

Blog posts written for Snowdonia Pass by debbidoo

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Anglesey Sea Zoo: preserving Britain's underwater world

Anglesey Sea Zoo is one of many family attractions offering discounts to Snowdonia Pass holders. Our blogger spent a morning at the attraction learning about the hidden gems in Britain's waters, and about the steps Anglesey Sea Zoo is taking to protect them.

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Whatever you think you know about British wildlife, prepare to have this challenged when you visit Anglesey Sea Zoo. I consider myself a reasonably intelligent person with pretty good general knowledge, but I was utterly amazed to learn of some of the creatures that live in the waters around Britain which I'd thought only lived in 'exotic' places. You'll see tanks of starfish, octopi, anemones and much more at Anglesey Sea Zoo – and every single creature you see is native to Britain.

The first thing that struck me as I entered the foyer to await my guides – Anglesey Sea Zoo's owner, Frankie Hobro and its marketing officer, Rhian Lloyd-Hughes – was the wonderful briny smell coming from the huge tanks of lobsters, turbot, mullet and wrasse.

As Rhian explained, the water in these tanks is fresh from the Menai Strait; there's a pump house which brings seawater in at high tide. No chemicals are involved so it's a totally natural environment for the tanks' inhabitants and so the creatures' behaviour is more natural as a result. This is a totally unique set-up – no other aquaria do this without chemicals.

Commencing our tour, we saw some very menacing-looking Atlantic wolf fish, whose tank has to be chilled because they're found deep in the coolest seas around the very north of Great Britain and Scotland. Throughout the tank were some of the anemones and starfish that come in with the tide. I would see many more – of several varieties – before my visit was over.

Next, we saw the octopi. Britain has two sorts, I learned: common and lesser. It's the lesser octopus that's most common around these parts, and they're extremely intelligent creatures who need to be kept entertained – and that's why there were toys in the tank with them!

We moved on to look at an enormous tank of starfish and anemones. The 'sun star' is a good example of the ones people don't realise we have in this country, Rhian tells me. They grow to be massive, and they are carnivorous.

Tanks of moon jellyfish (which don't sting) filled one wall, and hanging from the ceiling were dozens of jellyfish made from paper plates and plastic carrier bags. Frankie and Rhian told me about their programme to educate children about the fact that leatherback turtles – also resident in British waters, I was astounded to learn – eat jellyfish and can eat plastic bags by mistake. Eating the bags causes massive harm to the turtles and so educating people about disposing of rubbish sensibly is one of the many areas of marine conservation that Anglesey Sea Zoo is involved in. Another is beach clean-ups, which the zoo recruits volunteers to help out with. Any rubbish they find is logged on a global database of beach litter.

Frankie tells me that marine conservation is her background; she worked for many years for the Gerald Durrell Wildlife Trust based mostly in the Indian Ocean, and this has fed her passion for her work. Her passion is inspiring many other people, too; for example, local fishermen are working closely with Anglesey Sea Zoo on lobster conservation and other sustainable fishery projects.

One of my favourite exhibits in the zoo was the tank of plaice. These funny googly-eyed fish are extremely curious and love to interact with their audience. They reminded me of underwater puppies – silly and playful and friendly. I haven't eaten meat for years and now I'm going to have to add plaice to my don't-eat list. I'm curious – does Frankie eat fish? Yes, she says, but only if it's responsibly and sustainably caught.

My visit coincided with feeding time for the conger eels. I learned that the eels at the zoo are in various stages of their life cycle, and older ones are released to live out their days in the sea. The zoo received a Blue Peter badge for this work, and once released an eel live on The One Show – it was 'very wriggly,' Frankie says.

A fascinating creature – and one with an important role to play in commercial fish farms – is the lump sucker. Frankie tells me that as these fish attract many parasites, they're being used instead of pesticides in commercial fish farms. The parasites are attracted to the lump suckers and leave the other fish alone, so farmed fish can now avoid being treated for parasites chemically.

As I walk around the exhibits I'm absolutely overwhelmed by what I see – my jaw literally drops more times than I can count. I see rays, cuttlefish, seahorses, lesser spotted catsharks, longspine snipefish, pipefish, and even a maternity ward for lobsters (the breeding programme is a very important part of the conservation work taking place here).

Seahorse conservation is a big thing here too. Both species of British seahorse, the short snouted and spiny seahorse, have almost completely disappeared from Britain. There isn't enough information to properly classify them, but they are both definitely highly endangered. Anglesey Sea Zoo breeds them but it's very challenging – keeping the fry alive is one of the biggest difficulties.

The conservation message is strong and consistent throughout the attraction. There are many information points and displays, and there are loads of fun educational activities for children to help press the message home. I learned a huge amount during my two and a half hours at the zoo, and I will definitely visit again. To an old hippy like me who loves anything to do with nature and the environment, it was the perfect place to visit.

