

# Eryri | Snowdonia

Mynyddoedd a Môr  
Mountains and Coast

## 7. Website Day Itinerary – History of a nation

**Location:** Tywyn

**Morning:** The **Talyllyn Railway** is an historic narrow-gauge steam railway, set in the beautiful Mid-Wales countryside. Running from Tywyn to Abergynolwyn, the line passes the delightful Dolgoch Falls and there are excellent forest walks at Nant Gwernol. A coal-fired narrow-gauge steam train takes you on a 2½ hour trip through unspoilt Snowdonia, with the chance to stop for a picnic. The world's first volunteer-run preserved railway dates back to 1865 and original locomotives are still in use. The history of the **Talyllyn Railway** is inextricably tied up with the history of **Bryn Eglwys** slate quarry.



All but invisible from the main valley road and from the present-day terminus of the **Talyllyn Railway** at Nant Gwernol, the quarry once employed 300 men and in its time produced 300,000 tons of slate.

At the Railway station, there's also a fascinating, free admission **Narrow Gauge Railway Museum** containing a special section devoted to the Reverend W. V. Awdry, creator of "Thomas the Tank Engine". Awdry was an early volunteer on the Talyllyn Railway, and its history and his experiences were the inspiration for his "Skarloey Railway" on which operated thinly disguised counterparts of Talyllyn locomotives. The collection includes a reconstruction of part of the Reverend Awdrey's study from his last home in Stroud, Gloucestershire. Also at the station you'll find a licensed Café, shops, disabled facilities, and playground.

**Contact:** Talyllyn Railway, Wharf Station, Tywyn, LL36 9EY  
Tel: 01654 710472  
[www.talyllyn.co.uk](http://www.talyllyn.co.uk) e: [enquiries@talyllyn.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@talyllyn.co.uk)

**Location:** Penmaenpool (Travel Time from Tywyn – 35 mins, 18 miles)

**Lunch:** After a pretty coastal journey from Tywyn and along the banks of the magnificent Mawddach Estuary, why not fit in a visit to **The George III Hotel**,

six miles inland of Barmouth. This 1650 building was originally two dwellings – a ship chandler’s serving the flourishing boat building industry, and a pub.

Now under local management, the hotel has eleven en-suite rooms, character bars and lounge. The restaurant offers excellent food sourced as locally as possible. Specialities include Meirionnydd Mountain Lamb and Berwyn Bred Welsh Black Beef, as well as locally bred pork and a range of fresh fish as available.

**Contact:** George III Hotel, Penmaenpool, Dolgellau, LL40 1YD  
Tel: 01341422525  
[www.georgethethird.co.uk](http://www.georgethethird.co.uk) e: [hotel@georgethethird.co.uk](mailto:hotel@georgethethird.co.uk)

**Location:** Blaenau Ffestiniog (Travel Time from Penmaenpool – 30 mins, 23miles)

**Afternoon:** Now it’s onwards and upwards to experience a hugely enjoyable and informative afternoon at **Llechwedd Slate Caverns**. Not an average museum, it is set in 2,000 acres of land above the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog. **Llechwedd** is a living, working slate mine that has been active since opening in 1836. There are two exciting and unique underground mine tours, the Deep Mine Tour and Miners’ Tramway Tour, that take you deep into the mountain to explore the mysterious world of the Victorian slate miner. Believe it or not, the temperature in the mines is about 54°F throughout the year making the caverns ideal come rain or shine.



At Llechwedd top quality ‘Greaves Portmadoc Slate’ is still being mined, and gifts fashioned from this incredibly durable and fascinating material are available to purchase.

**Contact:** Llechwedd Slate Caverns,  
Blaenau Ffestiniog, LL41 3NB  
Tel: 01766 830306  
[www.llechwedd-slate-caverns.co.uk](http://www.llechwedd-slate-caverns.co.uk) e: [quarrytours@aol.com](mailto:quarrytours@aol.com)