

4-Night Northumberland Guided Walking for Solos Holiday

Tour Style: Guided Walking Holidays for Solos

Destinations: Northumberland & England

Trip code: ALBOS-4

1, 2 & 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Country walking is a great way to meet new friends. We welcome individual travellers on all of our holidays, but on Guided Walking for Solos the entire holiday is especially for single guests. Enjoy like-minded company and a great selection of walks on the Northumberland Coast. Discover stunning beaches, iconic castles, and the peaceful Simonside and Cheviot Hills.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- High quality en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Full board from dinner upon arrival to breakfast on departure day
- 3 days guided walking
- Use of our comprehensive Discovery Point
- Choice of up to three guided walks each walking day
- The services of HF Holidays Walking Leaders

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Follow the River Aln past magnificent Alnwick Castle
- Walk in the Simonside Hills
- Walk to the clifftop Dunstanburgh Castle near a rich site for seabirds
- See the best of the Northumberland coast
- Get to know other solo travellers as you walk and socialise in the evenings

TRIP SUITABILITY

This trip is graded Activity Level 1,2 and 3, Get away from it all to explore peaceful Northumberland on our guided walks. Enjoy stunning walks along the coast in this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, taking in the iconic castles at Bamburgh, Dunstanburgh and Lindisfarne, and looking out for dolphins and seals. Heading inland the Cheviot and Simonside Hills in the Northumberland National Park each offer rare tranquility; two of England's undiscovered gems. Join our friendly and knowledgeable guides who will bring this beautiful landscape to life.

Our experienced guides offer the choice of up to three different walks each day
Choose the option which best suits your interests and fitness

We provide flexible holidays. Join our guided walks, explore independently, or relax at Nether Grange

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

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

Enjoy a complimentary Afternoon Tea on arrival.

Day 2: Around Alnwick Or The Breamish Valley

Option 1 - Around Alnwick

In Summary: Follow the River Aln, past Alnwick Castle and into Hulne Deer Park, part of the Duke of Northumberland's estate. Here we'll see the striking remains of Hulne Priory, before returning to the historic town of Alnwick.

Highlight: Enjoy great views of Alnwick's mighty medieval castle as you follow the riverside path along the River Aln.

Distance: 7 miles (11½km)

Total ascent: 600 feet (180m)

Option 2 - Along The River Aln

Summary: From Denwick village follow pleasant paths and by-ways down to the River Aln and pass Alnwick castle on the way to Hulne Deer Park. Here visit the Priory Ruins before returning to Alnwick.

Highlight: The curious statues at the Priory.

Distance: 9½ miles (15km)

Total ascent: 600 feet (180m)

Option 3 - Breamish Valley Hill Fort

In Summary: An upland walk from the remote, winding valley of the River Breamish visiting some remarkable Iron Age hill forts in wonderful scenery.

Highlight: The poignant memorial cairn for two cheviot shepherds.

Distance: 11½ miles (18½km)

Total ascent: 2,200 feet (660m)

Day 3: Rothbury And The Simonside Hills

Option 1 - Above Rothbury

Distance: 7 miles (11½km)

Ascent: 1,100 feet (340m)

In Summary: A circuit from Rothbury heads onto the hills above the town, following the winding carriage drive, which loops round the forests and moorland of Lord Armstrong's Cragside Estate.

Highlight: Look out over the fine rolling countryside of Northumberland with excellent views of the Cheviot and Simonside Hills.

Option 2 - Dove Crag & Rothbury

Distance: 9 miles (14½km)

Ascent: 1,450 feet (440m)

In Summary: Walk from Rothbury through fieldpaths to the village of Thropton, then climb steadily through woodland to the summit of Dove Crag, on the Simonside Hills. We descend back into Rothbury via the Beacon and Garleigh Moor.

Highlight: The Simonside Hills are a real hidden gem. Look out for the ancient cup-and-ring stones on top of Garleigh Moor.