Frankie told me as we walked around that the aim is to make people look at British beaches with new eyes. Mission accomplished, in my case!

Find out more about Anglesey Sea Zoo's conservation work [here](#).

Anglesey Sea Zoo has a new, very rare guest – find out more [here](#).

Christmas shopping at Inigo Jones Slate Works

Tucked away in a quiet corner of Snowdonia is one of the region's most fascinating businesses – Inigo Jones Slate Works. You probably know it as a popular visitor attraction, thanks to its famous self-guided tours... but did you know you can also do your Christmas shopping there? We sent our blogger to investigate...

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I have to say, Inigo Jones Slate Works is full of surprises. Having visited the showroom several times over the years, both on business and as a shopper, I knew before my 'research visit' that it sold some pretty interesting items. What I didn't know, however, was just how fascinating the making of these items is!

On arriving I was shown into a little room to watch a film about the history of slate and of Inigo Jones Slate Works. That was a really fascinating ten minutes, and it's the starting point for anyone who pays for one of the self-guided tours. Afterwards I was shown around the shop by Sue, who manages it, and learned about the hand-crafted goods, most of them locally-made, that are available to buy there.

I think what took me most by surprise was how many items can be personalised. Sue showed me the special UV printer they use for printing onto slate items like trophies and coasters. It was huge, and it was really interesting to watch it at work.

What really fascinated me was the number of items that can be personalised – and the fact that, if you're a designer, you can get Inigo Jones to print your designs onto slate products and then sell them on to your own customers. As a craftsperson, the cogs in my mind started to turn when Sue told me this!

As Sue explained, the coasters are very popular as personalised wedding favours. You can provide your own design by email, and one of the team members will print it onto slate for you. The prices were surprisingly low too, considering what you get for your money... an order of 50-100 personalised slate coasters would cost around £2.40 per coaster, including VAT.

Engraved name plates for houses are also very popular. Over a thousand of them are produced on-site each year, and shipped out all over the UK.

Sue gave me a tour of some of the most popular items available to buy at the showroom.

Slate place mats are by far the most popular product sold at Inigo Jones (in fact, my mother bought a set when we took her there for a visit a few years ago, and she tells me that her visitors are always admiring them). The table mats at Inigo Jones are made from beautiful blue-grey Welsh slate, which is cut at the quarry before being finished at the slate works where they're oiled (for stain resistance) and baized (to protect table tops).

Slate items like the tealight holders, door stops, cake stands and lazy Susans are always popular, Sue said, as well as the slate clocks which can also be personalised. The Gwynant clock in particular has been a bestseller for 40 years, and over a hundred have been sold this year alone.

But it's not just slate goods that you can buy at Inigo Jones Slate Works. They stock an excellent selection of products by local artists and craftspeople, as well as items from further afield. Welsh-language books are plentiful there (in fact, I bought one for my little grandson

during my visit, which he loved) as are more unusual items like greetings cards made from sheep poo!

There's some really beautiful work by local artists too – and some absolutely stunning slate jewellery which is very popular, Sue said, because each piece is unique.

One of the things that really impressed me about Inigo Jones Slate Works was the huge amount of support they give to local artists and craftspeople by stocking their 'makes'. It's so refreshing to visit a shop and know that almost every item you can buy has a local connection of some sort. If you'd like to buy a Christmas present with a difference this year, and support Snowdonian artists while you're at it, you should definitely add Inigo Jones Slate Works to your Christmas shopping trip itinerary!

All of these items and many more are available to buy at the Inigo Jones showroom at Y Groeslon, which is open from 9am to 5pm every day including weekends. You can also shop at their online store, which is at www.inigojones.co.uk.

You can use your Snowdonia Pass to enjoy 10% discount on purchases over £10 at Inigo Jones Slate Works – please visit their 'deal details' page to find out more.

Have a green day out at GreenWood Forest Park

Since GreenWood Forest Park was launched as the GreenWood Centre in 1993, it's become one of the world's greenest attractions

When Stephen and Andrea Bristow started 'The GreenWood Centre' in 1993, it was little more than a green oak cruck frame building on a 17-acre plot of land. The plan was to educate visitors about nature and wildlife.

Twenty-three years later, GreenWood Forest Park, as it's now known, is one of the UK's top 10 attractions (as voted for by TripAdvisor members), a winner of several awards, and one of the world's eco-friendliest attractions (GreenWood was featured in The Guardian's 'Green Travel List' as one of the seven top green attractions in the world).

Now covering over 27 acres, GreenWood Forest Park has a lot more going on than just education – although that's still a big part of what happens there.

Home to the world's only people-powered rollercoaster, GreenWood is the UK's only family adventure park to feature truly eco-friendly rides; in fact, most of the park's rides and activities harness visitors' energy in some way, providing a really different way to have a fun and educational day out.

