

Walk description:

From the car park at Ringstead Bay, this super Dorset walk takes the SW Coast Path to Osmington Mills before going inland to visit the picturesque village of Osmington with its charming cottages, then returning on field- and woodland paths. Glorious views across Weymouth Bay from the coast path, undulating rich meadows, hills and valleys and quiet woodland paths, all combine to give a taste of wonderful and varied Dorset countryside.

Access information:

Off the A353 between Poxwell and Preston on unclassified road towards Upton and Ringstead. Take a right fork to Ringstead Bay where there is a car park (chargeable).

Additional info:

The shop at Ringstead car park sells a wide range of food and goods and also serves drinks and light meals. Opening times depend on seasonal demand.

Start grid ref: SY751815**OS map:** Explorer O.L.15**Walk length:** 6 miles**Duration:** 225 minutes**Height gain:** 75 metres**Contributor:** Ron and Jenny Glynn**Weathercall:** Get a local forecast for this walk.

Call 09068 020 504 from your phone or mobile. Or dial 09065 22 45 02 from your fax machine to receive a fax.

09068 calls 60p/min, 09065 calls £1.50p/min.

Features:

- Hills or Fells
- Pub
- Toilets
- Play Area
- Church
- Wildlife
- Birds
- Flowers
- Great Views
- Butterflies
- Cafe
- Gift Shop
- Food Shop
- Good for Kids
- Restaurant
- Woodland

- 1**  Leave the car park and pass the well-stocked shop to walk on the stone track. Pass the holiday cottages and houses looking out to sea and continue over footbridge and onto narrower, secluded path where there are superb views out to sea through openings in bushes and trees. Follow the path down steps and over a stream through woodland, then on a steep climb up steps cut into the bank. Go on along this wonderful coast path, hills and woods one side and the sea on the other with spectacular views across Weymouth Bay. Eventually take two gates and walk down towards the Smugglers Inn at Osmington Mills. (Grid ref: 751815)
- 2**  Turn right on footbridge over stream, to climb steps up to a large car park where there are public toilets. Turn right along road to begin a steady ascent, passing a caravan park on the right and coastguard house on the left. (Grid ref: 736817)
- 3**  Turn left on secluded path, partly hidden in the trees, to pick up the coast path again. (Grid ref: 736820)
- 4**  Turn left with marker towards Weymouth, walking between hedge and field. Climb a stile and turn right towards another, then go downhill with superb views over sea and land. There are footbridges and steps along the way for the benefit of the walker and stiles at regular intervals add interest to the route. Continue to meet the road, then turn right on it just before Osmington Bay Holiday Park and walk uphill, a white house coming into view on the hillside ahead. Pass several houses and arrive at the A353. (Grid ref: 735821)
- 5**  Cross over to take the stile opposite into a wooded area, then climb another stile to walk on in a meadow. Turn right over stile and follow path into Osmington Churchyard and down to the lychgate. (Grid ref: 724828)
- 6**  Turn left out of the lychgate and pass the charming Lychgate Cottage and other idyllic dwellings. (Grid ref: 725830)
- 7**  Turn right into Village Street where there are more pretty cottages, then turn right into Chapel Lane and follow it up to the main road again. Turn left along the pavement. (Grid ref: 725831)
- 8**  Turn right at marker signed 'inland route to Osmington Mills' and follow path through a copse, then over a stile to walk with hedge on left in a meadow. Leave the hedge in another meadow to head for a stile. Follow fence and hedge on left for a few yards, houses of Osmington Mills ahead and the landscape wonderful and undulating. Take a stile to retrace steps of the outward journey for a very short distance, returning to Osmington Mills along the narrow road. (Grid ref: 728829)

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Turn left by the postbox and follow path down and round over footbridge, then up steps to walk by private gardens to reach a stile. Turn left at fence corner to a stile. Continue on hard track past holiday chalets, then uphill beside fence.

(Grid ref: 735818)

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Turn right along single-track road lined with trees, then between fields on a steady incline. Go on towards Spring Bottom, passing a bungalow and a house, then over a stile with a wonderful panorama of spectacular landscape ahead. Go on into woodland.

(Grid ref: 737821)

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Cross a brook and take a stile onto path signed to Ringstead, the woodland path peaceful and pleasant. Pass Woodlands Cottage to meet narrow road and turn right along it, Burning Cliff dominating the scene ahead. Round a bend to return to Ringstead Bay car park.

(Grid ref: 744818)