



Walks



Map



News



Soci

Walk - Little Hangman

2.1 miles (3.3 km)

📍 Kiln Car Park in Combe Martin - EX34 0DJ → Kiln Car Park in Combe Martin

📌 Moderate - Steep ascent and descent on stony, muddy paths that can be very slippery, quiet lanes and tracks

A breathtaking walk in both senses of the word, with tremendous views over Combe Martin Bay and inland, and a gentle stroll downhill through an area once famous for its silver mines. A great walk in autumn, when the rusty bracken bristles with banks of purple heather.

🏠 [Heritage \(/walksdb/tags/heritage/\)](/walksdb/tags/heritage/) [Wildlife \(/walksdb/tags/wildlife/\)](/walksdb/tags/wildlife/)

[Autumn \(/walksdb/tags/autumn/\)](/walksdb/tags/autumn/)

🌙 Sleep

Newberry Beach Lodge, Combe Mart

A pebbles throw from the award winning Newberry & Combe Martin beaches, local pubs and cafes. Enjoy a soak in a roll-top bath after a day's walking!



01271 833709

Cranleigh House B&B, Combe Martin

We are a comfortable, dog friendly, vegetarian/vegan, Yoga B&B. Bike storage & overnight drying facilities available.



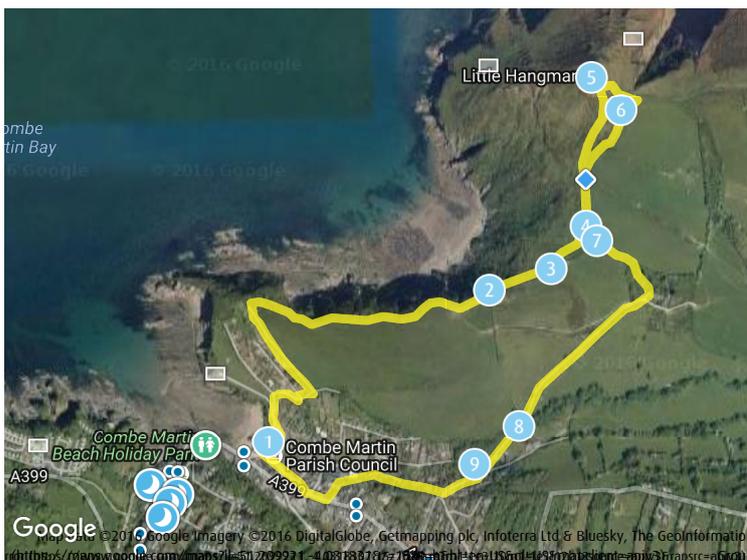
01271889325 / 07985928461

Fontenay B&B, Combe Martin >

A family run bed and breakfast within very close proximity of the coast path. We offer a warm friendly welcome along with our home products and cooking.



01271 889368

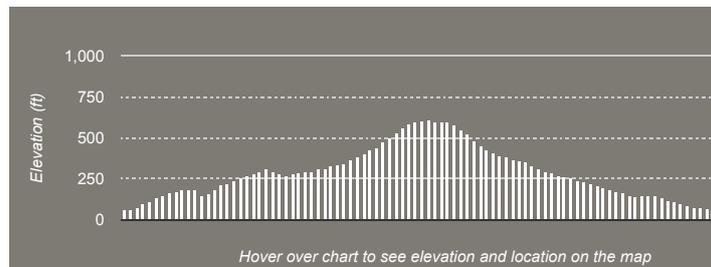


📌 ✓ Easy walks

🍴 ✓ Eat & Drink

📈 Interactive Elevation

-  ✓ Moderate walks
-  ✓ Challenging walks
-  ✓ Sleep
-  ✓ Do
-  ✓ Bus stop
-  ✓ Photographs
-  ✓ Car park
-  ✓ Toilet
-  ✓ Place of interest
-  ✓ Route change



Route Description

1 *From the Kiln Car Park in Combe Martin take the Coast Path up the steps past the houses and keep climbing with it to the junction of paths above Wild Pear Beach.*

Wild Pear Beach has a small shore of sand and shingle, with rocky outcrops and small sea caves. It is possible to reach it on foot, but the steps once cut into the cliffs were washed away by storms in 2008, leaving a great chasm across the hillside, making it a treacherous trek not to be lightly undertaken. Its resultant inaccessibility has made it a popular nudist venue.