There are many ways that GreenWood earns its green credentials:

- 70-80% of the park's electricity is supplied by the park's 550 solar panels – making GreenWood the UK's first solar-powered adventure park
- The new 'SolarSplash' ride is completely powered by solar energy – the first ride in the UK to get all of its power in this way
- GreenWood plant over 500 trees a year – more than 10,000 in total since the park was launched
- Over 130 cubic metres of rainwater are harvested each year, which is used for flushing toilets
- Many of GreenWood's food and drink containers are biodegradable
- Used cooking oil from GreenWood's cafes and restaurants is processed into biodiesel

So what can you expect from a day at GreenWood Forest Park?

Rides include the aforementioned people-powered rollercoaster - the 'Green Dragon' – and the SolarSplash water chute. There's TreeTop Towers, a fabulous timber treehouse-cum-adventure playground. The pedal-powered Moon Carts seat 1-2 people and are a fun, energetic alternative to dodgems. The Great Green Run is a fun take on bobsledding, while the Little Green Run offers a similar experience on a smaller scale for tiny tots.

The Barefoot Trail offers the sensory experience of walking barefoot through different terrains including sand, bark, straw, timber and water. The Giant Jumper is a huge bouncing pillow for the under-12s, offering 1,500 square feet of bouncing space.

There's also a huge climbing web, jungle boats that you pull yourself along in, a crocodile maze, den building and archery.

And with a packed programme of entertainment throughout the school holidays, which includes face painting, crafts, shows and much more, you're guaranteed a very full day when you visit GreenWood Forest Park!

Your Snowdonia Pass entitles four visitors to a discount of 10%, seven days a week. To find out more, visit our [GreenWood Forest Park profile page](#) or visit their website at <http://www.greenwoodforestpark.co.uk>.

There's more to King Arthur's Labyrinth than meets the eye!

Chances are you've heard of King Arthur's Labyrinth – but did you know it's part of a bigger 'suite' of attractions?

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One of Snowdonia's more unusual attractions, [King Arthur's Labyrinth](#) in Corris is well-known as the place where visitors take an underground boat ride to hear stories of the deeds of one of the most famous historical characters to have strong ties with Snowdonia.

Guided by a mysterious hooded boatman, your journey takes place deep beneath the Snowdonia mountains and through a magical waterfall, beyond which you'll disembark and walk through winding tunnels and immense caverns, learning as you go about the dragons that prophesied Celtic victory against the Saxons, about giants, ladies of the lake and Arthur's battles... all dramatically punctuated with lights, sounds and models.

But the fun doesn't stop there.

There are more stories to be heard at [Lost Legends of the Stone Circle](#), an above-ground storytelling attraction that opened in 2012. Here you'll explore a simple maze where you'll learn another eight mythical stories, featuring intriguing characters, wonderful statues, a wildlife pond and of course a mystical stone circle.

Also on-site you can try your hand at mine exploration in a safe, guided way with [Corris Mine Explorers](#). You'll be shown the old mining tools, machinery and even the candles that were left behind, looking for all the world as if the miners have just popped home for lunch!

And finally, the other well-known attraction on the site is the [Corris Craft Centre](#), a collection of nine craft studios where you can try hands-on activities and meet the crafters and buy their goods. Crafts at the centre include handmade candles, chocolates, jewellery, glass sculptures, pottery, toys, herbal lotions and remedies, rustic furniture and even gin!

It would be easy to write Corris off as just somewhere you pass through on the way to Machynlleth or Aberystwyth, but as you can see there's a great deal going on in this little village, so round up the family and head down to Southern Snowdonia for a fun-packed day out – whatever the weather!

Your Snowdonia Pass entitles you to 10% discount for two adults and three children at King Arthur's Labyrinth, and 10% off a 2-hour mine explorers' trip for up to five people. Terms and conditions apply – visit the [King Arthur's Labyrinth](#) and [Corris Mine Explorers](#) profile pages on this website for essential information.

Where to use your Snowdonia Pass in Northern Snowdonia

In the first of a series of articles about using your Snowdonia Pass in different parts of Snowdonia and Anglesey, we look at how you can get the best use of your pass in Northern Snowdonia.

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At the time of writing, there are almost fifty great deals available to Snowdonia Pass holders throughout Snowdonia and Anglesey.

To make it even easier to plan a reduced-price day out, celebration or shopping trip, we're publishing a series of articles looking at the deals available in each area of the region covered by the Snowdonia Pass.

In this first article we look at the deals available with your Snowdonia Pass in the northern part of Snowdonia. This includes the areas around Caernarfon, Llanberis, Bangor, Conwy and Llandudno.

Please make sure you click the links for full terms and conditions of the deals offered, as well as opening times, seasonal closure information and contact details of the organisations offering the deals.

Great days out

Parc Glynllifon

Kids go free – one child per paying adult – at Parc Glynllifon, one of Wales' best-kept secrets. Enjoy some wonderful Welsh fresh air, take a picnic, explore the follies and amphitheatre and have a fabulous family day out.

