

4-Night Scottish Highlands Christmas Guided Walking Holiday

Tour Style: Guided Walking

Destinations: Scottish Highlands & Scotland

Trip code: LLXFW-4

3, 4 & 5



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Spend the festive season in the Scottish Highlands, socialising and walking in this beautiful place. 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. The walks in the West Highlands can be sublime at this time of year, however they can be also be challenging because of the combination of short daylight hours and sometimes extreme weather. We will not be walking on terrain which demands specialist skills and equipment such as ice axes and crampons.

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

- Plenty of exercise to walk off the festive excesses
- A choice of guided walks in spectacular winter scenery
- Just relax, soak up the party atmosphere, enjoy wonderful festive fare and leave all the organising to us
- Evening activities include dancing, quizzes and festive celebrations
- Cosy Country House and a special festive cheer

TRIP SUITABILITY

This trip is graded Activity Level 3, 4 and 5

Typically, easier walks are up to 8 miles (13km) with up to 1600 feet (470m) of ascent, medium walks are up to 8 miles (13km) with up to about 2,850 feet (870m) of ascent, while harder walks can be up to about 10 miles (16km) with up to 3,900 feet (1180m) of ascent.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

You're welcome to check in from 4pm onwards.

Enjoy a complimentary Afternoon Tea on arrival.

Day 2: Glen Nevis

Option 1 - Nevis Riverside

Distance: 6 miles (10 km)

Ascent: 900 feet (280m)

In Summary: From the heart of the mountains we follow the River Nevis downstream, below the towering Ben Nevis. We ascend the ridge of Cow Hill, affording some great views, before descending to Fort William.

Highlight: Great views over Fort William, Loch Eil and to the north.

Option 2 - The Nevis Gorge

Distance: 7 miles (11½km)

Ascent: 1,450 feet (440m)

In Summary: Walk through the Nevis Gorge below the towering Ben Nevis. Our route meanders through the wooded gorge where the torrent churns between giant boulders, to emerge into the wide vistas of the Steall Meadow.

Highlight: The magnificent An Steall waterfall is the third highest cascade in Britain.

Option 3 - Below The North Face

Distance: 9 miles (14km)

Ascent: 2,600 feet (800m)

In summary: Ascend to the climbers' hut below the mighty north face of Ben Nevis. We then contour below the massive Castle Ridge buttress and descend via the Pony Track to Glen Nevis.

Highlight: An opportunity to see the towering cliffs of the 'Ben's' North Face up close. These mighty cliffs provide some of Britain's best rock and ice climbing.

Day 3: Loch Linnhe And The Hills Around Ballachulish

Option 1 - Loch Linnhe Shore

Distance: 5 miles (8 km)

Ascent: 155 feet (40m)

In Summary: Walk from the house towards Holly Tree Hotel along the shores of Loch Linnhe and return back to the house

Highlight: Exploring the shores of the beautiful Loch Linnhe.

Option 2 - Gleann A Chaolais Circuits

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Total ascent: 950ft (300m)

In Summary: We walk from the house, cross the Ballachulish Bridge and then via a traffic St John's Church in Ballachulish back to the house. Along the way we take in the glorious forest trails of Gleann a Chaolais.

Highlight: Superb views across Loch Leven and Loch Linnhe on one side and the imposing and atmospheric Beinn a Bheithir on the other.

Option 3 - Sgorr Dhearg Festive

Distance: 9.5 miles (15.5km)

Ascent: 3,700 feet (1120m)

In Summary: Starting from Alltshellach we cross the bridge and follow gently rising tracks through the forest. The path then narrows and steepens until it emerges from the forest below the dramatic horseshoe ridge of Beinn a' Bheithir. We head towards the col then turn left to follow a wide range up to the summit of Beinn Dhearg. We return by the same route to the valley of Gleann a' Chalouis and walk back on forest tracks, over the Balachulish Bridge to the house.

Highlight: In the right conditions, the view from the summit includes the mountains above Glencoe, Ben Nevis and several Hebridean Islands.

Day 4: Hills And Tracks Around Kinlochleven

Option 1 - Mamore Lodge And Grey Mare's Waterfall

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Ascent: 1450ft (440m)

In Summary: We view the Grey Mares waterfall then follow paths and the Old Military Road along the flanks of Sgurr an Fhuarain, visiting fine viewpoints, before heading back to Kinlochleven

Highlight: Exploring the history of the Old Military Road and looking at the views of the Mamores and Loch Leven.

Option 2 - The Lairigmor

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Ascent: 2,050 feet (620m)

In Summary: Walk from the northern shore of Loch Leven to the village of Kinlochleven. We'll take a steep path up the hillside, then contour behind Mam na Gualainn to join the West Highland Way.

Highlight: Follow the West Highland Way, Scotland's premier long distance path, along part of General Wade's 18th Century military road.

