7 Night Scottish Highlands Christmas & New Year Self-Guided Walking Holiday



Trip style:
Self-guided walking

Destination:
Scottish Highlands

Carbon Footprint:
115kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Few places gift walkers with winter scenery like Scotland does. Hike through snowy Scottish Highlands, crunch over frostbitten fields, and ramble by frozen lochs for an experience sure to put you in a merry mood. And then there's the reward. Fire roaring and a belly-warming whisky ready for pouring, festive breaks at our country house in Glen Coe come with all the Christmas magic you could wish for. We pull out all the stops at this time of year and welcome you with a sprinkling of festive cheer, fresh, 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 self-guided walking holiday
- Staying in our charming country house in the Scottish Highlands
- Heading out on your choice of winter walks
- The easy-to-follow routes and maps available in our Discovery Point
- Discovering the stunning landscapes of Scottish Highlands on foot

- A celebration dinner with all the trimmings on Christmas Day and New Year's Eve

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information available in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

ITINERARY - SELF-GUIDED

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 2–7 **Leg Stretcher Walks (Walking Grades 2 - 4)**

These are a selection of longer walks on well-graded paths that allow you to discover local highlights and viewpoints. These routes are often further from the house but still offer walks that start and end on the doorstep of the property, plus options for guests travelling by public transport or car. The walks you'll find in our Discovery Point at Alltshellach range from 4 to 9 miles and visit popular areas such as Steall Falls, Kentallen, and the Lost Valley.

Day 2–7 **Laid Back Walks (Walking Grade 1 - 2)**

Our easiest selection means walking at a relaxed pace, often stopping and spending time at places of interest along the way. Some are circular walks that start and end on the doorstep of our country house; others make use of local transport whilst remaining close to the property. The walks you'll find in our Discovery Point at Alltshellach range from 2.5 to 5 miles and visit popular areas such as Glenfinnan, Kinlochleven, and Lismore.

Day 2–7 **Full on Walks (Walking Grade 2 - 5)**

These walks are ideal for those with more stamina who can push themselves to go that extra mile. Some routes will start from the house, but some may require the use of a car. Public transport may not be possible for every route in this category due to remote locations. The walks you'll find in our Discovery Point at Alltshellach range from 4.5 to 11 miles and visit popular areas such as Ben Nevis, the Ballachulish hills, and Glencoe.

Day 8 **Departure Day**

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Alltshellach, Glencoe

For a combination of mountain views, olde-worlde charm, and somewhere comfortable to sleep, this stately Scottish house in North Ballachulish has an enviable setting right on the shores of Loch Leven. The walking opportunities here are as every bit rugged and romantic as you'd expect, especially around Glen Coe, the Mamores, Kinlochleven, Bidean nam Bian, and Ben Nevis – the 1,345-metre-high peak towering above glistening lochans and glacial valleys in the north-west Highlands. You can also spend time in Fort William and ride the Hogwarts-esque Jacobite steam train as it makes its way through beauty spots such as Loch Eil, Glenfinnan, and Arisaig to the fishing port of Mallaig.

About

· 38 well-appointed guest rooms · Exclusive occupancy: 53 guests minimum · Check in from 4:00pm · For members check in from 2:00pm · Full-board (including cream tea on arrival) · Free Wi-Fi · Free on-site parking · Boot room and drying room · 2 travel cots & 2 high chairs · Discovery Point offering a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and information for self-guided walks · Indoor pool · Books and games to borrow · Licensed bar · Three lounges · Lawns and wooded grounds leading down to Loch Leven · Electric vehicle charging point - Please note, you will need to bring your own cables to use this EV charging point

The pool opening hours: 7am -12pm and 4:30pm-9pm

Then & now

Designed in the early 1870s by Inverness architect Alexander Ross, Alltshellach was built for Lady Alice Ewing – fourth daughter of the 19th Earl of Morton and the second wife and widow of Alexander Ewing, a former Bishop of Argyll & the Isles. Their daughter, Margaret, married Liberal MP Alexander Crum while their granddaughter, also Margaret, married William Thomson (later known as Lord Kelvin) who was one of the most important physicists of the 19th century for determining the absolute zero on any temperature scale. The house remained in the family thereafter, with notable architectural additions including a private chapel, coach houses, stables, and five cottages built from Kentallen granite to house the groomsman and servants. It has been part of our HF Holidays line-up since 1929 (we purchased the property in 1953) and used as a military hospital during WWII.

