7 Night Western Yorkshire Dales Christmas & New Year Guided Walking Holiday



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Festive breaks	Yorkshire Dales	4, 6 & 7	162kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Spend the festive season in the Yorkshire Dales and head out on winter walks in the part of the national park that dips its toe into both Cumbria and Lancashire. And when you're not busy exploring the wintry scenery of the dales, cosy up in Thorns Hall – our charming country house in Sedbergh. We pull out all the stops at this time of year and our houses welcome you with a sprinkling of festive cheer, seasonal food, and plenty of yuletide treats. So wrap up warm and step into Christmas with HF Holidays.

WHAT 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 Western Yorkshire Dales on foot
- Staying in our country house in the market town of Sedbergh
- 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 - CHRISTMAS

Day 1 **Christmas 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 **Mallerstang Myths and Legends**

Option 1 - The Upper Eden Valley

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Ascent: 450 feet (140m)

In summary: Follow the Upper Eden valley to the market town of Kirkby Stephen. We'll pass the ruins of Pendragon Castle, which according to legend was built by Uther Pendragon, King Arthur's father.

Highlight: The Mallerstang Valley is home to a colony of red squirrels. If you're lucky you may get to spot one of these illusive creatures.

Option 2 - Lady Anne's Way

Distance: 10½ miles (16.5km)

Ascent: 750 feet (240m)

In summary: Descend through the Mallerstang Valley from Aisgill to Kirkby Stephen. We'll follow Lady Anne's Way along the valley side, then alongside the River Eden to Pendragon Castle and Stenkrith Falls.

Highlight: Our walk follows the Settle to Carlisle Railway; England's most scenic line.

Option 3 - Mallerstang Edge

Distance: 10 miles (16.5km)

Ascent: 1,400 feet (420m)

In summary: A high-level traverse along Mallerstang Edge including the tops of High Seat and High Pike Hill. Our walk takes us from Aisgill to Kirkby Stephen.

Highlight: Expect some wild and track-less terrain, but also great views over the green Eden Valley.

Day 3 **River Rawthey, Dentdale & Aye Gill Pike**

Option 1 - River Dee and Briggflatts

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Ascent: 600 feet (200m)

In summary: Via the village of Millthrop we head into Dentdale to walk beside the River Dee. We then cross the River Rawthey to visit the Quaker Meeting House at Brigflatts and the return to Sedbergh.

Highlight: The Quaker Meeting House is not only of historic interest, but coupled with its garden, is a place for quiet reflection.

Option 2 - Circuit to Dentdale

Distance: 8.5 miles (13.5km)

Ascent: 950 feet (300m)

In summary: The walk goes over the modest Frostrow Fells before descending to delightful Dentdale, and a section beside the River Dee. Part of The Dales Way is now joined for the return to Sedbergh.

Highlight: The peace and tranquility of Dentdale.

Option 3 - Aye Gill Pike

Distance: 11 miles (17.5km)

Ascent: 1,750 feet (540m)

In summary: A well-graded ascent, albeit with the prospect of some boggy sections, leads to the summit of Aye Gill Pike. The descent is into Garsdale, before walking beside the Rivers Clough & Rawthey back to Thorns Hall.

Highlight: The descent affords fantastic views towards the Howgills and beyond.

Day 4 River Dee and the Howgills

Option 1 - River Rawthey

Distance: 7 miles (11.5km)

Ascent: 750 feet (220m)

In summary: Walk out to Tom Croft Hill viewpoint and return following the River Rawthey

Highlight: Following the Sedgwick Geological Trail

Option 2 - River Rawthey (North)

Distance: 8.5 miles (13.5km)

Ascent: 1050 feet (320m)

In summary: The walk heads NE up the Rawthey Valley, before crossing the river and the wilder lower slopes of West Baugh Fell. The return is across Hebblethwaite Hall Gill and Straight Bridge to Thorns Hall.

Highlight: Great views of Baugh Fell and The Howgills.

Option 3 - Over the Howgills

Distance: 9 miles (14.5km)

Ascent: 1,850 feet (580m)

In summary: This circular walk from Sedbergh ascends to the summit of Arant Haw in the Howgill Fells. We then descend over the Nab to join the Dales Way and return to Sedbergh passing the Brigflatts Quaker Meeting House and the River Rawthey.

Highlight: An opportunity to get high onto the Howgill Fells; a beautiful upland area of rolling grassy hills.

Day 5 Free Day

Discover more about Thorns Hall and the local area for ideas on how to fill your free day.

Day 6 The Howgill Fells and Sedbergh

Option 1 - Cross Keys, Cautley Spout and Farfield Mill

Distance: 5 miles (8.5km)

Ascent: 500 feet (150m)

In summary: From the Cross Keys Temperance House we've the opportunity to view England's highest single drop waterfall - Cautley Spout. We will follow the path along the fell side to the arts and crafts centre - Farfield Mill. From here we take the short walk along the River Rawthey, to Sedbergh.

