

4 Night Southern Lake District Christmas & New Year Guided Walking Holiday

Tour Style: Guided walking

Destinations: Lake District, United Kingdom & England

Trip code: CNXFW-4

2, 4 & 5



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The Lake District has always conjured up an effortless sense of romance. But in winter, the whole place has an added sprinkling of magic. Spend the festive season amongst the much-loved walking trails and chocolate-box villages of the Southern Lake District. Our characterful country house at Monk Coniston will be at its festive best, making it a merry base from which to take wintry walks and much more. We pull out all the stops at this time of year and welcome you with a sprinkling of festive cheer, seasonal food, and plenty of yuletide treats. So wrap up warm and step into Christmas with HF Holidays.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 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
- Guided walking with experienced HF Holidays Leaders
- Choice of up to three guided walks (on walking days)
- All transport to and from walks where necessary
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Getting into the festive spirit with a guided walking holiday
- A choice of winter walks with our experienced HF Holidays Leaders
- Discovering the stunning landscapes of Southern Lake District on foot
- Staying in our charming country house overlooking Coniston Water
- Enjoying festive fare and leaving all the organising to us
- A celebration dinner with all the trimmings on Christmas Day

TRIP SUITABILITY

This trip is graded Activity Level 2, 4 and 5.

Typically, easier walks are up to 4 to 8 miles (6½ to 13km) with 600 to 1,200ft (180 to 360m) of ascent, medium walks are up to 4 to 9 miles (6½ to 14½km) with 1,100 to 1,800ft (330 to 540m) of ascent, while harder walks can be up to about 4 to 9 miles (6½ to 14½km) with 1,800 to 2,600ft (540 to 780m) of ascent.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Enjoy a complimentary cream tea on arrival, served from 4.30pm.

Day 2: Coniston Fells And Lakeshore

Option 1 - Western Lakeshore

Distance: 7½ miles (12km)

Ascent: 800 feet (240m)

In summary: Join the Cumbria Way to Coniston village, then walk the old Coniston to Broughton railway line. Descend through woods and fields to Coniston Water and walk back to the house along the lake shore.

Highlight: The Cumbria Way stretch through meadow and fields with 'the White Lady' (a waterfall so called by locals), tumbling down the Yewdale Fells to your right. Beauty as nature intended.

Option 2 - Torver And Coniston Water

Distance: 10½ miles (16.5km)

Ascent: 1,750 feet (540m)

In summary: Head for Coppermines Valley and walk the lower slopes of Coniston Old Man to reach the old trading route known as Walna Scar. Head on towards Torver then drop down to Coniston Water and walk the shoreline back to the house.

Highlight: Hear the water lapping on the shore as you gaze over the water to the mountains beyond.

Option 3 - Levers Water And Coniston Old Man

Distance: 9½ miles (15km)

Ascent: 2,9500 feet (900m)

In summary: Heading from the House through Guards Wood, we pass the two Youth Hostels, as we ascend through old copper ore processing sites in the Coppermines Valley. On via Grey Crag, past the giant Pudding Stone, into Boulder Valley, to reach Levers Water. From there, it becomes a steep ascent on the path up Gill Cove, to Levers Hawse. It is then a pleasant ridge walk south to the summit of Coniston Old Man. Our route back follows the popular path, descending via Crowberry Haws and eventually down into Coniston village, to make our way back home.

Highlight: A less frequented ascent of Coniston Old Man, full of interest.

Day 3: Tarn Hows And Wetherlam

Option 1 - Tarn Hows And Coniston

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Ascent: 1,050 feet (320m)

In summary: Walk in the footsteps of Beatrix Potter through the woods from Monk Coniston to the stunningly beautiful lake of Tarn Hows, returning via Yew Tree Farm and Coniston Village; a great walk right on the doorstep.

Highlight: Yew Tree Farm was donated to the National Trust by Beatrix Potter and used for the film Miss Potter.

Option 2 - Tarn Hows And Hole Rake

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Ascent: 1,775 feet (540m)

In summary: We head out of the House, up through Hill Fell Plantation, to reach the picturesque Tarn Hows. From above the tarn, we then take a quiet path down to view the iconic Yew Tree Farm. Onto a bridleway and a short section of road, before we cut up across the hillside, over a couple of short rocky sections, on to the deep chasm of Tilberthwaite Gill. We ascend above the gill to near the top, where we turn into the hanging valley of Hole Rake on the flank of Wetherlam. This eventually brings us down into the Coppermines Valley, on down through the village and back to the House.

Highlight: A broad loop taking in the village, impressive mountain scenery, a gorge, waterfalls and 'must-see' local sights of Yew Tree Farm and Tarn Hows.

Option 3 - Low Tilberthwaite And Wetherlam

Distance: 8.5 miles (13.5km)

Ascent: 2650 feet (800m)

In summary: A grand day out in the mountains, reaching the top of Wetherlam after a mild but exciting scramble up Wetherlam Edge.

Highlight: The sense of achievement on reaching the top having scrambled up 'The Edge'.

