



> Kilmurrin cove (above), Dunabrattin Head (below)



### > Walk 2 - Dunabrattin Head - circular walk

This should only be undertaken with local advice as it is quite dangerous along the cliff-tops and much of it is on privately owned land. Advice can also be given as to where to start.

Good views of sea-arches and sea-stacks are presented along the cliff tops as one proceeds west from Boatstrand. Soon one comes to the feature that provided the name Dunabrattin - defensive features and these are still very much in evidence. A fosse and embankment across the headland formed a fort ("Dún") to protect a Celtic clan (Brattins?) who lived here about 2000 years ago.

Inside the Dun or promontory fort the cliff grows higher and one makes way cautiously to the tip of the headland where stands a more modern defensive feature, a look-out post built during World War II. The maritime vegetation here blossoms spectacularly in the spring.

From here there are fine coastal panoramas east towards Tramore and west to Dungarvan Bay and Helvic Head. Silhouetted behind are the great blocks of the Comeragh Mountains.

The track swings in their general direction and around an inaccessible inlet. Also visible is the horizontally banded limestone of the cliffs and sea-stacks. (For those with interest in the rocks and fossils, pamphlets may be acquired locally). One can continue along the cliff-tops or take the main track across a field and out through the entrance to the fort.

### > Walk 3 - Inland routes - (a) 45 minutes, (b) 1h - circular walks

Proceed up the hill immediately east of Boatstrand. As you ascend fine views open up of the cliffs and islands to the east. From the top of the hill onwards there are striking vistas of the Comeraghs. A pleasant walk brings one to a cross roads. The best options are (a) right and (b) left.

(a) Going right along a quiet road one dips into a valley. Proceeding uphill past a cottage on the right one comes to an untarred road with a gate. This beautiful and unspoilt "boreen" leads back to the coast road. Its high hedges are full of life as are the fields on either side. Gnarled old trees grow in boggy water at the lowest point.

Walking on uphill from there, past a large deserted farm complex, new vistas appear of rolling countryside with the Comeraghs in the background and the coast sweeping west to Dungarvan Bay and Helvic Head. A short walk brings one back to the tarred road again with views of Boatstrand harbour. This road dips into an incised river valley before rising close to the cliff tops and back towards Boatstrand.

(b) Going left along another quiet road past the reservoir tank on the left one descends into an almost untouched valley. Crossing the stream on the lovely old bridge, one reaches a cross roads and may opt to turn left.

The valley going left goes to Kilmurrin Cove. Go straight on here past a blow-hole on the right, then two lay-byes that are popular viewing points for the coast along here. The second has the Copper Coast sculpture representing ice, fire and water, the elements that shaped the landscape. A short walk past a cluster of houses brings one back to Boatstrand.

*Cover photo: Boatstrand harbour*

*Photo credits: Des Cowman (Dunabrattin Head), John Galloway (cover), Sophie Prêteselle (Kilmurrin, Boatstrand beach, dilisk)*

# The Copper Coast Geopark

## County Waterford, Ireland

### Trail card - Boatstrand/Dunabrattin



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a story captured in stone



> Walk 1 - Boatstrand beach

The walk eastwards and over the rocks should only be undertaken at an outgoing tide – ask local advice first. Also remember the cliffs are subject to frequent cliff-falls so care should be taken.

Boatstrand harbour was built in the late 1880s though as the name implies the strand had been used for boating and fishing for generations before. On the cliffs behind the harbour is a well, the remains of a 19th century lime kiln and an exploratory level looking for copper in the 19th century.

The ebbing tide on the beach to the east reveals rock pools, miniature universes in themselves. At low tide the ubiquitous bladder-rack dominates with its blister-like “bladders” and its rounded regular leaves. The red thin strips of dilisk (called dulse elsewhere in Ireland) left plastered on the rocks by the ebb of the water is a local delicacy once washed and boiled.

The cliffs immediately east of the harbour are a soft mudstone laid in an Antarctic ocean 460 million years ago. Further east lava dykes can be seen intruding into the mudstone and baking it into a harder consistency. At various places on the cliffs and on fallen rocks patches of iron pyrite, “Fools gold”, glitter in the sun. All along the cliff-tops lie the debris from the glaciers deposited a mere 12,000 years ago.

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> Boatstrand beach at low tide (above), dilisk (below)

