

Scottish Highlands Big Mountain Walks I

Tour Style: Challenge Walks

Destinations: Scottish Highlands & Scotland

Trip code: LLBGW

Trip Walking Grade: 6



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Complete some of Scotland's finest mountain ridges on this exciting holiday. These routes often follow strong features like an airy ridge, include a bit of scrambling to add interest, and finish on a pointy summit so you know you've "topped out". The "Big Mountain Walks I & II" holidays feature some absolute classics, all of which are must-do's for keen hillwalkers. And if you've done them before you know you'll never tire of this fine collection.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Great value: all prices include Full Board en-suite accommodation, a full programme of walks with all transport to and from the walks, plus evening activities
- Great walking: challenge yourself to tackle some of Scotland's finest mountain walks, in the company of our experienced leaders
- Accommodation: our country house is equipped with all the essentials – a welcoming bar and relaxing lounge area, a drying room for your boots and kit and an indoor swimming pool

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover the dramatic scenery and history of the Scottish Highlands
- Tackle some of Scotland's finest ridge walks
- Includes the CMD Arête – the connoisseurs' route up Ben Nevis
- Some exhilarating Grade I scrambling
- Plus plenty of Munros, superb scenery and the ultimate bragging rights on completion of this challenge

TRIP SUITABILITY

The nature of these routes means that the days will be long and strenuous with considerable steep ascents and descents over rough ground, bogs and streams, and will include scrambling up to Grade 1. The routes also involve moving along narrow airy ridges and walking above steep slopes where a slip could have serious consequences.

It is essential that you have previous experience of mountain walking in the UK over rough terrain (including scrambling) and have a good head for heights.

Scrambling is the link between hill walking and rock climbing with the use of hands on the rock to assist progress. We will only be doing Grade 1 scrambling, which requires no special mountaineering skills or equipment and which should be within the capability of any adventurous and experienced hill walker. Examples of comparable Grade 1 scrambles are Crib Goch in North Wales and Sharp Edge in the Lake District.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

You're welcome to check-in to your room from 2:30 p.m. onwards (upgraded rooms from 1 p.m.) Please join us for afternoon tea.

Day 2: Bidean Nam Bian Greater Horseshoe

Distance: 6 miles (9.5km)

Total Ascent: 4,150 feet (1,280m)

This walk traverses the complete southern ridge of Glen Coe, which is largely hidden beyond the Three Sisters, and covers some impressive mountain terrain. A classic and strenuous walk on one of Scotland's most complex and interesting mountains. We start by a steep ascent to gain the northern end of Beinn Fhada, the third Sister. We follow the ridge to a rock buttress which we ascend with a short section of Grade 1 scrambling on good holds, The Bad Step, and on over a narrow rocky ridge to gain the summit of our first Munro Stob Coire Sgreamhach. We head west along the rocky ridgeline to the twin summits of Bidean nam Bian, our second Munro and highest mountain in the area, and then on over Stob Coire nam Beith. From here we descend steeply back to the Glen and a well earned drink in the famous Clachaig Inn.

Day 3: The Trembling Ridges

Distance: 6½ miles (10.5km)

Total Ascent: 3,300 feet (1,020m)

The south side of Glen Shiel presents an imposing ridgeline of seven Munros. This walk takes in two of the Munros; Aonach air Chrith and Maol Chinn-Dearg in a sporting round of the trembling ridges.

After crossing the valley bottom we have a steep ascent over rough terrain to gain A'Chioch and the start of the easy scrambling over its sharp summit crest. More scrambling (short sections of Grade 1) over the rocky connecting ridge (Druim a' Ciche) to gain the main summit. We continue along the airy coire rim to our second summit from where we descend down Druim Coire nan Eirecheanach, the path becoming progressively easier as we descend.

Day 4: Grey Corries Ridge

Distance: 10 miles (16km)

Total Ascent: 4,550 feet (1,400m)

The peaks of the Grey Corries provide the spectacular white ridgeline that can be seen to the south from Spean Bridge and give a very pleasant ridge-walk in a remote location. We start at the eastern end and ascend the grassy northern ridge to gain Stob Choire Claurigh - our first Munro. From here the narrow Grey Corries ridge is spread out before us with Ben Nevis providing a soaring backdrop. Undulating over a succession of tops and never dipping below 1020m the ridge provides such interest that the journey seems almost effortless. We pass over Stob Coire an Laoigh our second Munro and on to Stob Coire Easain where we turn north and follow a tributary ridge back to the forest and our starting point.

