

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

Tour Style: Guided walking

Destinations: Lake District, United Kingdom & England

Trip code: DBXFW-4

2, 3 & 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 northern Lake District. Our characterful country house at Derwent Bank will be at its festive best, making it a merry base from which to explore the likes of Derwentwater, Keswick, 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 Northern Lake District on foot
- Staying in our charming country house overlooking Derwent Water
- Enjoying festive fare and leaving all the organising to us
- A celebration dinner with all the trimmings on Christmas Day and New Year's Eve

TRIP SUITABILITY

Climb the mighty summit of Blencathra; explore the intricate Grisedale and Glencoyne valleys carved into the fell-side around Ullswater; visit charming Lakeland Villages; soak up the scenery on lakeside paths around Derwentwater, and Buttermere.

The walks are tailored to the time of year and will remain flexible to suit the weather conditions. Each day three grades of walk will be offered. Typically, easier walks are up to a maximum of 6 miles (9½km), medium walks are up to a maximum of 9 miles (14½km), while harder walks can be up to a maximum of 11 miles (17½km).

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

You're welcome to check in from 4pm onwards. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea on arrival.

Day 2: Whinlatter And Grisedale Pike

Option 1 - Words In The Woods Above Braithwaite

Distance: 7 miles (11.5km)

Ascent: 1,200 feet (380m)

In summary: We cross the entrance to Newlands Valley where passing through Braithwaite we reach fine deciduous woods and Masmill Beck. The beck is followed into conifer woods and Whinlatter's walking trails. We descend to Noble Knott, a pleasant picnic area. Our return follows easy forest tracks to the open hillside above Braithwaite before we make our way back to the house on lanes and field paths.

Highlight: Fine views over Bassenthwaite Lake from Noble Knott.

Option 2 - Forest Trail Via Comb Beck

Distance: 9.5 miles (15.5km)

Ascent: 1,850 feet (560m)

In summary: We use the minor roads and field paths to Braithwaite and enter the woodland to reach Comb Beck. Tracing the beck's course through the forest we arrive at Whinlatter Visitor Centre. Our descent takes us through the trees emerging on the ridge path from Grisedale Pike where with luck we will have extensive views before returning via Braithwaite.

Highlight: Superb views from below Grisedale Pike.

Option 3 - Grisedale Pike

Distance: 11.5 miles (19km)

Ascent: 3,000 feet (920m)

In summary: Grisedale Pike is the prominent and elegant peak seen from the front of Derwent Bank. We cross to Braithwaite and ascend the well used ridge path to the summit. Our descent begins following Hobcarton End and then forest tracks and paths back down past Whinlatter Visitor Centre to the pretty village of Braithwaite and then take roads and paths back to the house.

Highlight: On a clear day there are views in all directions from the summit of Grisedale Pike including the impressive neighbouring Hopegill Head.

Day 3: Catbells

Option 1 - Catbells Terrace

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 1,100 feet (340m)

In summary: Follow the elevated path along Catbells terrace, then return along the beautiful lakeshore path.

Highlight: This stunning route is right on our doorstep. Throughout the walk you'll enjoy glorious views over Derwentwater and the surrounding Lakeland fells.

Option 2 - Catbells (Shortened)

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Total ascent: 1,800 feet (550m)

In summary: We ascend Catbells via the ridge up along Skelgill Bank before descending to High Ground and Fellside, returning via the terrace path.

Highlight: Catbells' shapely summit is one of the most popular fells in the Lake District and affords magnificent views of the Northern Fells.

Option 3 - Catbells

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Ascent: 1,600 feet (500m)

In summary: We begin by heading up the ridge to the summit of Catbells. We then descend to the lakeside path and a beautiful walk along part of the Cumbria Way.

Highlight: Catbells' shapely summit is one of the most popular fells in the Lake District and affords magnificent views of the Northern Fells.

Day 4: Ullswater

Option 1 - Ullswater Way & Aira Force

Distance: 7½ miles (11.5km)

Ascent: 1,250 feet (380m)

In summary: From Bennethead we follow paths through fields and woodland before gently climbing and following the picturesque terrace path along the east then south side of Gowbarrow with its wonderful views over Ullswater. We descend to reach the famous waterfall of Aira Force. To finish we follow the Ullswater Way to Glenridding.

Highlight: Spending time near Ullswater, described by Wordsworth as 'the happiest combination of beauty and grandeur which any of the lakes affords'.

Option 2 - Gowbarrow Fell

Distance: 7.5 miles (12.5km)

Ascent: 1,650 feet (500m)

In summary: A circular walk around and over Gowbarrow Fell taking in the beautiful high terrace path above Ullswater, before continuing along the Ullswater Way to the village of Glenridding.

Highlight: The impressive waterfall of Aira Force is one of a series of cascades in this delightful wooded valley.

Option 3 - Place Fell

Distance: 7½ miles (11½km)

Total ascent: 2,150 feet (660m)

In summary: Make the moderately steep ascent to the top of Place Fell that commands an excellent view at the head of Ullswater. We descend to follow the attractive lakeside path back to Patterdale.

Highlight: Ullswater is one of the area's most attractive lakes. You'll enjoy great views towards Helvellyn and the North Pennines.

Day 5: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Derwent Bank

Adored by poets, painters, and literary giants for centuries, the Lake District has always had an irresistible pull. It's no surprise, then, that this country house near the market town of Keswick holds such appeal, not least for its setting in lovely grounds that slope down to the shores of Derwentwater. The location couldn't be more perfect; to the west is Cat Bells, to the east is Keswick, Walla Crag, and Latrigg, and to the south is the entrance to the Borrowdale valley. There's a wealth of big-name attractions within easy travelling distance, including Blencathra, Helvellyn, and Ullswater. Also visit-worthy for walkers is Scafell Pike for its well-trodden routes and trails and the 73-mile-long Cumbria Way for its mist-shrouded peaks, glacial valleys, and many excuses for pit-stops and picnics.

