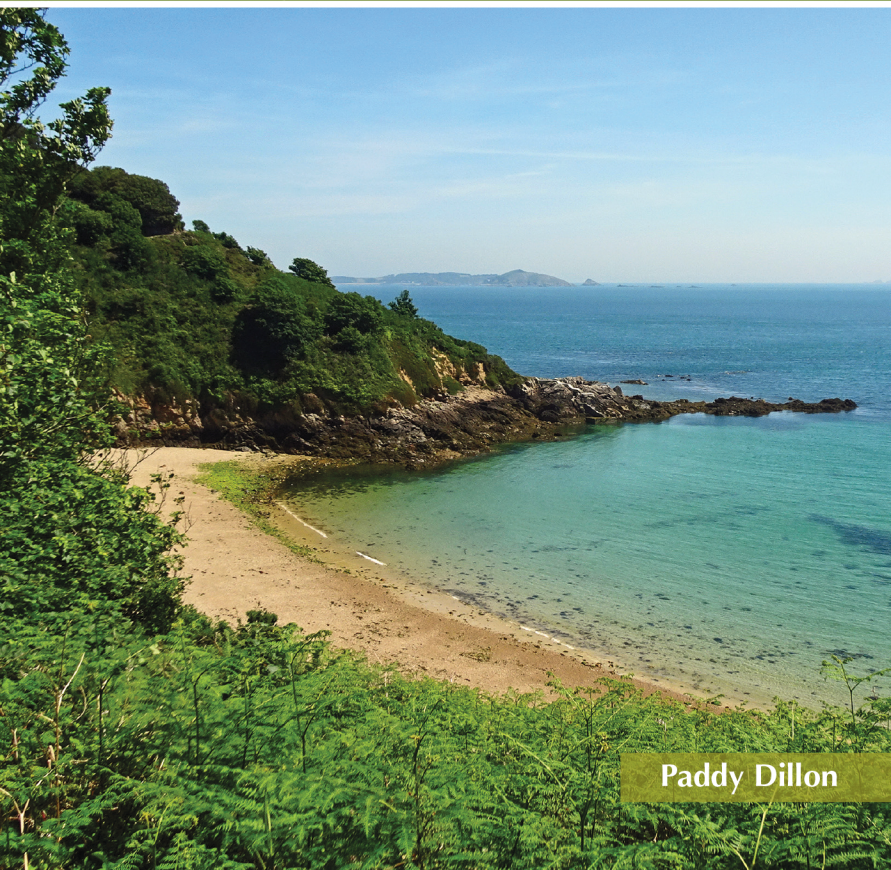


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WALKING ON

GUERNSEY

25 routes including the Guernsey
Coastal Walk, Alderney, Sark and Herm



Paddy Dillon

WALKING ON GUERNSEY

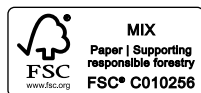
**25 ROUTES INCLUDING THE GUERNSEY COASTAL
WALK, ALDERNEY, SARK AND HERM**

By Paddy Dillon

CICERONE

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Updates to this Guide

While every effort is made by our authors to ensure the accuracy of guidebooks as they go to print, changes can occur during the lifetime of an edition. Any updates that we know of for this guide will be on the Cicerone website (www.cicerone.co.uk/1130/updates), so please check before planning your trip. We also advise that you check information about such things as transport, accommodation and shops locally. Even rights of way can be altered over time. We are always grateful for information about any discrepancies between a guidebook and the facts on the ground, sent by email to updates@cicerone.co.uk or by post to Cicerone, Juniper House, Murley Moss, Oxenholme Road, Kendal, LA9 7RL.

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Front cover: Fermain Bay, looking towards Herm (Walk 3)

CONTENTS

Map key	5
Route summary table	6
INTRODUCTION	9
Location	10
Geology	10
Turbulent history	12
Government	14
Wildlife	15
Protected areas	17
Getting to Guernsey	17
When to go	18
Accommodation	18
Health and safety	19
Food and drink	19
Parlez-vous français?	21
Money	22
Communications	22
WALKING ON GUERNSEY	23
What to take	25
Waymarking and access	25
Maps	26
Getting around Guernsey	27
Travel to Alderney, Sark and Herm	28
Tourist information	28
Emergencies	29
Using this guide	29
THE WALKS	31
Walk 1 St Peter Port Town Trail	32
Walk 2 St Peter Port and Fermain Bay	38
Walk 3 Fermain and Jerbourg Point	44
Walk 4 La Fosse and Icart Point	52
Walk 5 Le Bourg and Pointe de la Moye	57
Walk 6 La Prévôte and Torteval	64