Gypsy Wood Park

A magical day out for all the family. Your Snowdonia Pass entitles you to 10% off a family ticket at Gypsy Wood Park, so take the kids along for a day of fairy-hunting and meeting the friendly animals that live there.

Caernarfon Castle

You can enjoy 10% off entry at Caernarfon Castle with your Snowdonia Pass. Climb the towers and admire the views, or head down to the Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum for a fascinating display of military artefacts.

The Fun Centre

One adult goes free with every two child tickets purchased at The Fun Centre using your Snowdonia Pass. Let the kids run around and let off steam, while you get tired just watching them!

GreenWood Forest Park

TripAdvisor users have voted GreenWood Forest Park into the top 10 list of family attractions in the whole UK for 2016. When you visit it's easy to see why! Sustainable fun in a beautiful

setting, including the famous people-powered rollercoaster. One Snowdonia Pass gives a 10% discount to two visitors.

Electric Mountain Visitor Centre

Book a tour in advance with the Electric Mountain Visitor Centre, and enjoy a 10% discount with your Snowdonia Pass. This is Europe's largest man-made cavern, large enough to comfortably hold St Paul's Cathedral!

STORIEL

Formerly the Gwynedd Museum and Gallery, STORIEL houses a fascinating collection of ancient artefacts as well as contemporary art by local artists. Entry is free to all visitors, but if you present your Snowdonia Pass you'll get a free branded notepad too!

Conwy Castle

With your Snowdonia Pass you can enjoy 10% off entry to several of Wales' most iconic castles. Conwy Castle offers a really fascinating day out for the whole family, so take them all along!

RSPB Conwy Nature Reserve

Visit RSPB Conwy Nature Reserve and enjoy 20% off entry to the trails when you present your Snowdonia Pass. Say hello to the varied wildlife, which includes frogs, dragonflies, butterflies and of course plenty of birds!

Don't stop – shop!

Adra

Visit Adra's shop at Glynllifon and enjoy 10% discount on your purchases. Adra sells a gorgeous collection of stylish and contemporary Welsh gifts and homeware – so take home a treat for a friend, and perhaps one for yourself too!

Inigo Jones Slate Works

There are two ways to use your Snowdonia Pass at Inigo Jones Slate Works. Enjoy 10% off all purchases over £10 in the shop, and enjoy another 10% off self-guided tours for up to two adults and two children.

Eat, drink and be merry

Molly's Restaurant & Bar

Enjoy a discount of 20% on weekday lunches at Caernarfon's new American-style diner, Molly's Restaurant and Bar. There's even a big screen TV showing sports, so there's no need to miss that important match!

Royal Victoria Hotel

Visit the Eryri Bar and Lounge at the Royal Victoria Hotel in Llanberis, and enjoy 15% off food and selected drinks when you present your Snowdonia Pass. This generous deal covers up to four diners, so take a friend or three!

National Slate Museum

Entry to the National Slate Museum is free, but when you present your Snowdonia Pass you can also enjoy 10% off in the cafe before 1pm. What a great value day out!

Get around for less

Beics Menai Bikes

Up to six people on one Snowdonia Pass can enjoy 15% off cycle hire with Beics Menai Bikes. So if you're looking for a fun, healthy and sustainable way to enjoy the sights of Caernarfon, look no further!

Llanberis Lake Railway

Take a trip around Padarn Lake on the Llanberis Lake Railway's narrow gauge steam trains. When you present your Snowdonia Pass you can get a free child ticket when the accompanying adult pays full price, or if there are no children in your party you'll get 20% off a second adult ticket PLUS a half price guide book.

Snowdon Mountain Railway

If you don't fancy the walk up Snowdon but still want to enjoy the breathtaking views, there's a fun solution: the Snowdon Mountain Railway. With your Snowdonia Pass you can enjoy 20% off a return journey on the diesel service.

Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways

Although the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways comes up on our map at Porthmadog, there is of course a station at Caernarfon where you can use your Snowdonia Pass to get a 10% discount on full line journeys.

Great Orme Tramway

Travel on the Great Orme Tramway for 10% less when you present your Snowdonia Pass. On the journey you may be lucky enough to see rare butterflies and wild goats - and when you reach the top there are plenty of other things to see and do too!

Where to use your Snowdonia Pass on the Llyn Peninsula

In the second of our series of articles about using your Snowdonia Pass in different areas, we look at where you can use your Pass on the Llyn Peninsula.

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With close to 50 visitor attractions, eateries, shops and accommodation providers offering great deals to Snowdonia Pass holders, it's easy to feel spoilt for choice!

So we've split the region up into smaller chunks, to help you find a deal that's close to where you live, work or visit as a holidaymaker.

