4 Night Introduction to Watercolours in Northumberland



Trip style:

Destination:
Northumberland

Carbon Footprint:
105kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

With the countryside or coastline as an inspiring backdrop, this holiday caters for all ability levels; from absolute beginners to more experienced artists hoping to shake up their style. Led by expert tutors in groups of no more than 15, you'll learn how to get comfortable using watercolour paints - and try out new ideas. You'll also have ample time to practise in peaceful surroundings.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Learning how to work with watercolour paints
- Taking advice and guidance from an expert tutor
- Expressing yourself through art
- Gaining confidence by using various techniques
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 15 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Expert tuition

- Loan of wooden A3 art boards
- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information available in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Check-in at the hotel is available from 16:00. If you are a member you can arrive at the house from 14:00. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea at 16:30 and meet other guests.

Day 2 **Brush Control & Colour Mixing**

We'll start with the basics on our first day. Learn about the materials involved in watercolour painting and how to use them. We will talk through the various elements of the watercolour artist's kit and build a solid foundation on which to develop our skills.

Day 3 **Wet-on-Wet Blending Techniques**

Following on from yesterday's introduction, we'll experiment with traditional watercolour techniques, with a particular focus on wet-on-wet painting. Creating paintings in this way means we can take full advantage of the medium to produce soft yet complex effects in our work.

Day 4 **Pen & Wash**

Today, we'll build upon our work so far and push into the world of pen and wash. This method combines basic watercolour techniques with ink. By mixing the two mediums, we'll create more detailed and expressive artworks which contrast the sharper ink with softer watercolours.

Day 5 **Departure Day**

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Nether Grange

You can tell that you're in for something special at this former 18th century granary in the heart of Alnmouth – the postcard-pretty coastal village treasured for its colourful cottages, superb walking routes, and peaceful beach where the River Aln meets the North Sea (in its heyday, it was a working river-port, exporting grain, wool, coal, and even the odd pipe of Madeira wine). Not only will you be a 40-minute drive from Northumberland National Park, but also within easy travelling distance of several visit-worthy castles, including Alnwick, Lindisfarne, Dunstanburgh, and Warkworth. If the weather's nice, a boat trip to the Farne Islands that lie just offshore midway between the villages of Seahouses and Bamburgh rewards with sightings of England's largest grey seal colonies.

About

Visit Britain 2026 ROSE Award winners · 34 well-appointed guest rooms · Exclusive occupancy: 48 guests minimum · Check in from 4:00pm · For members check in from 2:00pm · Free Wi-Fi · Boot room and drying room · Discovery Point offering a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and information for self-guided walks · Books and games to borrow · Licensed bar · Lounge · Garden · Outdoor chess set

Then & now

It was most likely that Cadogan Hodgson Cadogan, Justice of the Peace and later High Sheriff of Northumberland, converted the granary into a spacious family house for his wife, seven children, teacher, five servants, and coachman in the 1870s. He replaced many of the original features, adding a new grand staircase between the ground and first floors. This was lit by a stained glass window that remains today – you'll notice how one pane has the initials CHC as a stamp of ownership. Nether Grange was then purchased by banker John William Pease in 1875 and used as a family holiday home. His son John was Baron Wardington of Alnmouth and later Chairman of Lloyds Bank while his daughter Ella was a school governor and Chair of the parish council (the nearby Pease's Park at the back of the village on Riverside Road largely owes its origin to her). The house was later reimagined as a hotel and has been part of our HF Holidays line-up since 1947.

Nowadays, you'll find 36 well-appointed guest rooms in two categories (Classic and Premium), many of which are sea-facing. In September 2026, Nether Grange was also awarded the coveted Visit England ROSE Award for hospitality excellence! Inside there's a large comfortable lounge, a dining room for a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients, a licensed bar, and a conservatory. The Discovery Point offers a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and easy-to-follow information for self-guided walks. A ballroom, boot and drying room, elevated terraced garden, outdoor chess set, and books and games to borrow during your stay complete the thoughtful touches. And then, of course, you'll be just a stone's throw from Alnmouth Beach, a wide bay that's great for sandcastle building and wildlife watching (swimming in the estuary is not recommended due to the strong current).

Check-In & Check-Out

You are welcome to check in from 4pm at the earliest. HF Members can check in earlier, from 2pm. On arrival, you'll enjoy a complimentary cream tea and get to meet your fellow guests, our HF Holidays Leaders, and the rest of the friendly team. Check out 10am.

FOOD & DRINK

Dining

Seasonal dining, tailored for you

Our team of skilled chefs design our dinner menus to showcase the best of each season, from warming winter comfort food to vibrant summer dishes, including vegetarian, vegan and high-protein options. We also source fruit and vegetables within a 40-mile radius of each house, open every break with a Chef's Special menu inspired by dishes and flavours of the local area, and are able to adapt dishes to suit special dietary requirements.

