4 Night Southern Snowdonia Festive Guided Walking Holiday



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Festive breaks	Snowdonia	5, 6 & 7	80kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

There's something magical about winter walks in Wales – especially around Snowdonia (Eryri). Even the name gives off a winter wonderland feel. Make this Christmas truly memorable and spend the festive season at Dolserau Hall – our 17th century manor house in the heart of Snowdonia (Eryri) National Park. We pull out all the stops at this time of year and our houses welcome you with warm festive cheer, seasonal food, and plenty of yuletide treats.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- 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 Snowdonia (Eryri) on foot
- Staying in our country house in Snowdonia (Eryri) National Park
- 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

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- En-suite accommodation in our 4-star 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 three guided walks (each walking day) from March to October, and two from November to February.
- 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

ITINERARY - FESTIVE

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 **Panorama Viewpoint & Barmouth**

Option 1 - Panorama Walk, Dinas Oleu and Barmouth Bridge

Distance: 4 miles (6.5km)

Ascent: 550 feet (160m)

In Summary: We ascend to the Panorama walk, with stunning estuary and sea views, continuing over the low hill Dinas Oleu then drop down to Barmouth. We then cross the famous bridge to finish at Morfa Mawddach station on the south side of the estuary.

Highlight: Stunning estuary, sea and mountain views.

Option 2 - Hills above Barmouth

Distance: 5.5 miles (9km)

Ascent: 1,050 feet (320m)

In Summary: After enjoying the Panorama Walk we head north to Craig y Gigfran, 'Raven Rock', for views of the coast. Continuing across Dinas Oleu we walk down through Orielton woods to finish on the front at Barmouth.

Highlight: Great views from above Barmouth.

Option 3 - Bwlch y Rhiwgyr to Barmouth

Distance: 8.5miles (13.5km)

Ascent: 2,000 feet (620m)

In Summary: Starting beside the estuary, we ascend steeply to Bwlch y Rhiwgyr, 'Pass of the Drovers' then follow the crest of a wide grassy ridge, with views to both sides, all the way down to Barmouth.

Highlight: Stunning ridge walking.

Day 3 **The Torrent Walk & Foel Caerynwch**

Option 1 - Brithdir and the Torrent Walk

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Ascent: 1,000 feet (300m)

In Summary: Walking from the house on an old carriage drive through woodland to Pwll y Gele wetland, then beside the river Wnion. We ascend to Brithdir village for views of the surrounding mountains and return via the beautiful Torrent walk. There is the option to visit a church in the Arts and Crafts style.

Highlight: The quieter corners of Southern Snowdonia.

Option 2 - Foel Caerynwch

Distance: 7.5 miles (12km)

Ascent: 1,450 feet (440m)

In Summary: Following the carriage drive through woodland to Pwll y Gele wetland then riverside walking to Brithdir village. We then ascend steeply to Foel Caerynwch, an impressive summit with 360 degree views. The descent is short and we return via the Torrent Walk.

Highlight: Great views from Foel Caerynwch summit.

Option 3 - The Roman Road and Foel Caerynwch

Distance: 7.5 miles (12km)

Ascent: 1,550 feet (470m)

In Summary: From Dolserau we follow a riverside path then ascend through woods and across farmland. We continue through deciduous forests and along a stretch of Roman Road up onto open moorland. We also go up to Foel Caerynwch for it's stunning all round views and return to the house by the Torrent walk.

Highlight: Lovely 360 degree views.

Day 4 **The old Precipice Walk and Coed Y Brenin**

Option 1 - The Old Precipice Walk

Distance: 7 miles (11.5km)

Ascent: 1,150ft (360m)

In Summary: Walking from the house we ascend through a medieval Deer park, visit Llyn Cynwch and on to the magnificent viewpoint of the Old Precipice walk. We continue on field paths then lanes back to the house.

Highlight: Historic medieval estate, stunning views of south Snowdonia.

