Great Glen Way Guided Trail



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided trails	Scottish Highlands	7	123kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The Great Glen Way is a classic Scottish long-distance trail which follows the mighty geological fault line that carved a path for the Caledonian Canal. Low-level towpaths and forest trails lead us from Scotland's western shores at Fort William to historic Inverness in the east. The Great Glen takes us along the banks of Loch Lochy, Loch Oich, and the famous Loch Ness, where we'll follow a high-level path to enjoy spectacular views of the surrounding highland scenery. Along the way there'll be a tour of the Uile-bheist Distillery and a chance to visit the Loch Ness Monster Exhibition Centre before ending our journey at the impressive Inverness Castle.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Walking a classic long-distance trail from Fort William to Inverness
- Highland scenery of rugged mountains and views over Loch Ness and Loch Lochy
- Following the natural fault line that makes up the Caledonian Canal
- The ease of a two-hotel holiday so you don't need to pack/unpack each day
- A private guided tour of Uile-bheist Brewery and Distillery with a tasting
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 15 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Guided walks with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- Comfortable en-suite rooms in our Highland house and partner accommodation
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- All transport to and from walks where necessary
- Luggage transfer

ITINERARY - GUIDED TRAIL

Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Arrival at Alltshellach, leader introduction and evening meal. Your leader will be at reception to meet the group and for a quick introduction to the holiday before dinner.

Day 2 **Fort William to Achnacarry**

Gentle tow paths of the Caledonian Canal lead us from Fort William to Gairlochy, past the impressive Neptune's Staircase. On a clear day you'll be treated to fantastic views of Scotland's highest mountain, Ben Nevis. From Gairlochy, forest trails wind along the shore to Achnacarry, where we end today's walk at the 17th century croft house, now home to the Clan Cameron museum.

15 miles (24km) with 440 feet (135m) of ascent

Day 3 **Achnacarry to North Laggan**

Following forest tracks we hug the peaceful shores of Loch Lochy en-route to Laggan and the secluded shores of Loch Oich. Enjoy a rest at the end of the day and visit the Eagle Barge, a Dutch canal boat that has now been converted to a bar/restaurant, moored at Laggan Locks. The only floating pub on the canal!

12.5 miles (20km) with 690 feet (210m) of ascent.

Day 4 **North Laggan to Fort Augustus**

Tranquil shores and mixed woodland paths offer us a scenic route to the historic village of Fort Augustus. Our day begins through woodland above the northern shores of Loch Oich, before continuing at a leisurely pace along the tow paths. While away some time watching the boats make their way through the flight of locks in the centre of Fort Augustus.

This evening, before dinner, our group will enjoy a private guided tour of the Uile-bheist Brewery and Distillery – linked to the Glen Mhor Hotel. Uncover the secrets, folklore and mythology behind Uile-bheist and discover the rich history of whisky and beer making in Inverness. Following the tour there will be a tasting of their Colpach blended whisky and beer, before heading for dinner at the hotel.

11.5 miles (18.5km) with 820 feet (250m) of ascent

Day 5 Fort Augustus to Invermoriston

Some splendid forest trails take us past the River Moriston as it tumbles into the waters of Loch Ness, and on towards Invermoriston. Keep your eyes peeled, you never know, you may get a glimpse of the infamous Loch Ness Monster. Today we take the high route, but the climb is worthwhile for the spectacular views in fine weather.

7.5 miles (12km) with 1575ft (480m) of ascent (High Route)

Day 6 Invermoriston to Drumnadrochit

Heading above the shores of Loch Ness, we experience a mix of forest, moorland and farmland walking as we wind our way to the teashops of Drumnadrochit. You can opt to visit the Loch Ness Monster Exhibition Centre which is home to seven different themed museums covering 500 million years' worth of history, and a fantastic source of information on the area (optional/payable locally). If the weather is kind, we will take the high route for wonderful vistas over the Highlands.

13.5 miles (22km) with 2,260 feet (690m) of ascent (High Route)

Day 7 Drumnadrochit to Inverness

Our final day follows highland drove roads through conserved plantations of the ancient Scots pine all the way to the Highland city of Inverness. Whilst this is the most challenging section of the Great Glen Way, it is straightforward with easy going terrain and reaches a fitting finale at the imposing Inverness Castle. Any extra effort will be rewarded by spectacular views.

19 miles (30.5km) with 1840 feet (560m) of ascent

Please note this walk is +1 grade higher than the overall grade of the holiday as a whole.

Day 8 Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



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

Alltshellach - Great Glen Way

For a combination of mountain views, olde-worlde charm, and somewhere comfortable to sleep, our stately Scottish house in Glen Coe is hard to beat. With an enviable setting right on the shores of Loch Leven, the scenery here is every bit rugged and romantic as you'd expect. After a long day of walking, unwind in one of three comfortable lounges with a wee dram or two, take a swim in the indoor pool, or take a post-dinner stroll around the beautiful lawns and wooded grounds that lead down to the water's edge.

