

The Coleridge Way Trail

Tour Style: Guided trails

Destinations: Exmoor, United Kingdom & England

Trip code: SLL0L

Trip Walking Grade: 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The Coleridge Way leads you through the Somerset landscapes that helped inspire one of Britain's most celebrated poets, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. An avid walker, Coleridge frequently journeyed between his home in Nether Stowey and the fishing village of Lynmouth and this much-loved trail follows some of the very same paths the wordsmith would have taken in the late 18th century. Exploring sweeps of open moorland, heather-clad hills, historic villages, and wooded valleys with panoramic views over the Exmoor coast, we'll discover places that inspired the poet to pen famous works including *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and the epic ballad, *Kubla Khan*.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- 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

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Spotting wild goats in the Valley of Rocks
- Visiting Coleridge Cottage, the poet's former home
- Hiking around the Quantock Hills
- Passing Alfoxton House, William Wordsworth's one-time home
- Walking through the heart of Lorna Doone Country
- Seeing where Coleridge was inspired to write *Kubla Khan*

TRIP SUITABILITY

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

You're welcome to check in from 4pm onwards. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea on arrival.

Day 2: Valley Of Rocks To County Gate

Distance: 8.5 miles (13.5km)

Ascent: 2,400 feet (740m)

We start the day at Poets Corner in The Valley of Rocks. Known for its wild goats and dramatic landscape, it's easy to see why this rugged gorge was named 'Little Switzerland' by Coleridge's friend and fellow Lake Poet, Robert Southey. Descending into Lynmouth, we reach the true start of the Coleridge Way. From the harbour, we follow the banks of the East Lyn River on an undulating woodland path to Watersmeet, a former fishing lodge now owned by the National Trust and open as a tearoom. We continue alongside the East Lyn emerging at Brendon where the path rises above the river valley with extensive views across Lorna Doone country to reach County Gate – where Devon and Somerset meet.

Day 3: County Gate To Porlock Village

Distance: 9.5 miles (15.5km)

Ascent: 1,640 feet (500m)

From County Gate we rejoin the Coleridge Way descending to join the riverside path to Oare, where we have an option to visit Oare Church, made famous in R D Blackmore's book Lorna Doone. We'll ascend the steep ridge of Deddy Combe to be rewarded with views of Exmoor including the Doone Valley. Following hedged tracks and lanes with glimpses of the Bristol Channel, we'll make our way towards the Somerset coastline. Along the way, we'll pass Ash Farm where Coleridge was inspired to write Kubla Khan before descending through Worthy Wood to the village of Porlock with its 13th century church dedicated to St Dubricius.

Day 4: Porlock Village To Wheddon Cross

Distance: 8.5 miles (13.5km)

Ascent: 2,210 feet (675m)

Departing Porlock, there's a steep ascent that flattens out as we reach the lanes and tracks that lead to Horner, an attractive hamlet of thatched cottages. Heading uphill through woodland takes us to the lookout at Webber's Post. After enjoying the views over Horner Wood and up to Dunkery Beacon (the highest point on Exmoor) we skirt around the base of Dunkery Hill to reach the River Avill. Once across the river, we follow wooded paths to the village of Wheddon Cross where there's an aptly-named pub called Rest and be Thankful (so-called because of its hilltop location at the end of a very long climb from the coast at Dunster and Minehead).

Day 5: Wheddon Cross To Roadwater

Distance: 9 miles (14.5km)

Ascent: 950 feet (295m)

From Wheddon Cross, we'll visit the 13th century Cutcombe Church with its stained-glass window depicting a line from Coleridge's poem Frost at Midnight. Following an ancient sunken lane and footpaths, we cross fields to ascend Lype Hill – the highest point of the Coleridge Way. From here, we're rewarded with far-reaching

views over the Brendon Hills. We'll then descend to the hamlet of Kingsbridge and take a route that rises and falls to reach our finish point for the day, the village of Roadwater. Perched on the Washford River, it served as one of the stations on the Old Mineral Line that brought iron ore from the Brendon Hills to Watchet, ready to be shipped to Wales for processing.

