

Best of Hadrian's Wall Guided Trail Holiday

Tour Style: Guided walking

Destinations: Northumberland, United Kingdom & England

Trip code: XHLDW

Trip Walking Grade: 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Walk the best-preserved sections of Hadrian's Wall starting in the market town of Brampton and ending in historic Corbridge. Let our experienced HF Holidays Leaders take care of all planning and navigation as you spend time at Housesteads Roman fort, explore the southern part of Northumberland National Park, and visit Vindolanda – an archaeological site that boasts carefully reconstructed towers and temples, excavated ruins, and a museum home to some of the oldest surviving handwritten documents ever found in Britain.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

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

Please note - Entrance fees are not included. See Essential Info tab for details.

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Walking along a sections of the Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail
- Visiting Roman forts including Vindolanda, Birdoswald, Housesteads, and Chesters
- Exploring Aydon Castle, Thirlwall Castle, and Lanercost Priory
- Staying in one of our carefully-selected partner hotels
- Sharing the experience with a group of like-minded walkers

TRIP SUITABILITY

This Best of Hadrian's Wall Guided Walking /Hiking Trail is graded 3 which involves walks /hikes on good paths with some significant assents, often quite a distance each day. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant fitness required to join this holiday. A sustained effort is required to complete this walk and provision cannot be made for anyone who opts out. Please be sure you can manage the daily mileage and ascent as listed. The walking day is normally 6-7 hours. It is important for your own enjoyment, and that of your fellow guests that you can maintain the pace. It makes a lot of sense to spend time getting some additional exercise before your holiday. We suggest that you try to fit in a number of longer walks, including some on hilly terrain. Other exercises such as cycling, jogging and swimming are also excellent for developing increased stamina.

Your 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 - whether 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

Day 1: Arrival Day

Check in at the hotel is available from 3pm. Your leader will be at reception at 18:00 to meet the group and for a quick introduction to the holiday before dinner.

Day 2: Brampton To Gilsland

Our starting point is the historic market town of Brampton, the headquarters of Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745. Leaving the town we follow a footpath through open fields, which leads us towards the evocative setting of Lanercost Priory, built in 1166 with red sandstone taken from Hadrian's Wall. Soon after leaving the priory we have our first meeting with the Wall from where we can look back over our route so far. We follow the course of Hadrian's Wall, passing various Turrets and Signal Towers before we reach the 2,000-year old Birdoswald Roman Fort, once home to over 1,000 soldiers. The visitor centre here provides a good introduction to the history of Hadrian's Wall. Descending to the River Irthing, we have the opportunity to explore the Roman remains at Willowford, one of the most photographed sections of the Wall, before arriving in the historic village of Gilsland.

9 miles (14.5km) with 1,300 feet (400m) of ascent

Please note, entrance to the various attractions on this holiday is payable locally, and not included in the holiday price as many of you will be entitled to free or discounted entrance. Please find further details in the "Trip Information" section of the trip notes, under "Admission Costs".

Day 3: Gilsland To Once Brewed

From Gilsland our route becomes more dramatic, as a craggy landscape rises ahead. We briefly cross the intersection with the Pennine Way before we reach the impressive ruins of Thirlwall Castle. The castle was built in the 14th century by John Thirlwall to protect his family from the violent cross border raids between England and Scotland. On leaving the castle the walking becomes more rugged as we cross a splendid section of wild and invigorating countryside, which includes Cawfield Crag and Milecastle 41. The location of the Milecastle commands superb views over a wide expanse of countryside. As well as a superb stretch of walking, this

section of the Wall is particularly impressive - an unbeatable combination. Crossing Windshields Crags we reach the trig point at 345 metres, the highest point on the entire Wall.

10 miles (16km) with 1,300 feet (400m) of ascent

Day 4: Once Brewed Circuit

Today's circular walk gives us the opportunity to visit Housesteads - the most complete Roman fort in Britain - and the ruins of Vindolanda, a Roman town with its own fort. Leaving Once Brewed, we'll climb along Steel Rigg and follow a stunning route that enjoys magnificent views over Crag Lough. As we walk, we'll also see Hadrian's Wall snaking into the distance, following the high ground to take advantage of the natural defences of this dramatic landscape. A little further on we'll pass by the spot where the famous "Robin Hood's" tree at Sycamore Gap once stood, before ample time to explore the impressive site of Housesteads Roman Fort and the gardens at Vindolanda.

5 miles (8.1km) with 570 feet (175m) of ascent.

Day 5: Housesteads To Chollerford

Leaving Housesteads we follow an attractive stretch of footpath along the Wall where woods perch on the rocky slopes of Sewingshields Crag. We can admire the great views of the Wall zigzagging ahead of us, before we pass a white cairn and Sewingshields Turret. Here we descend to follow a long line of roadside Wall, passing the site of the fort Brocolitia and the remains of the Temple of Mithras en route. Entering the Northumberland National Park an excellent stretch of walking provides stunning views of open countryside. Towards the end of our day we reach Chester's Fort, which was originally the grounds of a country house, home to John Clayton the man responsible for the initiation and restoration of the wall around 1832. The museum here displays his finds at various sites along the Wall and is a memorial to his efforts.

10 miles (16km) with 500 feet (150m) of ascent

Day 6: Chollerford To Corbridge, Via Aydon Castle

At Chollerford we cross a fine bridge, built in 1775 following the great flood of 1771, which demolished its predecessor. The Roman ditch is unmistakable and very deep on this stretch and we are surrounded by calls of the skylark, lapwing and curlew. Passing through a thick forest we emerge to a different world of arable farmland and enjoy pleasant walking through fields. The Wall stretches in a straight-line ahead of us, aligned along the Dere Street Roman Road from Corbridge. At the Onnum Roman Fort we bid our final farewells to the Wall and walk south to the peaceful village of Halton and its ruined castle. From here we continue to Aydon Castle, one of the finest surviving examples of a medieval manor house in England and the setting for the film 'Ivanhoe'. We have the opportunity to explore this delightful castle before following a bridleway to the finish of our Hadrian's Way holiday at Corbridge Roman Town.

