

# The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

## Glen Rosa-Brodick Bay Circuit (Isle of Arran)

### Route Summary

A very varied walk under the Goatfell range, introducing a mix of Arran landscapes, taking in woodland, waterfalls, moorland, mountain views, farmland, a golf course, and a sandy beach. Visits to the Arran Heritage Museum and Brodick Castle and Country Park are recommended, but optional.

Duration: 3 hours.



### Route Overview

**Duration:** 3 hours.

**Transport/Parking:** There is a frequent bus service from Brodick. Check timetables. There are parking areas at both sides of the A841, at the Cladach Sawmill and Garden Centre complex.

**Length:** 9.5 km / 5.9 mi **Height Gain/Loss:** 127 meter.

**Max Height:** 0 meter. **Min Height:** 84 meter.

**Surface:** Moderate. Mostly good paths, estate roads, and tarred public roads. A short section walking on the verge of the busy A841 road. Believed not suitable for off-road mobility scooter due to the narrow moorland path with boulders between Waypoint 4 and 5.

**Difficulty:** Medium.

**Child Friendly:** Yes, if children are used to walks of this distance and overall ascent.

**Dog Friendly:** Yes, but keep dogs on lead on public roads and near farm animals.

**Refreshments:** There are options at the Cladach walk start/end point, and in Brodick.



### Description

Due to its variety of scenery and dramatic mountains, the Isle of Arran is often described as "Scotland in miniature". Equally, the diverse environments encountered on this special walk might qualify it to be described as "Arran in miniature"! This very enjoyable route takes in mature mixed woodland; a deep rocky gorge enclosed by giant rhododendrons, with rushing waterfalls; an atmospheric upland glen with open grassy moorland under steeply sloped mountains; an arresting view of Goatfell; a tumultuous highland river with cascading waters; abundant birdlife, with an opportunity to encounter some sheep and red deer; green and pleasant pasture; a golf course; a sweeping sandy beach; and, optionally, visits to the Arran Heritage Museum, and Brodick Castle, with its grand Victorian edifice, and its unique and exotic gardens. The route starts and finishes at the Cladach Sawmill and Garden Centre, where a number of other interesting Arran enterprises are based, just over 3 km from the ferry terminal in Brodick. Although you need to be equipped for a hill-walk, the route is not arduous, and the ascents encountered are gentle. If you haven't already done so, we suggest a visit to nearby Brodick Castle before, or after, the walk. It can be easily reached by taking the "39 Steps" pedestrian path from the walk start-point, or driving to the car-park, a little further up the A841 main road. On our visit, we particularly enjoyed the delightful Walled Garden, and Woodland Garden with many exotic plant species from across the world. A visit to the castle itself has been enhanced, in recent years, by an interactive experience with an emphasis on the lives and personalities of the owning families. The Castle, Country Park and associated visitor experience are managed by the National Trust for Scotland who, of course, charge a range of visitor prices for non-members of the NTS. See: <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/brodick-castle-garden-country-park>



## Waypoints

### (1) Start walk from the Cladach complex

<https://w3w.co/booklets.toward.illogical> NS0120737626

The walk starts from the car-park at the Cladach Complex (Sawmill, Garden Centre, shops and bars), which is on the left, 3km from the main Coop in Brodick, travelling north on the A841. Walk gently uphill away from the car-park, passing the Wineport Bar on your left side and pedestrian access (39 Steps path) to Brodick Castle on your right side. After checking out the information board, continue up the rough track, signed for Goatfell, into the trees.



