

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Braemar-Two Rivers Ramble (Aberdeenshire)

Route Summary

When visiting the attractive village of Braemar, this walk makes for a gentle introduction to the highland landscape of Upper Strathdee, with tantalising glimpses of the Cairngorms.

Duration: 2 hours.



Route Overview

Duration: 2 hours.

Transport/Parking: Regular Stagecoach bus service along Deeside to Braemar. Check timetables. Balnellan Road car-parks near to the walk start/end point.

Length: 5.160 km / 3.23 mi

Height Gain: 81 meter. **Height Loss:** 81 meter.

Max Height: 380 meter. **Min Height:** 322 meter.

Surface: Moderate. Well-defined paths. May be muddy in places.

Difficulty: Easy.

Child Friendly: Yes, if children are used to walks of this distance.

Dog Friendly: Yes, on lead on public roads and near farm animals.

Refreshments: Options in Braemar.



Description

This is a very pleasant and easy route in a beautiful setting, mostly walking on riverside paths on the ancient flood plain of the upper River Dee, and surrounded by high hills on all sides. The focal point is undoubtedly where the Clunie Water meets the River Dee, with stunning views up and down the strath. Braemar sits on the eastern side of the Cairngorm National Park, the largest National Park in the UK, with 9 nature reserves, a diverse range of special natural environments, and a vast sub-arctic mountain plateau. In winter, the village of Braemar is one of the coldest settlements in the UK, and is also renowned for the great variations in temperature in one day. Although remote, the Braemar area was a strategically important crossing point on the Elsieck Mounth, an ancient trackway used by Picts and Romans. It was also an important place for the early kings of Scotland, with Kindrochit Castle first established as a wooden defensive structure and royal hunting lodge there in the 11thC. The 14thC remains of the later stone-built castle can be visited in Braemar village centre after the walk. Our route also takes in a view, across fields, to Braemar Castle, constructed in 1628. It figured prominently in the 17thC and 18thC Jacobite uprisings, being attacked and burned in 1689. After 1745, the ruined castle was re-built as a Hanoverian garrison. Near the end of the walk, our return route through the village goes through the Princess Royal & Duke of Fife Memorial Park, the site of the world-famous Braemar Gathering. The "Games", as they are known locally, are believed to originate from those held by Malcolm III in the 11thC. The Duke of Rothesay Highland Games building in the Park is an eye-catching new structure built in traditional "pavilion" style.



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at info boards in village centre

(57.00584; -3.40056) <https://w3w.co/modules.earphones.silk>
Start the walk at set of large information boards in the centre of Braemar, opposite the Fife Arms Hotel. Facing the hotel, turn right and walk along Mar Road, which after the bridge over the Clunie Water, becomes Invercauld Road. At the junction with the A93 main road, cross the A93 and go left, passing the Invercauld Hotel on your right side.



(2) Left into car-park area - then across footbridge

(57.00777; -3.39775) <https://w3w.co/napkins.otter.blogs>
In just over 300 m, after passing the Invercauld Hotel on your right side, turn to your left and cross the A93 road to enter a car-park. Keep going straight ahead and gently downhill to the perimeter of the car-park, bordering the Clunie Water. Go through a pedestrian opening and cross the footbridge. Turn right and follow the riverside path, with the Clunie Water on your right side, until you reach the confluence, where the Clunie Water meets the River Dee (in approx. 1.3 km). At that point, follow the path as it bends left to head SW, with the River Dee now on your right side. Keep walking along this riverside path for about 1.2 km, until Waypoint 3. (334 km)



(3) Keep following path above the river

(57.00592; -3.41195) <https://w3w.co/contact.indicated.otter>
In 2.9 km from Waypoint 2, as you ascend to a sloping heathery bank above the river, there is an option on your left to follow a track up to the Linn of Dee Road. Ignore that option and keep going along the riverside path for another 500 m, or so, in a broadly W direction, with the river now further below you than before. (2.9 km)



(4) Sharp left and steeply uphill to Linn of Dee Road

(57.00441; -3.41921) <https://w3w.co/proposals.novel.quality>
In 500 m, at an arrowed post, go sharp left and steeply uphill to the Linn of Dee Road. Cross the road and take the rough road ahead of you, ascending the heathery hillside in a broadly SE direction. (3.4 km)



(5) Veer left away from gates

(57.00215; -3.41570) <https://w3w.co/screaming.foods.dares>

In 300 m, as the rough road approaches gates into woodland, veer left to follow a path away from the gates. In about 80 m the path meets a rough road (Chapel Brae) which soon becomes tarred where it passes the scenic Duck Pond on your right side. (3.7 km)



(6) Veer right for car-park by the Duck Pond

(57.00288; -3.41337) <https://w3w.co/converter.index.penned>

In 200 m, or so, as you are passing the Duck Pond on your right side, veer off the Chapel Brae road to take a path that passes a corner of the pond. This soon meets a rough access road for a rough car-parking area. Turn right here to walk into the car-park. Keep walking to the perimeter of the car-park, with the old Royal Observer Corps bunker on your right side. (3.9 km)



(7) Right -then left - at end of Duck Pond car-park

(57.00265; -3.41127) <https://w3w.co/passions.frown.motivator>

In 100 m, follow a path out of the car-park that initially goes right through the heather. In about 50 m, follow the path that goes sharp left and keep taking this path down through the heather, with a house on your left side, until you reach a level area of rough ground. (4.0 km)



(8) Veer slightly left for high conifers

(57.00217; -3.41022) <https://w3w.co/matrons.scramble.technical>

In 200 m, or so, having descended to the level area of rough ground veer slightly left to head straight, in the direction of the prominent summit of Creag Choinnich, which overlooks Braemar. Also on the line you are taking, you will see a small group of conifers which stand out, a little taller than the other trees around them. (4.2 km)