Day 4: Grasmere Fells

Option 1 - Grasmere And Easedale

Distance: 6½ miles (10.5km)

Ascent: 950 feet (300m)

In summary: Starting from the village of Grasmere we'll walk to Easedale Tarn, an impressive glacial lake.

Highlight: There's time to explore Grasmere, famous as the home of poet William Wordsworth. Don't forget to seek out the poet's grave in the village churchyard, or sample the famous (and very tasty) Grasmere Gingerbread.

Option 2 - Ambleside To Grasmere Via Coffin Route

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Ascent: 1,050 feet (330m)

In summary: We begin in Ambleside, leaving Rothay Park, and skirt beneath Loughrigg Fell, to pass Rydal Water into the village of Rydal. After visiting Rydal Hall and grounds we continue via the 'Coffin Route' past Dove Cottage to Grasmere. There will be time to explore this lovely village with its connections to William Wordsworth and of course sample the famous gingerbread.

Highlight: Grasmere with its connections to William Wordsworth, don't forget to seek out his grave in the village churchyard.

Option 3 - Helm Crag And Calf Crag

Distance: 8½ miles (13.5km)

Ascent: 2,000 feet (620m)

In summary: An opportunity to climb Helm Crag, one of the most distinctive Lakeland Fells with the 'Lion and the Lamb' rock formations on the summit. We'll follow the ridge to Gibson Knott and Calf Crag before descending via Far Easedale.

Highlight: It's a steep climb to the top of Helm Crag, but you'll be rewarded with great views over Grasmere.

Day 5: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Monk Coniston

With a desirable address overlooking Coniston Water (the inspiration for Arthur Ransome's 1930 novel, Swallows and Amazons), this characterful Grade II-listed house delights with lakeside and woodland walks from the doorstep, décor that stays true to the period feel, and plenty of Beatrix Potter references. While the children's author and illustrator did not live at the Monk Coniston estate (her beloved home was Hill Top, bought in 1905 with the royalties from The Tale of Peter Rabbit), she campaigned with the National Trust to save it from development. She then purchased the entire estate in 1930 and as the new owner she immediately sold half to the organisation, bequeathing them the other half in her will.

Country House Accommodation

Rooms

Designed with your comfort in mind, Monk Coniston has 30 well-appointed guest rooms available in three categories: Classic, Premium, and Superior.

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, and comfortable mattresses.

Superior Rooms are even more spacious en-suite guest rooms offering upgraded views of the surroundings*. 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, and comfortable mattresses.

We love: The rooms with a garden or lake view. We also love Room 9 on the first floor for its original features and beautiful views across the gardens and fields that slope down to the shores of Coniston Water.

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.

Check in & check out

You are welcome to check in from **4:00pm at the earliest**. 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.

On the day of departure, we kindly ask all guests to check out by **10:00am**. You'll be asked to settle your bill prior to leaving. You may, of course, make a charitable donation to our HF Holidays Pathways Fund if you wish. Please note that we only accept card payments.

Room supplements

Superior	Premium single	Premium double/twin
£25 pppn	£20 pppn	£20 pppn

*Views and layout reflect each properties unique character and location

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, the HF Holidays Big Pub Quiz held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays Leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

Our HF Holidays Leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's walking delights (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

The walking day

Prior to setting off on walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you 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.

Food & Drink

Led by experienced chefs, we serve a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients. We always aim to source the best produce available and use home-grown herbs and vegetables from our own gardens whenever possible. Additionally, we have a licensed bar with beers, soft drinks, and a superb selection of spirits. Full-board comes as standard and includes a cream tea on arrival and a hearty breakfast on departure day.

HF Holidays understands the importance of managing allergens effectively to ensure food is safe for guests with food allergies. Whilst we are always able to confidently inform guests which allergens are present in our ingredients and dishes, we are unable to guarantee absolute freedom from the 14 main allergens in our kitchens. Vegetarian and vegan menu choices are available. If you have allergies, food intolerances, or any special dietary requirements, please inform our reservation team at the time of booking.

Accessibility

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on [020 3974 8865](tel:02039748865) or view the accessibility information online for [Monk Coniston](#)

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Monk Coniston
Coniston
Cumbria LA21 8AQ

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1539 441566](tel:+44(0)1539441566)

By Train

The West Coast mainline runs to the east of the Lake District, connecting Oxenholme (which is near Kendal), Penrith and Carlisle with London and Glasgow. A direct train runs from Manchester to Windermere. Local trains from Oxenholme call at Kendal, Staveley and Windermere.

The nearest station to Monk Coniston is Windermere. From Windermere you can take a taxi or bus to Monk Coniston (see below).

Check National Rail for journey times and routes.

By Taxi

The journey from Windermere train station to Monk Coniston is 10 miles.

From Oxenholme, it's double that at 23 miles.

For pricing, please contact Ace Taxi directly.

Ace Taxi

You can pre-book a taxi from our recommended company, Ace Taxi*. We recommend booking your taxi at least seven days in advance by contacting:

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1539 445445](tel:+44(0)1539445445)

Email: acetaxiwindermere@gmail.com

A return journey can be arranged on your behalf by the HF Holidays House Manager at Monk Coniston.