Option 3 - Beinn Na Caillich

Distance: 8 miles (12.5km)

Ascent: 3,200 feet (980m)

In Summary: Follow the undulating mountain ridge over the summits of Mam na Gualainn and Beinn na Caillich, before descending to join the West Highland Way to Kinlochleven.

Highlight: The 'Corbett' summit of Mam na Gualainn commands a fine view over Loch Leven and provides a good warm up for the other adventurous peaks later in the holiday.

Day 5: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Alltshellach

Situated in a stunning location on the shores of Loch Leven, Alltshellach is a stately Scottish house set amid a rugged landscape. The house is a picture of Highland solidity, with spectacular views of craggy mountains and grassy slopes beyond the loch. This pocket of domesticity lets you admire nature at your leisure though, sipping tea or G&T as you watch clouds scud across the sky. In fact, this one-time home of the Bishop of Argyll & the Isles has been recast as a hiker's hotel, with an air of old-world splendour, excellent accommodation, a generous indoor pool, three lounges and a supremely cosy Highland Bar that's well-stocked with local beer and whisky, all of which is (almost) enough to distract you from the vast vistas over the waters. But it's the great outdoors you're here for and the house is ideally situated for accessing the Mamores, the mountains of Glen Coe and tackling Ben Nevis as well as bagging munros and spotting local wildlife.

Matchless Country House Accommodation

Accommodation Info

Need To Know

Important Covid-19 Steps We Have Taken For Guest Safety: Please Read

We are continuing to take extra steps to keep our guests leaders, and staff safe in our HF country houses. We ask all our guests to respect the measures put in place.

The English, Scottish and Welsh governments are not in sync, so measures in our country houses will vary between the nations. With the relaxation of social distancing in England, from 19 July we will be allowing larger groups to dine and relax in the bar together. However, we will still give guests space e.g. we will seat 6 people at a table where pre-pandemic we may have seated 8. We will ensure our public rooms are well ventilated by opening doors and windows wherever possible. If you have any concerns about distancing, please speak to the House Manager. The government recommendation for England is to wear face coverings in crowded areas. You must wear a face covering by law in public areas in hotels in Scotland. This is mandatory in public spaces; however, face coverings will not be required whilst eating and drinking in the restaurant and bar areas or whilst you are outside our houses. In Wales face coverings will remain a legal requirement indoors, with the exception of hospitality premises.

As a temporary measure, we will not be servicing rooms during a stay. Extra tea, coffee, milk, and toiletries will be made available on request for all guests. It is recommended that guests bring their own toiletries for the duration of their stay. We will though be increasing the frequency of cleaning in our public areas providing particular attention to frequently touched items including door handles and handrails.

Menus for the week will be available in your room on arrival. A self-service breakfast will be served from 7.45am – 9am. Picnic lunches will now be pre-ordered the night before from an order form in the room. Evening meals will be table service. A dinner order form will be available in each room for completion. Dinner is served at either 7.15pm or 7.30pm. Please check at the house for details. The bar will be open. We will be offering a table service but guests can also come to the bar to order (depending on local restrictions).

Join our team after dinner on Wednesday evenings for the HF Big Pub Quiz. There will be one other evening of entertainment at the start of the week, which will vary depending on the country house that you are staying at. Our Walk Leaders will also be on hand in the bar or lounge for individual or small group walks talks briefings, which allow guests to talk through the following day's walk options and ask any questions. Swimming pools will be operated in line with maximum capacities.

For more information and to see all the steps taken, [visit our page on how house stays will be adapted](#).

Rooms

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

There are 38 comfortable bedrooms, all in the main house, with a range of Classic, Premium and Superior room options to choose from. Rooms radiate cosiness thanks to little touches – a remedy for even the dreichest day. Those with a view are worth the extra spend, as you'll be overlooking the gardens and loch. The Superior rooms include Room 21, a spacious corner room with lovely views of Loch Leven, while Room 23 is a stately showstopper that was once the official Bishop's bedroom, complete with original features and cracking views.

All 'Classic' rooms are ensuite and furnished to a high standard. There are also several 'Premium' and 'Superior' Rooms that are either larger or have a desirable view, a more luxurious mattress and larger televisions – 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 gardens, heated indoor swimming pool, multi-purpose ballroom, library and board games to borrow

After a day exploring, return to the house and its specially tailored walkers' facilities. Stroll the gardens that dip down to the loch. The small peninsula at the bottom of the lawns is called An Dunan and often becomes an island at high tide – look for prehistoric rock art cut into the slabs on its side. Make time too to plunge into the heated indoor swimming pool (currently closed) and do a couple of lengths under the watchful eye of the mountains through the panoramic windows. Inside the house, head for one of the communal areas: you'll have three to choose from and can kick back, relax and catch up with other guests. Later, stop in the Highland Bar for a nip of whisky or a nightcap – the comfy seats make a fine spot for a dram and there's a range of good single malts to choose from that'll have you believing you're living a laird's life.