Welcome Cream Tea

What better way to start your stay than with a cream tea, served fresh on arrival to make you feel instantly at home. A quintessentially English tradition, our scones are baked in-house and served with preserves and clotted cream, providing the perfect opportunity to meet fellow walkers.

A hearty breakfast to start the day

Start the day with a freshly-prepared cooked breakfast and a wide choice from our continental buffet, including hot drinks, juices and fresh fruit. Our team offer a quick and friendly service, leaving you fuelled and ready for your day's adventures.

Our famous picnic lunch

Our personalised picnic lunches are perfect for a day out walking, ready to enjoy when hunger strikes. Choose from a large selection of fresh sandwiches and salads, freshly baked cakes and snacks, including the ever-popular Freddos chocolate bar! Everything is designed to fit neatly into your rucksack, and all of the packaging we provide is recyclable or compostable.

3-course evening meals

Our à la carte evening menus feature a wide choice of starters, mains, and desserts, made with seasonal ingredients and, wherever possible, herbs and vegetables from our own gardens. Shared around sociable tables, dinners are relaxed occasions, with drinks available to order at the table or from the bar, and a traditional Sunday roast to round off the week.

ROOMS

Your room at Nether Grange

Designed with your comfort in mind, Nether Grange has 36 well-appointed guest rooms available in two categories: Classic and Premium.

Classic Rooms are comfortable en-suite guest rooms, ideal for a peaceful night's sleep. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, and shower gel), and a TV.

Premium Rooms are more spacious en-suite guest rooms*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers.

We love: The sea-facing rooms are especially lovely.

The Choose Your Room service is available at our UK country houses, allowing you the option of choosing and confirming a specific room for an extra charge of £30 per room. This is subject to availability. Upgrade supplements apply.

Room supplements

Premium single	Premium double/twin	Choose your room
£20 pppn	£20 pppn	£30 per room

*Views and layout reflect each properties unique character and location

ACCESSIBILITY

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on 020 3974 8865 or view the accessibility information online for Nether Grange

ABOUT YOUR STAY

A warm welcome
We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

Evening entertainment

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, HF Holidays Inter-House Quiz night held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided waking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Helping you enjoy the Great Outdoors - A natural focus on walks

Walks talks and Discovery Points
Our founder, country pastor turned social innovator, Thomas Arthur Leonard, was passionate about encouraging people to explore the countryside. His legacy continues in HF's continued focus on walking. Many guests choose to travel with us on guided or self-guided walking holidays, and as such, evenings at our houses are often busy with walk leaders hosting various briefings and talks. On guided walking holiday arrival days, there are walking information briefings before dinner, and for the duration of any guided walking holiday there will be a Walks Talk before (or on occasion after dinner), to go through the following day's walk options. Self-guided walking guests, and those on special interest holidays (where there is free time to explore independently), are of course welcome to also join in these Walks Talks - please talk to the team locally if you have any queries. Our Discovery Points are filled with handy maps and route notes, designed to ensure everyone, not just those booked on a guided walking holiday, can enjoy the beautiful countryside settings that our HF houses enjoy.

The walking day
Prior to setting off on guided walks, our HF Holidays Leaders run through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure walkers have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Nether Grange
Alnmouth
Alnwick
Northumberland NE66 2RZ

Tel: +44 (0)1665 830431

By train

The nearest station is Alnmouth, on the main east coast line between Newcastle and Edinburgh.

The station is 1.3miles from Nether Grange. Approximately 30minutes walk, with footpath all the way.

Check National Rail for train times and routes.

By taxi

The 1.5-mile journey from Alnmouth railway station to Nether Grange is about five minutes by taxi. Taxis are in limited supply in Alnmouth, so we recommend pre-booking as early as possible.

For pricing, please contact the taxi company directly.

Taxi companies in the area include:

Sovereign Taxis*
Tel: +44 (0)7553 360662

Wizard Taxis*
Tel: +44 (0)1665 663709

AA Taxis*
Tel: +44 (0)1665 606060

Some taxi companies have school runs so taxis may be in short supply between 9:00am and 10:00am. It is advisable to book your return taxi when you book your arrival taxi.

*HF Holidays does not own or manage any of the above taxi companies.

By car

Before travelling by car, note that there is no car park at Nether Grange and there's very limited on-street parking.

Exit the A1 onto the A1068 towards Alnwick. At the roundabout turn right (it's not well signposted), following the A1068 towards Alnmouth. Go straight ahead at the first roundabout then left at the second roundabout onto the B1338.

As you approach Alnmouth, turn right at the next roundabout, then left into The Wynd. Follow to Marine Road, turn right onto Riverside Rd which joins to Northumberland Street. After 100 yards on Northumberland St, turn right into Pease's Lane. You'll find Nether Grange on the left.