Country House Accommodation

Rooms

Designed with your comfort in mind, Derwent Bank has 40 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: Room 12 for its extra space and lovely views across the gardens and Derwentwater. Rooms 46, 47, 48, and 49 are first-floor garden rooms, each with their own balcony.

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	Choose your room
£25 pppn	£20 pppn	£20 pppn	£30 per room

*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 [Derwent Bank](#)

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Derwent Bank
Portinscale
Nr Keswick
Cumbria CA12 5TY

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1768 773667](tel:+44(0)1768773667)

By Train

The nearest station is Penrith, on the main line between London and Glasgow.

Check National Rail for train times and routes.

By Shared Transfer

If you're travelling to or from Derwent Bank on Mondays or Fridays from 19 February to 16 December 2024, or on Mondays and Fridays over the festive period, you can join our group transfer from Penrith Railway Station.

2024 prices are £50 per person for a return transfer or £25 per person for a single transfer.

Outward journey: Depart Penrith Railway Station at 16:50; arrive at Derwent Bank at 17:30.

Return journey: Depart Derwent Bank at 09:15; arrive at Penrith Railway Station at 10:00.

Places are limited so booking is essential. We recommend booking at least 14 days in advance by contacting:

HF Holidays Sales and Support Team

Tel: [+44 \(0\)203 974 8865](tel:+44(0)2039748865)

Email: reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

By Taxi

The 20-mile journey from Penrith railway station to Derwent Bank takes about 40 minutes by taxi in normal traffic conditions.

For pricing, please contact Davies Taxis directly.

Davies Taxis

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

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1768 772676](tel:+44(0)1768772676)

Email: info@daviestaxis.co.uk

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

*Davies Taxis is not owned or managed by HF Holidays.

By Bus

The X5 bus runs approximately every hour from Penrith station and the journey takes around 50 minutes. The nearest bus stop is on the A66, about a three-quarter mile walk from the house.

As you alight the bus at the Portinscale bus stop, turn to your right and go down the road signposted to Portinscale, Grange, and the Newlands Valley. Follow this road through Portinscale village - Derwent Bank is on your left-hand side after the Derwentwater Marina.

Alternatively, catch the X4 or X5 bus to Keswick bus station and take a 10-minute taxi ride to Derwent Bank. As of 2023, this should cost around £6 for a 4-seat taxi if using a pre-booked service with our recommended taxi provider listed above.

By Car

There is a large car park at Derwent Bank if you decide to drive.

From Penrith, you'll need to leave the M6 motorway at junction 40, taking the A66 towards Keswick. After 17 miles you'll reach a roundabout - continue ahead following signs to Cockermouth and Workington. Turn left off the A66 towards Portinscale, Grange, and the Newlands Valley. Derwent Bank is about three quarters of a mile further on the left.

By Air

The nearest airport is Manchester International Airport.

There are direct trains every hour from Manchester Airport to Penrith and the journey time is about two hours.

Flying to London Heathrow airport is another option but you'll have a longer onward train journey - it could take at least 4.5 hours to reach Penrith. From Heathrow, take the train to London Paddington, then the London Underground to London Euston connecting to the main line train to Penrith, which takes three 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 Derwent Bank.

Keswick

Approximately two miles away, this market town is the most northerly of the Lake District's towns. Don't miss the community-run Keswick Museum & Art Gallery for a huge amount of objects and exhibits that reflect life in the local area.

Derwentwater Launch Company

Departing every 30-minutes during the summer and regularly throughout the rest of the year, this 50-minute boat trip round Derwentwater is a must. There are various landing stages to disembark. The nearest stop to Derwent Bank is Hawse End.

Theatre By The Lake

Home to Cumbria's leading professional theatre company, this lottery-funded performance space is located between Hope Park and Derwentwater. The Main House seats 400 while the Studio Theatre is set up for an audience of up to 100. Bookings are recommended.

Honister Slate Mine

A 30-minute drive away, England's last working slate mine is located at the top of the Honister Pass in Borrowdale. You can watch slate being riven (meaning split or torn apart) using 300-year-old processes and learn about the history of underground mining.

Whinlatter Forest

England's only true mountain forest offers nine walking trails, three cycling trails, and unrivalled views across Bassenthwaite Lake, Derwentwater, and Keswick. It's also home to a Go Ape centre with a high ropes course and an all-terrain segway trail.

Derwent Water Marina

Just a five-minute walk away, this is a great spot for hiring canoes, kayaks, stand up paddle boards, rowing boats, and windsurfing equipment. Tuition is also available for individuals and groups.

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.

Ullswater

A 30-minute drive away, this watery wonder is the second-largest in the Lake District. Highlights include exploring the lake on foot or by steamer, marvelling at the Aira Force waterfall, and visiting Dalemain Mansion and its beautiful gardens.

Lake District Wildlife Park

Just a 10-minute drive from Keswick, this 24-acre park is home to over 100 species of animal including anaconda, zebra, mandrills, meerkats, otters, gibbons, monkeys, and more. There's also bird of prey flying displays, reptile encounters, and keeper talks.

Carlisle

Of all the historic attractions in Cumbria's county city, the 900-year-old castle where Mary Queen of Scots was held prisoner is the most famous. Further must-see spots include Carlisle Cathedral, Tullie House Museum, and Cumbria's Museum of Military Life.

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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