Option 2 - Coed y Brenin and the Old Precipice Walk

Distance: 7.5 miles (12.5km)

Ascent: 1,800ft (550m)

In Summary: We begin in Ganllwyd village by crossing the Afon Mawddach then follow forest tracks and paths through Coed y Brenin forest. We visit the remains of a copper mine then ascend steeply to join the Old Precipce walk. It is now all downhill beside Llyn Cywarch then through the deer park and back to the house.

Highlight: Magnificent Douglas Fir trees in Coed y Brenin forest.

Option 3 - Coed y Brenin, Old Precipice Walk and Foel Offrwm

Distance: 10.5 miles (16.5km)

Ascent: 2,700ft (820m)

In Summary: We explore a gold mining area, walk beside the Afon Mawddach and visit the copper mine remains. After a steep ascent we join the Old Precipice walk then continue up to Foel Offrwm. After enjoying the views we return through the deer park back to Dolserau.

Highlight: A varied and dramatic walk.

Day 5 Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Moderate walking grade 5

Some walking experience needed. Full day walks which may include some short but steep ascents and descents throughout the day, and varied terrain. Regular stops. Typically, 8-9 miles (13-15km) with around 1,300ft (400m) of ascent.



Moderate walking grade 6

Longer full day walks with more ascent and varied terrain. Good fitness and agility are needed. Typically, 9-10 miles (15-16km) with around 1,500ft (460m) of ascent.



Moderate walking grade 7

The most active moderate grade. Longer distances and short but steep ascents and descents possible throughout the day. Hill walking experience desirable. Typically, 11-12 miles (18-19km) with around 1,800ft (560m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Dolserau Hall

We're delighted to share that Dolserau Hall has now reopened following a significant investment in this much-loved Welsh HF Country House. With beautifully updated social spaces, refreshed bedrooms, and thoughtful enhancements throughout, it's the perfect moment to rediscover this special spot in southern Eryri (Snowdonia). Read more. Dolserau Hall enjoys arresting countryside views at this Victorian manor house at the southern end of Snowdonia (Eryri) National Park. The location is idyllic; think ancient woods and craggy uplands in all directions (parts of the park served as the inspiration for Middle Earth in JRR Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings). There's no shortage of things to do, either, including following the Mawddach Trail along the edge of the Mawddach Estuary, discovering the compact range of hills known as the Rhinogs, and climbing the rugged foothills of Cader Idris – the highest mountain in southern Snowdonia (Eryri) at 893 metres. You'll also be close to Dolgellau, the small market town best known for its once flourishing woollen industry (ruins of the Pandy fulling mills used to remove fats and grease from the wool cloth can still be seen along the Afon Aran River). With only 21 rooms, it's one of HF Holidays' smaller country houses and 40% of it's rooms are reserved for singles, making it easier than ever to have your own space.

About

· 21 well-appointed guest rooms · Exclusive occupancy: 31 guests minimum · Check in from 4:00pm · For members check in from 2:00pm · Full-board (including a cream tea welcome) · Free Wi-Fi · Free on-site parking · 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 · Well-behaved dogs welcome · Electric vehicle charging point - Please note, you will need to bring your own cables to use this EV charging point



Then & now

It was at Dolserau Hall (meaning 'meadow of the stars') where Robert Owen lived with this wife Jane before boarding the Vine – the ship carrying Welsh Quakers from Merionethshire to Pennsylvania in 1684. While the house remained in the family thereafter, it was destroyed by a fire and subsequently rebuilt. No remains of the old house are visible, but the foundations were uncovered during an excavation at a nearby mill site a few years ago. The present Dolserau Hall was built in 1863 for Charles Edwards, a Justice of the Peace who was MP for Windsor and later High Sherriff of Meirionnydd. His design brief was one of Victorian glamour, resulting in the porticoed entrance, large galleried hall, impressive staircase, and stained glass windows with coats of arms. The house was used as a private residence for various occupants over the years, including Sir Eric Ommanney Skaife, brigadier and patron of Welsh culture, who lived here during the 1940s. It opened as a hotel in 1972 and has been part of our HF Holidays line-up since 2011.

