

Britain

Self-Guided Hiking Tour

Active Journeys



Wainwright's Walk

Coast to Coast Hike

This classic route was originated and described by A. Wainwright; author of a well-known series of hiking guidebooks on the Lake District. The walk starts on the Irish Sea coast of Cumbria near the huge red sandstone cliffs of St. Bees Head. You cross three National Parks before reaching the North Sea at the pretty fishing village of Robin Hood's Bay on the rocky coastline of the North York Moors.

The first few days take you over some of the most rugged, beautiful terrain of the Lake District, by way of the idyllic Lakeland valleys of Borrowdale, Grasmere (poet William Wordsworth lived here) and Patterdale, close to Ullswater Lake. You pass Helvellyn, England's most popular mountain, and the mountain oddly named High Street, along which Roman Legions marched on their way to Hadrian's Wall.

After leaving the Lake District you cross a gentler landscape round Shap and Orton. Beyond the quaint market town of Kirkby Stephen you enter the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Two days are then spent walking through the long valley of Swaledale, with its dry stone walls and unspoiled villages. You reach the historic town of Richmond with its cobbled streets, market square and famous castle perched above the River Swale.

Beyond the Vale of York, elevation rises onto the expansive heather moorlands of the North York Moors, a region of long vistas and easy walking. After crossing the narrow wooded valley of Eskdale you reach the dramatic cliffs of the North Sea Coast. The last few miles follow the scenic cliff top path to the red-roofed village of Robin Hood's Bay. With an extra night here, you can relax on the beach or visit nearby Whitby with its ruined abbey, associated with the Dracula legend.



Tour Details

Daily April 1 to September 29

Cost: \$2995 per person

Single Supplement: Upon Request

Length: 16 days / 15 nights

Grade: Challenging

Starts: St. Bees

Ends: Robin's Hood Bay



Fast Facts

Includes:

- 15 nights hotels with breakfasts
- Luggage transfers, route notes & maps
- Local support

- **Waymarks:** There is quite a bit of way marking, but the route is very popular and easy to follow.

ITINERARY

Day 1 St Bees

Travel to starting point on the edge of the Irish Sea, with views to the Isle of Man across the water.

Day 2 St. Bees to Ennerdale 24 km / 7 hours

Your journey from coast to coast begins by following a cliff top path around St Bees Head, passing the lighthouse. It is an important site for nesting seabirds and the cliffs and rock formations are quite spectacular. The route then heads inland through Sandwith and Cleator before going over your first hill, Dent. Descending into the beautiful Nannycatch valley you enter the Lake District National Park and continue to Ennerdale Bridge.

Day 3 Ennerdale to Rosthwaite 24 km / 7 hours

Hike along a quiet and scenic footpath along the shore of Ennerdale Water Lake. Then, hike to Black Sail, and over the hills (1900ft) before descending to your accommodation in picturesque Borrowdale.

Day 4 Rosthwaite to Grasmere 14.5 km / 5 hrs

Included today are classic Lakeland views over Greenup Edge, with steep uphill climbs. Time to tour the hometown of William Wordsworth.

Day 5 Grasmere to Patterdale 12.5 km / 4 ½ hours

Hike over Grisedale Pass (2000 ft) and around the small mountain lake of Grisedale Tarn to Patterdale (500 ft). Add 3 km and 2 hours by including the detour via Summit of Helvellyn.

Day 6 Patterdale to Shap 25.5 km / 8 hours

Today with an early start, walk past Angle Tarn, over Kidsty Pike (2560 feet, the highest point on the whole route) and along Hawes Water, home of England's only nesting eagles.

Day 7 Shap to Kirby Stephen 32 km / 8 ½ hours

Today includes easier going over limestone plateaus between the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks. This is a town we recommend you can use for an optional day off, or rest day.

Day 8 Kirby Stephen to Keld 21 km / 5 hours

After walking across Nine Standards Rigg (2170 feet) with its array of obelisks, head down to Keld in Swaledale with its many waterfalls. Keld also boasts about having the highest-elevated pub in England.

Day 9 Keld to Reeth 18 km / 6 hours

Two alternative routes are on offer today, either the official Wainwright route which keeps high above the valley following old lead mining trails or the route following the River Swale through the meadows with their stone barns and the pretty villages that give Swaledale such a deservedly good reputation.



Day 10 Reeth to Richmond 19 km / 4 hours

A morning walk through Swaledale lined with limestone crags on either side, allowing time in Richmond for shopping (note - shops closed Sunday) and sightseeing in Richmond whose Norman Keep towers above the Swale on one side and the ancient cobbled market square on the other side. (Richmond is another town that you can day an optional day off or rest day.



