

4-Night Southern Snowdonia Christmas & New Year Guided Walking Holiday

Tour Style: Guided Walking

Destinations: Snowdonia & Wales

Trip code: DGXFW-4

2, 3 & 5



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Snowdonia is simply stunning in the winter, especially when there's something to celebrate. There's something magical about walking in winter. Whether it's the frosty footsteps, the clear crisp air, or the breathtaking views, it's a wonderful time to go walking. Join our festive breaks and choose from a guided walking holiday in the company of one of our knowledgeable leaders. We pull out all the stops on our festive holidays, with fabulous food, lots of seasonal entertainment and great walks and activities. 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. So wrap up warm, lace up your boots and go for an invigorating walk.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Wonderful meals – full selection at breakfast, your choice of picnic lunch, an excellent evening meal and

plenty of festive treats

- A programme of organised walks and activities
- The services of experienced HF Holidays' guides
- A packed programme of evening activities offering something festive for everyone, including some old HF favourites
- Any transport to and from the walks

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Head out on full day walks to discover the varied beauty of Snowdonia on foot
- Plenty of exercise to walk off the festive excesses
- A choice of guided walks in spectacular winter scenery
- Let a local leader bring classic routes and offbeat areas to life
- Enjoy magnificent Snowdonia mountainscape scenery
- Look out for wildlife, find secret corners and learn about Welsh history
- A relaxed pace of discovery in a sociable group keen to get some fresh air in one of Britain's most beautiful walking areas
- Just relax, soak up the party atmosphere, enjoy wonderful festive fare and leave all the organising to us
- Discover what makes the Snowdonia so special from the sweeping valleys to the rocky peaks
- Evenings in our country house where you share a drink, celebrate and re-live the day's adventures

TRIP SUITABILITY

Our House Manager and leaders are busy putting together a unique programme of walks and social activities, and look forward to welcoming you on your holiday.

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 up to a maximum of 7 miles (11½km), medium walks are up to a maximum of 9 miles (15½m), while harder walks can be up to up to a maximum of 11 miles (17½km). Walks in each grade are generally shorter than this and tailored to finish usually by 3.30pm – 4pm, at a comfortable pace.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

You're welcome to check in from 4pm onwards and you will find complimentary scones and preserves in your room on arrival.

Day 2: The Mawddach Trail & Cregennen Lakes

The easier walk starts at the southern end of the famous trestle bridge over the estuary before picking up the Mawddach Trail, a disused railway line hugging the banks of the Mawddach Estuary with fabulous views throughout. Our walk ends beside another trestle bridge at Penmaenpool, where we meet the medium and harder walkers. The medium walk starts in Arthog village and ascends beside lovely waterfalls to an ancient clapper bridge. We visit a stone circle, an iron mine and the Cregennen Lakes before descending through the Abergwynant valley for a short stretch on the Mawddach trail to Penmaenpool. The harder walk follows the same route as the medium walk, then ascends the Dragon's back, a delightful rugged area in the foothills of Cadair Idris to finish at the George III Inn with the other groups.

Day 3: The Torrent Walk & Y Foel

Plas Caerynwch, a local mansion, commissioned the Torrent Walk as an extension to its gardens, which were

opened to the public early in the 19th century. It's a beautiful woodland walk which follows a tumbling stream down from Brithdir; we all finish this way as we build an appetite for dinner. The easier walk heads east from the house through the Dolgwartheg Forest to the village of Brithdir before the return down the Torrent Walk. The medium and harder walks also head east but keep climbing after Brithdir to the super viewpoint of Y Foel before finding the same route back via the Torrent Walk.

Day 4: Cadair Idris & The Old Precipice Walk

The easier walk will do a scenic loop of the famous Old Precipice Walk, a circuit just north of Dolgellau with wonderful views of Coed-y-Brenin and the Mawddach estuary as well as Cadair Idris. It's not as precipitous as it sounds and after walking beside a lake, we continue through parkland all the way to the house. The medium walk starts in Coed-y-Brenin forest, walking through a former gold mining area and visiting a copper mine, before meeting the Old Precipice Walk and following the route of the easier walk back to Dolserau Hall. Weather permitting, the harder walk will start on the Minffordd path, and tackle mighty Cadair Idris via a delightful ridge circling Llyn Cau. We then descend to the north on the Pony Path finishing at Gwernan Lake.