The Llyn Peninsula is a rugged and extremely beautiful area of Snowdonia, consisting largely of a chain of extinct volcanoes. It's a very rural area, edged with some of the region's most beautiful beaches and hidden coves - but there are some wonderful towns and villages to explore too. If you're visiting the area it's worth taking a look around Pwllheli, Abersoch and our very own 'Land's End', namely Aberdaron – the last stopover for ancient pilgrims on their way to the holy island of Bardsey.

But where can you use your Snowdonia Pass on the Llyn Peninsula? At the time of writing, there are five great deals to be enjoyed there.

Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw Gallery

[Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw Gallery](#) in Llanbedrog is Wales' oldest art gallery. It's situated in a wonderful Gothic mansion which wouldn't look at all out of place in The Addams Family!

The mansion was actually purpose-built in 1856/57 to hold its owner's art collection; the owner being the dowager Lady Elizabeth Love Jones-Parry of Madryn Estate.

Today the house is every bit as stunning to look at – inside and out – as it was when first built.

At Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw Gallery you can of course (and completely free of charge) admire the art and the architecture, as you would expect. But you can also enjoy all sorts of performances there, including workshops, lectures, plays and concerts. And when you've exhausted yourself doing all that (and admiring the amazing scenery outdoors), you can use your Snowdonia Pass to enjoy a discount of 10% in the cafe and craft shop.

Nant Gwrtheyrn

No visit to the Llyn Peninsula would be complete without a visit to 'the Nant', as Nant Gwrtheyrn is affectionately known to locals. It's free to visit, so do take advantage!

This former quarry village was taken under the wing of the local community when it fell to ruin after the downturn in quarrying activity. After massive investments of time and money the village is now THE place to go if you want to learn the 'language of heaven', as Welsh is known. You can attend a variety of different residential Welsh language courses, immersing yourself in the language as surely as you'll immerse yourself in the Nant's stunning yet serene location.

Equally mesmerising is the wealth of folk stories you'll learn when you visit (whether as a day tripper or a resident student); the whole of North Wales is rich in history and mythology, and you'll have a lot of fun attempting to separate the two!

With your Snowdonia Pass you'll have access to a number of exclusive discounts, including food, drink, accommodation and retail. Please visit the [Nant Gwrtheyrn 'deal details'](#) page to find out more and see terms and conditions.

Glasfryn Parc

Glasfryn Parc is the Llyn Peninsula's premier family attraction, and when you visit you'll see why!

The first thing you'll notice is the go-karts, whose throaty roar will greet you as you arrive. The track is long enough that after your three laps you'll be absolutely exhilarated and ready for a cuppa and a bite to eat in the excellent and very reasonably-priced cafe.

After that, you can have a go at ten-pin bowling, or archery. Or if you're feeling adventurous, you could try quad biking, wakeboarding, kayaking or stand-up paddle boarding. Or how about some clay pigeon shooting or fishing?

There's even a soft play area for tiny tots, so nobody in the family needs to feel left out.

And before you leave, don't forget to visit the farm shop, where you can browse and buy a delicious range of foods, many of which have been produced on the Glasfryn estate.

Entry to the Parc is free – you just pay for the activities you want to take part in – so pop along for a visit next time you're in the area. Your Snowdonia Pass gets you a discount of 10% off any activities before 10.30am, so get there nice and early – and remember to check the terms and conditions at [Glasfryn Parc's 'deal details' page](#) before you visit.

Lloyd George Museum

A day out at the [Lloyd George Museum](#) is a lot of fun for the whole family – but it's very educational too, so it offers the best of both worlds.

David Lloyd George was a Liberal politician in the early 20th century, whose many achievements included sweeping social reforms that improved the lives of the working classes. He was Prime Minister from 1916 to 1922, and is to date the only Welsh Prime Minister we've ever had, and the only Prime Minister for whom English was a second language.

Lloyd George grew up in Llanystumdwy, near Criccieth, and it is at his boyhood home that the museum that bears his name is now based. A visit to the museum includes learning about the great man himself, but also about life in Victorian times, including a Victorian schoolroom where visitors can dress up in period costume.

Your Snowdonia Pass entitles you to 50% off the Lloyd George Museum handbook – an excellent bargain, we're sure you'll agree!

Criccieth Castle

Criccieth Castle really takes your breath away when you arrive in the sleepy little town at its feet. Perched atop a promontory that juts out into the sea, the castle may be a little shabbier than it was in its heyday, but it's certainly lost none of its majesty.

Built by Llywelyn the Great – the greatest of the Princes of Gwynedd – the castle held a strategically important position. So important, the English and Welsh fought over it many times, the castle passing back and forth more often than a cold sore in a kissing booth! Eventually Edward I – boo, hiss – took the castle and made deadly ‘improvements’ to it, and this most Welsh of castles became an English stronghold.

A visit to Criccieth Castle today is far less dangerous than it was during those days, of course; but its battle scars are there for eternity to help remind visitors that this beautiful architecture served a deadly purpose.

