



Oystermouth Castle

Oystermouth Castle is an impressive **stone ruin** that stands proudly on a hill above **Mumbles**, a seaside town near Swansea. The castle overlooks **Swansea Bay**, giving visitors stunning views of the land and sea.

The castle dates back to around **1106**, when the **Normans** were taking control of Wales. They built castles across the land to show their strength and control important areas. Oystermouth Castle was built to watch over **Swansea Bay** and to protect the surrounding land.

In the **13th century**, the powerful **de Braose family** expanded the castle. They added **grand towers**, **new battlements**, and a **beautiful chapel** with stained-glass windows. The chapel's windows still shine brightly today.

Castles like Oystermouth served two important purposes: they were **military strongholds**, keeping enemies out, and **symbols of wealth and power** to impress visitors and remind local people of who ruled the land.

Today, Oystermouth Castle is a fascinating place to explore. Visitors can climb the **winding stone staircases**, walk along the **battlements**, and admire the view across the bay. Schools visit the castle to learn about medieval life, and the castle hosts exciting **cultural events** such as **plays**, **storytelling festivals**, and **historical re-enactments**.

If you visit, imagine what life must have been like for the guards, lords, and servants who once walked through these ancient halls!

Glossary

- **ruin** — a broken or damaged building from long ago
- **Normans** — people from Normandy in France who invaded and ruled parts of Britain and Wales
- **de Braose family** — a powerful Norman family who ruled the area and improved the castle
- **battlements** — the high parts of the walls where guards stood
- **winding staircases** — spiral staircases that go around and around
- **military stronghold** — a safe place used by soldiers to defend an area
- **cultural events** — special activities like plays and festivals
- **historical re-enactments** — events where people act out what happened in the past

Questions

1. Who expanded Oystermouth Castle in the 13th century?

👉 The... family expanded it by...

2. What were two purposes of castles like Oystermouth?

👉 They were used for... and for...

3. How is the castle used today?

👉 It is used for...

4. Why do you think castles were often built near the sea or on a hill?

👉 I think they were built near the sea or on a hill because...