Today, Dolserau Hall has benefited from a light refresh of the communal areas and has 21 well-appointed guest rooms in two categories (Classic and Premium) spread across the main house and the converted coach house. You'll also find a comfortable main lounge, a licensed bar, a dining room for a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients, and a smaller room that's perfect for light lunches, snacks, and evening activities. Elsewhere, there's a handy boot and drying room, books and games to borrow during your stay, and a Discovery Point offering a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and easy-to-follow information for self-guided walks. Also worthy of your attention are the five acres of gardens and grounds offering views across to the valley to the summit of Cadair Idris.

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 Dolserau Hall

A choice of guest rooms at Dolserau Hall

Designed with your comfort in mind, Dolserau Hall has 21 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, and comfortable mattresses.

We love: The rooms in the main house or converted coach house. Some come with standout views of Snowdonia (Eryri) National Park.

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

Choose Your Room Service

Some guests love choosing a particular room, for the view, a quiet spot in an annex, or to be close to the dining room. Many return to the same room time and again, creating a familiar and comforting sense of place for only £30 per room.

ACCESSIBILITY

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

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

Dolserau Hall
Dolgellau
Gwynedd LL40 2AG

Tel: +44 (0)1341 422522

By train

The nearest station is Machynlleth.

For train times and to plan your route check National Rail.

By taxi

The 16-mile journey from Machynlleth railway station takes about 30 minutes.

For pricing, please contact Cader Cabs directly.

Cader Cabs

A local, 24/7 firm, who can provide transport from nearby train stations and bus stops. No pre-booking is required.

Cader Cabs are offering a 10% discount on all taxi journeys for guests coming to or going from Dolserau Hall.

Tel: +44 (0)7766 983 103

Email: info@cadercabs.co.uk

*Cader Cabs are not owned or managed by HF Holidays.

By bus

From Machynlleth take the T2 bus to Dolgellau. You can complete the two-mile journey to Dolserau Hall by taxi. Or if you alight at Dolgellau Starbucks, it's a one-mile walk along a quiet country lane to the house.

By car

It takes about 90 minutes to drive from the M56 at Chester or the M54 at Telford to Dolserau Hall.

From the north
Head to Chester, then take the M53 and A55 to join the A550, followed by 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 to follow the country lane for half a mile to Dolserau Hall.

From the south
Take the M54 and A5 to Shrewsbury to join the A458 towards Welshpool. Continue on the A458 through Welshpool and after 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 petrol station on the right. Take a right turn immediately before it, then you'll find Dolserau Hall is about one mile along this country lane on your left.

By Shared Transfer

If you're travelling to or from Dolserau Hall on Mondays or Fridays, you can join our group transfer from Shrewsbury Railway Station.

2026
Prices are £30 per person for a return transfer or £15 per person for a single transfer.

Outward journey: Depart Shrewsbury Railway Station at 15:00; arrive at Dolserau Hall at 16:40.
Return journey: Depart Dolserau Hall at 09:00; arrive at Shrewsbury Railway Station at 10:40.

2027
Prices are £90 per person for a return transfer or £45 per person for a single transfer.

Outward journey: Depart Shrewsbury Railway Station at 15:00 ; arrive at Dolserau Hall at 16:45.
Return journey: Depart Dolserau Hall at 09:00 arrive at Shrewsbury Railway Station at 10.45.

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: 020 3857 7758
Email: reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

By air

The nearest airport is Manchester Airport.

You'll need to allow around five hours, firstly taking the train to Chester, changing to the Sapphire bus to Wrexham, and from there taking the T3 bus to Dolgellau.

LOCAL AREA

Places to visit in Snowdonia

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 Dolserau Hall.

Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway

Established in 1832, this heritage line offers nearly 40 miles of Snowdonia (Eryri) scenery. The Ffestiniog Railway runs from Porthmadog to Tan y Bwlch while the Welsh Highland Railway travels from Caernarvon to Beddgelert. Porthmadog station is a 40-minute drive away.

Great Little Trains of Wales

A collection of little steam railways, this makes for an enchanting way to discover the visually-striking Welsh countryside. The Snowdon (Yr Wyddfa) Mountain Railway has been taking passengers to the mountain's summit since 1896 (early bookings are highly recommended).

National Slate Museum

A 90-minute drive away, this Llanberis-based museum is housed in the industrial Victorian workshops once used for serving and maintaining the Dinorwic slate quarry. Highlights include watching slate being cut by hand and visiting the terrace of quarrymen's houses.

Caernarfon Castle

Just over an hour's drive away, this fortress-palace on the banks of the River Seiont was built by Edward I. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers Museum is located inside the castle and offers a wealth of exhibits that tell the story of the oldest infantry regiment in Wales.

Harlech Castle

A 45-minute drive away, Edward I's stone fortress dominates the landscape and affords incredible views across Snowdonia (Eryri). The castle is largely a ruin, although the huge inner walls and towers still stand almost to their full heights.

Criccieth

A 50-minute drive away, this seaside town is famed for its 13th century castle ruins overlooking Cardigan Bay. Highlights include relaxing on the beach and stopping for an ice cream at Cadwaladers - the esteemed Welsh ice cream parlour founded here in 1927.

Llechwedd Slate Caverns

A 40-minute drive away, this visitor attraction is best known for its deep mine tour that descends 500 feet underground. Highlights include learning about the subterranean chambers and enjoying a fabulous light and sound display at the underground lake.

Bodnant Gardens

Just over an hour's drive away, these breathtaking gardens spread across 80 acres offer wonderful views of Snowdonia (Eryri). Founded in 1874 and given to the National Trust in 1949, highlights include the Italianate terraces, wildflower meadows, and woodland.

Plas Newydd House

A 90-minute drive away, the historic home of Lady Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby (the so-called Ladies of Llangollen) was a stone cottage converted into a gothic fantasy. The mansion also comes with 40 acres of garden and 129 acres of woodland and parkland.

Portmeirion

Designed by celebrated Welsh architect Sir Clough Williams-Ellis in the mid-1920s, this Italianate-style coastal village is an hour's drive away. For walkers, not-to-be missed sights include the Dwyryd Estuary and the subtropical forest known as The Gwyllt.

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

Weather conditions in the UK can vary throughout the day, and conditions in the mountains may be cold and windy even in summer. Use the following list as a guide when preparing for your holiday.

Essentials

- Suitable waterproof walking boots with ankle support and good grip
- Waterproof, wind-resistant jacket with a hood, taped seams and a hydrostatic head rating of at least 10,000 mm
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Spare warm clothing, such as a synthetic insulated jacket
- Comfortable walking clothing (jeans & waterproof capes are not suitable)
- Warm mid-layers, such as fleeces
- Gloves and a warm hat, even in summer
- Rucksack with a waterproof liner
- Water bottle with a capacity of at least 1 litre
- Flask for hot drinks
- Sunscreen
- UV-protective sunglasses
- Spare high-energy food
- Head torch and spare batteries for holidays between October and March
- Passport (if applicable)
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy

Recommended

- Several base layers, with long or short sleeves
- Cushioned walking socks to avoid blisters
- First-aid kit, including plasters, insect repellent, a midge net and a tick-removal tool
- Sit mat
- Waterproof pouch for valuables
- Rubbish bags
- Wallet or purse

- Camera
- Walking poles
- Sun hat
- Gaiters
- Mobile Phones
- Swimwear (please see accommodation information for hotel facilities)
- Membership cards for English Heritage, the National Trust or similar heritage organisations in Scotland and Wales, if you are a member. These may be useful when visiting attractions during your itinerary or on your free day.

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