

<b>Name of Walk</b>	Abergairn Castle via Craigendarroch	
<b>Miles</b>	<b>Total Ascent (feet)</b>	<b>Type</b>
5.05	1,221	Moderate
<b>Drive to start required</b>	No, walk starts from hostel front door	

<b>Starting Grid Reference</b>	NO 37146 95712
<b>Map available</b>	Yes

Head up Craigendarroch first, then onto little known, rather hidden Abergairn Castle. Return by the river.

Abergairn Castle is a ruined castle, built in 1614, possibly as a hunting lodge. Abergairn castle was a tower-house - a rectangular keep 3-4 stories tall with an attached round tower. As of 1921 there was only about 10 feet or less left of the main building, now only the basement remains. The main tower survives only to a maximum height of 4 feet; a round tower to the north west reaches to 10 feet. There was some repointing in 1960 which has stabilised the structure. Little is known about this ruined tower (history of the castle has been lost) which was in possession of the Farquharson's.

Walk through the village past all the shops. Just after the Auld Kirk (old church) a road called Craigendarroch Walk will be on your right. Turn right here, and then after 50 metres (ish) a path goes off diagonally left. Go through a wee gate and into the wood. Head uphill, bearing left, before the path flattens out. Not far on you come to a sign post, signally "round" Craigendarroch is straight on and "up" Craigendarroch is right. Head up right to get lovely views over Ballater. Once on top, continue over and down the other side. On reaching a T-junction turn left, so you are now going around Craigendarroch Hill anti clockwise. Just before the junction where you turned right to go up the hill there is a path taking you down to Craigendarroch Lodges. Walk through the lodges and out the other side. There is a path enclosed by fences taking you out the other side. Cross over the Pass of Ballater road and onto the avenue opposite. Bear left with the road and just as it bears right spot a stile on your right. Cross this stile and follow the path. The path will eventually disappear. Persevere and push on through the undergrowth. You will pop out on a green clearing, and see Abergairn Castle in front of you. Return to the stile the same way you came. Back track along the avenue, cross over the road and go along the very straight path enclosed by fences. Turn right to exit Craigendarroch Lodges. Cross over the main road and go straight down the bank the other side, to the river. It's steep but doable. Walk back into Ballater along the old railway line.