Although nothing can be seen of them now, old Ordnance Survey maps indicate that there was once a lime kiln somewhere above the beach. This would have burnt coal brought in by ships from South Wales to process limestone, also from Wales, to make lime, which was used as an agricultural fertiliser. On their return journey, these ships would have carried iron and manganese from the nearby workings. Records also suggest that there was also a counting house on the beach, used to pay the men's wages.

A little earlier, in 1854, an English cargo vessel, the Eleanor, was caught in gale-force winds out in Combe Martin Bay, and was wrecked in heavy seas on the deadly rocks just off the coast here.

2 *Ignoring the track to the right here, carry on up the hill towards Little Hangman.*

The twin cones of the two hangmen hills make them prominent landmarks, visible from various places around Exmoor.

It is tempting to assume that the two hills were so named following use as gallows hills, but their exposed nature makes this unlikely, given that they are frequently subject to high winds.

A local legend suggests that Little Hangman, at least, was named after a sheep rustler, who threw a rope around a ram's neck and led it away, the flock following tamely behind. However, the ram made a run for it, and in its errant foolishness it plunged over the cliffs here, taking the rustler with it. As they fell, the rope caught on a rock, and in the morning a passing sailor was said to have spotted the man hanging from the rope, halfway up the hillside.

 [Print OS \(Ordnance Survey\) M](#)

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Local maps and publications

[> A-Z 1:25,000 map book: North Devon & Somerset \(http://shop.southwestcoastpath.org.uk/p/405.htm\)](#)

Nearby Walks

Easy walks

(5 wal

However, perhaps the most likely explanation is that the hills are named after “an men”, Cornish for “the rock”.

- 3 *When the path forks towards West Challacombe, stay left and keep following the Coast Path uphill.*

There were mine adits in the cliffs at Wild Pear Beach and at nearby Lester Point, as well as a shaft just below Lester Cliff and about 250 yards to the south of West Challacombe Farm. This was the West Challacombe Mine (also known as West Combmartin or New Combmartin) and was an old site for working silver-lead. It was explored in the late eighteenth century with a view to exploiting it commercially, but this was abandoned a few decades later, although it was working again briefly at the end of the nineteenth century.

Combe Martin was famous for its silver mines. In the fourteenth century it was said that “the battles of Crecy, Poitiers and Agincourt (1415) were won in the shafts of Combe Martin”, and a century later a German mining engineer was appointed to work hereabouts, with a thousand men at his command (see the Hangmen Hills Walk).

- 4 *Take the sheep path on your left and follow it up to the cairn on Little Hangman.*
- 5 *Take the other path back down to the Coast Path.*
- 6 *Return to 4, but this time take the other path, forking left from this direction, and follow it around the hedge to the track.*
- 7 *Turn left onto the track to West Challacombe, passing in front of the farm, and head downhill for about a quarter of a mile, ignoring the path off to the right on the way.*
- 8 *Stay with the track, ignoring the other one joining from the right, and carry on down to the lane at the bottom.*
- 9 *Turn right, and go downhill past the school, staying on the bottom road past the museum to return to the car park.*

Nearby refreshments

In Combe Martin

Public transport

Filer's 301 bus service runs regularly between Barnstaple and Combe Martin, and the First North Devon 3 bus runs from Ilfracombe to Combe Martin. The Exmoor Coast 300 bus service also runs between Lynmouth, Combe Martin and Barnstaple during the summer season. For timetable information, zoom in on the interactive map and click on the bus stops, visit Traveline (<http://www.travelinesw.com>) or phone 0871 200 22 33.

Parking

Moderate walks

(2 wal

Challenging walks

(8 wal

Current Conditions

19°

Overcast skies

Wind 23 mph S



Tomorrow

14° - 19°

Overcast skies

Wind 23 mph S



Next day

12° - 15°

Patchy rain possible

Wind 24 mph WSW



Kiln Car Park in Combe Martin at the start of the walk. Post code for sat navs: EX34 0DH


 Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs
 (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-
 for-environment-food-rural-affairs)


 Coastal Communities Fund
 (https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/ccf)


 SOUTH WEST WATER
 (http://www.southwestwater.co.uk/)


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