

The call of CONWY

Walk the circuit
around the
battlements of
Conwy Castle

A superstar castle, top-tier garden and epic scenery add up to a relaxing break in North Wales

Sitting sentry at the mouth of the river, Conwy Castle looks fresh from the pages of a storybook. Built over 700 years ago, this medieval masterpiece formed part of a ring of defences built by Edward I, designed to subdue rebellious local forces. Today the castle and kilometre-long walls are a UNESCO World

Heritage Site, and the only invaders are jolly tourists sauntering through the town's quaint lanes or enjoying a pint by the quayside.

Mighty towers

After seeing centuries of battles, Conwy Castle became a romantic mossy ruin, painted by artists like JMW Turner. An 18th-century restoration revived its splendid outline and now it sits proud as one of Wales' most admired landmarks. Tour its stone-cold battlements, linger in the best-preserved medieval royal apartments in Wales and tackle spiral staircases to the top of 21-metre-high turrets. The effort will be paid off with a heart-swelling panorama of town, estuary and the mighty Carneddau Mountains (£13.10, cadw.gov.wales).

The elevated pathway on the walls around the town is free to wander. It is punctuated with

21 towers, the highest being The Watchtower, from where you can see Anglesey Island jutting into the Irish Sea.

Back at street level, step into the past at Plas Mawr, a Tudor town house gem (£10.50, cadw.gov.wales). Built by prosperous merchant Robert Wynn, it's decked out with the most fashionable interiors of its time – fancy plasterwork, carved oak four-poster beds and an en suite loo. To see a more humble abode, go through the Lower Gate (Porth Isaf) to the quayside. Here you'll find a shoebox-sized cottage that, at less than 2m wide, has earned the title of Britain's smallest house. (£1.50, thesmallesthouse.co.uk).

Quaint streets

Conwy has a great array of independent shops and cafes, including Baravelli's in Bangor Road, where owners Mark

and Emma create chocolates decorated in swirling patterns and illustrations. For foodie gifts that celebrate the region's makers and bakers, head to Dylan's in the High Street. Its first-floor restaurant comes with castle views too.

Need a caffeine fix? Detour to Nonno's in Rosehill Street for barista-style coffee and cakes in a suntrap courtyard.

Gorgeous garden

A few miles inland from Conwy lies Bodnant, a world-famous, 80-acre garden created by



Stroll around
the Tudor
town house,
Plas Mawr



Visit the smallest
house in Britain



Colourful
borders at
Bodnant
Garden

Embrace the
tranquillity at
Bodysgallen
Hall Hotel



Victorian industrialist Henry Pochin and his wife Agnes (nationaltrust.org.uk). There's something for every flower fancier here, from perfumed rose borders to wild woodland and the much-photographed laburnum arch. Signposted paths (including step-free options) lead from high terraces looking across to Eryri (Snowdonia) to the Hiraethlyn river, where rustic bridges span tumbling waterfalls. There are numerous refreshment spots – the Italian-style Old Mill in the Dell is especially lovely. Relaxing here on a sunny day feels like you've been transported to the Mediterranean.

Hotel heaven

Combining history with hospitality, Bodysgallen Hall Hotel is a mile from the coastal seaside resort of Llandudno, a 10-minute drive from Conwy and less than 15 from Bodnant

Garden. Owned by the National Trust, this 17th-century haven is all about peace (polite notices ask guests not to use phones in public areas) and friendly service. Its soft pink sandstone walls blend gently into the surrounding 200-acre estate, peppered with woodland walks, self-catering cottages and a pretty spa with a swimming pool.

Inside, the decor is typical country-mansion: think wood-panelled rooms and stone fireplaces. Portraits adorn the walls and the dining room flickers with candlelight. The best bedrooms overlook the gardens, which feature a herb-filled, 17th-century box parterre.

A night's stay for two people in a double room, including breakfast and use of the spa, costs from £275. Guests also enjoy free entry to National Trust and Cadw attractions (Conwy Castle, Plas Mawr); bodysgallen.com.

WORDS: CHRIS MORLEY. PHOTOS: ALAMY, BODYSGALLEN HALL HOTEL. DETAILS CORRECT AT TIME OF WRITING

Woman's
Weekly

TRAVEL OFFERS

ESCORTED TOURS

Hidden Italy: Padua, Vicenza and Mantua

6 days from £1,049pp

April to October 2026



The BIG Riviera Giveaway^{††}

Uncover the unseen gems of the breathtaking Veneto and beyond, from beautiful architecture, and cities steeped in history to some of Italy's best wines.

All tours include

- Return flights from a selection of regional airports with hotel transfers
- Five nights in four-star accommodation
- Daily breakfast
- The services of our experienced and insightful tour manager

Your experiences

- 4 visits, including Padua, Palazzo Ducale, Scrovegni Chapel and a local artisan distillery
- 2 guided tours, including Mantua and Vicenza
- A tour and tasting at a winery at Villa Sandi

Your next adventure starts here...

For more information or to book,

rivieratravel.co.uk/www

01283 901 271 quoting code WWE

Terms and conditions apply. See website for full details. Calls from a landline or mobile are charged at local rates. Travel insurance not included. Lead-in price based on two people sharing and is correct at time of going to press. Single supplement applies. Offers operated by Riviera Travel Ltd. ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430, a company wholly independent of Woman's Weekly, published by Future plc. See website for full details. ^{††}Book any 2026 holiday by July 31, 2025 to be automatically entered into The BIG Riviera Giveaway – with over £1 million in gifts waiting to be won – see the website for full terms and conditions.

RIVIERA
TRAVEL