Walk 7	Portelet Harbour and Pleinmont	71
Walk 8	Rocquaine Bay and Lihou Island	76
Walk 9	Perelle Bay and St Saviour	85
Walk 10	Vazon Bay and Cobo Bay	95
Walk 11	Cobo Bay and Saumarez Park	101
Walk 12	Portinfer and L'Islet	108
Walk 13	L'Ancrese and Vale	115
Walk 14	St Sampson and Belle Grève Bay	123
Walk 15	Beau Sejour and Le Friquet	130
Walk 16	St Martin and La Villette	138
Walk 17	St Andrew and Castel	143
Walk 18	King's Mills and Fauxquets	150
Walk 19	Rocquaine Bay and Quanteraine	156
Walk 20	Guernsey Coastal Walk	161
Alderney		168
Walk 21	Alderney – East	170
Walk 22	Alderney – West	177
Sark		184
Walk 23	Sark – South	185
Walk 24	Sark – North	193
Herm		199
Walk 25	Herm	200
Appendix A	The Channel Island Way	205
Appendix B	Contacts	206

Symbols used on maps for walks 2–19



















	route		start/finish point		start/alternative finish
	alternative route		start point		
	route direction		finish point		

SCALE: 1:15,000

0 metres 150 300

Contour lines are drawn at 5m intervals and highlighted at 25m intervals.

Symbols used on overview map and walks 20–25

	route		station/railway
	alternative route		airport
	route direction		peak
	start point		building
	finish point		castle
	start/finish point		lighthouse
	alternative start/finish		windmill
	woodland		telegraph tower
	urban areas		ferry route

Map scales are included on individual maps.

Contour lines are drawn at 25m intervals and highlighted at 100m intervals.

GPX files for all routes can be downloaded free at www.cicerone.co.uk/1130/GPX.

WALK 1

St Peter Port Town Trail

Start/Finish

Liberation Monument, St Peter Port

Distance

Variable

Terrain

Urban roads, sometimes steep or with steps, as well as parks.

Refreshments

Plenty of choice around St Peter Port.

Transport

All bus services on Guernsey operate to and from the bus terminus on South Esplanade.

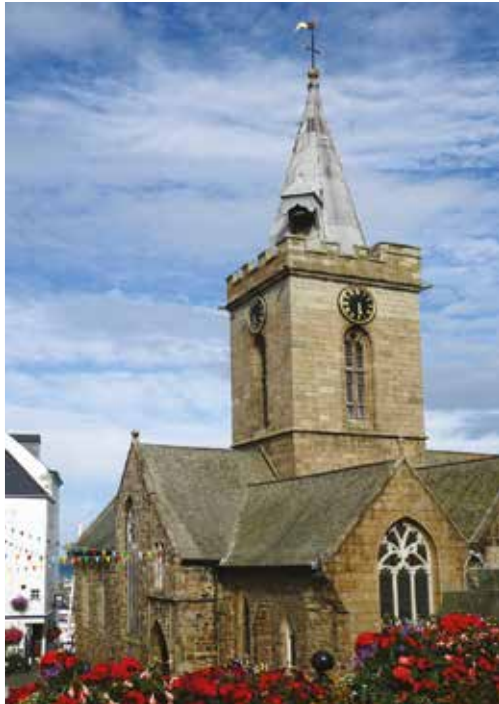
St Peter Port is the largest town on Guernsey and the second largest in the Channel Islands. Approaching the town by ferry, its buildings look as if they are stacked onto a cliff face, and the land certainly rises very abruptly from the harbour. A rigid route description is hardly appropriate, and in fact there is no need to dedicate a whole day to a tour. Simply explore a different area of town any time you are passing through. There are so many places of interest, some of them apparent even if you are not particularly on the lookout for them. Lots of little plaques and memorials are fixed to all sorts of structures. There is a fine museum, several interesting and historic buildings, steep and narrow streets, some with flights of steps, and a number of green spaces to discover. Free town plans are widely available.