Day 11 Richmond to Ingleby Cross 35 km / 8½ hours

This is the longest and flattest day of the tour, bridging the gap between the Yorkshire Dales and the North York Moors National Parks **This can be split into 2 day-hikes for a 16-night tour, otherwise it would be a 15 night tour if you want to hike the whole way.



Day 12 Ingleby Cross to Clay Bank Top 19 km / 5 ½ hours

The route now takes to the hills again as you enter the North York Moors National Park. You follow the delightful path along the northern escarpment of the national park, giving sweeping views to the north over the flatter terrain of Teesside, the meeting point of Yorkshire and County Durham.



Day 13 Clay Bank Top to Glaisdale 29 km / 7 hours

Today includes an easy descent to wooded Glaisdale Rigg. The latter part of today's walk follows a beautiful path through the woodlands on the banks of the River Esk.

Day 14 Glaisdale to Littlebeck 13 km / 4 hours

A short day follows the valley of the River Esk through pleasant woodlands and the villages of Egton Bridge and Grosmont. Here you will cross the railway line at the terminus station of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, from where steam trains take passengers on the 13 mile picturesque route south to Pickering.

Day 15 Littlebeck to Robin Hood's Bay 19 km / 5 hours

This is our final leg of the journey, as we catch the sights of the coastline in the distance. We walk along a coastal cliff path to Robin Hood's Bay, with a village of red-roofed houses clustered around its harbour on the North Sea coast. This is the end of the 319 kilometer crossing of England.



Day 16 Depart after breakfast

This is the end of our services.

ABOUT THE TRIP:

Waterproof (not water resistant!) hiking boots are strongly recommended for this journey! The route is 319 kilometres long, which works out to an average of 24 kilometres per day. Shorter days occur early in the tour, where steep gradients and rough going are encountered during the crossing of several high passes in the Lake District. The days get longer towards the end of the tour, with 38 km, mostly on level ground, between Richmond and Os-motherley being followed by a day of 34 km over the Cleveland Hills and North York Moors. As well as providing a challenge, the route is renowned for its variety of beautiful scenery. Compass and map reading skills are very useful on this tour.

What to Expect

What will the weather be like?

The daytime temperature will be around 15 to mid-20 degrees C (60's to 70's F), with moderate rainfall. It often rains making the countryside lush and green. It is usually misty and not torrential downpours, but rain gear is still necessary, both a jacket and a pair of pants.

How many hours of hiking a day?

Be prepared to hike between 4 to 8 hours daily. This is not a supported tour, so you must be able to get to the next destination en route. Compass reading skills will come in handy. If you need to take a day off and rest, you can easily get to the next town by public transport.

How fit do I need to be?

The fitter the better, so you will be able to enjoy this active holiday. There are some hills and some level terrain, rolling hills rather than any steep pitches. This trip is not suited for beginners.

What is the food like?

We have included a full breakfast each day. For lunch, you can stop in a pub and local restaurant for a full meal or mid-day snack. For dinner, our notes will suggest a location.

What are the hotels like?

They are chosen for their charm and location. Properties are charming B&B's, well- located in the towns. Most the rooms have private facilities.



Extra Services

Please note that we are suggesting a rest day or days to be interspersed during your holiday. We would like to recommend a day off in Kirby Stephen, halfway through the trip on day 7/8, or on day 11/12, in Richmond. Extra nights start at \$160 per person.

We have a selection of hotels available for you, both before and after the tour.

Getting There

The most convenient major city and airport is Manchester, 4 hours by rail from St Bees, changing at Carlisle, (except on Sundays when trains run only as far as Whitehaven, which is 4 miles from St Bees). Travelling from London Euston to Carlisle and then on to St Bees should take approximately five and a half hours.

On the return take a bus (1 hr) or taxi (30 mins) to Scarborough, then a train back to Edinburgh and London.

How to book your holiday

- Contact our office to make sure there is space available. One of our travel planners will walk you through the entire process.
- Download the reservation form from our site and send in the completed form by fax or email. Once this is done, your space is confirmed and pre-departure packet will be sent.
- A deposit is required immediately, and final payment is required 60 days prior to the trip departure. Terms & conditions are outlined in our Reservation Form.
- Plan your air travel as soon as possible.
- We encourage you to purchase travel insurance, either through us or a travel insurance provider directly.
- Ensure you are in proper health for the trip chosen. Contact us for more information on vaccinations, inoculations, and fitness requirements.