Highlight: Cautley Spout is England's highest waterfall above ground, tumbling a total of 650 feet down a cliff face.

Option 2 - The Lune Valley

Distance: 7 miles (11.5km)

Ascent: 500 feet (160m)

In summary: Walk through the beautiful Lune Valley along the Dales Way beside the river. We then make our way back to Sedbergh passing Brigflatts and the River Rawthey.

Highlight: The interesting Brigflatts, is one of the most famous and attractive Quaker meeting houses in Britain.

Option 3 - Howgill Traverse

Distance: 9 miles (14.5km)

Ascent: 2,150 feet (660m)

In summary: A fantastic north to south traverse across the Howgill Fells. Walking high in the hills for most of the day we'll follow the undulating ridge over Hazelgill Knott to the summit of The Calf, then continue onwards along the ridge to Sedbergh.

Highlight: The Calf is the highest point in the Howgills and enjoys a great view over the Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District mountains.

Day 7 **Smardale & Ravenstonedale**

Option 1 - Smardale Gill

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Ascent: 900 feet (280m)

In summary: Head over Smardale Fell to Smardale Hall, then along the valley side and across the viaduct back to Ravenstonedale.

Highlight: The valley of Smardale Gill is an unexpected delight crowned by the majestic viaduct of the old Darlington to Tebay railway.

Option 2 - Potts Valley & Smardale

Distance: 9½ miles (15km)

Ascent: 1,350 feet (400m)

In summary: From Newbiggin-on-Lune we head into Potts valley to Crosby Garrett returning via Smardale Gill and crossing the impressive grade 2 listed viaduct.

Highlight: Smardale Gill is a National Nature Reserve; a classic limestone habitat that is rich with butterflies, wild flowers and birds.

Option 3 - Green Bell and Randygill Top

Distance: 8.5 miles (14km)

Ascent: 1,800 feet (560m)

In summary: Journey over Green Bell and Randygill top, these quieter upland sections of the Howgills lead to a gentle descent and through farmlands to finish back in Ravenstonedale.

Highlight: The rolling grassy uplands of the Howgill fells.

Day 8 Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) 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

Thorns Hall, Sedbergh

Delivering on all fronts for countryside lovers, this cosy Grade II-listed manor house is just a skip away from Sedbergh – the Cumbrian market town treasured for its cobbled streets, public school, artisan shops, and bookshops (it's known as England's official book town for good reason). You'll also have the Yorkshire Dales National Park on your doorstep as well as the Howgill Fells - the small group of hills adored by legendary fellwalker, illustrator, and guidebook author Alfred Wainwright. The walking opportunities here are outstanding, but if you fancy travelling further afield there's Kendal (home of the mint cake), Hawes, Wensleydale, Appleby-in-Westmorland, and Lake Windemere all within easy driving distance.

About

· 25 well-appointed guest rooms · Exclusive occupancy: 32 guests minimum · Check in from 4:00pm · For members check in from 2:00pm · Free Wi-Fi · Free on-site parking · Boot room and drying room · Travel cot & high chair · 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 · Lounges · Garden · Electric vehicle charging point - Please note, you will need to bring your own cables to use this EV charging point

Then & now

The earliest reference to Thorns (it was renamed Thorns Hall in 1685) was in 1534 when Alan Sedgwick transferred 'the gudewill and tennendright of my hole Fermold cald Thornys' to Giles Lund of Sedbergh for £30. It was then sold in 1586 to John Mayer, Master of Sedbergh School, and the property remained in the family until 1679. It continued as the residence for subsequent Masters of Sedbergh School until 1802 when it was marketed as a 'handsome roomy mansion...with a large fruitful garden and orchard, a cottage, two water corn mills, drying kiln, malt kiln and granary'. It was purchased by sea captain William Findlay for £4,650 and changed hands a few times thereafter. It has been part of our HF Holidays line-up since 1988 and was visited by King Charles III during our centenary celebrations in 2013.

Although the building has been renovated, many of the original features will appeal to history lovers; think wood-panelled public rooms, beamed ceilings, open fireplaces, and stone flag flooring. There's also a pretty garden, books and games to borrow during your stay, a handy boot and drying room, and a Discovery Point offering a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and easy-to-follow information for self-guided walks. Accommodation comes by way of 25 well-appointed guest rooms in three categories (Classic, Premium, and Superior) spread across the main house, cottages, and cobbled courtyard. You'll also find a dining room for a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients, a licensed bar for cosying up with a drink by the log burner, and wow-worthy countryside views in every direction.

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 Thorns Hall

Designed with your comfort in mind, Thorns Hall has 25 well-appointed guest rooms available in three categories: Classic, Premium, and Superior.

Classic Rooms are comfortable en-suite guest rooms, ideal for a peaceful night's sleep. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, and shower gel), and a TV.

Premium Rooms are more spacious en-suite guest rooms*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers.