The focal point for exploring St Peter Port is around the Weighbridge and the Liberation Monument between the harbour and a large marina. Truckloads of tomatoes and other goods for shipment used to be weighed and then weighed again unladen at the Weighbridge. The difference between the two weights was the weight of the goods, for which payment would be made. ◀ Wandering along the North Esplanade leads past the Guernsey Information Centre, tel 01481 723552. At the post office inside the information centre, enquiries can be made about Guernsey and Alderney stamps and first-day covers. Continue along The Quay, then the bus

Ferry tickets are available from a nearby kiosk for Herm and at a nearby office for Sark.



The Parish Church in the centre of St Peter Port holds the record for being located close to a pub!



Walk 2 starts on South Esplanade.

terminus and bus information office lies beyond on South Esplanade. ◀ High Street runs parallel to The Quay, in effect doubling back a few steps inland from the Parish Church of St Peter Port. The church is worth a visit; it dates from at least 1048, when it was referred to as Sancti Petri de Portu Maris. It holds the record for standing closer to a pub than any other church!

The old Market Hall is tucked away behind the church, but has been converted into shops and no longer features market stalls. There are plenty of shops along High Street, continuing along The Pollet, offering goods at VAT-free prices. Climbing through St Peter Port is a matter of following steep and narrow streets, or very steep

and very narrow streets, or even flights of steps. Energetic walkers might dash up and down these, but most people will take them slowly and steadily.

St Julian's Avenue rises fairly gently from the Liberation Monument and can be used to reach the Candie Gardens. A statue of Victor Hugo stands here and there are views across the harbour to the islands of Herm, Jethou and Sark. Sitting in the heart of the gardens is the Guernsey Museum, tel 01481 726518, and there is an entry charge. This is a good starting point for those wishing to enquire into the history, natural history and heritage of the island. Despite limited space it tells the story of Guernsey from its bedrock upwards.

Visitors are often intrigued to see stone towers on the skyline when approaching St Peter Port by sea. These include Victoria Tower, Elizabeth College, St James' Centre and church spires. Walking from one to another involves negotiating a network of narrow streets, and if a route can be contrived down to the tiny green space of Trinity Square, then explorations can continue with some sense of order. Along the way some of the financial institutions that take advantage of Guernsey's low taxation rate can be seen.

A flight of steps near Trinity Square, alongside the Victoria Homes, can be used to climb to a road called Hauteville. Following this back down towards the town centre leads past Victor Hugo's house, where he lived in exile from France from 1855 to 1870. The uppermost room of Hauteville House, tel 01481 721911, was Hugo's study, which enjoyed a view of his beloved France on a clear day. Further down the road is the National Trust of Guernsey Victorian Shop and Parlour, where Trust members may be in period costume.

There is another opportunity to take a run at the shops along High Street, or you could follow the South Esplanade to Castle Pier. If you do go this way, watch out for a sculpture telling the story of Othon, a Swiss knight who was a great friend of Edward I and was granted the Channel Islands for life in 1277. The sculpture is naturally beside the Credit Suisse offices!

Castle Pier has an upper walkway which can be used to reach Castle Cornet, tel 01481 721657, which charges an entry fee. The castle grew on a rocky islet to defend St Peter Port and Guernsey. If the castle is visited, the rest of the day might quietly disappear as there is so much to see.

CASTLE CORNET

Castle Rock may have been inhabited by Neolithic and Bronze Age people, while Castle Cornet was developed almost as soon as King John lost Normandy to France in 1204. The French raided frequently in the 13th century, and in 1338 they took the castle and held it for seven years. The castle was considerably extended and strengthened in the 16th century, and later held out for nearly nine years as a Royalist stronghold in the 17th century when the rest of Guernsey supported Parliament in the Civil War.

A massive explosion occurred when the magazine in the central keep was struck by lightning in 1672, accounting for the rather squat form of the castle today. There were improvements to the fortifications in the 18th and 20th centuries, with concrete structures added during the German Occupation, augmenting the castle's ability to defend the harbour. The site includes a number of small museums, including a maritime museum, and attractive little gardens add colour to the bare walls. Traditionally, a cannon is fired at noon each day from the ramparts.