Nowadays, Alltshellach has 38 well-appointed guest rooms in three categories (Classic, Premium, and Superior). Room 23 on the second floor is known as the Bishop's Room for its small prayer area, but this was most likely to have been the children's bedroom as the bishop would have slept in one of the larger rooms on the first floor. You'll find three comfortable lounges (the area with the small stained glass window at the end of the entrance hall was probably the private chapel), a dining room for a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients, and a licensed bar with a superb Scottish whisky selection. Elsewhere, there's a handy boot and drying room, books and games to borrow during your stay, a Discovery Point offering a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and easy-to-follow information for self-guided walks, and beautiful lawns and wooded grounds leading down to Loch Leven. It also has a heated indoor swimming pool that is open all year round*.

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 Alltshellach

Designed with your comfort in mind, Alltshellach has 38 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: Room 21 for its extra space, corner position, and gorgeous views across Loch Leven. Equally fabulous is Room 23 (known as the Bishop's Room) on the second floor.

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

*Please note, pool opening hours are: 07:00am – 09:00am 16:00pm – 18:30pm

ACCESSIBILITY

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

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

Alltshellach
Onich
Fort William
Invernesshire PH33 6SA

Tel: +44 (0)1855 821357

HF Holidays Sales and Support Team

Telephone: +44 (0) 208 0155108

Email: reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

(our office customer support team are happy to help with any requests or queries you may have for the house)

Flights to Glasgow are available on a request basis; please contact our team for a quotation. Thank you.

By HF Holidays Shared Transfer

We offer group transfers for your convenience/peace of mind on **Saturdays**, or over the **festive period**. Available transfers will show as options on the booking page, if appropriate, for your requested holiday date/s.

2026 Prices: £85 per person for a return transfer, or £55 per person for a single transfer.

Outward journey: Depart Glasgow Buichanan Street Bus Station at 15:15, or Glasgow Airport at 15:45. Arrive at Alltshellach approx. 18:30.

Return journey: Depart Alltshellach at 09:30, arrive at Glasgow Airport at approx. 11:30 or Glasgow Buchanan Street Bus Station at approx. 12:00

These transfers are at additional cost and MUST be booked in advance via our website, by email or with our team over the phone (please see above contact info for the Sales & Support Team. Thank you.

By Road

From Glasgow (or the south) take the A82 towards Crianlarich then Fort William. Once you reach Ballachulish go straight on at the roundabout, over the steel bridge and take the second right onto the B863 towards Kinlochleven. Once you've turned onto the B863, continue around 400 yards and you will find Alltshellach on your right.

From Fort William (or the north) take the A82 southbound towards Glencoe. Once you reach North Ballachulish, turn left onto the B863 towards Kinlochleven (if you've reached the steel bridge at Ballachulish then you've gone too far). Once you've turned onto the B863, continue around 400 yards and you will find Alltshellach on your right.

By Taxi

Alltshellach is an approx. 25 mins taxi journey from **Fort William**. There are frequent train services along the west coast between Glasgow and Fort William. Please see the 'By Train' section for further information. Taxi companies to consider include the below:

West Highland Taxis Tel: 01855 831495, jamie@westhighlandtaxis.com

Nevis Taxis Tel: 01397 703000, nevistaxi@hotmail.com

Lochaber Taxis Tel: 01397 703334, pedro@lochabertaxis.com

Alltshellach is approx. 97 miles from **Glasgow city centre**, which takes around 2h30 and is a considerable cost by taxi; we would suggest using public transport in the first instance as the most reasonable option.

By Bus

For journey planning, including for any bus, coach, ferry, Glasgow Subway or Edinburgh Tram service in Scotland, we recommend using www.travelinescotland.com for the most up to date information. There is also an app you can download or you can call 01421 465 1878 for further information.

Alltshellach's closest bus stop is **North Ballachulish, at/opposite Kinlochleven Road End on A82.** You can request that your driver stop here (there is no need to continue on to Fort William - however please check timetables that the bus is scheduled to stop at North Ballachulish). The bus stop is approx. 0.4 mile (or 8 mins) walk away from Alltshellach, on flat pavement. There is no need to cross the steel bridge. The bus stop is on the A82; disembark here and then turn onto the B863 towards Kinlochleven, and Alltshellach is 400 yards on your right. We regret that HF staff are not permitted to collect/drop you at the bus station for insurance reasons.

The bus to/from Glasgow and North Ballachulish takes approx. 2h45. The main bus station in Glasgow is **Buchanan Bus Station, Glasgow City.**

The bus between Edinburgh and North Ballachulish takes approx. 3h40 or longer. The main bus station in **Edinburgh is Edinburgh Bus Station, City of Edinburgh**.