Day 5: Free Day

Day 6: CMD Arête

Distance: 11½ miles (18km)

Total Ascent: 4,850 feet (1480m)

Climbing Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in Britain, should be on everyone's bucket list and the Carn Mor Dearg Arête provides a magnificent route up. We start at the North Face carpark and make our way up onto the ridge leading up to Carn Mor Dearg, a Munro, from where we get views of the impressive north face of Ben Nevis. The ridge now narrows to form the famous CMD Arête. It is more of a clamber than a scramble but the slopes on either side are very steep. Eventually the arête merges into the side of Ben Nevis which we ascend steeply to join the crowds on the summit. Descent by the Pony Track leads us to a well-earned drink in the Nevis Inn.

Day 7: Ben Starav High Ridge

Distance: 10 miles (16km)

Total Ascent: 4,900 feet (1500m)

The bold peak of Ben Starav occupies a commanding position at the end of the beautiful Glen Etive. A steep ascent gives access to an exhilarating high-level ridge walk. From the Glen we ascend the north ridge which sweeps up directly to the summit of Ben Starav our first Munro. We head east along the sharp arête involving some easy scrambling to Stob Coire Dheirg. We then descend steeply to the Bealach before ascending again to Glas Bheinn Mhor, our second Munro, we continue along the ridge until a steep descent leads to the Allt Mheuran which we follow back down to the Glen.

Day 8: Departure Day

Enjoy a final breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Alltshellach

Situated in a stunning location on the shores of Loch Leven, Alltshellach is a stately Scottish house set amid a rugged landscape. The house is a picture of Highland solidity, with spectacular views of craggy mountains and grassy slopes beyond the loch. This pocket of domesticity lets you admire nature at your leisure though, sipping tea or G&T as you watch clouds scud across the sky. In fact, this one-time home of the Bishop of Argyll & the Isles has been recast as a hiker's hotel, with an air of old-world splendour, excellent accommodation, a generous indoor pool, three lounges and a supremely cosy Highland Bar that's well-stocked with local beer and whisky, all of which is (almost) enough to distract you from the vast vistas over the waters. But it's the great outdoors you're here for and the house is ideally situated for accessing the Mamores, the mountains of Glen Coe and tackling Ben Nevis as well as bagging munros and spotting local wildlife.

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

There are 38 comfortable bedrooms, all in the main house, with a range of 'Good', 'Better' and 'Best' options to choose from. Rooms radiate cosiness thanks to little touches – a remedy for even the dreichest day. Those with a view are worth the extra spend, as you'll be overlooking the gardens and loch. The Best rooms include Room 21, a spacious corner room with lovely views of Loch Leven, while Room 23 is a stately showstopper that was once the official Bishop's bedroom, complete with original features and cracking views.

All 'Good' rooms are ensuite and furnished to a high standard. There are also several 'Better' and 'Best' Rooms that are either larger or have a desirable view, a more luxurious mattress and larger televisions – 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 gardens, heated indoor swimming pool, multi-purpose ballroom, library and board games to borrow

After a day exploring, return to the house and its specially tailored walkers' facilities. Stroll the gardens that dip down to the loch. The small peninsula at the bottom of the lawns is called An Dunan and often becomes an island at high tide – look for prehistoric rock art cut into the slabs on its side. Make time too to plunge into the heated indoor swimming pool (currently closed) and do a couple of lengths under the watchful eye of the mountains through the panoramic windows. Inside the house, head for one of the communal areas: you'll have three to choose from and can kick back, relax and catch up with other guests. Later, stop in the Highland Bar for a nip of whisky or a nightcap – the comfy seats make a fine spot for a dram and there's a range of good single malts to choose from that'll have you believing you're living a laird's life.

Food & Drink

As at all of 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 Alltshellach is full of Scottish flavours and focusses on locally sourced and seasonal produce. Once a week the dining room hosts a Local Food Night, when you might be treated to Cullen Skink Soup and a trio of smoked salmon, mackerel pate and steamed mussels with Highland oat cakes, while mains may include Highland game and 'Barlotto', a type of nutty risotto made from barley instead of rice. Finish off with a spoonful of Iron Brew Ice, chocolate and marmalade mouse and Atholl brose, a luxurious blend of honey, whisky and carefully selected herbs for a flavour of the Highlands.

