Before you go

No public body gives a distance or a time for the whole way. By our map it is about 6 km (3¾ miles) there and back with about 520 metres of climb, and it takes about 3 to 4 hours, more with stops, in poor weather or under snow. Under snow Carn an Tuirc is a winter mountain on a high, exposed plateau, in the Southern Cairngorms avalanche forecast's area. In winter it is serious terrain, one guide says, where crampons and an ice axe are likely to be needed, with the skill to use them.

Check the mountain forecast, and under snow the avalanche forecast too: the Mountain Weather Information Service's Southeastern Highlands and Cairngorms forecasts both cover this ground. Wear sturdy footwear and carry waterproof and warm layers, water and food. Carry a map and compass and know how to use them: the ski centre asks walkers to have a backup means of navigation with them at all times. If the cloud comes down, the wind rises or anyone is tiring, turn back by the way you came. Stalking runs on Invercauld's Glenshee and Glencallater ground from mid-September to 20 October, with no stalking on Sundays: follow the estate's signs.

The councils work snow gates on the A93 at the Spittal of Glenshee and at Braemar, and in winter snow may block the road over the pass: check the road first. The car park is at grid reference NO 148 800, and one walker reckoned it holds about 20 cars if carefully parked. There are no toilets at it: the nearest are at the Glenshee ski centre, about 2 km south.

After the walk

Cairn of Claise, about 2 km to the south-east, is the nearest Munro, and Tolmount and Tom Buidhe lie about 4 km to the east across the plateau. Many walkers join them in one long day from the same car park: this walk keeps to Carn an Tuirc.

The walk online, with its film and map:
hiddenscotland.com/walks/carn-an-tuirc-from-glen-clunie

It starts at the car park beside the A93, about 2 km north of the Glenshee ski centre, NO 148 800.

In an emergency, call 999 or 112 and ask for Police and Mountain Rescue, Mountaineering Scotland says, and give your location as exactly as you can, ideally a six-figure grid reference and a named feature. Do not rely only on a phone or GPS.

A MUNRO WALK UP

Carn an Tuirc

A HIDDEN SCOTLAND WALK

From Glen Clunie

Carn an Tuirc is 1,019 metres, a stony dome rising east of the A93 at Glenshee, above the head of Glen Clunie. This is its usual way on its own: a path up the north bank of the Allt a' Gharbh-choire from a car park beside the A93, then a hill path up the west side through heather, scree and boulders to the summit, and back the same way. It is a short Munro, but its top is a broad plateau where mist and winter come in fast: for hillwalkers who can find their way with a map and compass.

words // Hidden Scotland

The car park is a rough, free one beside the A93, a fast road with no pavement: keep a dog on a lead by it, as one guide advises. A short path leads east to the burn, where two bridges stand close together. Most guides cross the old arched stone bridge over the Cairnwell Burn. By our map the path up the north bank starts from the footbridge a few steps to the north, just below where the burns meet, and this walk crosses there.

The path runs east along the north bank of the Allt a' Gharbh-choire. For about the first kilometre it can be very boggy, and walkers have worn several lines round the worst of it: keep to the higher ones. About 1.2 km out a tributary comes down from the north-east: cross it at the ford. After rain it may need a detour upstream, one guide warns, and if it is running high, turn back. Just past it the hill path leaves the burn and climbs east-north-east up the open hillside, faint and grassy in places, and steepens.

From about 800 metres up the path climbs through scree and stones, faint in places, and near the top through boulder fields with several paths. The guides call the rocks tough going, and they can turn an ankle: go steadily. The summit is a cairn on a wide, flat, stony top, with a round stone shelter a few metres west. The top is a featureless plateau with paths in all directions: in mist walkers can leave the summit the wrong way, and careful navigation is needed, particularly in winter. Before you leave, take a bearing: by our map the path goes north-west, then west. Go down the way you came, crossing the tributary again at the ford.



Up Carn an Tuirc from Glen Clunie and back the same way: about 3 to 4 hours.

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