(9) Cross rough road and left through gate into showground

(57.00273; -3.40779) <https://w3w.co/encourage.adopting.marbles>

In about 100 m, you will have followed a short path from the rough ground that passes a white post. Cross the tarred access road here, and go left through the pedestrian gate into the Princess Royal and Duke of Fife Memorial Park*. Follow the path to the flagpole area where there is a fine view over the village, then take the path down to the level of the showground. Go right and follow a path that takes you past the eye-catching Highland Games Pavilion**, on your right side. Keep going, out of the Park onto Broombank Terrace which joins Chapel Brae very briefly before meeting the roundabout at the Hazelnut Patisserie. Now walk up Mar Road into the centre of the village where you started the walk. (4.3 km)



**Note: the Park is well-known for hosting the annual Braemar Gathering Highland Games. See: <https://www.braemargathering.org/>*

***Note: the Braemar Highland Games Centre features objects, photographs, documents and costumes associated with the history of Highland Games, focusing in particular on the Braemar Gathering. See: <https://www.highlandgamescentre.org/>*

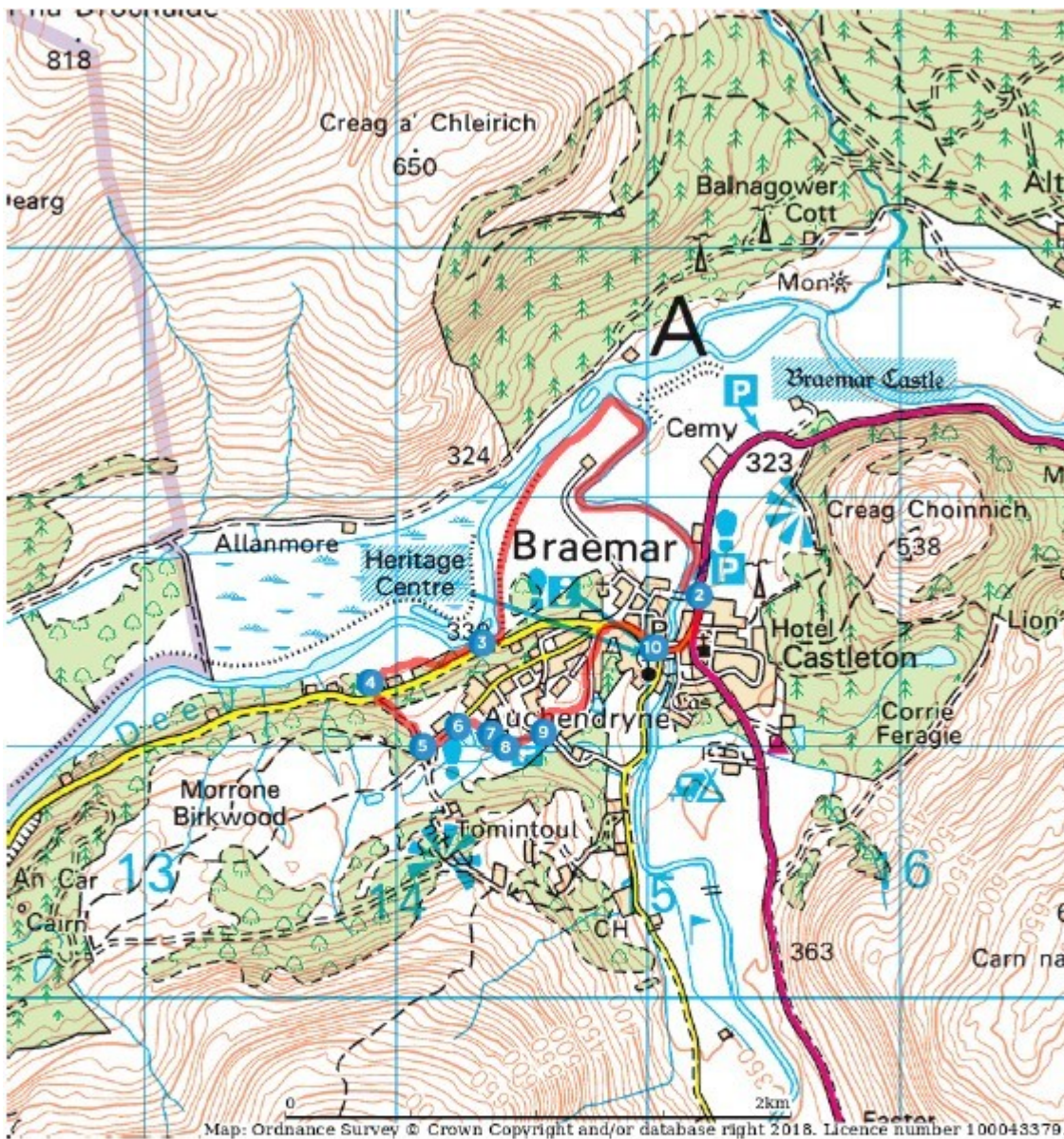
(10) Finish walk back at info boards

(57.00585; -3.40070) <https://w3w.co/modules.earphones.silk>

In 900 m, you will have arrived back at the information boards where you started the walk. (5.2 km)



Route Map



Links:

[Photos from Walk](#)

[Download Route Guide](#) (PDF with illustrated Waypoints)

[Download GPX file](#) (GPS Exchange Format)

[Access Walk on Viewranger](#)

[Access the Walk on OutdoorActive](#)

[Access Walk on OSMaps](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)