

My Favourite Ride # 1

Ffairfach - Dolaucothi Loop

A circular ride starting and finishing at Ffarfach near Llandeilo.

Distance 44 miles. Total ascent 1,968 feet. Max elevation 940 feet.

Terrain: Lanes, B Roads, some short sections of A Roads. Moderate.

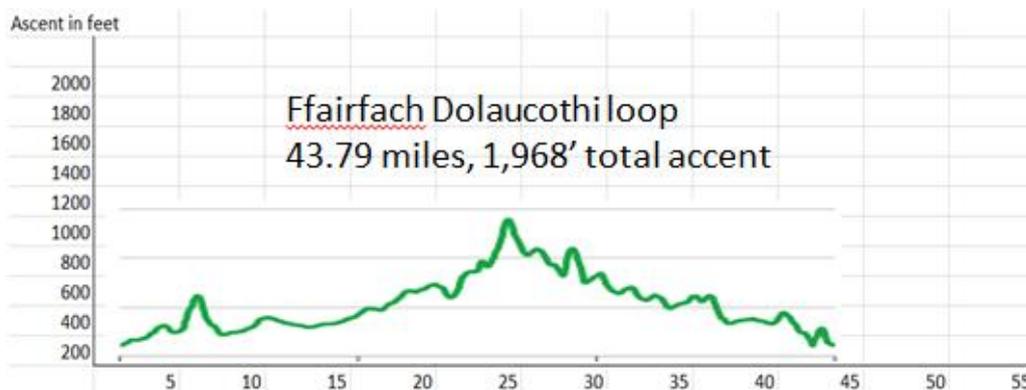
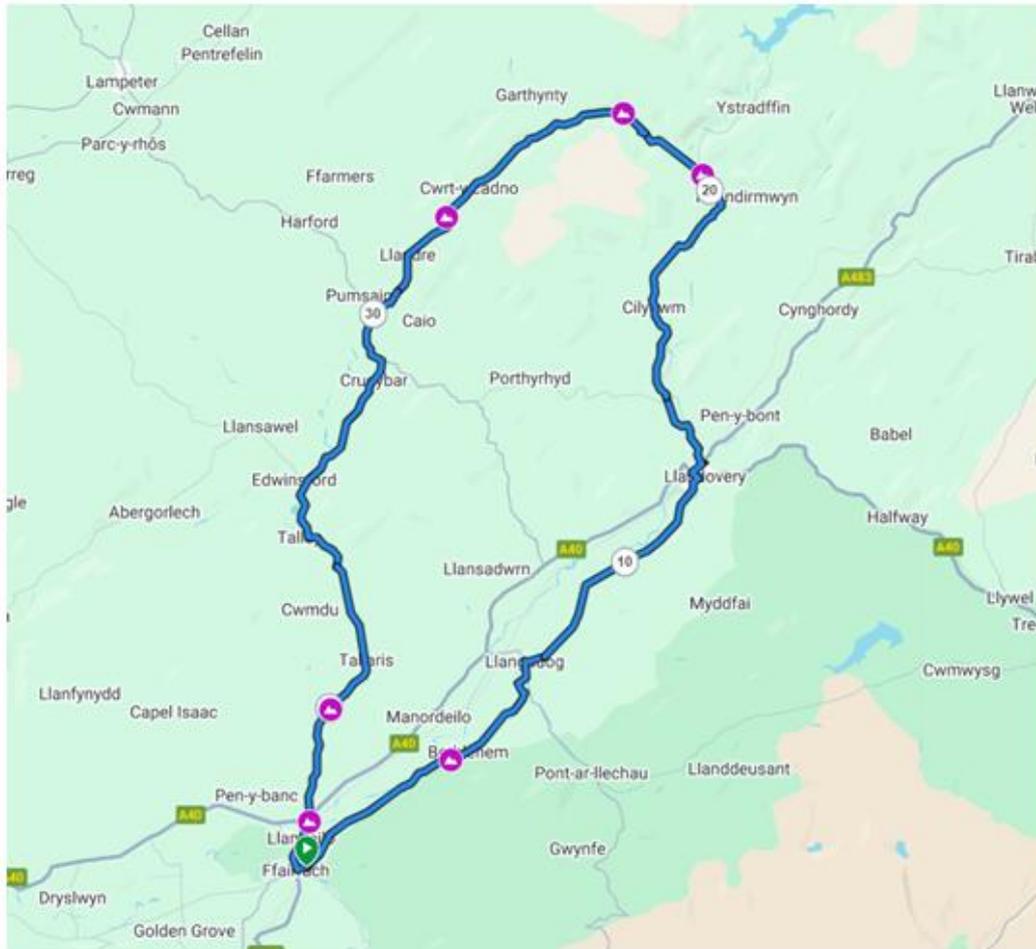
This ride starts at Melin Tregib, SA19 6SY 51.875361, -3.989571 Google Plus Code V2G6+6F

The views on this ride are magnificent, following the Afon Tywi upstream for almost half of the ride, there are some "lumpy bits" but the rewards after the climbs are worth it. This ride needs to be done on a fine day to get the best views of the fantastic countryside, once is never enough for this ride, when completed, the question is always "when can we do this again?"

From the start at Tregib we have an upward undulating ride of 5 miles to the village of Bethlehem where on the left side we have splendid views across the Tywi valley, some years ago you could get your Christmas cards stamped with the Bethlehem postmark at the village Post Office, this was a major attraction at the time and at the Post Office was a small coffee shop doing a roaring trade, we frequently stopped there for a coffee and cake on our CTC Swansea rides. The Post Office has now been relocated further up the hill but no coffee there anymore unfortunately. Continuing onward, we have an undulating descent of 2 miles to Llangadog and from there we join the A4069 Road to Llandovery for 7 miles and here we stop for refreshments because there aren't any other refreshments available until the end of the ride.

After our refreshments, we head out towards the village of Cilycwm crossing over the Afon Tywy on the famous Dolauhirion Bridge on a quiet lane that was once the main coach road from Llandovery to Lampeter, the bridge built in 1773 it is worth a stop to admire it. Continuing up the western bank of the Tywy as far as the Towy Bridge Inn, we follow the left fork lane up Nant Melyn, a steep sided valley of oak woods and waterfalls, climbing upward to the top of the pass but just before it is a small whitewashed Capel Bwlch-y-Rhyw, one of the oldest Baptist chapels in Wales built in 1717. From the pass, which is the highest point of our ride, is a long gentle descent down the Cothi valley through Cwrt y Cadno, a small hamlet with a large Chapel, then along the valley until crossing a small stone bridge over the Afon Cothi at Brynteg, then comes a short but steep climb out of the valley toward the Gold Mines at Dolaucothi. These are the only known Roman gold mines in Britain. There are picnic tables in the woods here and a suitable place to eat a packed lunch.

From the Gold Mines we continue to the junction of the A482 and turn left for 1.3 miles then right onto the B4302, an undulating mainly downward road through Crugybar and onward to Talley, there are remains of an Abbey here founded in the 1180s by Lord Rhys, a native ruler in south Wales at that time, only the outline of the Abbey tower remain. The ride continues through Halfway and New Inn until we reach Llandeilo, we join the A483 through the town when we have the option of a short coffee break before the end of the ride only a mile away. We cross the Afon Tywi after leaving the town and at the next cross roads with traffic lights, we turn left and under the railway bridge to our start point.



Download the gpx file for the route at:

<http://routes.swanseacycling.co.uk/events/event/ffairfach-doloucothi-loop>

Bethlehem old Post Office



Dolauhirion Bridge



Capel Cwrt y Cadno



Llandeilo and the Tywi Bridge