Accessibility

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

TRAVEL DETAILS

Our address is: Alltshellach, Onich, Fort William, Invernesshire PH33 6SA

Tel: [01855 821357](tel:01855821357)

Group Coach Transfer:

If you are travelling to or from Alltshellach on Saturdays in October 2021 you can join our group coach transfer from Glasgow. Places are limited so booking is essential – please call our Holiday Services Team at least 14 days before your departure date on +44 (0)208 732 1220 or email holidayservices@hfholidays.co.uk to book your place on the coach.

£48 per person for a return transfer or £30 per person for a single transfer.

Outward journey: depart Glasgow Buchanan Street bus station* at 16.15 or depart Glasgow International Airport at 16.45; arrive Alltshellach 19.00.

Return journey: depart Alltshellach 08.30; arrive Glasgow International Airport at 11.30 or arrive Glasgow Buchanan Street bus station* at 12.00.

*Buchanan Street bus station is about 15 minutes' walk from Glasgow Central station (buses available) or 5 minutes' walk from Glasgow Queen Street station.

By Train:

The nearest station is in Fort William but many guests take the train to Glasgow and take the Scottish Citylink bus from there, or join our group coach transfer to Alltshellach (on Saturdays in October 2021 – see above). For train times and route planning by train visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or phone 03457 48 49 50.

By Air:

Many guests opt to fly to Glasgow International Airport, then make their way to Glen Coe. From the airport you can take the Citylink bus (see below) or join our group coach transfer to Alltshellach (on Saturdays in October 2021 - see above).

By Bus:

The journey from either Glasgow Buchanan Street or the airport can be made using the Scottish Citylink bus, numbers 914 or 915. See www.citylink.co.uk for the timetable. Ask the driver to stop at the north side of Ballachulish Bridge - from here it is a 400 metre walk to Alltshellach.

By Car:

From Glasgow take the A82 towards Crianlarich. Continue on the A82 towards Fort William. Head for Ballachulish keeping the village on your left. Go straight on at the roundabout over the steel bridge and take the second right B863 to Kinlochleven and the seafood restaurant. Alltshellach is 400 yards further on, on your right.

Travelling From Overseas

Ideally book a flight to Glasgow Airport (see By Air above).

The next best option is to fly to Manchester Airport, which has a better range of long-haul flights. There are trains from the airport to Glasgow (some direct, others need 1 change). Allow 4 hours to get to Glasgow, from where you will need to transfer to Alltshellach. See www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times.

LOCAL AREA

Alltshellach is situated beside the shores of Loch Leven. This is a spectacular location with magnificent views of the surrounding mountains.

About two miles away, across the loch is the village of Ballachulish. Here you'll find a post office, food store and bank. A much wider range of facilities can be found in Fort William, about 14 miles to the north.

As the adventure capital of Britain, the Lochaber region is a popular destination for all outdoor enthusiasts. During your stay in Glen Coe you may enjoy visiting the following activities and places of interest:

Jacobite Steam Train

Ride the [Jacobite Steam Train](#) from Fort William to Mallaig. This stunningly scenic line includes the famous Glenfinnan Viaduct, featured in the Harry Potter films. Steam trains run every day and early booking is recommended.

Isle Of Mull

Reached by car ferry from Oban, or Lochaline, [Mull](#) is one of the most popular Scottish islands. You could visit the colourful harbour at Tobermory or the abbey on Iona.

Isle Of Lismore

The peaceful [Isle of Lismore](#) is ideal for a relaxed exploration. You can hire bikes at Port Appin, about 30 minutes' drive south of Alltshellach, then take the short ferry crossing to the island.

Oban

The bustling harbour town of Oban, about 45 minutes' drive south of Alltshellach, is a popular destination. There's always plenty of activity around the harbour and it's well worth the walk up to McCaig's Tower, a remarkable folly built in the style of a Roman amphitheatre, with commanding views over the town.

Eilean Donan Castle

Nearly 80 miles drive north from Alltshellach is this romantic and much photographed [Scottish lochside castle](#). Located on a small island just offshore, the castle is isolated by the sea at high tide, only accessible via a stone bridge.

Ice Factor

Try your hand at ice climbing on the [indoor wall](#) at nearby Kinlochleven.

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

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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