### (2) Veer left and downhill at y-junction

In 150 m, veer left off the Goatfell route, to take the path going gently downhill. Follow this path for 950 m, passing a number of waterfalls on the Cnocan Burn, on your right side. At one point you will cross a tarred estate road by a stone bridge. Cross the road and carry on taking the path through the trees until you come to a yjunction in the path. (150 m)



### (3) Veer left to take higher path at y-junction

In 950 m you will arrive at a narrowly angled y-junction in the path. Do NOT take the right-hand option going downhill towards the Cnocan Burn. Instead, take the left fork which continues going gently uphill through the trees. Soon, you will arrive at a t-junction where there is a walks post. Go sharp left here. Soon, the path starts to descend through the trees with some open views ahead, at times, into Glen Rosa. (1.1 km)



### (4) Go right after descending to t-junction

In 970 m, the path has descended to a t-junction, with open ground in Glen Rosa straight ahead of you. Turn sharp right here to follow a path through a heavily shaded plantation (as at 2022). Soon you pass through a gate into open grassy moorland in Glen Rosa, with high hills on either side, and the Glenrosa Water below you on your left side. Keep going along this moorland path for 1.63 km, until you come to a footbridge. (2.07 km)



### (5) Cross bridge over the Glenrosa Water

In 1.63 m, you will arrive at a footbridge over the Glenrosa Water. Cross the footbridge and go left\*, reversing your direction, and heading towards another bridge, over the Garbh Allt, a tributary of the Glenrosa Water. Before you arrive at the bridge, we suggest you divert right for a short distance, around a low hillock, to get a better view of the Garbh Allt water slide/waterfalls, cascading down the steep hillside (especially impressive after recent rainfall). (3.7 km)

*\*Note: if you turn right here instead, after crossing the footbridge, you will soon arrive (in about 100 m) at a photogenic low waterfall and pool, known as "The Blue Pool", popular with wild swimmers. If you make this diversion, re-trace your steps to continue with our route. To carry on into the glen from the Blue Pool takes you deep into Glen Rosa, with the potential to make the arduous climb to The Saddle, and Goatfell (for experienced walkers only).*



Thanks to CaddyBabez - Reddit

### (6) Divert right for waterfall

In about 240 m from the footbridge at Waypoint 5, you will have diverted for a short distance, to the foot of the Garbh Allt water slide/waterfalls, on your right, cascading down the steep hillside. From here, re-trace your steps back to the main track and continue making your homeward return along the south side of the Glenrosa Water, with the river now on your left side. Keep going on this rough road, eventually becoming a tarred public minor road at the Glenrosa hamlet, and passing the Glenrosa camp-site on your left side. Note that this section of the route is approximately 3.5 km in length. (3.94 km)



### (7) Left onto the String Road

In 3.51 km, you will arrive at a t-junction with the String Road (that crosses the island from East to West). Cross this road with care and go left, walking downhill, facing the oncoming traffic. In about 135 m you will arrive at the junction with the A841 road. Go right here to walk along the verge of this busy main road. In another 300 m you will pass the Arran Heritage Museum on your left (well worth a visit!). From here, happily, there is a pavement to walk on. Now, as you continue to walk in towards Brodick, look out for a large ancient standing stone, across the road from you, on your left. Your next waypoint, and change of direction, is very soon after this standing stone. (7.45 km)



### **(8) Left onto path to Brodick Bay**

In 660 m from arriving at the String Road, at Waypoint 7, having just passed a large ancient standing stone across the road on your left side, and with the Brodick Primary School on your right side, cross the busy A841 main road with care to take a path into the trees (by a little car/bus parking area on your right), heading in the direction of Brodick golf course.

As soon as you arrive at a tee on the golf course, turn left to cross the (now tranquil) Glenrosa Water on a footbridge. Turn right after the bridge and follow the main path (the Brodick "Fishermans Walk"), through bushes, as it bends left, away from the river, The golf course is now on your left side, and Brodick Bay, through bushes, on your right side. We suggest, that in about 500 m from crossing the bridge, you divert off the Fishermans Walk, to your right, crossing a sandy area to the beach. Here, there are fine views back to Brodick, and ahead to Brodick Castle and the Goatfell range).