Castle Cornet, built on a rocky islet, is reached by following a stout stone pier from St Peter Port



The Liberation Monument, whose shadow traces a particular path along the granite wall on 9 May each year



Head back into town via the harbourside to return to the Liberation Monument.

Walking round St Peter Port early or late in the day is quite relaxing, and several pubs and restaurants offer a cosmopolitan range of food and drink. When there are fewer cars and people on the streets there is a chance to look at the finer detail of the buildings, spotting all sorts of interesting plaques and monuments telling more about the history of the place. ►

There are sometimes guided heritage walks around town; the tourist information centre can provide details.

WALK 2

St Peter Port and Fermain Bay

Start/Finish	Bus Station, St Peter Port
Distance	6.5km (4 miles)
Terrain	Good coastal and woodland paths, with plenty of steps up and down, and some road walking.
Refreshments	Plenty of choice around St Peter Port. Beach café at Fermain Bay. Hotel restaurants and a pub at Fermain.
Transport	All buses serve St Peter Port. Buses 91, 92, 93, 94 & 95 run along Fort Road in Fermain village.

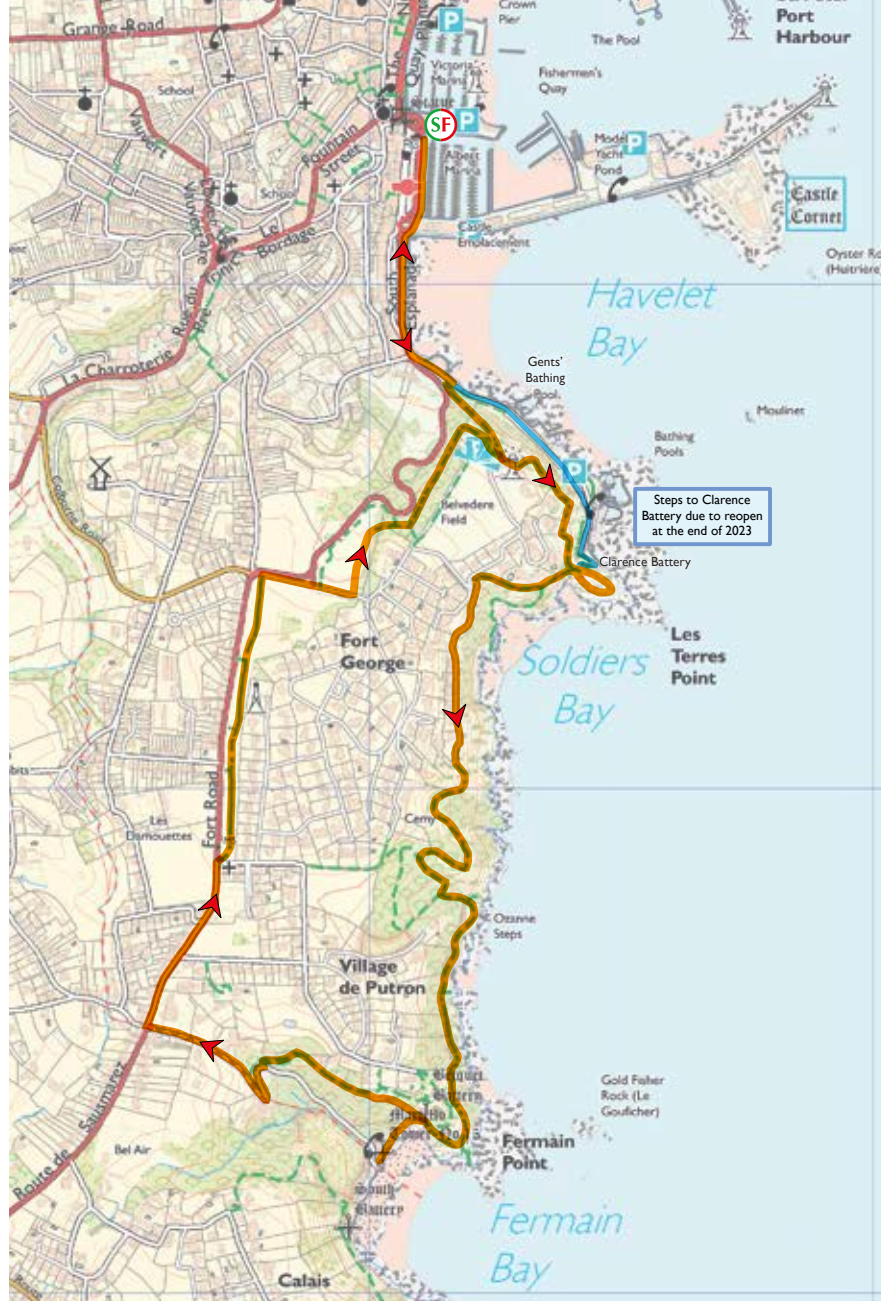
One of the most popular walks on Guernsey runs from St Peter Port to Fermain Bay. Although short, there are lots of ascents and descents on flights of steps, with enough woodland to make it feel more like a jungle trek than a coastal walk. In spring there are lovely carpets of bluebells. Marker stones carved with place names show the way to Fermain Bay, but beware of paths leading steeply down to beaches and bays, as it is usually necessary to climb back up afterwards. Coastal fortifications and other attractions can be explored from the start, and an inland route is used to return to St Peter Port.