9½ miles (15km) with 800 feet (240m) of ascent

Day 7: Departure Day

ACCOMMODATION

Centre Of Britain Hotel, Haltwhistle - Best Of Hadrian's Wall

We love the Centre of Britain Hotel in Haltwhistle. It's one of the region's oldest buildings and part of the hotel was once a 15th century Pele Tower used by the Border Reivers. Later it became a Manor House, excise office, and a coaching inn. Comfortable rooms come kitted out with TV, radio, tea and coffee making facilities, as well as a hairdryer and safe. Drying and washing facilities are available, too. And to really get you into the Hadrian's Wall spirit, the hotel usually organises a Roman banquet-themed meal for your final evening. This hotel is dog-friendly so you may meet four legged friends in some of the communal areas.

Food & Drink

Your stay is full-board. This includes daily breakfasts, packed lunch options, and evening meals. Vegetarian choices and dietary requirements can be catered for (please give advance notice when booking).

Packed Lunches

Our packed lunches will be too much food for some and not enough for others; if you feel you might need more food during the walk, please bring a supply of snacks to supplement this – it won't always be possible to buy these on the route. Your packed lunches will include: a bread sandwich or roll with a choice of filling; some fresh fruit; fruit cake/flapjack or similar, crisps and/or biscuits. For those of you tackling a level 4 or above holiday, we would highly recommend bringing some trail mix or something similar to ensure you've some fuel in reserve should you need it.

Dietary Requirements

Our partner hotels can cater for most dietary requirements, but it is important you advise us of any allergies and dietary restrictions you have at the time of booking.

TRAVEL DETAILS

By Car

It is possible to leave your car in the Centre of Britain Hotel car park for the duration of the holiday. The hotel is located in the centre of Haltwhistle, on the main street.

By Rail

For train times and route planning by train visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or call [+44 \(0\)3457 484950](tel:+44(0)3457484950). Our hotel is located only ½ a mile from Haltwhistle railway station. The hotel can collect you on request from the station, but please ensure that you give the hotel a call the day before your arrival to arrange this free service.

By Air

There are a number of low-cost flights from around the UK, to Newcastle and Manchester. If you are flying from overseas there are international flights to Manchester Airport and Newcastle Airport.

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

Holiday Information

We try to create a relaxed atmosphere on the walk but please listen to safety instructions from your leader.

Keep members of the group in view especially when weather or visibility is poor. If you leave the group, then your leader will no longer have responsibility for you. Our leaders consider the safety of the group as a whole and are likely to be more cautious over potential risks such as bad weather.

Hadrian's Wall is the best-known frontier in the entire Roman Empire. Our holiday travels through the centuries and follows the most spectacular sections of the wall combining a unique mix of heritage with wild and dramatic landscapes. Internationally celebrated as a World Heritage Site, Hadrian's Wall is the most important monument built by the Romans in Britain and stands as a reminder of the past glories of one of the world's greatest civilisations. The wall was built by order of the Emperor Hadrian, who came to Britain in AD 122. Over the next six years the army built a wall 80 Roman miles long, starting from Wallsend in the east, to Bowness on Solway in the west, with the intention of separating the Romans from the Barbarians. By the early 400's, the

Empire had declined, and Britain was abandoned. Spanning nearly 2,000 years of history, this makes what we see today all the more precious for being the last remains of such an incredible Roman structure.

In the hopefully rare event of any cause for complaints regarding accommodation, you should notify your leader who can then attempt to rectify the problem.

Essential 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. Fleeeces make a good choice
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Gloves and a warm hat
- Rucksack with waterproof liner
- Spotting scope and/or binoculars
- Flask for hot drinks
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity)
- Sunscreen
- UV sunglasses

Recommended

- Several base layers (long-sleeve or short-sleeve)
- Cushioned walking socks to avoid blisters
- First aid kit, including plasters and insect repellent
- Sit mat
- Waterproof pouch for valuables
- Rubbish bag (remember to always leave no trace)
- Wallet/purse
- Camera
- First-aid kit

Useful Information

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.

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.

Suggested Reading and Maps

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

<http://hadrianswallcountry.co.uk/>

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/hadrians-wall>

<http://www.visitnorthumberland.com/hadrians-wall>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hadrians-Wall>

Hadrian's Wall Path Adventure Atlas by [Geographers A-Z Map Company Ltd.](#)

This official National Trail Map provides complete OS Explorer mapping coverage of the Hadrian's Wall Path.

Hadrian's Wall: Archaeology and History at the Limit of Rome's Empire by [Nick Hodgson](#). This book is a good introduction to the Wall, how it was built and its purpose and about the soldiers and men, women and children who once lived there.

Admission Information

Please note

Just to let you know, admission fees aren't included in your holiday price and are payable locally.

If you have National Trust (NT) / English Heritage (EH) membership, you're entitled to free or reduced-price entry to some of the attractions we'll visit. If you have either of these, be sure to bring your membership identification with you.

If you aren't a member of either and aren't eligible for any concessions, you can expect to pay approximately £60 to cover entrance to the English Heritage venues we'll visit.

Sites not operated by English Heritage along this route include Vindolanda and the Roman Army Museum. These are independently operated, and a joint ticket can be purchased to cover entrance to both sites for a total of approximately £17.

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.

Document produced: 15-06-2024