Day 5: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Dolserau Hall

Walkers in the know head to southern Snowdonia to uncover one of Wales' best-kept secrets. Stood in the heart of the Snowdonia National Park, just a couple of miles from the attractive market town of Dolgellau, Dolserau Hall makes a superb base for getting off the beaten path. The tranquillity of the location wraps around you. A smart country house with breathtaking views from every room, attractive gardens and vistas that stretch across the valley to the summit of Cadair Idris, you're surrounded by rural inspiration. Depending on what mood strikes, explore the Rhinogs, take on a classic ridge walk with great views, set foot on the Mawddach Trail or follow the coast to Harlech, where the eponymous medieval castle stands on a wonderful position overlooking the sweeping sands of Cardigan Bay. Croeso I Cymru, as they say around here.

Matchless Country House Accommodation

Accommodation Info

Rooms

Tea & coffee-making facilities, TV, Hairdryer, Toiletries, Wi-Fi

Stay in the smartly presented rooms in the main house or in one of the handful of bedrooms in the converted coach house close by. With 23 rooms, Dolserau Hall has plenty of space and there's a range of Good and Better Rooms to choose from. Enjoy the extra space of Room 1 and soak luxuriously in the tub that comes with the room, or watch the light change outside from the comfort and privacy of the sofa in front of the large picture window in Room 5.

All 'Good' rooms are ensuite and furnished to a high standard. There are also several 'Better' Rooms that are either larger or have a desirable view, a more luxurious mattress, larger television, enhanced toiletries and a fluffy bathrobe & slippers – upgrade your stay for just an extra £15-25 per person per night. You can choose a specific room for an extra £30 per room, subject to availability. Upgrade supplements still apply.

Facilities

Free Wi-Fi, boot room and drying room, extensive garden, lounge bar, library and board games to borrow

After a day rambling over the slopes of the Rhinogs or summiting a cracking peak, come back to the house and its specially tailored walkers' facilities. Wander through the Coach House garden and admire the far-reaching views. Settle into the lounge bar and sink into the comfy leather sofas here. Grab a book or a board game and make yourself comfortable.

Food & Drink

As at all our country houses, holidays are full board, from afternoon tea served as a welcome treat through that evening's meal to a hearty breakfast on the day of departure. Lunch is a chance to stock up on our famous picnic snacks. Food at Dolserau Hall is varied and tasty and has a strong emphasis on ingredients from the area and seasonal produce. Once a week the dining room hosts a Local Food Night, when, over a sociable evening, you might try a six-course feast of regional flavours. Look out for highlights including Cawl Cennin, a leek and potato broth, smoked haddock with Welsh rarebit and lava bread and Welsh lamb Wellington. If you've space, tuck into a slice of Monmouth Pudding, a great old-fashioned desert of breadcrumbs, fruit, cream and meringue

Accessibility

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on 020 3974 8865

TRAVEL DETAILS

Our address is: Dolserau Hall, Dolgellau, Gwynedd, LL40 2AG
Tel: [01341 422522](tel:01341422522)

By Train:

The most convenient railway station to Dolserau Hall is at Machynlleth. For train times and route planning visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or phone 03457 484950

By Taxi:

The 16-mile journey from Machynlleth railway station takes approximately 30 minutes. You can pre-book a taxi from our recommended taxi company, Mach Taxis. As a guide price, it cost £30 per 4-seat taxi in 2020. 8-seat taxis are also available at a higher rate. Mach Taxis will arrange shared taxis wherever possible. Please pre-book your taxi at least 7 days in advance by contacting:

Mach Taxis*
Tel: +44 (0) 1654 702048
Email: taxi@machtaxis.com

The return journey can be arranged on your behalf by the House Manager.

*Mach Taxis is not owned or managed by HF Holidays

By Bus:

From Machynlleth take the X27 bus to Dolgellau. The 2 mile journey to Dolserau Hall from Doglellau can we completed by taxi. Alternatively alight at Dolgellau Starbucks, form where it a 1-mile walk along a quiet country lane to the house.

By Car:

Dolserau Hall is approximately 1 1/2 hours' drive from the M56 at Chester or the M54 at Telford.

From the North head to Chester, then take the M53 and A55 around the south of Chester. Join the A550 then the A5104 for about 20 miles, then finally the A494 signposted to Bala. Stay on the A494 through Bala heading towards Dolgellau. A mile after going past a junction for the B4416 to Brithdir, take the next turning on the left, after the campsite. Follow the country lane for 1/2 mile to Dolserau Hall.

Form the South take the M54 and A5 to Shrewsbury. Follow the A5 around the south of Shrewsbury and join the A458 towards Welshpool. Countinue on the A458 through Welshpool and after a further 27 miles turn right at a roundabout onto the A470 towards Dolgellau. As you come down a steep hill before Dolgellau, look out for a terol station on the right hand side. Take the turning on the right immediately before the petrol station. Dolserau Hall is about 1 mile along this country lane on your right.