Your Snowdonia Pass entitles you to a 10% discount, but terms apply, so please check the [Criccieth Castle ‘deal details’ page](#) before you visit.

Where to use your Snowdonia Pass on Anglesey

In the third article in our series about where to use your Snowdonia Pass, we look at all the places on Anglesey that offer fantastic deals to pass holders.

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Just a quick hop across the Menai Strait from the mainland, Anglesey is home to all sorts of fascinating places to visit. From ancient standing stones and burial chambers to Roman ruins and medieval castles, Anglesey has a great selection of attractions to choose from.

And where landscape is concerned, Anglesey has all sorts to offer. Beautiful beaches, vast swathes of open countryside, ancient forests and a good number of towns too - so if you fancy a spot of shopping or are looking for a quality place to eat and drink you'll be spoilt for choice.

There are several places on this little island that offer great deals to holders of the Snowdonia Pass, so take a look at our guide and plan your visit accordingly!

Anglesey Sea Zoo

A day out at Anglesey Sea Zoo is great fun for the whole family. Anglesey's leading all-weather attraction, Anglesey Sea Zoo is home to a fascinating variety of marine life. There are interactive talks, a shipwreck to explore, and even non-fishy activities like crazy golf, an adventure playground and a giant bouncy castle and slide.

Once you've finished exploring you can fill up at the fully licenced cafe, and buy a few souvenirs at the gift shop to remind you of your visit.

Your Snowdonia Pass entitles you to 10% off before 11am, and this discount can also be applied against full-priced season tickets. There are some terms and conditions, so make sure you read the offer in full at the [Anglesey Sea Zoo deal details page](#).

Beaumaris Castle

A day at Beaumaris Castle is like stepping back in time. You can almost hear the sounds and smell the scents of battle from the moment you cross the threshold.

This World Heritage site – one of many castles built by Edward I across North Wales – was begun in 1295 and never fully completed. But that won't spoil your enjoyment of a great day out at a site where you'll marvel at the architecture while imagining the horror and hardships of medieval castle life.

With your Snowdonia Pass you'll receive a 10% discount on entry fees, but there are terms and conditions to be aware of, so make sure you check the [Beaumaris Castle deal details page](#) before your visit.

Halen Môn

Halen Môn – that's Welsh for 'Anglesey Salt' – is a real delicacy. Not just in Wales – it's highly prized by connoisseurs all over the world.

With your Snowdonia Pass you can enjoy a 10% discount when you pre-book an early bird tour of Tŷ Halen. This unique tour is really fascinating and will give you an idea of salt's place

in history – not to mention why Halen Môn is so highly regarded as a seasoning. You'll take part in a salt tasting session during the 50-minute tour, and have an opportunity to talk to members of staff along the way.

There are some terms and conditions to be aware of before using your Snowdonia Pass to take advantage of this fantastic offer, so make sure you visit the [Halen Môn deal details page](#) and read the T&Cs before you book.

Hydeout Bar-B-Q and Smokehouse

If you're a fan of American food you'll definitely enjoy using your Snowdonia Pass to get a great discount at Hydeout Bar-B-Q and Smokehouse.

This is one barbecue that the British weather can't ruin, and that smoky hickory taste is absolutely delicious. You'll enjoy 10% off meals and takeaways (doesn't include alcohol) when you use your Snowdonia Pass. You can find out more and read the full details of the offer at the [Hydeout Bar-B-Q and Smokehouse deal details page](#).

Pier House Bistro

Another delicious food offer – this time at the Pier House Bistro in Beaumaris.

Take advantage of your Snowdonia Pass deal and enjoy local delicacies while you soak up Pier House's relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Pier House is very child-friendly and dog-friendly too, and as the bistro makes a special effort to source its ingredients locally, you just know the quality is going to be great too!

With your Snowdonia Pass you'll get 10% discount between 2 and 5pm weekdays (alcohol not included). Find out more and read the T&Cs at the [Pier House Bistro deal details page](#).

St David's Spa

After all that exploration and eating, how about a spot of pampering? Yes, you can even use your Snowdonia Pass for that!

At St David's Spa there are a number of treatments to enjoy, including facials, body scrubs, massages, manicures, pedicures and spray tans. And if you want to use your Snowdonia Pass to grab a pampering bargain, you can use it to enjoy a 15% discount against any anti-ageing Elemis Facial.

To find out more, visit the [St David's Spa deal details page](#).

Tredici Italian Kitchen

If you fancy a delicious Italian meal on Anglesey and would like to use your Snowdonia Pass to get it at a lower price, pop over to Tredici Italian Kitchen where you'll enjoy a 10% discount (doesn't include alcohol).

Located in Castle Street, Beaumaris, Tredici uses quality ingredients to produce beautiful Italian food, all in a relaxed family atmosphere.

To find out more, please visit the [Tredici Italian Kitchen deal details page](#).

