

Walk 4: Stonehaven Harbour – War Memorial – Dunnottar Castle

Distance: 5 km / 3.25 miles - allow 90 to 120 minutes

Difficulty: Moderate (one or two steep sections)



Dunnottar Castle is arguably the most spectacular of Scotland's ruined coastal fortresses, perched on a gigantic rocky outcrop almost detached from the mainland. It is the highlight of this coastal walk which goes south from Stonehaven harbour. You can retrace your steps to maximise the fantastic views from both directions, make a loop by walking back along the minor road or use the Land Train to get back to the town centre (summer months only).

The walk is along a well marked coastal path with one steep ascent by the harbour and the path is close to some steep cliff edges so care must be taken. If you choose to go into the castle there is a steep stairway. Wear decent footwear as the path is rugged in parts and may get muddy in wet weather.

The walk can be done in either direction as there is car parking facilities both at the castle and at Stonehaven Harbour (behind the Tolbooth museum).

Starting Point

Starting in the picturesque harbour from the front of the Tolbooth Museum (a 16th century building that started life as a storehouse, then was the town's courthouse and prison), follow the road left around the harbour walking past the Ship Inn and Marine Hotel.



Leaving Stonehaven

At Wallace Wynd turn right as signposted. Turn left behind the houses, signposted for Dunnottar Castle, and follow the road to the end and go up the steps. Climb this path up to the road, Bervie Brae (this is the steepest bit of the walk). Keep left and be sure to take in the stunning views of the town and harbour as you go.



On to the War Memorial

Follow the road until you come to a small parking area on the left, where the road turns to the right you now leave the road and follow the obvious path up towards the Black Hill monument.

As you reach the brow of the hill you catch your first view of the Castle but it is worth a detour here to go through the gate to your right and go up to the imposing War Memorial.



Dunnottar Castle



Return to the path and continue onwards towards the castle. The path follows the contours of the rugged coastline where you will get stunning views of the cliffs, stacks and arches.

When you reach the head of the steps for the castle you have options:-

- turn right and follow the wide track up to the refreshments cabin for a hot drink, ice cream or food
- turn left and descend the steps down to the beach and/or into the castle (admission charge applies)
- continue along the cliff path to view the castle from the southern headlands

To return to the harbour you can retrace your steps along the cliff path or go up past the refreshments cabin to the road turn right and carefully follow it back to the path above the harbour.

