

The Complete St Oswald's Way Guided Trail Holiday

Tour Style: Guided Trails

Destinations: Northumberland & England

Trip code: ALLOW

Trip Walking Grade: 4



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

St Oswald's Way explores some of the finest landscapes and fascinating history of Northumberland. From Holy Island to Warkworth alongside stunning coastline, and then inland towards Hadrian's Wall. The trail links places associated with St Oswald, 7th century King of Northumbria, who played a major part in bringing Christianity to his people. You will find castles, coastline, islands, scenic river valleys, attractive villages, forest and farmland on this complete trail.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- High quality en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Full board from dinner upon arrival to breakfast on departure day
- The services of an HF Holidays' walks leader
- All transport on walking days

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Complete trail - both coastal and inland sections
- Stunning Northumberland scenery
- Stay at Nether Grange, Alnmouth

TRIP SUITABILITY

This Guided Walking /Hiking Trail is graded 4 which involves walks /hikes of long distances in remote countryside and rough terrain. Sustained ascents and descents and occasional sections of steep ground are encountered. You will require a good level of fitness as you will be walking every day. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant fitness required to join this holiday.

Fitness

We want you to be confident that you can meet the demands of each walking day and get the most out of your holiday. Please be sure you can manage the mileage and ascent detailed in the daily itineraries. 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.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Day 2: Holy Island To Bamburgh

Starting from Lindisfarne Priory on Holy Island we head towards the mainland, via the tide-exposed Causeway, passing through the small village of Fenwick and on to Shiellow Woods. Our route then leads to Belford, passing by its Norman church and the 18th century Belford Hall. Belford was a coaching stop on the Great North Road and has an old coaching inn, now the Blue Bell Hotel. We head back towards the coast, pass Spindleston Heughs, cross the golf course and enter the charming village of Bamburgh. Bamburgh Castle, once the seat of the Kings of Northumbria, and the Grace Darling museum, are symbols of Bamburgh's connection to the past.

19 miles (30km) with 925 feet (277m) of ascent

Day 3: Bamburgh To Craster

Walking south on golden sands, with views of the Farne Islands, we head towards Seahouses, a popular tourist centre and centre for visits to the Farne Islands. We leave Seahouses at the harbour and head for the small fishing village of Beadnell which has the only west-facing port on the east coast of England. The historic limekilns, now owned by the National Trust are near the harbour. We cross the sandy expanse of Beadnell Bay where Little and Arctic terns breed in season. The Way crosses Newton Links and arrives at the tiny settlement of Low Newton. The spectacular ruins of Dunstanburgh Castle now draw us towards it around Embleton Bay, and on to the grassy path leading to the village of Craster.

14 miles (22.5km) with 150 feet (45m) of ascent

Day 4: Craster To Warkworth

Today we leave Craster passing the harbour and the herring smokehouses (kippers), and take the coastal path. This leads to the volcanic Cullernose Point and around Howick Bay, well known for its geological interest. We reach Boulmer, historically a notorious centre for smuggling activities. Just to the south of Boulmer is Alnmouth, the location of our HF Holidays' Country House, Nether Grange, and after a brief stop set off in the direction of Amble and Warkworth to end the day at Warkworth Castle, situated above the River Coquet.

13½ miles (22km) with 400 feet (120m) of ascent

Day 5: Warkworth To Rothbury

We continue inland past the imposing Warkworth Castle to follow the valley of the River Coquet. The Way passes through the villages of Fenton and Weldon Bridge, and close to Brinkburn Priory, before joining a disused railway line. From here we get views across to the Cragside Country Park, and as we take a high-level route into Rothbury views of Cragside House appear. A steady road descent brings us to the market town of Rothbury.

18 miles (29km) with 875 feet (262m) of ascent

Day 6: Rothbury To Kirkwhelpington

Leaving Rothbury, the Way turns south and visits Lordenshaws, an Iron Age hill fort and settlement, with its cup-and-ring marked rocks. After a further short ascent, heather-clad open moorland is crossed, leading to Coquet Cairn, the highest point of the walk. We continue through the extensive Harwood Forest, The trail leaves the forest near the hamlet of Harwood and follows paths over attractive farmland, offering magnificent far-reaching views, towards Knowesgate then onto the scenic small village of Kirkwhelpington, our destination.

15 miles (24km) with 1,075 feet (322m) of ascen

Day 7: Kirkwhelpington To Heavenfield

Kirkwhelpington is left behind as the route heads through remote but picturesque rolling farmland. The settlements of Great Bavington and Hallington are passed on the way to the village of Great Whittington. A short stretch south brings us to the course of Hadrian's Wall Path and the Military Road. Here we head west, following the path until we reach our final destination of Heavenfield where a wooden cross marks the site of the historic battle.

17½ miles (28km) with 1,025 feet (307m) of ascent

Day 8: Departure Day

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

As we slowly reopen in the wake of the Coronavirus lockdown, our country house stays are set to be organised a little differently; extra steps have been taken to keep our guests, house teams and leaders safe while we return to action. We ask all our guests to respect the measures put in place.

Initially the overall capacity of the houses has been reduced. Guests must wear face coverings in public spaces. To adhere to social distancing guidelines, we have taken the necessary steps to space out furniture and seating in public areas. In addition, a one-way system will be in place around the house. Adequate signage will be displayed to support the direction of travel to be followed by guests and house teams.

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 have removed all non-essential and reusable items from our rooms for the meantime including cushions, hairdryers, bathrobes, bed throws, and printed materials to reduce the number of items that need to be disinfected. Hairdryers will be available on request. Clean towels will be available on request. 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.

For now, there is no cream tea on arrival day. We have also adapted our food offering to remove all buffets and open food items. Different sittings may be required for breakfast and dinner due to the occupancy and size of the house. Picnic lunches will now be pre-ordered the night before from an order form in the room. The bar in each country house will be open, and we will be offering a table service for drinks. At this time there is no, or only a very limited, evening social programme available. Outdoor swimming pools at those houses that have them will re-open throughout August, except at Freshwater Bay House, where the pool will remain closed for 2020. Indoor swimming pools will remain closed.

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 tippie. 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

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](#) 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 Housesteads 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

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.

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

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 Guided Walking/Hiking Trail 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 the party, 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. 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.

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

www.stoswaldsway.com

Guide book: St Oswald's Way Official Guide Book – Alnwick D.C.

St Oswald's Way Leaflets (Sections 1-6)

You may wish to download an official St Oswald's Way pack with rubbing sheet from www.stoswaldsway.com/merchandise. The completed sheet can be sent in to receive a certificate.

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 £20 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.

Document produced: 19-01-2021

