

Combe Martin Circular



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Fact File:

Highlights: Combe Martin Bay, Combe Martin church, Silver Mine pack-horse cuttings, Great Hangman, Little Hangman, South West Coast Path

Start Grid ref: SS 577 472

Distance: 5.4 miles, circular

Height gained/lost: 428 metres. A moderate to strenuous walk, taking in the hills and valleys surrounding Combe Martin, including a stretch of the coast path.

High Point: 318 metres

Low Point: 10 metres

Toilets: at start car park only

Eating places: in Combe Martin village only

Time required: excluding stops: 3.5 hours

Public transport: 300, 301 bus service. Please check the current timetable on Traveline 0871 200 22 33 www.travelinesw.com before travelling.

Route description: This walk shows off the superb scenery around Combe Martin. There are three valleys that converge on Combe Martin. The largest one cradles the long village and the other valleys have the occasional farm and fields. This walk passes through each of these valleys and part of the coast path. Holdstone Down (349 metres) is to the right of this walk and is the highest point beside the sea in the British Isles. Great Hangman (318 metres) is the second highest and also has the highest sheer cliffs of 800 feet. The walk enjoys views over the village from each side as well as superb views along the coast with glimpses of Lundy Island.

Route directions: The grid references are given should you like to follow the route on an Ordnance Survey map. They are not needed to follow the route which is described very accurately in the text.

1, SS 577 472

From Combe Martin's main car park above the beach, walk back out of its entrance and bear right to reach the main road. Bear right again above the beach and shortly ignore the path to the right, instead following the road pavement.

2, SS 575 472, 0.2 miles

After the small car park entrance, bear right down steps to then follow a small road and when it swings right (signed Coast Path) continue ahead still on a small road signed Public footpath. Shortly follow the path to the right of a fence of the cottage ahead to bring you to the main road.

3, SS 574 470, 0.4 miles

Be careful here. Cross straight over to the Newberry valley entrance and then walk back towards Combe Martin to the 30mph signs and then turn hard right down a small lane called Furze Park. Soon bear right into Cracklands Farm entrance signed Public Footpath. Follow this fairly windy lane to pass the farm buildings to a footpath ahead by a stream.

4, SS 574 466, 0.7 miles

Pass through the next bridle gate and follow the path

uphill to reach two gates near the top. Pass through those and keep by the fence on your left to pass through the next bridle gate ahead. Continue straight ahead up to a track by telegraph poles. Bear left along it, soon losing height.

5, SS 580 465, 1.1 miles

Soon cross the stile by the farm gate and at the junction, ignore the gate back-left and the road bearing right, instead taking the track downhill ahead. After a short while this lane reached houses with the village down to your left. Continue ahead towards the church.

6, SS 586 462, 1.5 miles

On reaching the church DO NOT go along the road. Turn left through the church lych-gate and then turn right at the church door along a path to a gate on to a wide path by the war memorial. On reaching the road turn left along the pavement to reach the main road.

7, SS 587 463, 1.6 miles

Cross straight over to go up Corner Lane signed Public Footpath. Follow this lane uphill past houses. It then becomes a single-track concrete road the then narrows again to a footpath in a deep cutting.

8, SS 587 465, 1.8 miles

Shortly ignore the path on the left in a cutting. Continue ahead on this path which becomes a track steadily climbing all the way. Keep on taking breathers at the gates with views on the left.

9, SS 598 467, 2.5 miles

On reaching the top turn left at the tracks T-junction with Knappdown Farm down the track on your right. On reaching the road, turn left and almost immediately right along a more-level track signed to Great Hangman.

10, SS 598 470, 2.7 miles

Shortly ignore the path on the left to Combe Martin (Knap Down Lane Head). Continue ahead towards Great Hangman.

11, SS 599 471, 2.8 miles

At Girt Down Farm go through the gate ahead, ignoring track off to the left, and then through another gate to continue along the track to Great Hangman. Shortly when the track divides, bear left keeping to the main track to soon pass through two gates. Now keep to the right of this field to the gate in the far right-hand corner.

12, SS 601 473, 3.0 miles

Cross the stile by the gate and continue ahead by the fenced bank on your right. On reaching the coast path across you, Sherrycombe and Holdstone Down are on your right.

13, SS 603 477, 3.3 miles

Turn left along the coast path to the top of Great Hangman. Continue along the coast path to pass through the next bridle gate and on downhill towards Little Hangman.

14, SS 592 480, 4.1 miles

Soon pass through the next bridle gate, down steps along the coast path following near a Devon bank on your left.

15, SS 586 480, 4.5 miles

At Little Hangman follow the stone bank round to the left, unless you want to see the views from the top of Little Hangman. Continue along the coast path as it loses height again, to reach the bottom of this slope and up to another bridle gate.

16, SS 582 475, 4.9 miles

Now ignore the path on the left to Combe Martin, instead continuing ahead also to Combe Martin. After a short while you reach a shelter. Immediately after it the path divides.

17, SS 577 475, 5.3 miles

Leave the coast path and bear right. This brings you a prettier way to grassland overlooking Combe Martin harbour. Go down the grass slope to the car park.

I hope you enjoyed this walk.

