

# PORTH

(Newquay)

An easily accessible sandy and enclosed inlet beach, on the northern outskirts of [Newquay](#). The historic Trevelegue Head and Porth Island with its Iron Age fortifications on its northern flank go unnoticed to many who visit the beach. It is believed the fortifications were to protect Porth which was some form of landing place for very early traders. Nowadays its proximity to the centre of Newquay and with many caravan and camp sites nearby it is popular with families because of the wonderful stretch of sand at all stages of the tide and the beach is at road level. At low spring tides it is possible to walk round the headland to the south to [Lusty Glaze Beach](#) and other



Looking across the beach to Trevelegue Head and Porth Island

Newquay beaches. Similarly, it is possible to walk through the gap at Porth Island to [Whipsiderry Beach](#) and on to [Watergate Bay](#). It is well worth going over the footbridge which spans the narrow gap between the mainland and Porth Island to see one of the best 'blowing holes' in Cornwall; it is supposed to be at its best at half-tide when there is a good swell and wind when it starts to spout. At low water it can be entered through Mermaid Cave. Below the footbridge is a circular pool in the rocks known as the Wishing Well. The name for the beach on old Cornish Maps is St. Columb Porth.



At low water looking out to sea..... and looking inland



Early on a summer morning looking towards the 'Great Cupboard'



**TR7 3NB** - Take the B3276 coast road from Newquay to Padstow and after 800m the road passes right next to the beach. On the left there is Beach Road which leads to an area of car parking on the beach (capacity about 100 cars). Further on the main road just past the pub is the main car park on the right (capacity 300+cars).



One of the reasons it is so popular is that from either car park the walk to the beach is very short and on a level which makes it ideal for prams and wheelchairs. The long walk out to the sea at low water is another matter!



Although westerly facing it can be relatively sheltered, despite not having any really high cliffs surrounding it. One of the attractions of the beach is both the large area of fine golden sand at high water



The river crossing the beach

and again when the tide is out. At high water in summer there is usually an area of dry sand that is over 300m wide and at least 100m in depth even at spring tides. The tide goes out an amazing 900m right to the mouth of the inlet. The river crosses the easterly side of the beach and can be quite a barrier to accessing the more secluded areas around Porth



The river in winter after heavy rainfall

Island but at the same time is a favourite for children. On the westerly sheltered side of the beach there are a number of secluded spots including the small Cove called the 'Great Cupboard'. If exploring Long Cove on Porth Island and other points of interest at the mouth of the inlet, real care needs to be taken with the tide!



There are safety equipment points above the beach in easily seen locations. RNLI Lifeguards are on duty from the end of May until the end of September. Unusually there is a restriction on surfboards over 1.52m in length when the lifeguards are on duty from 1000hrs to 1800hrs; this means that bodyboards can be used. The reason for this is the narrowness of the inlet and it being a popular beach with families with children. The Lifeguard lookout is perched above the beach on the westerly side.



Swimming at low water, or when the tide is going out, is not advisable at all unless the Lifeguards are on duty and there is a designated bathing area; this is because of strong currents at the mouth of the inlet. However, when the tide is coming in well up the inlet it can be a relatively safe beach for swimming if the swell and surf permit and more especially at high tide away from the river.



Secluded areas to explore on the way to Porth Island



Despite the surfing restrictions during the day in summer it is a popular surfing beach especially with beginners but does not seem to have the aura of other surfing beaches which is a shame because it is good over most of the tidal range. It is a classic beach break but does not tend to blow out as much as [Fistral](#) or [Watergate Bay](#).



It is not really a snorkelling beach but on occasions, when there is little swell and wind, snorkelling around the Porth Island side of the inlet can be quite interesting. There are a few rock pools on either side of the inlet especially Porth Island.



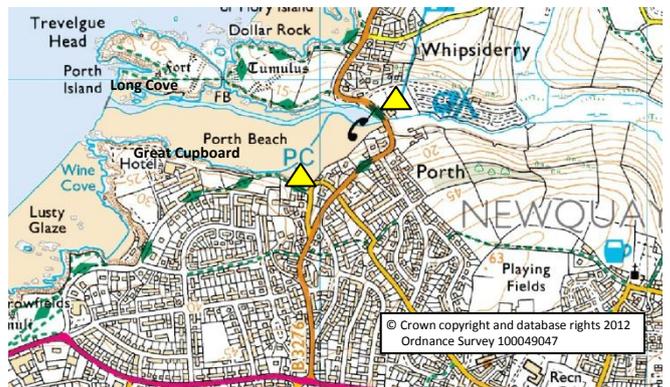
Views of the beach



Dogs are allowed from October until Easter but are not permitted for the rest of the year.



Toilets, including those for the disabled, are located adjacent to Porth Beach Road above the car park. There is a cafe and beach shop above the beach and a pub almost on the beach. It is surprising there are not more facilities for such a popular beach. There is a pitch and putt and crazy golf next to the main road at Trevelegue Head.



Location – Part of OS Explorer Map



The sea water quality is good but the river can be variable especially in times of heavy rainfall. The beach is owned and cleaned by Cornwall Council. It is a fine beach although the development surrounding the beach is not the best.