If you are travelling by train and arriving into (or departing from) **Fort William**, then there is a bus service between Fort William and North Ballachulish, which takes approx. 25 mins, and at peak times the service runs approx every 30 mins.

Ember also run electric bus services across Scotland, including to Fort William. For further information see https://www.ember.to/

By Train

The nearest train station to Alltshellach is **Fort William**.

For journey planning by rail, please visit www.scotrail.co.uk. You can also view handy maps of Scotrail routes here; https://www.scotrail.co.uk/plan-your-journey/our-routes

Trains operate between **Glasgow Queen Street** and Fort William, and the journey time is approx. 3h50; this is a scenic journey on what is often known as the 'West Highland Line'.

There is a bus service between Fort William and North Ballachulish, which takes approx. 25 mins, and at peak times the service runs approx every 30 mins. Please see the 'By Bus' section on this webpage.

If you plan to travel from Edinburgh to Fort William, then there are trains between **Edinburgh Waverley station** and Glasgow. There are two train stations in Glasgow offering services to/from Edinburgh; Glasgow Central and Glasgow Queen Street, and it is a short 10 mins walk between the two (or you can take a taxi).

By Air

The nearest airport to Alltshellach is **Glasgow Airport (GLA),** which is around 87 miles away by road. For information on flights, car hire and other services from the airport, please visit https://www.glasgowairport.com/

There is an official bus service connecting the Glasgow Airport and the city centre (Glasgow Buchanan Bus Station); journey times from just 15 mins, aboard a fleet of electric buses. **Airport Express Service 500** is operated by First Glasgow; please see https://www.glasgowairport.com/to-and-from/glasgow-airport-express-service-500/ for further information. From the city centre, you can take a train and/or bus north to Alltshellach; please see those relevant sections for further information.

Other than the above mentioned Airport Express Service, regular buses from the airport to the city centre (Buchanan Bus Station) take between 30 mins and 1hr, dependent on the service you choose and traffic. Please visit www.travelinescotland.com for further journey planning.

Please note, Glasgow is served by two airports; the main Glasgow Airport (GLA) is located approx. 8 miles west of the city centre, in Paisley. There is also Glasgow Prestwick Airport (PIK) which is located about 32 miles southwest of the city, in Ayrshire.

Edinburgh Airport (EDI) is around 114 miles by road from Alltshellach. For information on flights, car hire and other services from the airport, please visit https://www.edinburghairport.com/

There is a convenient tram service between the airport and Edinburgh city centre, taking approx. 30 mins. For further information please see https://edinburghtrams.com/.

There are Scottish Citylink bus services between Edinburgh Airport and Glasgow, taking around 1h20. For information regarding transport links between Edinburgh Airport and the city centre, please see https://www.edinburghairport.com/transport-links

LOCAL AREA

Places to visit in the Scottish Highlands

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 Alltshellach.

Ballachulish

Split into three (North Ballachulish, South Ballachulish and Ballachulish Village), the village was once famous for its slate. Nowadays, one of the best-known attractions is the 9-hole Woodlands Golf Course, formally known as The Dragon's Tooth.

Fort William

Nicknamed the Outdoor Capital of the UK, this West Highland town on the banks of Loch Linnhe is a 25-minute drive away. The town centre has a high street with an excellent selection of shops selling outdoor clothing and walking equipment.

Jacobite Steam Train

Making its way through beauty spots such as Loch Eil, Glenfinnan and Arisaig as it travels to the fishing port of Mallaig, riding this Hogwarts-esque steam train is a must for *Harry Potter* fans. Trains run daily and early booking is recommended.

Isle of Mull

Reached by car ferry from Oban or Lochaline, this Inner Hebridean island is home to Tobermory - the colourful town featured in children's TV series, *Balamory*. Don't miss Duart Castle, the ancestral home of Clan Maclean – one of the oldest Highlands families.

Isle of Lismore

After hiring bikes at Port Appin, a 30-minute drive away, it's just a short ferry crossing to this quiet and rural island. Must-dos include making the most of the walking and cycling opportunities, spotting all manner of wildlife, and visiting the Lismore Gaelic Heritage Centre.

Oban

As the unofficial capital of the West Highlands of Scotland and the Gateway to the Hebridean Isles, this harbour town is a 45-minute drive away. The climb to McCaig's Tower rewards with spectacular views across Oban Bay to the Atlantic Islands.

Eilean Donan Castle

Claiming to be the most-photographed Scottish castle, this ancient stronghold worth the 80-mile drive. It opened to the public in 1955 and has since become one of the country's best-loved attractions. Most interesting is the banqueting hall, kitchen, and main keep.

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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