Food & Drink

As at all of 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. Food at Alltshellach is varied with a strong emphasis on the use of seasonal British produce. Our experienced chefs create each dish using only the freshest ingredients and, when in season, use home grown herbs and vegetables taken from our own gardens to give a true taste of the local area.

Accessibility

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

TRAVEL DETAILS

Our address is: Alltshellach, Onich, Fort William, Invernesshire PH33 6SA
Tel: [01855 821357](tel:01855821357)

Group Coach Transfer:

If you are travelling to or from Alltshellach over the 2021 festive period you can join our group coach transfer from Glasgow. Places are limited so booking is essential – please call our Holiday Services Team at least 14 days before your departure date on +44 (0)208 732 1220 or email holidayservices@hfholidays.co.uk to book your place on the coach.

£48 per person for a return transfer or £30 per person for a single transfer.

Outward journey: depart Glasgow Buchanan Street bus station* at 16.15 or depart Glasgow International Airport at 16.45; arrive Alltshellach 19.00.

Return journey: depart Alltshellach 08.30; arrive Glasgow International Airport at 11.30 or arrive Glasgow Buchanan Street bus station* at 12.00.

*Buchanan Street bus station is about 15 minutes' walk from Glasgow Central station (buses available) or 5 minutes' walk from Glasgow Queen Street station.

By Train:

The nearest station is in Fort William but many guests take the train to Glasgow and take the Scottish Citylink bus from there, or join our group coach transfer to Alltshellach (over the 2021 festive period – see above). For train times and route planning by train visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or phone 03457 48 49 50.

By Air:

Many guests opt to fly to Glasgow International Airport, then make their way to Glen Coe. From the airport you can take the Citylink bus (see below) or join our group coach transfer to Alltshellach (over the 2021 festive period - see above).

By Bus:

The journey from either Glasgow Buchanan Street or the airport can be made using the Scottish Citylink bus, numbers 914 or 915. See www.citylink.co.uk for the timetable. Ask the driver to stop at the north side of Ballachulish Bridge - from here it is a 400 metre walk to Alltshellach.

By Car:

From Glasgow take the A82 towards Crianlarich. Continue on the A82 towards Fort William. Head for Ballachulish keeping the village on your left. Go straight on at the roundabout over the steel bridge and take the second right B863 to Kinlochleven and the seafood restaurant. Alltshellach is 400 yards further on, on your right.

Travelling From Overseas

Ideally book a flight to Glasgow Airport (see By Air above).

The next best option is to fly to Manchester Airport, which has a better range of long-haul flights. There are trains from the airport to Glasgow (some direct, others need 1 change). Allow 4 hours to get to Glasgow, from where you will need to transfer to Alltshellach. See www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times.

LOCAL AREA

Alltshellach is situated beside the shores of Loch Leven. This is a spectacular location with magnificent views of the surrounding mountains.

About two miles away, across the loch is the village of Ballachulish. Here you'll find a post office, food store and bank. A much wider range of facilities can be found in Fort William, about 14 miles to the north.

As the adventure capital of Britain, the Lochaber region is a popular destination for all outdoor enthusiasts. During your stay in Glen Coe you may enjoy visiting the following activities and places of interest:

Jacobite Steam Train

Ride the [Jacobite Steam Train](#) from Fort William to Mallaig. This stunningly scenic line includes the famous Glenfinnan Viaduct, featured in the Harry Potter films. Steam trains run every day and early booking is recommended.

Isle Of Mull

Reached by car ferry from Oban, or Lochaline, [Mull](#) is one of the most popular Scottish islands. You could visit the colourful harbour at Tobermory or the abbey on Iona.

Isle Of Lismore

The peaceful [Isle of Lismore](#) is ideal for a relaxed exploration. You can hire bikes at Port Appin, about 30 minutes' drive south of Alltshellach, then take the short ferry crossing to the island.

Oban

The bustling harbour town of Oban, about 45 minutes' drive south of Alltshellach, is a popular destination. There's always plenty of activity around the harbour and it's well worth the walk up to McCaig's Tower, a remarkable folly built in the style of a Roman amphitheatre, with commanding views over the town.

Eilean Donan Castle

Nearly 80 miles drive north from Alltshellach is this romantic and much photographed [Scottish lochside castle](#). Located on a small island just offshore, the castle is isolated by the sea at high tide, only accessible via a stone bridge.

Ice Factor

Try your hand at ice climbing on the [indoor wall](#) at nearby Kinlochleven.

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

Essential Information

"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

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 – 5.30pm, Saturday: 9am – 1pm, Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday: closed

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 £30 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: National Westminster Bank, Account Name: HF Holidays Limited, Account Number: 48904805, Sort Code: 60-00-01, IBAN: GB90NWBK60000148904805

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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