

Oystermouth Castle is an Anglo-Norman fortification dating from the 12th century, built at a time when Swansea and Gower were being fought over by the Norman lords and the Welsh Princes of Deheubarth. The castle changed hands several times between 1106 and 1220 but these days things are a bit calmer and the castle plays host to a series of themed events throughout the year. The ghost of a lady in white is also reputed to haunt its dungeon.

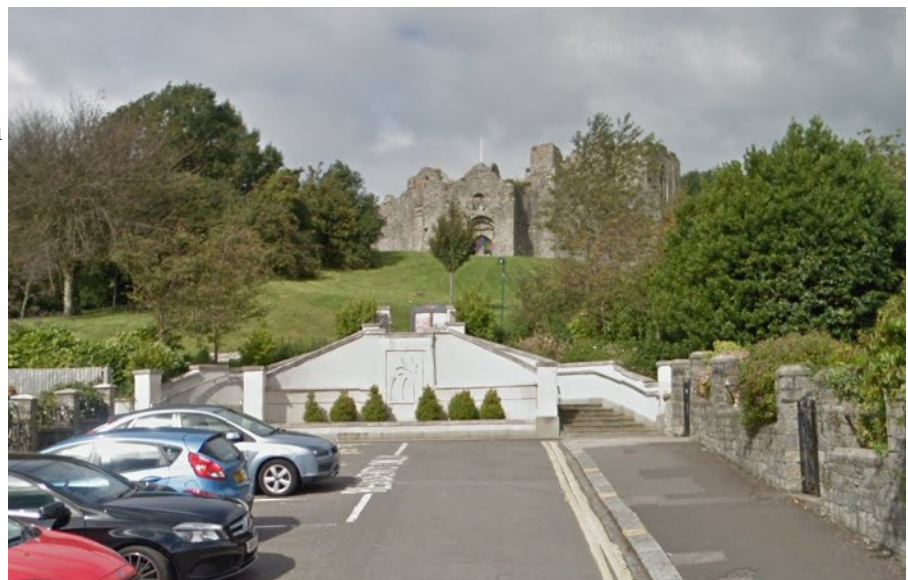


As we turn into Castle Avenue we get our first glimpse of Oystermouth castle.

Walking towards the castle we notice at the far end of the Avenue,

an impressive looking set of steps which enable us to gain access to the castle grounds -

which we will toil up as a foretaste to the stairways of the castle itself



Now, a choice awaits, do you go left or right; take care your choice may give away your political leanings!

Just a little further to go.



Lets hope that you are not running out of puff! Alison is at the back doing her usual 'sweeper' job.



Nearly there. Reaching the top of the slope we can see the two-storey gatehouse, which was originally flanked by two round towers, long since removed, though their position is evident from the concave walling at either side of the frontage, and the gated doorways at the base, once allowing access to the tower staircases. This is the Gower Peninsula's finest castle, standing on a small hill with a magnificent view over Swansea Bay in the resort town of Mumbles. It is well-preserved, intricate and exciting to explore.



We enter through a barrel-vaulted passageway, on the far side of which are two flights of stairs that lead the upper level of the gatehouse, a now roofless room; linking to

wall-walks to the east and west. The main section of the castle, the four connected ranges, is on the far side of the courtyard, and the most impressive is the 14th century chapel block. It also includes a 30ft (10m) high glass bridge. This gives access to the chapel, the bridge being constructed as part of a project to restore the castle and sustain its long term sustainability.

Beneath the bridge the ground floor basement houses the gift shop and fee station. Yes, as the castle is in private hands and so we can not avoid the entry fee but it is only £3 for us today. The people taking your money are from the Friends of the castle who are responsible for the daily operations of the castle itself.

We will meet back at the gift shop at 1.00 so please find your own way around and look out for the steep steps.









From the walkways at the top of the walls there are very impressive views over the surrounding countryside.



Including the distant Mumbles Pier (well not too distant as we will be walking there)



..... firstly along the road which we recently used to get to the castle.

A quick health check; no twisted ankles or other signs of the castle's structure getting its own back on this latest lot of visitors.



We start off to walk back through the town, past the bus stop we made use of earlier, and down to the the main road. No pedestrian crossing at this point, so please be careful as we cross to the other side.





Safely over the road we take the path to the left of the bench and before us is the sweep of the bay.



Aren't you glad you came on the trip? Even better; it's lunch time; bet you thought it would never come!

"Quite right too" says Ruth who always prefers an earlier lunch.

We have lunch booked at 1.45, at Bistrot Pierre and it's just a two minute walk from here, through the car park and its on the flat!



Margaret had recommended that I consider one of her favourite restaurants which she often used when at Swansea University; 'Particks'. However nice though it is it they not be able to take our numbers today, but perhaps on another trip?



And so on to Bistrot Pierre, part of the new 2017 development of Oyster Wharf, and our lunch. Hope you are hungry. Can I hear the odd tummy rumbling?

