

Walk of the Month

The 'Doc Martin' walk: Port Quin – Port Isaac – Port Quin

Distance: 7 miles (an optional short-cut would reduce it to 5 miles).

Map: Ordnance Survey Explorer 106

Start: National Trust Car Park at Port Quin(Grid Ref SW 972 805)

Character: This walk is a 'must' for all Doc Martin fans – it includes the farm where some of the stage-sets were erected; the school; Bert's cafe; and the Doc's house itself. You will walk across footpaths where Martin Clunes (the 'Doc') has probably exercised his dogs in between filming.

Physically, the first part of the walk is undemanding but the stretch of coast-path from Port Isaac (P.I) back to the car park, at Port Quin (P.Q), is challenging, with many steps. A compass might be useful, as compass points (N,E,S,W) are used and we also recommend that you use OS Explorer Map 106.

Start the walk by exiting the car park and turning right (as you pass the box, please make a small donation to the National Trust to help with the up keep of the car park, and many miles of Cornish coast path). Walk up the road for about 200m and, when the road bends to the right, take a track in front of some cottages (the public footpath sign indicates that P.I is 2 miles away). Enter a field via a stile next to an old white gate, and continue E on the obvious route across a total of 7 fields. The farm complex off to your right as you cross the 5th field is called *Roscarrack* and its outbuildings have been used for filming some of the Doc Martin scenes.

In the 1970's *Roscarrack* was also 'Nampara' in the 2nd series of 'Poldark'. Being one of the oldest farms in Cornwall, it was an ideal choice for this series set in 18thC Cornwall.

From here there are pleasant coastal views off to your left, with the dishes of Morwenstow satellite-tracking station way off in the distance. The headland in the middle distance is Tintagel Head, the site of *Tintagel Castle*, and, in the foreground, you can see a piece of the coastal path on which you will be walking later on.

At the end of the 5th field, close to *Roscarrack* farm, turn left (NE) and, after 150m, look out for a stile in the hedge in front of you. At first, it looks more like a wooden 3-barred gate than a stile. Once over the stile, descend steeply to a footbridge over a stream at the bottom of the valley. Cross the bridge and take the path that rises steeply up the other side of the valley. After the initial (very steep) part that passes through gorse, you emerge at the edge of a field where the ascent becomes less steep. Continue straight ahead, towards a wooden pole on the skyline. Upon reaching the pole, you will get your first view of P.I. Do you recognise any of the buildings? Can you see the school?

There is a hedge directly in front of you, with a stone stile just to the left.

*Those of you wanting to do the shorter walk need to cross over the stile and proceed straight into P. I. Resume the walk at * below.*

This walk has been researched and compiled by Bodmin Visitor Information Centre. 'Gold' award winners at the 2009 Cornwall Tourism Awards- Best Tourist information Centre. For further information on this walk, refer to OS Map No 106. For details of other walks in the area, please speak to a member of staff. With compliments, Bodmin Visitor Information Centre ☎01208 76616.

Those walkers doing the longer version do not need to cross here. Instead, turn right and, keeping the hedge on your left, walk up to a gate at the edge of the field (please do not be tempted to trespass by taking a diagonal route from the pole to the gate). Pass through the gate to find yourself on farm track, bounded on either side by a high hedge. After approx ½ mile, you will exit a gate onto a minor road. The path continues directly ahead as, unusually, it passes under an 'arch' that separates 2 parts of a house. Continue walking through the complex of houses and, shortly, you will pass through an 'orchard' type field and see a stile ahead. Cross the stile and continue SE across a field and, soon, you will see your next objective – another stile. Cross this and, immediately, turn left. Descend via a concrete farm track, over a cattle grid, and down to where the track bends to the left. Here, go straight ahead to a gate that is often tied - it's easier to climb the gate than unravel the string.

Negotiate the gate to find yourself in a wooded area. Continue descending and, at the bottom, ignore the stone stile straight ahead, but turn sharp left back on yourself. Follow the valley-bottom path that leads directly into P.I.

Have a wander around the quaint fishing village and see how many buildings you recognize from the TV series. *Note: the Doc's house will not be seen until you resume your walk by leaving the village in a north-westerly direction.*

* After you've enjoyed a pub lunch or cream tea in P.I, pick up the coastal path by taking the road up the left-hand side of the cove. After passing the public toilets, Bert's cafe can be seen on your right, and the Doc's house is further up, on your left, as you climb out of the village. It is usually obvious by the crowd of people outside! But, if in doubt, it is the detached house built of Cornish stone with red bricks surrounding the door and windows. From the Doc's house continue on up. Shortly, a footpath comes in from the left and the sign indicates that the coastal route to P.Q is 3 miles. *This is where the shorter walk enters P.I and, in order to see the Doc's house, walkers will need to turn right.*

Where the road ends, fork down to the right to pass in front of a row of houses. The path ascends a set of stone steps to reach a welcome bench. The route back to P. Q is now obvious – just keep the sea on your right!

There are 4 more benches between here and P.Q. The 3rd one is a memorial to Sargeant Steven Roberts, of Wadebridge, the first soldier to die in the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Straight across the bay from here is Doyden Castle. This was the home of Doctor Dwight Enys in the TV series 'Poldark', and where he had an affair with Keren Daniels, the miner's wife.

From the bench, it is less than half a mile back to the car park at P.Q. Just follow the obvious path.

Keep Cornwall Tidy

Please remember to take your litter home with you, thus ensuring future enjoyment of Cornwall for others. Better still, take a carrier bag and pick up litter along the way! Thank-you.

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