Option 3 - The Simonside Hills

Distance: 10½ miles (17km)

Ascent: 1,900 feet (580m)

In Summary: Ascend via Garleigh Moor to walk the length of the Simonside Hills. After a steep descent from the summit, we drop down through woodland to Thropton, then climb again to follow part of the carriage-drive back into Rothbury.

Highlight: Enjoy panoramic views up Coquetdale and into the Cheviots from the top of the Simonside Hills.

Day 4: Along The Northumberland Coast

Option 1 - Craster To Alnmouth

Distance: 7½ miles (12.5km)

Ascent: 450 feet (140m)

In Summary: Walk south along the coast from the quaint fishing village of Craster to Alnmouth.* Walk on the low cliffs and the beach, with fantastic sea views throughout.

Highlight: Explore the atmospheric harbour at Craster, and let your nose lead you to famous kipper smokehouse.

**due to a stretch of beach walking, this walk may be reversed to avoid doing so at/near high tide*

Option 2 - Dunstanburgh Castle

Distance: 10½ miles (17km)

Ascent: 700 feet (220m)

In Summary: Walk from Embleton to the iconic ruins of Dunstanburgh Castle, then follow the path all the way back along the beautiful Northumberland Coast to Alnmouth.*

Highlight: Dunstanburgh Castle occupies a glorious cliff-top position. Look out for fulmars, razorbills and kittiwakes nesting nearby.

**due to a stretch of beach walking, this walk may be reversed to avoid doing so at/near high tide*

Option 3 - High Newton To Alnmouth

Distance: 12½ miles (20km)

Ascent: 700 feet (220m)

In Summary: Starting further north at High Newton this grand coastal walk takes in the sweeping arc of Embleton Bay, Dunstanburgh Castle and Craster, before continuing to Alnmouth.*

Highlight: A glorious opportunity to see the best of the Northumberland Coast. With luck you may see seals, as well as the rich array of birdlife.

**due to a stretch of beach walking, this walk may be reversed to avoid doing so at/near high tide*

Day 5: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Nether Grange

Sitting pretty in the centre of the quiet harbour village of Alnmouth, Nether Grange stands in an area rich in natural beauty and historic gravitas. There are moving views of the dramatic North Sea coastline from the house too. This one-time 18th century granary was first converted into a large family home for the High Sheriff of Northumberland in the 19th century and then reimagined as a characterful hikers' hotel. Many of the 36 bedrooms look out across the sea, while a large lounge, conservatory and adjoining bar are there to entertain you. Easily accessible from the house are the coast path while inland lies the Northumberland National Park. North are the Farne Islands and their spectacular seabird colonies and close by is Lindisfarne and its romantic castle accessible at low-tide via an ancient pilgrim's path. Nearby too is the medieval market town of Alnwick and its eponymous castle, as well as the atmospheric ruins of Dunstanburgh Castle, perched on a grassy peninsula to the south of Embelton Bay. Best of all though is Bamburgh Castle, built to resemble a magnificent medieval fortress but actually an impressive Victorian folly.

Matchless Country House Accommodation

Accommodation Info

Need To Know

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

Following the relaxation in government guidance on 19 July, 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. All of our swimming pools are open, except for Glen Coe, which will not re-open this year. 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

Stay in one of the house's smartly presented rooms up an impressive sweeping staircase. Full of warm tones or coastal colours and comfy touches they're a great base for exploring the area. With 36 bedrooms, Nether Grange has plenty of space and there's a range of Good and Better Rooms to choose from.

All 'Good' rooms are ensuite and furnished to a high standard. There are also several 'Better' Rooms that are either larger or have a desirable view, a more luxurious mattress and larger television – 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 garden, multi-purpose activity room, lounges, library and board games to borrow

After a day walking on the coast, come back to the house and its specially tailored walkers' facilities. Relax by sitting in the elevated terrace gardens with a cooling drink and a cracking sea view or challenge a fellow guest to a game of croquet or giant chess, backed by views of the beach and sea beyond. The spick and span sky-blue painted bar with its mismatched blue and stripy seats boasts all the requisite cosiness and British bonhomie, plus a selection of local beers and your favourite tipple. Settle in.