*Ace Taxi is not owned or managed by HF Holidays.

By Bus

From Windermere station catch the 555 or 599 to Ambleside Kelsick Road. Change here onto the 505 to Monk Coniston. The stop is right outside our country house.

Check Stagecoach for bus times.

National Express also run coaches to Lancaster, Penrith and Carlisle where you can catch an onward bus connection into the Lake District.

By Car

Car parking is available at Monk Coniston.

Leave the M6 motorway at junction 36. Follow the A590 to Greenodd Roundabout, take the second exit and follow the A5092 before turning right onto the A5084 signposted to Torver. At the T junction turn right onto the A593 and follow into Coniston village. Turn right onto the B5286 and follow for 1.5 miles. The entrance to Monk Coniston will be on your right.

By Air

The nearest airport is Manchester International Airport.

There are direct trains every hour to Oxenholme with the journey time around 90 minutes. From here you can change to Windermere or get a taxi (we recommend pre-booking one).

National Rail have up-to-date information on times and routes.

Flying to London Heathrow airport is another option, but it'll take you at least four hours to reach Oxenholme. Take the train to London Paddington station, then the London Underground to London Euston where you can connect to the main line train to Oxenholme. The journey from here is 2.5 hours.

LOCAL AREA

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 Monk Coniston.

Coniston

About a mile from the house and easily accessed from a direct path, this small village charms with a superb position at the foot of the Old Man of Coniston and by the western shore of Coniston Water. The small town of Ambleside is a 20-minute drive away.

The John Ruskin Museum

Coniston's John Ruskin Museum charts the history of the village through exhibits focused on the people who have lived and worked here throughout the ages. It's newest treasure is the restored Bluebird K7, Donald Campbell CBE's world-record breaking Jet Hydroplane. Mr Campbell broke 4 World Water Speed records on Coniston Water and tragically died attempting his 5th when Bluebird somersaulted in January 1967. The wreckage lay at the bottom of the lake for 34 years until it was raised in 2001, finally returning home to Coniston in 2024.

Steam Yacht Gondola

Manged by the National Trust, this restored steam-powered yacht on Coniston Water was built by the Furness Railway Company in 1859. It stops at the Monk Coniston jetty at the bottom of the meadow below the house and calls at Coniston and Brantwood House.

Brantwood House

A couple of miles away, this 250-acre Lakeland estate was once home to English writer, philosopher, art critic, and social revolutionary, John Ruskin. The eight beautiful gardens were created by Ruskin, his cousin Joan Severn, and head gardener Sally Beamish.

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway

Known locally known as La'al Ratty meaning 'little railway', this is one of England's oldest and longest narrow gauge railways dating back to 1873. A trip here can easily be combined with a walk over Muncaster Fell or to the Stanley Ghyll Waterfall.

Blackwell House

Designed by esteemed architect Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott between 1898 and 1900, this Grade I-listed building is one of the UK's finest examples of Arts & Crafts architecture. Don't miss the well-preserved interiors and the formal terraced garden.

Tarn Hows

Just a short walk away, this man-made lake was created in the mid-19th century by one of Monk Coniston's former owners, James Garth Marshall. The 1.5-mile path around the lake has been well maintained by the National Trust and is suitable for wheelchair users.

Grizedale Forest

Set right in the heart of the Lake District between Windermere and Coniston, this vast woodland is perfect for walking, mountain biking, and swinging through the trees on a Go Ape course. There's also a visitor centre with a gift shop, tearoom, and playground.

Levens Hall & Garden

A 50-minute drive away, this privately-owned Elizabethan mansion is cherished for its award-winning topiary gardens – the oldest in the world. Inside, there's fine oak panelling, ornate plasterwork, leather wall coverings, and the earliest examples of English patchwork.

Grasmere

Best known for its William Wordsworth connections, this impossibly pretty village is a 30-minute drive away. Highlights include Grasmere Lake, Allan Bank, and the 17th century Dove Cottage - home to the Wordsworth

Museum.

Windermere

The largest natural lake in England, this watery wonder measures 10.5 miles long, one mile wide, and 220 feet deep. Ferries connect Ambleside in the north to Bowness and Lakeside in the south, where you can board the Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway.

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

Essential Information

The UK has a famously unpredictable climate so it's best to be prepared for weather that's sunny one minute and raining the next. To make it easier, here's a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Suitable footwear such as waterproof walking boots that provide ankle support and good grip
- Waterproof and windproof jacket
- Comfortable clothing (jeans & waterproof capes are not suitable)
- Mid-layer(s) to keep you warm. Fleeeces make a good choice
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Gloves and a warm hat
- Rucksack with waterproof liner
- Flask for hot drinks
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity)
- Sunscreen
- UV sunglasses

Recommended

- Several base layers (long-sleeve or short-sleeve)
- Cushioned walking socks to avoid blisters
- First aid kit, including plasters and insect repellent
- Sit mat
- Waterproof pouch for valuables
- Rubbish bag (remember to always leave no trace)
- Wallet/purse
- Camera
- First-aid kit

Safety On Your Holiday

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 while 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.

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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