By air

The nearest airport is Newcastle International Airport. Take the metro to Newcastle Central station, then the train to Alnmouth - a straightforward journey taking just over an hour.

LOCAL AREA

Places to visit in Northumberland

Whether you're enjoying a guided or self-guided walking holiday, there's always the opportunity to linger for longer. Here's our pick of the very best things to see and do within easy travelling distance of Nether Grange.

Alnmouth

This pretty coastal village is adored for its colourful cottages, superb walking routes, peaceful bays, and deserted sandy beaches where the River Aln meets the North Sea. There's a small tidal harbour, a handful of small shops, and several pubs and cafés.

Alnwick Castle

A 15-minute drive away, the market town of Alnwick is dominated by the second-largest inhabited castle in the country. Home to the Duke of Northumberland's family for over 700 years, it has featured in *Harry Potter* films and *Downton Abbey* specials.

Alnwick Gardens

The castle's 12-acre garden is home to a collection of over 4,000 plant varieties. Highlights include the world's largest Tai Haku Cherry Orchard, a cascade comprising of 120 water jets, and the world's largest treehouse restaurant set 18 metres above ground level.

Bamburgh Castle

Home of the Armstrong family since 1894 and crowning nine acres of the Great Whin Sill, this so-called king of castles has stood guard above the Northumberland coast for thousands of years. The site is by the seaside village of Bamburgh, a 35-minute drive away.

Farne Islands

Located off Northumberland's coast in the North Sea, this groups of islands is home to a breeding colony of thousands of seabirds and grey seals. Between March and October, regular boat trips run from Seahouses harbour - a 45-minute drive away.

Lindisfarne (Holy Island)

An hour's drive away, this sacred place is where you can follow in the footsteps of the ancient monks who built their priory here nearly 1,400 years ago. Don't miss the museum for a chance to learn more about the 8th century manuscript known as the Lindisfarne Gospels.

Warkworth Castle

Crowning the hilltop above the River Coquet, Northumberland's hilltop fortress and hermitage was used by William Shakespeare as the setting for several scenes of his *Henry IV* plays. Located in the village of Warkworth, it's just a 10-minute drive away.

Cragside House

A 40-minute drive away, this National Trust-owned house was the first in the world to be lit by hydroelectric power. Highlights include one the largest rock gardens in Europe, a rhododendron-filled garden, and over 40 miles of lovely lakeside and woodland walks.

Seaton Delaval Hall

Designed by acclaimed Baroque architect, Sir John Vanbrugh, this National Trust-owned mansion is a 40-minute drive away. The grounds are gorgeous, especially the formal rose garden that was created in the 1950s and 1960s by Lady Hastings.

Hadrian's Wall

A 90-minute drive away, this World Heritage Site built in AD 122 extends for 73 miles. Don't miss the Roman Vindolanda Fort & Museum for fascinating artefacts, reconstructed turrets and temples, and insight of daily life in a Roman garrison town.

Edinburgh

Scotland's capital is just a one-hour train ride from Alnmouth station and worth the effort for its wealth of attractions. Must-dos include visiting Edinburgh Castle, spending time at the National Museum of Scotland, climbing Arthur's Seat, and strolling through Holyrood Park.

Newcastle-Upon-Tyne

Simply known as Newcastle, this vibrant city is an hour's drive away. Highlights include admiring the iconic Tyne Bridge, relaxing at Newcastle City Baths, crossing the Gateshead Millennium Bridge, and visiting Gateshead's Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

For introductory art holidays, all guests will require the following materials and tools, to be purchased before the start of your holiday. The listed items should be available from all good art supply shops, and we recommend that you try to purchase the best quality that you can afford. Well-known brands, such as Daler Rowney or Winsor & Newton have 'student' quality ranges which are ideal for our exercises.

Paints & Pencils

Watercolour paints in tubes or dry pan sets, in the following colours:

- Ultramarine Blue, Cobalt Blue & Cerulean Blue
- Cadmium Red & Alizarin Crimson
- Lemon Yellow, Yellow Ochre & Cadmium Yellow
- Sap Green
- Burnt Umber & Burnt Sienna
- Payne's Grey

Plus, Designers Permanent White Gouache in a tube

Surfaces

- 10" x 14" 300gm watercolour book or pre-glued pad (cold pressed/not, surfaced), 10-12 sheets
- A4 Cartridge Sketch Pad

Tools

- Watercolour brushes: No. 10, No. 6 & No. 3
- Small Rigger brush
- 2B & 4B pencils
- Pencil eraser

Other

- Black/Sepia-coloured fibre-tipped drawing pens (waterproof ink, in fine and medium thickness)
- Mixing palette (can be a white dinner plate!)
- Small craft knife or pencil sharpener
- Water pot
- Kitchen roll x 1
- Bulldog clips x 6

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be

prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

Document produced: 23 November 2026