After walking on the beach for about 400 m, go left off the beach to regain the path, which soon crosses a bridge over the estuary of the Cnocan Burn. After crossing the bridge, veer left to follow a path which takes you back to the A841 road, across from the Cladach Complex where you started the walk. Cross the road, with care, to complete the walk. (8.11 km)

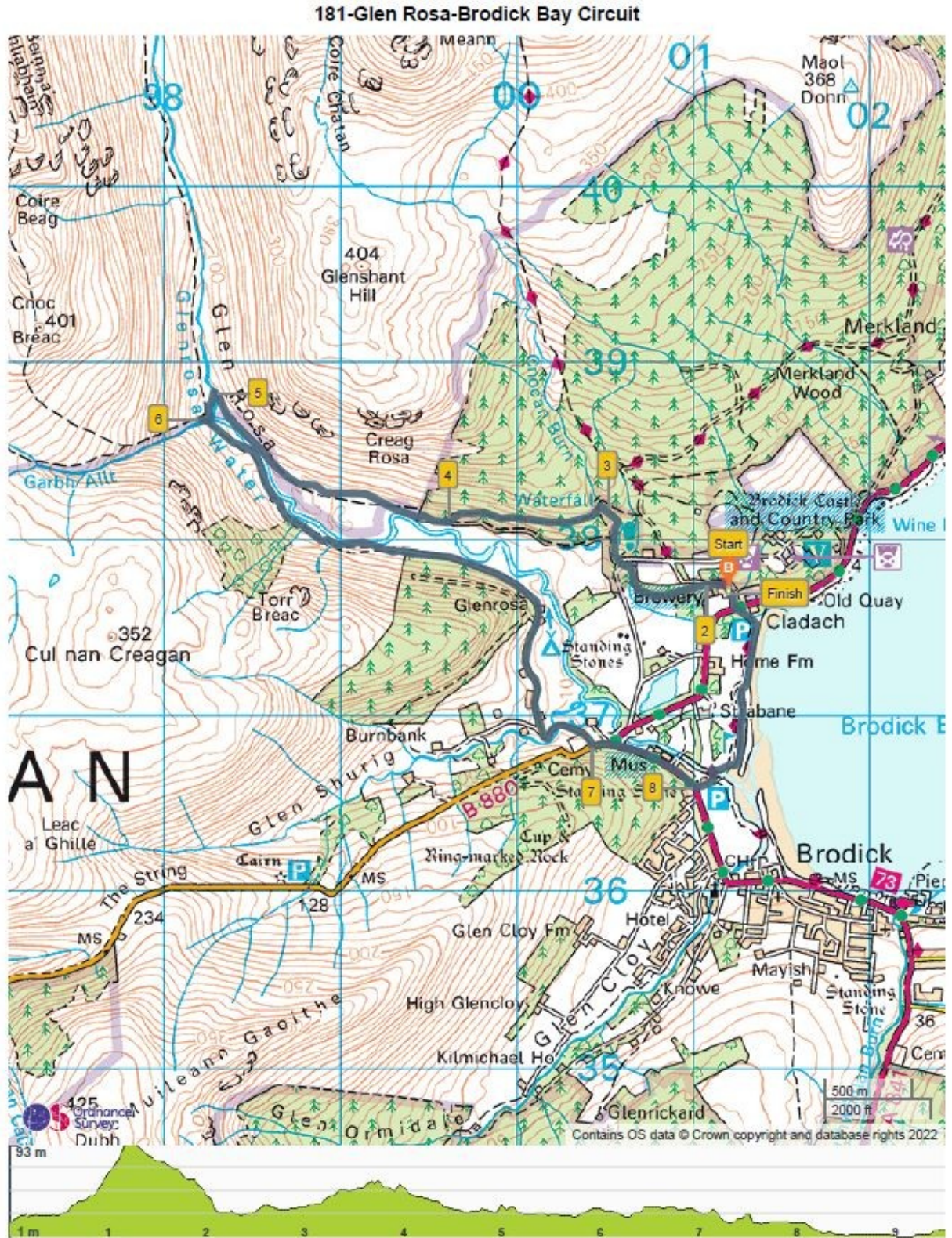
### **9) Finish walk back at the Cladach complex**

In 1.4 km from the previous Waypoint 8, you will have arrived back at your start-point, in the car-park at the Cladach Complex, near to Brodick Castle\*. (9.51 km)