Where to use your Snowdonia Pass in Southern Snowdonia and Cardigan Bay

In our latest article about using your Snowdonia Pass around the region, we look at where your Pass can save you money in the Cardigan Bay and Southern Snowdonia areas.

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The Southern Snowdonia and Cardigan Bay areas of Snowdonia are among the region's most scenic. The beautiful blue waters of the bay are home to pods of dolphins, which you may be lucky enough to see during your visit, while the dramatic mountains of Snowdonia provide a breathtaking backdrop.

The towns and villages of this part of Snowdonia are just wonderful. There's ancient Dolgellau with its hundreds of listed buildings, and Barmouth with its traditional seaside fun. Porthmadog, an important part of the region's industrial heritage, is a great place to go shopping, while tiny Corris has a surprisingly high concentration of attractions and activities for such a small village. And then there's historic Tywyn, home to the oldest known example of written Welsh and a petrified forest that's rumoured to be the site of the legendary sunken lands of Cantre'r Gwaelod.

Yes, the folklore and storytelling tradition holds strong all over Wales, but perhaps nowhere more so than in Snowdonia, which lays claim to many of the Arthurian tales. No doubt you'll hear a lot more about that in 2017, which Visit Wales has designated the Year of Legends... meanwhile, here's how to get the most out of your Snowdonia Pass in Southern Snowdonia and Cardigan Bay.

LaserfunWales

LaserfunWales takes the pain out of paintball – and the mess, too! Have tons of fun playing battle games at a disused army camp at Tywyn. It's fun for pretty much everyone, including families, youth groups, stags, hens and anyone else who fancies letting off steam in stunning surroundings. Your Snowdonia Pass gets you 10% off - find out more and read the T&Cs at the [LaserfunWales deal details page](#).

Talyllyn Railway

There are few nicer ways to enjoy Snowdonia's gorgeous countryside than from a steam train. There are several steam railways in Snowdonia, and the Talyllyn Railway is one of the most popular. There are some fantastically beautiful sights to be seen and with 10% off standard travel using your Snowdonia Pass, there's never been a better time to visit. Find out more and read the T&Cs at the [Talyllyn Railway deal details page](#).

King Arthur's Labyrinth

A scenic journey of a different kind now – underground, in a boat, surrounded by everything that's needed to illustrate the weird and wonderful tales of King Arthur and his knights that you'll hear in a truly atmospheric setting. Your Snowdonia Pass entitles you to 10% discount off standard admission for 2 adults and 3 children – find out more at the [King Arthur's Labyrinth deal details page](#).

Corris Mine Explorers

Another underground adventure – this time, you’re exploring old mines, which is a lot more fascinating than you might think! Don a miner’s helmet and discover the items discarded by the miners in years gone by – it’s as if they’ve just popped out for lunch. Truly interesting stuff, and with 10% off a two-hour Mine Explorers trip for up to five people, it’s extremely good value too! T&Cs apply so please make sure you read them at the [Corris Mine Explorers deal details page](#).

Harlech Castle

One of Wales’ most famous castles, Harlech Castle has a turbulent history, a distinctive profile and World Heritage status. Explore the walls and towers and learn how the 200-foot stairway once provided access to the sea. A truly mesmerising day out, and at 10% off with your Snowdonia Pass it’s value for money too. T&Cs apply so please make sure you visit the [Harlech Castle deal details page](#) before you go.

Portmeirion Village

The masterpiece of eccentric visionary architect Clough Williams-Ellis, Portmeirion Village is one of Snowdonia’s best-known and best-loved attractions. This quirky, colourful and breathtakingly beautiful Italianate village on the Dwyryd Estuary is a Snowdonia attraction you’ll want to visit again and again... and with 10% off entry when you present your Snowdonia Pass, no doubt you’ll do just that! Strict T&Cs apply, so please familiarise yourself with them at the [Portmeirion Village deal details page](#) before you visit.

Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways

Full steam ahead with the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland railways – it’s a charming way to see Snowdonia’s countryside, and fun for the whole family. Your Snowdonia Pass will get you 10% off a full line journey on either railway – that is, between Caernarfon and Porthmadog or Porthmadog and Blaenau Ffestiniog. T&Cs apply – read them at the [Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways deal details page](#).

Glosters, Porthmadog

Enjoy some retail therapy at Glosters of Porthmadog and save 10% with your Snowdonia Pass on Sundays. You could even combine your visit with a trip on a steam train, and get double the value from your Snowdonia Pass! Or if you’re feeling a bit artistic, you could even use your Pass to save 10% on a “throw down Saturday” pottery course. Find out more at the [Glosters of Porthmadog deal details page](#).

Kerfoots of Porthmadog

Even more retail therapy in Porthmadog – this time at Wales’ only privately-owned department store. You’ll be pleased to know that your Snowdonia Pass entitles you to 10% off in every part of the business, including in the coffee shop/restaurant. To find out more, visit the [Kerfoots of Porthmadog deal details page](#).