Food & Drink

As at all 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. Lunch is a chance to stock up on our famous picnic snacks. Food at Nether Grange is hearty and has a strong emphasis on ingredients from the area and seasonal produce. Once a week the light-filled dining room hosts a Local Food Night, when, over a sociable evening, you might try a five-course feast of local flavours.

Accessibility

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

TRAVEL DETAILS

Our address is: Nether Grange, Alnmouth, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 2RZ
Tel: [01665 830431](tel:01665830431)

Nether Grange sits on a headland and only has access to limited roadside parking. We advise our guests to use rail travel where possible. Nether Grange is a 5-minute taxi ride from Alnmouth train station

By Train:

The nearest railway station is Alnmouth, on the main line between Newcastle and Edinburgh. For train times

and route planning by train visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or phone 03457 48 49 50

By Taxi:

The 1½-mile journey from Alnmouth railway station takes approximately 5 minutes. You can pre-book a taxi from our recommended taxi company, Knight's Taxis. As a guide price, it cost £6 per 4-seat taxi in 2019. 8-seat taxis are also available at a higher rate. Please pre-book your taxi at least 7 days in advance by contacting:

Knight's Taxis*
Tel: +44 (0) 7760 751667
Email: info@knightstaxi.com

The return taxi journey can be arranged on your behalf by the Nether Grange Manager.

*Knight's Taxis is not owned or managed by HF Holidays

By Car:

Take the A1 to Alnwick. Exit on the A1068 heading towards Alnwick. At the roundabout turn right (not well signed) and follow the A1068 towards Alnmouth. After 2¾ miles go straight ahead at the first roundabout then left at the second roundabout onto the B1338. Cross a bridge as you approach Alnmouth, turning right at the next roundabout, then almost immediately left into The Wynd. Follow the one way system into Marine Road, passing the golf clubhouse on the left, and round into Northumberland Street. After 100yds turn right into the narrow Pease's Lane. Nether Grange is on the left. Please note that Nether Grange does not have a car park, there is very limited on-street parking available on a first come basis. You can park in available slots on Marine Road, Pease's Lane and elsewhere in town. There is a pay and display car park at the end of Marine Road.

Travelling From Overseas

The nearest airport is at Newcastle which is served by European flights, and UK regional flights from London. From here take the metro to Newcastle Central station, then on by train to Alnmouth - a straightforward journey taking just over 1 hour.

Manchester Airport has a much wider range of long-haul flights. There are trains every hour from the airport to Alnmouth with one change at Newcastle. Allow 3½ hours to Alnmouth - see www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times.

Flying to London Heathrow airport is another option, but has a longer onward train journey - allow 5 hours to reach Alnmouth. From Heathrow first take the Piccadilly line Underground train to London Kings Cross station. From here take a train to Alnmouth - see www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times.

Edinburgh Airport is also a possibility.

LOCAL AREA

Nether Grange sits right at the heart of the historic coastal village of Alnmouth. Located right on the North Sea coast there is a sweeping sandy beach and a small tidal harbour. Facilities include a handful of small shops, pubs and cafés.

A wider range of facilities, including shops, supermarkets, banks and chemists can be found in Alnwick, the nearest town. Alnwick is about four miles inland and is connected to Alnmouth by regular buses.

During your visit to the Nether Grange you may enjoy visiting the following places of interest:

Alnwick Castle

The huge Norman [Alnwick Castle](http://www.alnwickcastle.com) is a big attraction and has gained increased interest since being used as

'Hogwarts Castle' in the Harry Potter films and as Brancaster Castle in two Downton Abbey Christmas specials. It was also used as a location in the first series of Blackadder. The castle has been home to the Percy family for over 700 years and today is home to Ralph Percy, the 12th Duke of Northumberland. Alnwick is just 10 to 15 minutes' drive from Alnmouth, and can also be reached using the hourly X18 bus.

