

7 Night Southern Snowdonia Festive Guided Walking Holiday

Trip style: Festive breaks

Destination: 📍 Snowdonia

Trip code: DOL07-XFW03

Trip Walking Grade: ul 2, 3 & 5

Carbon Footprint: 🌳 141kg 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

WALKING GRADES AND OPTIONS

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 - CHRISTMAS

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 - 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.

Option 2 - 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 3 - 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 Orielson woods to finish on the front at Barmouth.

Highlight: Great views from above Barmouth.

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 – 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.

Option 2 – 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 3 – 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 Precipice 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.

Day 5 Free Day – Southern Snowdonia

Discover more about [Dolserau Hall and the local area](#) for ideas on how to make the most of your free day.

Day 6 Around Dolgellau

Option 1 - Dolgellau and Glyn Aran

Distance: 7 miles (11.5km)

Ascent: 1,100 feet (340m)

In Summary: We ascend the Torrent walk then continue on lanes and paths to the Arran valley which we follow into Dolgellau town. We cross the river then return on the north side of the valley by country lanes.

Highlight: The historic town of Dolgellau.

Option 2 - Cymer Abbey, Dolgellau and Glyn Aran

Distance: 10 miles (19km)

Ascent: 1,350 feet (420m)

In Summary: We follow lanes skirting the town to arrive at Cymer Abbey, a 12th century Cistercian foundation. After a gentle stretch on part of the Mawddach trail we explore Dolgellau town then follow Glyn Arran and tracks and paths to return to the house.

Highlight: Quaint abbey in tranquil spot.

Option 3 - New Precipice Walk & Dolgellau

Distance: 12 miles (19km)

Ascent: 2,050 feet (620m)

In Summary: We walk on lanes and tracks with views of Dolgellau town below, to Llanelltyd village. We then ascend to the New Precipice walk, a delightful path constructed on a previous Gold Mines tramway. We descend through woodland and cross the Penmaenpool toll bridge to the George III pub. Continuing on the Mawddach Trail we visit Dolgellau town and return to the house by quiet lanes.

Highlight: Amazing views from the New Precipice Walk

Day 7 Around Harlech

Option 1 - Bryn Cader Faner

Distance: 9 miles (14.5km)

Total ascent: 1,700 feet (520m)

In Summary: Starting north of Harlech we walk on the lower slopes of the Rhinogydd mountains above the Arduwy coast. We pass a beautiful lake and an ancient stone circle before we descend gradually to Harlech.

Highlight: Great views along the coast and of Harlech Castle on the final leg.

Option 2 - Along the Coast to Harlech

Distance: 6.5 miles (10.5km)

Total ascent: 900 feet (280m)

In summary: We follow the coast from Llanbedr to Harlech, taking in the delightful beach at Llandanwg and the rolling hills above the coast, before reach Harlech.

Highlight: Visit Harlech Castle

Option 3 - The Ardudwy Coast and Harlech

Distance: 5 miles (8.5km)

Ascent: 750 feet (240m)

In Summary: Starting beside the Artro river we walk beside reed beds to its estuary and onto the lovely shingle beach at Llandanwg. We cross fields and ascend to pass a slate cavern before continuing to the golden sands of Harlech beach to arrive at its historic castle.

Highlight: Beautiful unspoilt beaches

Day 8 Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

Daily Walk Options



Easier Walks

Good paths but walks are a bit longer. Some walks, particularly in mountain areas, may have sections over rough or steeper terrain.



Medium Walks

Walks follow well-defined paths, though often in hilly or upland areas, or along rugged coastal footpaths. These may be rough or steep in sections and will require reasonable fitness.



Harder Walks

Good fitness and stamina required. Expect rocky terrain with sustained ascents and descents. Walks may include high summits and ridges.

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 its rooms are reserved for singles, making it easier than ever to have your own space.

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.

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



Food & drink

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

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](tel:02039748865) 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 walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

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

The walking day

Prior to setting off on guided 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.

Accessibility

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

Travel Details

Address

Dolserau Hall
Dolgellau
Gwynedd LL40 2AG

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1341 422522](tel:+44(0)1341422522)

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](tel:+44(0)7766983103)

Email: This email address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it.

*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.

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

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 Dwyrdd Estuary and the subtropical forest known as The Gwyllt.

Useful Holiday 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. Fleeces 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

For holidays operating October through to the end of March, please also bring the following on your walks:

- spare warm clothing
- spare high energy food
- head torch and spare batteries
- please note for the October to March season your waterproof jacket needs to offer a high level of waterproofing and wind resistance, and a hood. Look for a waterproof jacket with sealed/taped seams and a minimum HH (hydrostatic head - this is the rating given on waterproof jackets) of 10,000mm+

Recommended

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

Trip Information

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.

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: 26 July 2026

