

CRATHIE

Everyone knows of Crathie because of Crathie Church, famous for its royal visitors and well worth a visit. So after or before you view this building why not take a ramble round the environs.



Balmoral Castle

If you have parked at the church car park you will need to cross the busy A93 so I would advise using the ample parking spaces on the south side of the A93. Head towards Balmoral Castle but instead of turning in at the splendid gates turn left and take the quiet road which follows the golf course on the banks of the river Dee. After less than one mile you will spot a white pedestrian bridge which takes you back over the river. To quote James Page who wrote in 2004: "Giant flies were rising from the river and doing a drunken swirl all over the place. Stones in the river which had been underwater the day before were now basking in June sunshine. The young river was doing its urgent, there's-no-time-to-hang-about stuff." After which follow the path around and back towards your car. On your left there is the manse, then Crathie Opportunity Holidays and then a graveyard.

I have chosen this route because, having stayed at Crathie Opportunity Holidays on several occasions, I have come to love it. I always find water very peaceful and tranquil even when fast flowing but here it slowly moves along attracting birds and wildlife along its way. Over the years I have seen a heron and a red squirrel amongst other more frequent visitors.

For a very good self-service meal the restaurant at Balmoral Castle is hard to beat. There

are 2 accessible toilets and a busy shop.

Further information from:

Balmoral Estate: Ranger 013397 42534 www.balmoralcastle.com

Ballater Royal Deeside Ltd 013397 55467

Crathie Opportunity Centre: 013397 42100 www.crathieholidays.org.uk

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| FACTFILE | |
| MAP | Ordnance Survey map 44 |
| GRID REFERENCE start/finish | Information & car park: NO 265949 Balmoral Castle car park: NO 255951 |
| PARKING | Information Car Park Balmoral Castle Car Park |
| TOILETS | Information Kiosk (at Crathie Car Park) - W/C (L) 9.30-5 summer season only Balmoral Castle café (R&L) Ballater Car Park W/C (L) radar |
| DISTANCE | 2 miles |
| LANDSCAPE | Riverside, crossing on 2 bridges. |