The Alnwick Garden

The [Alnwick Garden](#) has been created by the current Duchess of Northumberland. The gardens have the largest collection of European plants in the UK and the largest Japanese Cherry Orchard in the World. There are water features, sculptures and a small Poison Garden filled exclusively with toxic, intoxicating and narcotic plants (open for guided tours only!). There is also a bamboo labyrinth, large rose garden and a treehouse where you can eat refreshments 18 metres above the ground!

Bamburgh Castle

Owned by the Armstrong family since the 1750s, [Bamburgh Castle](#) occupies a splendid position above the sweeping sands of the North Sea coast. Bamburgh is 35 minutes' drive from Alnmouth, and can also be reached using the 501 local bus which runs every other hour.

Farne Islands

Take a boat trip (weather permitting) from Seahouses to the [Farne Islands](#); one of the best places in Britain to view seals and puffins. Seahouses is around 45 minutes' drive from Alnmouth, and can also be reached using the 501 bus.

Lindisfarne

English Christianity was born in 7th century Northumberland and [Lindisfarne Priory](#) is its oldest major site, dating from 635AD. It is located on the [Holy Island of Lindisfarne](#), cut off by the tides twice a day (make sure that you check the tide times before you visit). The Heritage Centre tells the stories of St Aidan, St Cuthbert and St Bede and displays the 8th century Lindisfarne Gospels in electronic form. Holy Island is set in the heart of the [Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve](#) - an internationally important area for migratory waterfowl; visit in autumn or winter to see them in large numbers. Lindisfarne is just under an hour's drive from Alnmouth.

Warkworth Castle

[Warkworth Castle](#), a few miles to the south of Alnmouth, towers over a bend in the River Coquet and the picturesque town of Warkworth. Warkworth is just 10 minutes' drive from Alnmouth, and can also be reached using the 518 bus.

Cragside House

Built by Victorian industrial magnate William Armstrong, [Cragside House](#) was hugely innovative and was the first house in Britain to be lit by electric light. Now managed by the National Trust, the house and gardens are a fascinating visit. Cragside is around 40 minutes' drive from Alnmouth.

Seaton Delaval Hall

[Seaton Delaval Hall](#) is a fine stately home, designed by John Vambrugh and completed in 1728. Following an extensive fundraising appeal it was purchased by the National Trust. The hall is around 40 minutes' drive from Alnmouth.

Hadrian's Wall

Around 1½ hours drive from Nether Grange, [Hadrian's Wall](#) remains a powerful symbol of the Roman Empire.

The most dramatic section is from Once Brewed to Housteads Roman Fort and a walk here enables you to see some of the best-preserved sections at close quarters. Two museums of note are the Roman Army Museum near Walltown where you can gain an insight into the daily lives of Roman soldiers, and [Vindolanda Roman Fort](#) with its collection of rare Roman artefacts.

Edinburgh

Edinburgh is very accessible for a day trip. Catch the train from nearby Alnmouth station for the scenic 1-hour journey to the Scottish capital. You'll arrive in the heart of the city centre with numerous museums, shops and galleries, plus the [famous castle](#) all within easy walking distance.

Barter Books

[Barter Books](#) has been dubbed the British Library of secondhand bookshops and is located in a handsome old Victorian railway station in Alnwick.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

The vibrant city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne is always bustling with activity and is famed for its shopping and lively nightlife. The new Baltic Arts Centre and the Sage Gallery in nearby Gateshead are well worth a visit. Newcastle is just under an hour's drive from Alnmouth, and can also be reached by hourly local bus.

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

- Waterproof 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)
- Sun hat and sunscreen

Denim jeans and waterproof capes are not suitable on any walks.

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

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 – 7pm 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: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

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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