

3 Tresillian River

EASY • 7.5 MILES/ 12.4 KM • ONE DAY

3

► Cornwall's maritime heritage features prominently in this walk, although the throng of boats plying Tresillian's sheltered estuary are now mostly pleasure craft. The highlight of the walk is the historic rowing-boat ferry.

START 1.5 miles (2.4 km) east of Truro. From Truro, take the A390 through Trelander in direction of Tresillian. When road reaches river, parking spaces on the road.

ESSENTIALS 3 hours. **Terrain** Wooded river banks, country lanes. Path muddy between Merther and Tresawsan farms. Much of the walk skirts Lord Falmouth's Tregothnan Estate, where public not welcome: keep to lanes. The path between Merther Farm and Tresawsan Farm may be walked with permission from either farm.

FINDING THE WAY From parking space, cross road and continue walking towards Tresillian, keeping river on your right. (Although a busy road, there are wide verges and excellent views across the river.) Continue into Tresillian, and, in about 0.75 miles (1.2 km) cross bridge and take a sharp right turn off road into a lane signposted 'St. Michael Penkevil'. After 0.25 miles (0.4 km) turn right at fork in road down rough track past sign for Treffry. Keep to fenced track through farmyard and beyond. After just over a mile (1.6 km), where the track rejoins the lane, turn right and continue as far as entrance to Merther Farm. (Call at farm and seek permission to walk next part of path.) Walking past farm buildings on right, fork left through gate and across field to woods on far side, then cross stream and bear right through gate and up hill. Follow track between farmhouse and outbuildings to where it meets the road, almost 1 mile (1.6 km) from Merther Farm. Here turn right and follow the road, through Merther Lane village, ignoring the crossroad, reaching T-junction after around 1 mile (1.6 km). Turn left and keep straight on to visit St. Michael Penkevil and Tregothnan House (if open). Otherwise turn right and follow the road round to the water's edge and the ferry crossing, reached after 0.5 miles (0.8 km). Ferry operates during daylight hours, all year, weather permitting. (If crossing from Malpas side, attract attention by ringing bell in slipway wall.) Once in Malpas, turn left for detour to the Heron Inn, otherwise turn right and follow Malpas road until the houses end, and continue on track for another mile (1.6 km), around the edge of four fields, until you reach a T-junction. Turn right and follow path through St. Clement village, and continue on other side, to path along river edge. After 2.75 miles (4.4 km), reach Pencalenick. Cross river by causeway and turn right along main road to starting point.

► POINTS OF INTEREST

- **ST. MICHAEL PENKEVIL** This remote village has an interesting church with Pre-Raphaelite windows.
- **THE TREGOTHNAN ESTATE** is closed to the public, but the house and gardens open two or three times a year.
- **THE MALPAS FERRY** used to be the main route into Truro from the east, carrying horse-drawn vehicles as well as passengers. The present ferryboat is over 150 years old. Legend says that Tristan and Iseult (Isolde) used the ferry on their ill-fated journey to Tintagel, and that the name of Malpas - from the French for bad passage - derives from the tragedy of their love affair. There may be a more mundane explanation for the name: the river currents here are quite strong, and in stormy weather the wind funnels up the estuary, making the crossing something of an ordeal.
- **THE HERON INN** serves real ale and good lunches. • **ST. CLEMENT'S CHURCH** dates from 1259.

STAYING NEARBY

Driftwood *seaside hotel, Rosevine.* This now well-known hotel (right) is far from being a budget choice, but in terms of value, you get every penny's worth. It's one of the new breed of Cornish seaside hotels, a clapboard house stylishly and comfortably converted in a clean, fresh style. Cosy sitting and drawing rooms, TV room. Set in seven acres of glorious coastline, this would be a great base not just to do this walk, but to enjoy other nearby sights (Eden Project, St Mawes, Tate Gallery, gardens of Heligan) and seaside activities. About 12 miles (19.6 km) from the starting point. 01872 580644; info@driftwoodhotel.co.uk



Other possibilities

Trevalsa Court *seaside hotel, Mevagissey.* Cliff-top hotel with spectacular sea view. Cheaper than Driftwood. Coast path at bottom of garden. Around 14 miles (22.4 km) from start of walk. 01726 842468; stay@trevalsa-hotel.co.uk

The Bay Tree B & B, Truro. About 2 miles (3.2 km) from Tresillian. 01872 240274.