The Snowdon Ranger

This a mountain bike route of 11.5 miles on Snowdon, the largest mountain in Wales. The Snowdon Ranger path is a big step up in technical difficulty from the [Llanberis Path](http://www.theedgecycleworks.com/mtbroutes/snowdon%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) route with lots of steep, loose riding on big rocks with lots of switchbacks. It also gets you away from the hordes of walkers so you can really concentrate on pushing your limits.

**Snowdon Voluntary Cycling Agreement**
During the summer months Snowdon is very busy with walkers and tourists. To avoid accidents and incidents with cyclists a voluntary agreement has been put in place, limiting the times bikes are allowed on Snowdon. To avoid an outright ban please adhere to the times of this agreement - [available here](http://www.cyclingnorthwales.co.uk/pages/snowdn_volunt.htm).

1. Start from the main car park, next to the [Electric Mountain visitor centre](http://www.electricmountain.co.uk/), in Llanberis [(GR580601)](http://streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258060&y=360137&z=120&sv=258060,360137&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=687&ax=258060&ay=360137&lm=0). At the exit of the car park turn left onto the main road and ride past the Electric Mountain visitor centre on the left. Continue following the road straight on, past the Snowdon Mountain Railway on the far side of Llanberis, then climb to a mini roundabout junction just after [(GR583596)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258298&y=359664&z=120&sv=258298,359664&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=555&ax=258298&ay=359664&lm=0). Turn right and follow the lane, past a line of houses on the left, to a junction with a lane on the right. Go straight on then at the end of the houses cross the cattle grid that marks the start of a very steep road climb. At about half way the lane bears left after which the lane continues climbing very steeply to the [Pen-y-Ceunant](http://www.snowdoncafe.com/index.php/snowdoncafecafe) tea house at the top, on the left. After the tea house continue ahead up the much easier incline to a gate where the lane turns right. Once through the gate follow the lane right up a short, steep climb to the signposted junction with the start of the Llanberis Path on the left [(GR581589)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258178&y=358954&z=120&sv=258178,358954&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=555&ax=258178&ay=358954&lm=0).

2. Turn left and follow the trail through a gate then up a few rocky sections that give a good indication of what is to come. What follows is a very challenging mixture of loose rocks, slab steps, boulder cobbles, and some flatter rocky hardpack. Some sections are always a push/carry, mainly in the top third, but in good conditions the trail is about 50-70% ridable (depending on how good you are at climbing). The bonus though is when it gets too much you can rest and take in the awesome scenery. When it's open the Halfway House is a great place to stop for a cup of tea and a cake on the way up. Continue following the Llanberis Path ahead all the way to the summit [(GR610544)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261003&y=354404&z=120&sv=261003,354404&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=555&ax=261003&ay=354404&lm=0).

3. After the obligatory summit photos, taking in the views, and fighting past the crowds for a coffee the mountain has to be descended. Descend the Llanberis Path back down the steps from the summit. At the junction at the right hand end of the café turn right and descend the final steps. Continue ahead and descend the technical, rocky track to the start of the plateau at the view point, with junctions on either side marked by vertical stones [(GR607548)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=260783&y=354859&z=120&sv=260783,354859&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=687&ax=260783&ay=354859&lm=0). Go ahead, just to the left of the vertical rock on the left with the Ranger Path inscribed on it. Descend the track to the railway crossing. After crossing the rails follow the track ahead for a fast, loose and rocky descent that bears gradually left. After a while the track reaches the steep middle section of the descent where things start to get really technical. The track is then covered in large, loose rocks that are combined with chutes, steps and tight switchbacks. It’s a proper pick your way down trail where controlling your speed is essential. This section of the descent ends with about 30m of big rocks that I've never had the bottle/skill to ride. At the end of this the boulders give way to a gently descending hardpack track.  Continue ahead along this track, which bears left before eventually coming to a gate [(GR585555)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258513&y=355514&z=120&sv=258513,355514&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=555&ax=258513&ay=355514&lm=0).

4. Go right through the gate then follow the track as it descends gently across the hill. After some time the track comes to a gate in a dip with a junction directly after [(GR574553)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=257489&y=355352&z=115&sv=257489,355352&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=724&ax=257489&ay=355352&lm=0). Go through the gate then turn right and climb the gravel track following the signpost for Llanberis. Go through the S-bend 2/3rds of the way up then through the following gate. After this continue following the track ahead to a gate in the saddle on the ridge at the top [(GR572558)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=257248&y=355872&z=115&sv=257248,355872&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=555&ax=257248&ay=355872&lm=0).

5. Go through the gate then follow the rocky track that descends down the left hand side of the valley ahead. The descent starts with a number of rocky drops before becoming fast and flowing. Be careful of the sharp edged water bars that are good at puncturing even tubeless tyres. Continue descending the trail ahead, which towards the bottom bears left and goes down a number nice rocky sections. At the end of this the trail becomes a gravel/broken tarmac double track before reaching a gate ahead. Go through the gate, then through a dip. Continue following the track ahead until it eventually comes to a junction with a gated track straight on, where the lane turns right through a gate [(GR573591)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=257288&y=359082&z=120&sv=257288,359082&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=555&ax=257288&ay=359082&lm=0). Turn right and descend the lane through some bends to the next gate, by a farm on the right. Go through the gate and continue descending the lane through the bends, going past Llanberis YHA on the right, all the way to where it ends at a junction with the main road in Llanberis [(GR578601)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=257813&y=360092&z=120&sv=257813,360092&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=555&ax=257813&ay=360092&lm=0). Turn right and ride through Llanberis to where the road ends at a junction with the main road [(GR581599)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258118&y=359957&z=120&sv=258118,359957&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=687&ax=258118&ay=359957&lm=0). Turn left and follow the road to the next junction then turn right back into the Electric Mountain visitor centre car park to complete the ride.