Superior Rooms are even more spacious en-suite guest rooms offering upgraded views of the surroundings*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers.

We love: The spacious Room 25 for its ground floor setting, brick fireplace, comfy seating, large bed, and gorgeous views of the gardens. Room 4 is large and airy while the cosier Room 13 has an exposed wood ceiling and courtyard view.

The **Choose Your Room** service is available at our UK country houses, allowing you the option of choosing and confirming a specific room for an extra charge of £30 per room. This is subject to availability. Upgrade supplements apply.

Room supplements

Superior	Premium single	Premium double/twin	Choose your room
£25 pppn	£20 pppn	£20 pppn	£30 per room

*Views and layout reflect each properties unique character and location

ACCESSIBILITY

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

Thorns Hall
Cautley Road
Sedbergh
Cumbria LA10 5LE

Tel: +44 (0)1539 620973

By train

The nearest station is Oxenholme, Lake District, on the main line between London and Glasgow.

Check National Rail for routes and journey times.

By shared transfer

If you're travelling to or from Thorns Hall on Mondays or Fridays or over the festive period, you can join our group transfer from Oxenholme Railway Station.

2026 prices are £50 per person for a return transfer or £25 per person for a single transfer.

Outward journey: Depart Oxenholme Railway Station at 16:45; arrive at Thorns Hall at 17:10.

Return journey: Depart Thorns Hall at 09:30; arrive at Oxenholme Railway Station at 10:10.

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

HF Holidays Sales and Support Team
Tel: +44 (0)203 974 8865
Email: reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

By taxi

The journey from Oxenholme station to Thorns Hall is 10 miles and will take about 20 minutes.

For pricing, please contact Woofs of Sedbergh directly.

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

Tel: +44 (0)1539 620414
Email: woofs.sedbergh@outlook.com

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

*Woofs of Sedbergh is not owned or managed by HF Holidays.

By car

There's a car park available at Thorns Hall if you decide to drive.

Leave the M6 at junction 37 and follow the A684 eastbound for five miles to Sedbergh. At Sedbergh follow the road into Finkle Street (avoiding the main street), then almost immediately turn left at a small roundabout into Back Lane. Turn onto the A683 following signs to Kirkby Stephen. Thorns Hall is 100 yards on the left.

By air

The nearest airport is Manchester International Airport.

There are direct trains every hour to Oxenholme with the journey taking around 90 minutes. From Oxenholme station you can complete the journey to Sedbergh by taxi.

National Rail have up-to-date information on train times and routes.

Flying to London Heathrow airport is another option, but it'll take you at least four hours to reach Oxenholme. Catch the train to London Paddington station, then the London Underground to London Euston where you can connect to the main line train to Oxenholme. The journey from here is 2.5 hours.

LOCAL AREA

Places to visit in the Western Yorkshire Dales

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 Thorns Hall.

Sedbergh

A few minutes' walk away, this Cumbrian market town is treasured for its cobbled streets, public school, and bookshops (it became England's Book Town in 2003). Just down the road is the Farfield Mill Arts, a crafts and heritage centre housed in a Victorian woollen mill.

Kendal

Home of Romney's Kendal Mint Cake which was made famous on 29 May 1953 when it was carried on the first successful summit of Mount Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Sirdar Tenzing, this market town is a 20-minute drive away.

Sizergh Castle

A 25-minute drive away, this 1,600-acre estate delights with ancient woodland, an award-winning limestone rock garden, and a boating lake. Built by the Strickland family in 1350, the house has turrets, battlements, a collection of family paintings, and oak-panelled interiors.

Levens Hall & Garden

A 30-minute drive away, this privately-owned Elizabethan mansion is most cherished for its award-winning topiary gardens – the oldest in the world. Inside, there's fine oak panelling, ornate plasterwork, leather wall coverings, and he earliest examples of English patchwork.

Settle to Carlisle Railway

This 73-mile-long railway route crosses regions of the Yorkshire Dales and the North Pennines. Head south for the Ribblehead Viaduct as well as Settle, Skipton and Saltaire – or head north for Appleby. The nearest station is Garsdale, a 20-minute drive away.

Hawes & Wensleydale

A 30-minute drive through the Yorkshire Dales takes you to the Hawes, the market town of Upper Wensleydale. From here you can continue through to Wensleydale, the wide open valley famous for its historic villages, traditional markets and crafts, and plentiful cheeses.

Lake District

A 40-minute drive away, the Lake District in the heart of Cumbria has been adored by poets, painters, and literary giants for centuries. It spoils first-timers and returning visitors with charming villages, tumbling waterfalls, impressive peaks, and shimmering bodies of water.

Lake Windemere

An hour's drive away, this watery wonder measures 10.5 miles long, one mile wide, and 220 feet deep. Whether you start your journey in Bowness, Ambleside, or Lakeside, there are plenty of cruise operators offering old-fashioned steamers or modern sightseeing vessels.

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.

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