when crossing a bridge over the stream a number of footpaths merge. Take the path to the right of the brook following upstream. At Damson's Mill, cross over the lane and continue upstream. At Oliver's, cross the stream below a waterfall from an old mill pond and continue past the front of the cottage and into a meadow.*

*Two thirds of the way across this meadow head for a stile in a gap above on the left. A route diagonally across the next field takes you up to further stiles and onto a track. Follow the track uphill for a short distance and turn left at a footpath sign over a stile. Follow the directional arrows uphill, passing to the right of Locks Cottage which you see before you, to a stile in the right hand corner of the field. Over that stile and up a track for about 100 metres, turning left as waymarked and over the next stile. Follow the right hedge and pass to the left of Tocknells House to join the drive and emerge on the A46. Here turn right and walk the short distance along the pavement to The Royal William Inn. Follow the lane upwards behind the Inn to emerge on Painswick Beacon. The Cotswold Way National Trail signs can now be followed over the Beacon, emerging just below the Rococo Garden entrance.*

Walking across Painswick Beacon, the views across the Severn vale to the Forest of Dean and beyond this the mountains of Wales, are stunning. The highest point is the site of an Iron Age Fort, 500-100 BC and the ramparts can be made out very clearly. When crossing this public access area, consideration has to be given that it is also a golf course.

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