



Sissinghurst Castle Estate walk

Sissinghurst Castle, Biddenden Road, near Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2AB

TRAIL
Walking

GRADE
Easy

DISTANCE
3 mile (4.8km)

TIME
1 hour 30 minutes

OS MAP
**Landranger 188;
Explorer 136**

Contact

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sissinghurst@nationaltrust.org.uk

Facilities

Exploring Sissinghurst's gardens can be complemented by a walk around the surrounding estate.

Nestled in the heart of the Weald, this landscape inspired the creation of a world class garden and the prolific writing of Vita Sackville-West.



Terrain

The terrain is fairly flat but can be muddy during the wetter months. It is advisable to wear stout boots. Well behaved dogs on leads are welcome.

Things to see



The Gazebo

Look out for the gazebo in the corner of the garden by the moat at Point 1. It looks out over the estate and wider Wealden countryside; it was built as a memorial to Harold Nicolson (diplomat, author and politician and husband of writer Vita Sackville-West) and was used by Harolds son, Nigel Nicolson, as a writing room.

The Tower

Built in the 16th century, the Tower was used as a viewing platform for the deer hunts on the 700-acre deer park surrounding the Elizabethan house during the 16th and 17th centuries. Later, in the 1850s, the woodland was cleared to create the parkland that can still be seen today.

Sissinghurst Castle Farm

The vegetable plot, visible from parts of the walk, is a new feature for the estate and supplies the restaurant with seasonal vegetables. Over the next few years the farm will evolve into an organic mixed farm supplying meat, eggs, fruit and vegetables, and is managed so as to benefit wildlife and the environment. The arable crops are grown in rotation with grass for grazing, winter fodder and livestock bedding.

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Start/end

Start: National Trust car park, grid ref: TQ807384
End: National Trust car park, grid ref: TQ807384

How to get there

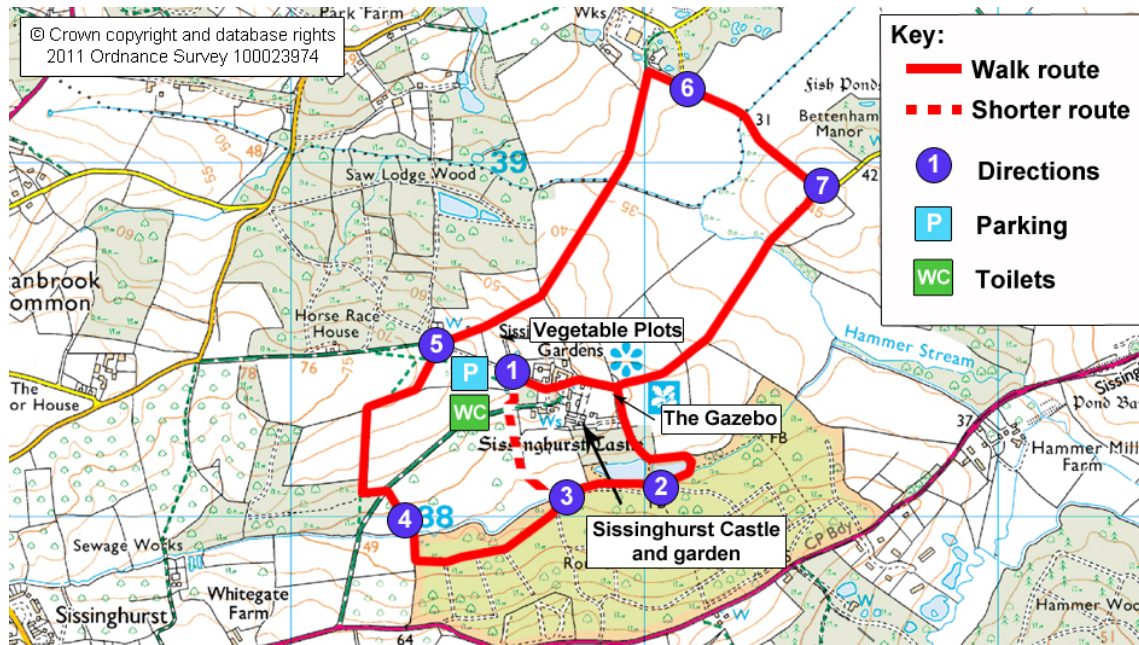
By bus: Service 5 runs from Staplehurst station to Sissinghurst village.

By train: Regular service to Staplehurst from London Charing Cross. From here take bus service 5 (see above)

By road: 2 miles (3.2km) north east of Cranbrook, 1 mile (1.6km) east of Sissinghurst village on A262

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1. From the car park follow the path towards the castle. Walk to left of the castle and continue along the Medieval moat, following it round to the right at the gazebo. Continue along this path, through a gate and down the hill towards the lake. At the bottom of the field go through the gate and turn left around the lower lake.

2. After crossing the second bridge, turn right and continue along the ride through the traditional coppice woodland.

3. After 383yds (350m) you will reach an 'F' marker. Here, you have two options: Shorter route (marked on map), turn right and continue up the hill across Park Field towards the car park. To continue on the longer route (marked on map) bear left then right and continue 459yds (420m) along the ride until you reach the edge of the woodland, where you will find a 'G' marker. Turn right down a narrow path and continue over the stile into Park Field.

4. Bear slightly to the left across the parkland, taking in the views of the castle and estate. At the next stile cross the drive and enter Bull and Birches Woods. Follow the path for 66yds (60m) then turn right along the public footpath up the field. At the top turn right, pass through the second double gate then bear diagonally left across the orchard.

5. Cross the track and join the bridleway, passing the vegetable plots on your right and continue along this track until you reach marker 'H'. Turn right into the field and follow the margin until you come to a metal gate.

6. At the gate bear right on to the lane and follow this to the next gate on your right. Go through this gate onto the path, taking in the views before continuing over the stream back to the castle.