Snowdon – Twin Peaks

This mountain bike route of 18.6 miles is an extremely difficult and technical ride, starting from Llanberis in North wales. It uses all the bridleways on Snowdon and in doing so reaches the summit twice. Steep, bouldery trials that will test your riding skills to the limit make up the majority of this route. The percentages included on what is ridable are based on a very fit rider comfortable with riding Scottish level black runs. There is a lot of hike-a-biking on this route so you must be happy with pushing and carrying your bike.

**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.html) 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. From the summit head to the left hand side of the cafe. Go straight on past the entrance to the cafe, if it’s not cloudy, the Rhyd Ddu track can be seen traversing a thin ridge ahead. Continue straight on and descend the very steep and rocky track. The rocks give way to some steep hard pack before it reaches the ridge. At the ridge the track drops over to the left. GET OFF AND WALK HERE. The ridge traverse is mainly a push and a little carry. If you don't like walking along a 6 inch wide track, holding on to rocks with one hand while pushing your bike with the other above a 350m sheer drop I wouldn't advise you to go this way. Fortunately not much height is lost on the ridge. Near the end of the ridge section the trail splits in two [(GR604537)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=260453&y=353669&z=120&sv=260453,353669&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=558&ax=260453&ay=353669&lm=0).

4. Follow the track on the right but don't look down as there is now a 350m sheer drop on the right. At this point your bike can be remounted but think carefully about the big drop and the penalty of an error before you do. When the singletrack traverse finishes the trail follows a fence that starts on the right, definitely ok to get back on your bike now. The trail follows the fence down through a number of loose and very steep switchbacks. After the switchbacks the ground flattens out slightly for a very rocky track that follows the line of the ridge before coming to a gate in a drystone wall [(GR597537)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=259745&y=353734&z=115&sv=259745,353734&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=558&ax=259745&ay=353734&lm=0).

5. After the gate the trail parallels the ridge for a while before dropping off to the left and getting steeper. On the way down the jumble of boulders just gets bigger and bigger with multiple line choices. This is the most technical part of the ride and only the best will be able to ride it all. Go through the next gate for a slightly less technical section to a short walk down a tricky steep section with water running down it that ends at a plateau. After this the trail flattens out slightly and the boulder fields disappear but the riding is still very testing. Continue along the obvious trail descending the technical rock sections and uneven boulder paving, where some speed can be gained. Even with a full-sus your arms will be burning at the bottom from the pounding of the constant lumps. The trail ends with a short climb to a gate [(GR582525)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=258270&y=352494&z=120&sv=258270,352494&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=558&ax=258270&ay=352494&lm=0).

6. After the gate turn right and descend the wide gravel track towards Rhyd Ddu village, which goes through a couple of gates before coming to a junction with a barrier [(GR572527)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=257237&y=352696&z=120&sv=257237,352696&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=688&ax=257237&ay=352696&lm=0). After the barrier turn left and descend to the railway crossing. Go straight on through the gates to cross the railway track. Directly after crossing the railway turn right and follow the track around the back of the houses, then turn left at the following junction to come out at the A4085 [(GR569527)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=256945&y=352764&z=120&sv=256945,352764&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=558&ax=256945&ay=352764&lm=0).

7. Turn right and follow the road through Rhyd Ddu, the [Cwellyn Arms](http://www.snowdoninn.co.uk/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) is always worth a stop for refreshments. Continue following the road straight on out of the village then around the right hand edge of Llyn Cwellyn to the Snowdon Ranger YHA. Go past the YHA then shortly after turn right up the double track, signposted as a bridleway, to start the Snowdon Ranger path [(GR565551)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=256505&y=355084&z=120&sv=256505,355084&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=558&ax=256505&ay=355084&lm=0). Climb straight on over the railway crossing to a junction just behind the houses [(GR565552)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=256580&y=355269&z=120&sv=256580,355269&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=558&ax=256580&ay=355269&lm=0). Turn right and climb the trail steeply through a number of switchbacks, going over a few water bars on the way. After a final right hand bend the track climbs steeply straight ahead across the side of the hill. When the track finally flattens off continue ahead to a junction with a gate ahead and a track on the left [(GR574553)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=257475&y=355324&z=120&sv=257475,355324&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=653&ax=257475&ay=355324&lm=0).

8. Go straight on through the gate and follow the gravel track back towards Snowdon up an easy gradient. The trail eventually comes to another gate. Directly after the gate follow the trail left then climb through a gentle right hand bend to the bottom of the long hike-a-bike section where the Snowdon Ranger path becomes very steep. After some time the track emerges from the boulder fields where it becomes slightly less steep and just about rideable again. The track bears generally right and eventually comes a crossing at the SnowdonMountain Railway. Go across the tracks and continue climbing the track to a junction with the Llanberis Path at the standing stone. Continue straight on and follow the Llanberis Path all the way to the summit of Snowdon [(GR610544)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261003&y=354404&z=120&sv=261003%2c354404&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=555&ax=261003&ay=354404&lm=0).

9. Once the summit has been reached for a second time all that remains is a descent of the Llanberis Path. The descent is simply a case of following the Llanberis Path all the way back down the mountain, which has the benefit that you know what to expect. While it's possible to ride 100% of the descent it's a very technical prospect with big boulders, steep scree, large rock steps and fast flowing sections to tackle. It is a popular place with walkers so it’s best to find a time when foot traffic is light or you could be slowing down every 10 meters. At the end of the descent the Llanberis Path comes to a gate. Go through the gate to the junction with the lane [(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).

10. Turn right and descend the lane all the way back into Lanberis, passing the [Pen-y-Ceunant](http://www.snowdoncafe.com/index.html) tea house on the way, which is licenced and good for refreshment. Continue following the lane ahead until it ends at the mini roundabout on the eastern end of Llanberis [(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 left and descend the main road past the Snowdon Mountain Railway to a junction with a road on the left just after. Continue ahead along the main road to the next junction on the right, which is the entrance to the Electric Mountain visitor centre car park. Turn right into the car park to complete the ride.