Glen Mhor Hotel, Inverness – Great Glen Way

The Glen Mhor Hotel is nestled on the banks of the River Ness, just along from Inverness Castle and opposite Inverness Cathedral. The hotel is located in a conservation area of Inverness City centre, and is all about sustainability – the property recently had a £7.5 million investment in an autonomous energy centre, water system and 'Brewstillery'. Rooms include tea and coffee making facilities, TV, hairdryer, iron and ironing board and WiFi.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

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 (hyrodstatic 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 midge repellent/net and tick remover tool
- Sit mat
- Waterproof pouch for valuables
- Rubbish bag (remember to always leave no trace)
- Wallet/purse
- Camera
- Walking poles
- Midge net

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

Joining instruction

PLEASE NOTE the website www.travelinescotland.com is a fantastic resource for public transport in Scotland and planning your journey.

Holiday Start

Your first three nights are spent at Alltshellach (HF Holidays Country House).

By Air

There are International flights and also flights from around the UK to Glasgow International Airport. From Glasgow International Airport take the regular airport bus to Glasgow Central station (journey time 30 minutes) (www.glasgowairport.com). You may also wish to consider pre-booking with all-electric, intercity bus service Ember (as they operate a dynamic service based on pre-booked seats); https://www.ember.to/ or please see Traveline Scotland above. There are also flights to Glasgow Prestwick Airport, which has its own railway station with frequent trains (journey time 45 minutes to Glasgow Central station), (www.gpia.co.uk).

By Bus

You can reach Alltshellach from Glasgow Airport by bus from
Glasgow City using the Scottish Citylink Bus (the nearest bus stop is at North Ballachulish (not Ballachulish) which is a 400m walk from Alltshellach). See www.citylink.co.uk for the timetable and to book in advance. Please also see the Ember service mentioned above.

By Rail

The nearest railway station to Alltshellach is at Fort William and there are trains from Glasgow. You can take a taxi to the house; there are plenty of taxi companies available in Fort William if you search online, or our house manager can arrange a local taxi from Fort William if required. Alternatively please see above for information regarding bus timetables from Fort William to North Ballachulish (a 400m walk away).

Holiday Finish

Your final four nights are spent at our partner accommodation in Inverness, the Glen Mhor Hotel.

By Air

You can reach Inverness Airport by taxi (approx. 25 mins) or by using the Stagecoach bus (approx. 50 mins) see Welcome to Stagecoach for the timetable and to book in advance. There are flights throughout the UK out of Inverness.

By Rail

The nearest railway station to the hotel is Inverness (3 mins by taxi). The hotel team can arrange a local taxi if required.

By Car

If you have travelled to Alltshellach by car, you may wish to travel by bus back to the house; please see www.travelinescotland.com for bus timetables. Thank you.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Safety Information

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.

In the event of a problem

If you become separated from your group, please stay where you are. Your leader will retrace their steps to find you.

All our walk leaders carry a mobile phone, group shelter, spare maps and a compass. In the unlikely event your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call the emergency services (call 999 in the UK, or 112 overseas).

Please then try to call the hotel where you are staying to let them know there is a problem.

We advise you carry a copy of these trip notes or note down the contact phone number for your accommodation (details in the travel section) should you need them in case of emergency.

If you have any cause for complaints regarding accommodation, you should notify your leader who can then attempt to rectify the problem.

Ticks

Ticks are tiny creatures that live in vegetation and can attach themselves to passing animals or walkers and may carry a risk of Lyme Disease. Please refer to NHS advice and guidelines for information prior to your holiday.

Your Island Hopping Leader

Our experienced and knowledgeable volunteer leaders undergo a thorough assessment to lead you on your holiday and are delighted to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with you.

Please ensure you complete and hand in your registration form on arrival and let the leader know about any medical problems you may have. This may be useful in the event of a problem on the walk and will be treated confidentially by the leader.

In the event of a problem

If you become separated from your group, please stay where you are. Your leader will retrace their steps to find you.

All our leaders carry a mobile phone, group shelter, spare maps and a compass. In the unlikely event your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call the emergency services (call 999 in the UK, or 112 overseas).

Please then try to call the hotel where you are staying to let them know there is a problem.

If you have any cause for complaints regarding accommodation, you should notify your leader who can then attempt to rectify the problem.

Maps and Guides for Great Glen Way

Suggested Reading and Maps

Your leader will carry all the necessary maps and guides. For you own interest you may consider looking at some of the following:

www.greatglenway.com

Harvey Maps: Great Glen Way (strip maps on a single sheet)

Footprint Maps: Great Glen Way (strip map on a single sheet)

Great Glen Way by Jacquetta Megarry and Sandra Bardwell (also contains small scale strip maps)

Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Landranger sheets 26 (Inverness and Loch Ness), 34 (Fort Augustus) and 41 (Ben Nevis)

Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Explorer Sheets 392 (Ben Nevis and Fort William), 400 (Loch Lochy and Glen Roy) and 416 (Inverness, Loch Ness and Culloden)

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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