Royal Sportsman Hotel

You can even use your Snowdonia Pass to save on your accommodation and refreshments in Porthmadog, thanks to the Royal Sportsman Hotel’s generous deal! Enjoy a 10% discount on your meals, and £5 off per night when you book a room in accordance with the T&Cs of this deal, which you can read at the [Royal Sportsman Hotel deal details page](#).

A day at GreenWood Forest Park

There are dozens of fun-packed Snowdonia attractions offering discounts through Snowdonia Pass – but what's it like to actually visit one? We sent our roving reporter to GreenWood Forest Park for the day to find out...

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Strictly speaking, my grandsons Jacob (2½) and Nicolas (8 months) are a bit young to fully appreciate GreenWood. But in the event it didn't really matter at all – they both had lots of fun.

Jacob's first fun moment happened before we'd even gone through the gates: as it's almost Hallowe'en, GreenWood is adorned with spooky decorations, including witches suspended from the overhead signage at the ticket booth. These kept Jacob occupied for at least 10 minutes (during which he pointed and exclaimed "wow!" about a hundred times) before my daughter Emily and I decided it was time to get past the gates and actually explore!

After a couple of minutes of looking at the map and getting our bearings, we headed toward the Puzzle Barn. Instantly, something caught Jacob's eye: mini mechanical diggers, which he could actually dig up sand with. Well that was his idea of heaven: for hours he kept asking to go on the diggers again!

Not being as addicted to construction vehicles as Jacob, we managed to drag him away to the Little Forest PlayBarn, where both boys had a huge amount of fun. Soft and safe, this building is perfect for little ones and Nicolas had just as much fun as his big brother. He especially loved the 'light tube' in the corner – a clear glass tube filled with liquid and colour-changing lights and little floating shapes. Nic was absolutely transfixed!

Jacob, meanwhile, had discovered the things that make noises and was having a lot of fun pressing buttons. There are animals that make sounds, and a big piano keyboard, and a pooing elephant on the wall! You take a sponge ball from the basket beneath the elephant's tail, pop it into a hole in its mouth and it's sucked through the elephant's "intestines" (clear plastic tubes) before falling back into the basket. Jacob loved this, but Nana loved it more!

After about half an hour of soft play we decided to carry on walking around the park to see what else there was to enjoy. Hint: A LOT!

We stopped to say hello to the beautiful donkeys and rabbits, and then Jacob discovered the budgies, which he really loved. And then we spotted the 'Giant Jumper' – a bungalow-sized inflatable pillow similar to a bouncy castle, but much bouncier. Jacob loves a trampoline so I took him on for a bounce and it was tremendous fun. Jacob is especially talented at getting Nana to do silly things, so there I was, a rather rotund middle-aged lady bouncing like a fool on an inflatable hillock, in the process making poor Jacob fly up into the air! Just one of a good many laughs Emily and I had that day!

Hungry, we headed back to the entrance where there's a lovely cafe complete with yet more play areas for children – one for older kids, the other for toddlers. After a delicious lunch and more running around for Jacob, we headed for the MoonKarts. Again, Jacob wrapped Nana around his little finger and we shared a kart around the track, Nana pedalling furiously and Jacob loving every minute.

Exhausted, I suggested we try out the Jungle Boats: what could be tiring about a gentle boat ride around a purpose-built canal? Famous last words! You're given a paddle 'just in case',

and it's just as well because I couldn't for the life of me figure out the best way to work the overhead ropes! It was hard work, but we got around the course eventually – laughing until tears streamed down our faces. It was genuinely hilarious (almost as hilarious as the moment when a wasp had flown up to me and I'd run as fast as my stubby little legs would carry me – forgetting that I was holding Jacob's hand, so the poor child was whisked off his feet as he flew behind me. What can I say? I'm very phobic!)

Next stop: the Crocodile Maze, which was very relaxing compared to our previous activities! It was lovely to do something as gentle as walking, and we enjoyed a stroll past the zip wires, Snowdon View and TreeTop Towers (Jacob was a bit young for these) before stopping at the Tunnel Warren – something which Jacob loved so much, we struggled to get him to leave!

It was almost time to go, but I wasn't going to leave without going on the Green Dragon rollercoaster – it's one of the things GreenWood is most famous for! I love the idea that it runs on 'people power' so I had to have a go. Especially as I'd been too much of a wuss to try the Solar Splash! Leaving Emily with the kids, I hopped aboard and grinned like a loon all the way round.

We had the most amazing day at GreenWood Forest Park. Having lived in the area for 16 years I'm kicking myself that I've never visited before. Look how much fun I've missed! But I will definitely go back, and one of these days both Jacob and Nicolas will be old enough to try all the other activities... and then, no doubt, I'll become a very regular visitor!