Causeway Coast, Guided Walking with Sightseeing in Northern Ireland



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Walking with sightseeing	Northern Ireland	4	309kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Northern Ireland's rugged Causeway Coast delivers on far-reaching Atlantic views, mist-wreathed headlands, and a slew of spots that eagle-eyed visitors may recognise from Game of Thrones. Learn about long-gone Gaelic kingdoms as you explore the crumbling clifftop remains of Dunseverick and Dunluce castles and test your mettle crossing the nerve-shredding Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge. There's also the chance to spot rare seabirds on Rathlin Island and visit the UNESCO-listed Giant's Causeway – a geological marvel with approximately 40,000 hexagonal-shaped stepping stones dating back almost 60 million years.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Walking the best of the Causeway Coastal Route
- Spending time in historic Belfast
- Crossing the Giant's Causeway
- A boat trip to Rathlin Island
- Spotting rare seabirds and wildlife
- Soaking up views over Ballycastle and the coast
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 15 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite rooms in our partner accommodation(s)
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided walks with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from walks where necessary
- Return flights from London Heathrow to Belfast, including hold baggage and airport transfers

Please note - Admission costs are in addition to your holiday price, please see "Essential Information" section for details.

ITINERARY - GUIDED TRAIL

Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Meet at the hotel reception at 1830 for a quick introduction to the holiday before dinner. If you're in Belfast early, take time to visit the Titanic museum (booking advisable), it's well worth it, and if you've the energy after dinner, take a stroll to the famous Crown Bar, and enjoy the craic.

Day 2 **North to the Causeway Coast**

Our local guide takes us on a discovery of the stories and histories of Belfast this morning, before we head north to the Causeway Coast, with time to explore the mystical "Dark Hedges" on the way. Time to relax at the hotel this afternoon, or join us for a walking tour of charming Ballycastle, our base for the rest of our holiday.

Day 3 **Giant's Causeway**

This has to be one of the best walks in Northern Ireland, and leads from the geological wonder and world famous UNESCO site of Giant's Causeway to the clifftop ruins of Dunseverick Castle. There is plenty of time to explore as our walks take us through the towering basalt columns (the tallest is 12m high and there are approx. 40,000 of these impressive hexagonal columns in total). Our transport picks us up from Dunseverick Castle and takes us on to Dunluce Castle for a short visit, before we head back to Ballycastle.

Please note – entrance to the visitor centre at Giant's Causeway has not been included in the price, as many of you will be entitled to free or reduced entrance fee if you have National Trust membership. Entrance to Dunluce Castle is not included.

6.5 miles (10.5km) with 1,000 feet (300m) of ascent

Day 4 **Ballintoy & White Park Bay**

Walk the Causeway coastal path from Carrick a Rede to picture perfect Ballintoy Harbour, with the opportunity to cross the historic rope bridge to the "rock in the road". Continue along the shoreline to see fantastic rock formations and an array of coastal birds before exploring White Park Bay, a unique chalk beach.

The charge for the Rope Bridge is not included, free for NT members.

6 miles (9.5km) with 150 ft (40m) of ascent and 450ft (140m) of descent

Day 5 Rathlin Island

Rathlin Island. The northernmost point of the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and home to tens of thousands of seabirds including guillemots, kittiwakes, puffins and razorbills. Stunning walking today, choose to include a bus tour to the *RSPB bird sanctuary (in season), or a cliff top walk to visit the seal colony at Ushet Point.

Distance 6 miles (9.5km) with 550 feet (170m) of ascent

*RSPB centre & bus tour not included in holiday price

Day 6 Fair head & Murlough Bay

A downhill walk on a winding tarmac road with stunning views takes us to one of the area's best kept secrets, beautiful Murlough Bay. After enjoying time to take in the scenery we'll meet our minibus and transfer to the start of our walk on Fair Head. Fair Head is wild and ruggedly beautiful, and offers breathtaking views towards Ballycastle and Rathlin Island

Distance: 4.5 miles (7km) Ascent: 290m (950ft)

Day 7 Glenariff

Home to Northern Ireland's most impressive waterfalls, we'll follow the forest trails that showcase the best of the park. We'll stop for lunch by the impressive Ess na Grub waterfall with refreshments available at the nearby Lara Lodge, before continuing alongside the Glenarriff River on the Waterfalls Walk. On our route home we'll make a stop to discover the stories and histories of Loughareema/The Vanishing Lake.

Distance: 5.5 miles (8.5km) ASCENT: 800ft (240m)

Day 8 Departure Day

A morning group transfer takes us back to Belfast today, to the City airport, and afterwards (on request) to Great Victoria Street railway station.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

The Clayton Hotel, Belfast

The Clayton Hotel, Belfast, is a comfortable 4* hotel, in the perfect location. A short walk from the railway station, and easily reachable from the airport bus route, the Clayton is the ideal base for us to explore the city from. All rooms have tea/coffee making facilities, free wifi, TV, hairdryer etc.

Marine Hotel, Ballycastle

A cracking seafront location in the heart of charming Ballycastle, the 3* Marine Hotel looks out over the town's beautiful beach and marina, and gives us the perfect base for our walks exploring the Causeway Coast. All rooms are comfortable ensuites, with tea/coffee making facilities, TV, hairdryer, and free Wi-Fi is available in the public

areas. This hotel is dog-friendly so you may meet four legged friends in some of the communal areas.

SAFETY ON YOUR HOLIDAY

Walking safety

Walks may be changed for safety reasons and are subject to a maximum and minimum number of guests.

Leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole, and may need to alter or curtail the walk if the conditions dictate. Your leader may refuse to accept a guest where clothing, equipment or behaviour is unsuitable. In the event of a problem all leaders carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, group shelter, spare maps and a compass.

Please note: If you choose to leave the group your leader is no longer responsible for you.

If you have a particular health condition or disability please put this on your guest registration form. This information will be confidential to your leaders and the house manager, but leaders do need to take account of any issues when planning walks. Please carry a copy of these trip notes with you, or note down the contact phone number for your accommodation (details in the travel section) should you need them in case of emergency.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

Joining instructions for Causeway Coast Trail

This holiday begins in Belfast. For those who have booked our "with flight" option, you will fly from London to Belfast City airport, from where you will be transferred to the Clayton Hotel.

Your holiday ends in Belfast. If you have booked our "with flight" option, we will take you back to Belfast city airport. If you have booked without-flight, you're welcome to either leave the holiday in Ballycastle, or to join the group transfer back to Belfast on the departure day, and we will make a stop at the airport and at Great Victoria Street railway station on request (times to coincide with group flights).

USEFUL INFORMATION

Ticks

Ticks are tiny creatures that live in vegetation and can attach themselves to passing animals or walkers and may carry a risk of Lyme Disease. Please refer to NHS advice and guidelines for information prior to your holiday.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out travel insurance and any other personal insurance relevant to you and the holiday. It is particularly important with the possibility of flight changes and cancellations due to the challenging weather conditions that can occur on the islands and might impact your onward travel arrangements.

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.

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