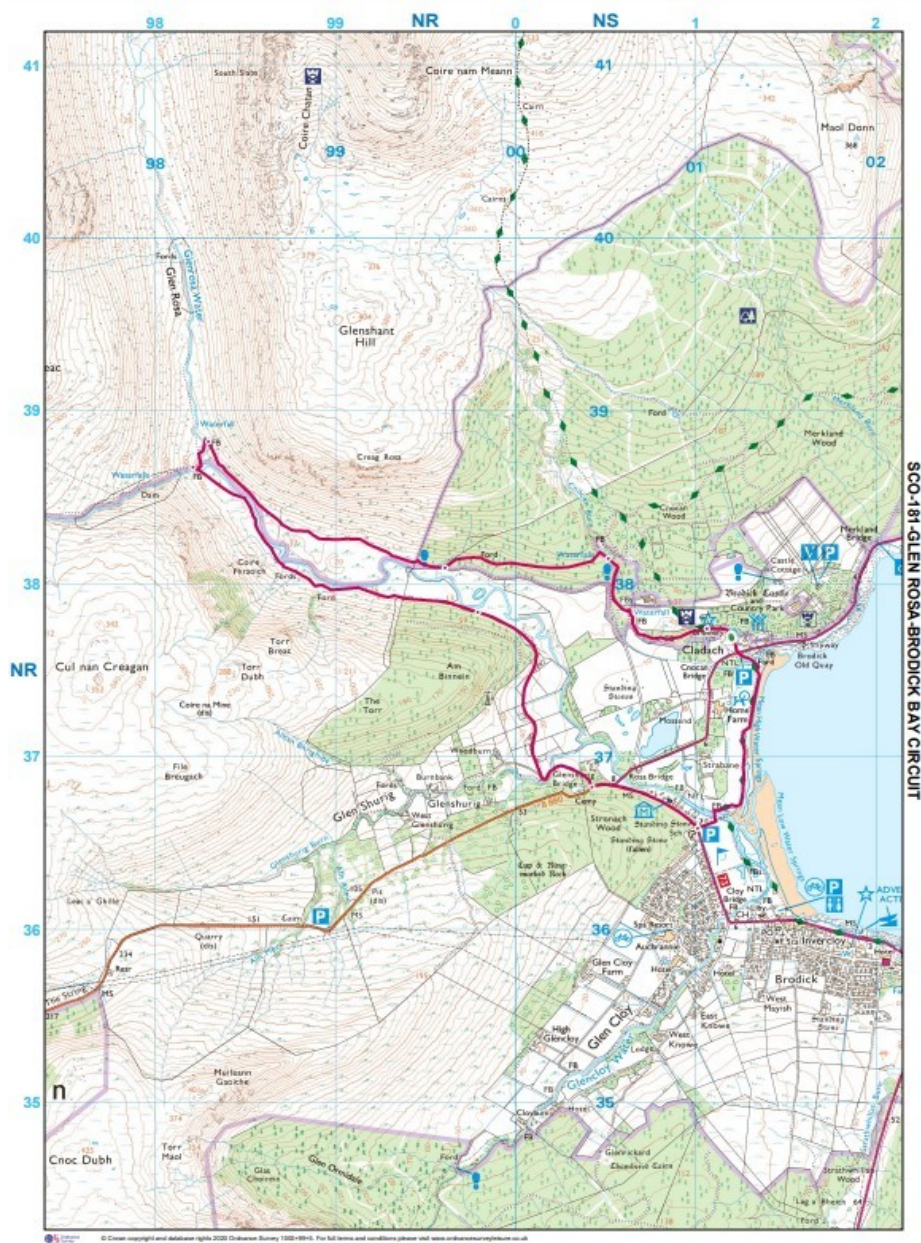
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# Route Map (with waypoints)



# Route Map



## Links:

[Photos from walk](#)

[Download Route Guide](#) (PDF with illustrated Waypoints)

[Download GPX file](#) (GPS Exchange Format)

[Access Walk on OutdoorActive](#)

[Access Walk on OSMaps](#)

[Access Walk on Alltrails](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)