To walk round the coast of Guernsey (see Walk 20), pick up the route description here.

The steps collapsed in 2020, but might be rebuilt by the end of 2023.

Leave the bus station and follow the **South Esplanade** ◀ out of St Peter Port, passing the harbour and walking beside **Havelet Bay**. A minor road leaves the main road and follows the coast, passing the Octopus bar and restaurant. If the road is followed onwards, it leads to **La Vallette Underground Military Museum**, the **Bathing Pools** and a set of steps that climb from the road-end to Clarence Battery, connecting with the main route. ◀ To follow the main route instead, cross the road a short way beyond the Octopus and follow a zigzag path up a steep and well-vegetated slope.

Turn left at the top as marked by a stone reading 'Cliff Path'.



The loopholed tower at **Fermain Bay** is also known as the Pepper Pot, and was number 15 of a series of 15 towers built at strategic points around the coast between 1778 and 1780, of which 12 remain. The tower can be hired from the National Trust of Guernsey for accommodation. Musket fire from the loopholes covered every possible approach, while a cannon could be fired from the roof. Loopholed towers gave way to Martello towers from 1794. The Beach Café and toilets stand beside the tower.

The route now heads inland, so retrace your steps into the woods, looking for a stone carved with the words 'main road', with steps climbing from it. A well-wooded path climbs close to a couple of houses, then descends to the road serving Fermain Bay, near the former Le Chalet Hotel and the Fermain Valley Hotel. Follow the road, Fermain Lane, above these to reach the main road at Fermain, which is **Fort Road**.

Turn right to follow the road past the Fermain Tavern, leaving the village to pass the splendid Chateau du Village nursing home and the former Morley Methodist Church. A broad strip of grass forms a linear park beside the main road, with a path through it. Follow the path past a number of huge pines. Turn right alongside a quiet road which runs towards an archway inscribed **Fort George**. Turn left downhill without passing through the arch, following a grassy path.

FORT GEORGE

As Castle Cornet's role in defending St Peter Port and Guernsey drew to a close in the 18th century, Fort George was constructed above the town. Work on this extensive structure started in 1782 and continued for 20 years. Fort George became the main military headquarters for Guernsey and was continually improved throughout the 19th century. Dates over its gateways stretch from 1812 to 1845. During the German Occupation the fort was used as a military headquarters and its defences were strengthened. As a result, the site attracted Allied air raids. Little remains of the fort beyond its curtain wall, and the interior is now a housing estate.



The grassy path along the foot of the wall becomes a woodland path, still following the wall, although the masonry is often obscured by ivy. The path follows an embankment parallel to the wall, reaching a viewpoint overlooking the harbour. Turn right, then left, away from a fine gateway in the wall that was passed earlier in the day. A clear path continues onwards, emerges from the woods, then the zigzag path can be followed down to the Octopus bar and restaurant. Simply walk back onto the **South Esplanade** on the edge of **St Peter Port** and finish back at the bus station.

A pleasant pathway avoids a busy road on the way out of Fermain, back towards St Peter Port



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Most of the walks are 5–17km (3–11 miles) long, but also included are the Guernsey Coastal Walk – a 61km (38-mile) island circuit – and details of the 182km (113-mile) Channel Island Way.

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