

PORTHCURNO

and Percella Cove

These are popular fairly small south facing beaches with glorious white sand and surrounded by enigmatic granite cliffs. Porthcurno is the main and most well known beach but to the east around Percella Point is an equally delightful but smaller beach called Percella Cove that is only accessible from the main beach at low water. Porthcurno is the home of the famous Minack Open Air Theatre which is perched on the cliff-top overlooking the Cove and with stunning views along the coast to [Pednavounder Beach](#) and the headland of Logan Rock. Porthcurno was once the home of 'Cable and Wireless' and in the 19th Century



Porthcurno Beach from the cliffs below the Minack Theatre

submarine telephone cables from all around the world came ashore under the beach. It is now the home of the Porthcurno Telegraph Museum which is worth a visit as it illustrates how important Cornwall was in the history of global communications.



TR19 6JX From Penzance take the A30 road to Land's End and after 3.5kms take the B3283 through St.Buryan and after a further 4.5kms the road to Porthcurno is signposted on the left. Follow the road down the valley and a large car park (capacity over 300 cars) is on the left. In summer there are



Early on a summer morning



Sculptured granite rock faces



The access point on to the main beach

restrictions on roadside parking and often the road can get congested with the large number of visitors during the day to the Minack Theatre.



There is a good and fairly level path (320m) from the car park down to the beach with steps at the end. It is suitable for some pushchairs but not wheelchairs. If visiting the Minack Theatre and parking in the theatre car park there is a fine short walk along the Coast Path (which crosses the car park) and down a flight of steps on to the beach.



The triangular shaped main beach is made up of coarse shell based white sand that seems almost exotic when the sun reflects off the granite cliffs and rocks. It shelves quite steeply and flattens out at low water. There is always an area of sand above high water mark. As the tide recedes it is possible to walk round the Point to Percella Cove which is similar to the main beach but care needs to be taken not to get cut off by the tide as there is often little or no beach at high water; It is much quieter than the main beach which can be crowded in summer. Both beaches can be very sheltered from all but winds from the south.



Views of the main beach



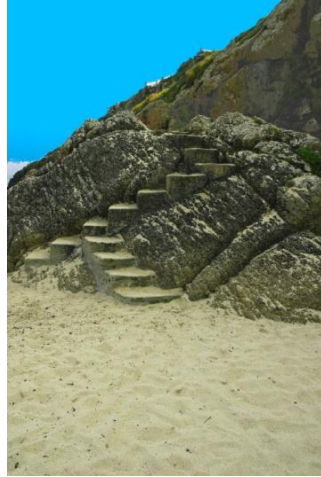
There is safety rescue equipment above the main beach but nothing at Percella Cove. RNLI Lifeguards are on duty from the end of May until the end of September with designated bathing areas on the main beach.



When the conditions are right they can be wonderful beaches for swimming especially on an incoming high tide when the steeply shelving beach makes entry into the water ideal. However, there are times on an ebbing tide at low water when currents can make it unsafe. When there is a swell it is



Path from the car park



Steps to the Minack Theatre

advisable to only enter the water when the Lifeguards are on duty and then within the designated area as the sea has a tendency to 'dump' on the shelving beaches and unsuitable for some, especially young children.



Despite its southerly aspect Porthcurno can pick up some fine Atlantic swell and produce good surfing conditions with extremely hollow, short fast waves but only at low water; surfing on higher tides is not advisable because of the heavy waves that have been known to break boards!



On higher tides there is interesting snorkelling out to Minack Point but generally they are not snorkelling beaches. There are very few rock pools and occasionally some sandy pools but they are not a



Porthcurno Beach looking out to Minack Point

feature of the beach.



Dogs are not permitted from the beginning of May until the end of September from 8.00hrs to 19.00hrs.



There are toilets in the car park which are only open during the summer months



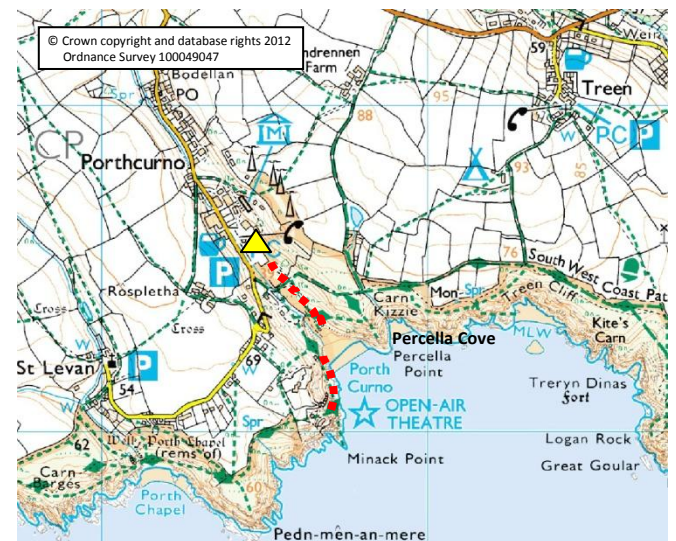
There is a village shop which is closed during the winter.



There is a beach cafe/restaurant that also sells beach items. The pub is located opposite the car park. There is also a cafe at the Minack Theatre which is open during the summer and the Telegraph Museum which has limited opening in the winter but open daily in the summer.



Waves and games



Location – Part of OS Explorer Map 102



Water quality is very good. It is sometimes possible to walk to [Pednavounder](#) past Percella Cove at very low water or else it is a wonderful walk along the Coast Path. Similarly, it is a short walk past the Minack Theatre to [Porth Chapel](#). These are wonderful beaches in a great setting.