

Great Glen Way Guided Trail

Trip style: Guided trails

Destination: 📍 Scottish Highlands

Trip code: XAY07-LDW11

Trip Walking Grade: ⚡ 4



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

WALKING GRADES AND OPTIONS

This Guided Walking/Hiking Trail is graded 4 which involves walks/hikes over long distances in remote countryside and rough terrain. Underfoot conditions can be rough, boggy and pathless in places. Sustained ascents and descents require a good level of fitness. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant fitness and equipment required to join this holiday. A sustained effort is required to complete this trail and provision cannot be made for anyone who opts out. Some sections of the trail are across remote country and the terrain can be rough underfoot in places. Please be sure you can manage the daily mileage and ascent detailed in the daily itineraries. The walking day is normally 6 to 7 hours. It is important for your own enjoyment, and that of your fellow guests that you can maintain the pace.

Your fitness

This holiday has been designed for experienced walkers with a good level of fitness. Having a solid base of fitness before your holiday will ensure you've the best chance of completing the holiday and enjoying it to boot. Here's a few simple tips to help you get fit and ready for your challenge:

- Get out walking – whatever the weather, get out there, and start building your fitness months before your holiday
- Build your distance gradually and get a number of 6-8hr hill days in
- Ideally, try and do two consecutive days training if possible
- Take the stairs every time
- Train on different terrain
- Train with your day pack and your walking boots too, to ensure they're well worn in before your holiday
- Other sports help improve your walking fitness too. The best ones are jogging, cycling, swimming, which will build your stamina, and yoga which will help strengthen your core and improve balance

Time training will help ensure you enjoy your holiday to the max.

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 Gairloch, 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 Gairloch, 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 2,430 feet (740m) 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

Day 8 Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

Daily Walk Options



Medium Walks

Long distances in remote countryside and on rough terrain. You can expect some sustained ascents and descents; there may be occasional sections of scree and steep ground.

Accommodation

Alltshellach - West Highland 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. **Holiday Finish** The last four nights are spent at Alltshellach (HF Holidays Country House). You can return to Glasgow Airport or 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. The nearest railway station to Alltshellach is at Fort William. Our house manager can arrange a local taxi to Fort William if required.

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.

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. Fleece makes 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 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

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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