

02 Scotland

Kerrera, Argyll & Bute

• Distance 11km/7 miles • Time 3hrs • Type Coast and hill

2 NAVIGATION LEVEL 2 2 FITNESS LEVEL 2



Plan your walk



WHERE: Circular walk around the island of Kerrera. **START/END:** Kerrera slipway (NM830287).

TERRAIN: Excellent single-track road and rough coastal path, with one fairly steep climb.

MAPS: OS Explorer 359; Landranger 49.

GETTING THERE: Regular Scotrail services or Citylink Service 976 link Glasgow to Oban. Then West Coast Motors bus 431 runs from Oban to Kerrera Ferry slipway near Gallanach (0871 200 2233, www.travelinescotland.com), from where there are frequent daily sailings to Kerrera (© 01631 563665, www.kerrera-ferry.co.uk).

EATING & DRINKING: Kerrera Bunkhouse/Tea Garden, Lower Gylen, Kerrera (© 01631 570223, www.kerrera-bunkhouse.co.uk), open from April to October; The Piazza, North Pier, Oban (© 01631 563628,



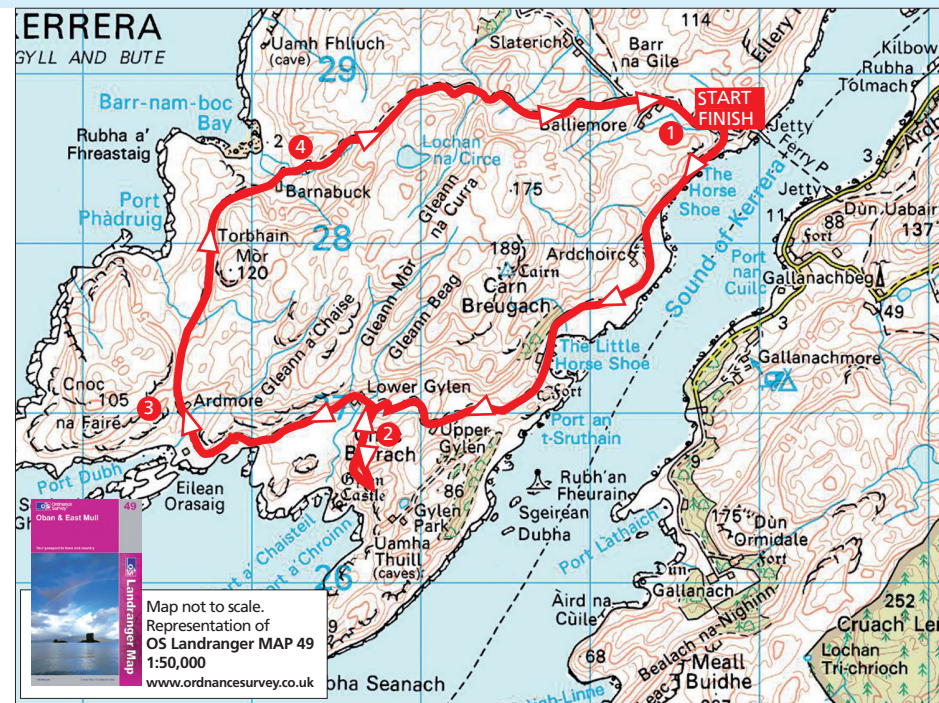
PHOTOGRAPHY: KEITH FERGUS

To step on to Kerrera is to step back in time. A two-minute ferry journey across the Sound of Kerrera transports you into a tranquil, bygone world. Unless you're a resident, no vehicles can be brought on to the island and so a peaceful, fume-free and beautiful walk is guaranteed. There is only one single-track road on the island, which runs along its eastern edge and passes beautiful Horseshoe Bay, culminating in a short detour to reach historic Gylen Castle. A rougher path travels along the western side to the hushed loveliness of Barr-nam-boc Bay. Back on the road, and a steep climb leads past Carn Breugach, Kerrera's highest point, and down to the ferry.

1. START After alighting the ferry, walk up the rough single-track road to reach a phone box. Bear L, continue to a fork, and go L along the road around beautiful Horseshoe Bay

(NM827285) beneath the wooded slopes of Carn Breugach, enjoying superb views back to Oban. Once past the bay, ignore a track on the R for Ardchoirc (NM824280) and instead keep to the main road, which makes its way around Little Horseshoe Bay (NM818274). Passing by a row of cottages, the road then ascends and descends gently along the coast, before climbing first steadily then steeply inland, past another track on the L, a farmhouse and several ruined cottages at Upper Gylen (NM811269). The road then drops gradually through peaceful countryside towards Lower Gylen, passing through a gate towards the Kerrera Bunkhouse and Tea Garden (NM805271). Just before this, turn L though a gate signposted for Gylen Castle.

2. Once through the gate, a grassy path makes its way over a



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www.piazzaoban.com. **SLEEPING:** Kerrera Bunkhouse/Tea Garden, Lower Gylen, Kerrera (see previous page); The Manor House, Gallanach Road, Oban (© 01631 562087, www.manorhouseoban.com). **VISITOR INFORMATION:** Oban TIC, Argyll Square (© 01631 563122, www.oban.org.uk.com). **GUIDEBOOKS:** *Ben Nevis and Glen Coe* by Ronald Turnbull (£14, Cicerone, ISBN 9781852845025). **LOCAL RAMBLERS GROUP:** Mid Argyll and Kintyre Ramblers (© 01546 886680, www.makramblers.co.uk).

field and then through rocky outcrops to reach the Gylen Castle (NM805265), where there's a good chance of bumping into some wild goats. The castle has a

fascinating history, as well as stunning views towards Mull. The artist JWM Turner visited here in 1830, filling his sketchbook with many drawings of the castle and the surrounding landscape. Retrace your steps to the road, turn L, walk by the tea room then go through a gate. Follow the road underneath steep slopes towards the rugged western end of the island, with more terrific views across the Firth of Lorn. Upon reaching Port Dubh (NM798268), the road swings away from the shore and becomes a grassy track, climbing past a house at Ardmore (NM796270).

3. A rough path passes in-between a steep embankment and continues along the remoter western side of Kerrera, with superb views of Lismore and Loch Linnhe. The path runs parallel with the coast at the foot of Torbhain Mor, eventually reaching Barr-nam-boc Bay (NM800283) – an incredibly

peaceful place full of wildlife, including sea and golden eagles.

4. The path then broadens into a single-track road, which passes a cottage and the remains of a settlement. Follow the road steeply up and away from the coast, granting an exceptional panorama from the top, including Ben Cruachan and the Argyll coastline. From here, a steep, rough and pathless slope can be climbed to reach Carn Breugach (NM815278), Kerrera's highest point. Otherwise, the road meanders high above the coast and then descends through a few gates back towards the ferry. Continue along the road past Ballimore (NM818288) and then through a wooden gate, passing the old church building and several cottages. At a fork, bear R and walk down the road to reach Horseshoe Bay. Turn L and walk past the phone box to return to the slipway.

Route devised by Keith Fergus