LOCAL AREA

During your visit to Dolserau Hall you may enjoy visiting the following places of interest:

Welsh Highland Railway

The recently re-opened Welsh Highland railway runs from Caernarfon to Porthmadog, passing through Beddgelert on route. This is a spectacular journey which includes the dramatic Aberglaslyn Pass and views of Snowdon. The steep gradients require powerful locomotives which have to work particularly hard on the climb from Beddgelert to the summit of the line at Rhyd Ddu. www.festrail.co.uk

Great Little Trains Of Wales

Snowdonia is noted for its concentration of narrow guage steam railways, all of which offer highly scenic journeys. The Ffestiniog Railway and Snowdon Moutain Railways are both within reach. For a truly unique day out you can take the mountain railway to the summit of Snowdon (best to book in advance as tickets can sell out quickly on busy days). www.greatlittletrainsofwales.co.uk

National Slate Museum

Located at Llanberis, the excellent, and free, National Slate Museum tells the story of this once extensive industry. You can see slate being cut by hand, the huge waterwheel that powers the machinery, and the fascinating quarrymen's houses which show their development over the centuries. Llanberis is around 30 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, and can also be reached using the Snowdon Sherpa bus.

www.museumwales.ac.uk/slate

Caernarfon Castle

Built by King Edward I after his conquest of Wales, Caernarfon Castle is one of the most impressive and well preserved fortifications in the principality. Along with neighbouring castles at Harlech, Beaumaris and Conwy it now has World Heritage status. Caernarfon is around 30 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, or can be reached using the Welsh Highland Railway. www.cadw.wales.gov.uk

Criccieth

The seaside town of Criccieth is around 25 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, and full of Victorian character. You could visit the historic castle, relax on the beach, or sample the excellent ice cream at Cadwaders parlour.

Llyn Peninsula

The long arm of the Llyn Peninsula offers beautiful and contrasting scenery, with wild cliffs and white sandy coves. Enjoy the glorious beaches at Aberdaron or Abersoch, or walk to the tip of the peninsula and enjoy the views of Bardsey Island.

Harlech Castle

Harlech Castle occupies a superb vantage point overlooking the coast and the mountains of Snowdonia. Built by Edward I, its imposing walls were built by 1,000 skilled craftsmen between 1283 and 1295. www.cadw.gov.uk

Llechwedd Slate Caverns

Located near Bleanau Ffestiniog, about 30 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, the Llechwedd Slate Caverns are one of the area's most popular attractions. Take the underground railway deep into the mountain where a knowledgeable guide will tell you how slate was hewn by hand. www.llechwedd-slate-caverns.co.uk

Bodnant Gardens

Situated in the Conwy Valley, about 50 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, the National Trust's gardens at Bodnant have impressive collections of colour and views of the Snowdonian mountains. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/bodnant-garden

Plas Newydd

The grand house at Plas Newydd enjoys glorious views overlooking the Menai Straits. Built for the 1st Marquess of Anglesey, the house itself is impressive, as are the extensive gardens. Now managed by the National Trust. Around 50 minutes' drive from Beddgelert. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/plas-newydd

Portmeirion

This quaint Italianate village was the brainchild of the architect Clough Williams-Ellis. It is also well-known as the setting for the cult 1960's TV series The Prisoner. Portmeirion is around 20 minutes' drive from Beddgelert. www.portmeirion-village.com

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

What To Bring

"There's no such thing as bad weather, just the wrong type of clothing!" goes the adage. Come prepared for all eventualities and you'll walk in comfort as well as safety. Britain's famous for its changeable weather, so here's our advice on what to wear and bring.

Essentials

- Walking boots providing ankle support and good grip.
- A waterproof jacket and over-trousers
- Gloves and a warm hat (it can be chilly at any time of the year)
- Rucksack
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity)
- A small torch (everywhere in winter, year round in mountains)

Recommended

- Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed
- Specialist walking socks to avoid blisters.
- A first aid kit inc plasters– your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication
- Sit mat (insulated pad to sit on when you stop for a break)

You Might Also Want

- Walking poles, particularly useful for descents.
- Insect repellent
- Flask for hot drinks
- Rigid lunch box
- Gaiters
- Blister kit (eg Compeed) just in case
- Waterproof rucksack liner
- Sun hat and sunscreen (we may just get lucky and have some festive sunshine!)

Denim jeans and waterproof capes are not suitable on any walks.

Safety On Your Holiday

On the first evening of your holiday your leaders give a short talk about safety on walks which we would like you to attend. 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.

HOW TO BOOK

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday & Sunday: 9am – 1pm Bank Holiday Monday: 9am – 1pm

PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £10 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit hfholidays.co.uk/membership for details.

BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit hfholidays.co.uk/insurance

PEACE OF MIND

ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website atol.org.uk

MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

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.

PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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