Day 6: Roadwater To Bicknoller

Distance: 9.5 miles (15km)

Ascent: 1,300 feet (400m)

From Roadwater, the path climbs gently through fields and woodland to follow a level track above the Washford River and the route of the Old Mineral Line. We'll follow old lanes into Monksilver and continue to the village of Sampford Brett - birthplace of Richard le Breton, one of the four knights who murdered Thomas Becket in 1170. Crossing the West Somerset Steam Railway line and the A358 to Bicknoller, we'll pass by its 12th century church full of interesting features. Keep an eye out for the ornately carved angels and nightmarish animal heads.

Day 7: Bicknoller To Nether Stowey

Distance: 10 miles (16km)

Ascent: 1,740 feet (530m)

On our final day, the route winds around the lower slopes of the Quantock Hills – one of Coleridge's favourite places to roam. Ascending from Bicknoller, we join a woodland path with a brief section of road and walk into West Quantoxhead. It's then onto a grassy track that weaves through the woods before descending to Alfoxton House – the one-time home of William Wordsworth. Continuing to Holford, we'll head up and over heathland to Woodlands Hill and down to Dowsborough where an Iron Age hill fort once stood. Lanes and paths lead us past the remains of Stowey Castle to our final destination - Nether Stowey. The village has an interesting collection of old houses crowded along its narrow streets, including the National Trust-owned, Coleridge Cottage - the former home of Samuel Taylor Coleridge himself and a fitting end to our journey.

Day 8: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Holnicote House

There's plenty to look forward to at this beacon of Somerset hospitality near the impossibly pretty village of Selworthy. The location couldn't be more perfect; within rolling-out-of-bed distance from Exmoor National Park and an easy drive from Dunster Castle, Coleridge Cottage, the twin villages of Lynton and Lynmouth, and the sandy delights at Porlock and Minehead. The walking opportunities here are standout, too, not least for the trails around the Quantock Hills, Dunkery Beacon, Bossington, and a section of the England Coast Path that takes you on a glorious journey along the county's coastline.

Country House Accommodation

Rooms

Designed with your comfort in mind, Holnicote House has 32 well-appointed guest rooms available in three categories: Classic, Premium, and Superior.

Classic Rooms are comfortable en-suite guest rooms, ideal for a peaceful night's sleep. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, and shower gel), and a TV.

Premium Rooms are more spacious en-suite guest rooms*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers, and comfortable mattresses.

Superior Rooms are even more spacious en-suite guest rooms offering upgraded views of the surroundings*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers, and comfortable mattresses.

We love: The rooms in the main building or the thatched grounds, especially Rooms 1 and 4. The first floor rooms have fabulous views across Crawter Hill and Dunkery Hill.

The **Choose Your Room** service is available at our UK country houses, allowing you the option of choosing and confirming a specific room for an extra charge of £30 per room. This is subject to availability. Upgrade supplements apply.

Check in & check out

You are welcome to check in from **4:00pm at the earliest**. On arrival, you'll enjoy a complimentary cream tea and get to meet your fellow guests, our HF Holidays Leaders, and the rest of the friendly team.

On the day of departure, we kindly ask all guests to check out by **10:00am**. You'll be asked to settle your bill prior to leaving. You may, of course, make a charitable donation to our HF Holidays Pathways Fund if you wish. Please note that we only accept card payments.

Room supplements

Superior	Premium single	Premium double/twin	Choose your room
£25 pppn	£20 pppn	£20 pppn	£30 per room

*Views and layout reflect each properties unique character and location

About Your Stay

A warm welcome

We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

Evening entertainment

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, the HF Holidays Big Pub Quiz held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays Leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

Our HF Holidays Leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's walking delights (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

The walking day

Prior to setting off on walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.

Food & Drink

Led by experienced chefs, we serve a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients. We always aim to source the best produce available and use home-grown herbs and vegetables from our own gardens whenever possible. Additionally, we have a licensed bar with beers, soft drinks, and a superb selection of spirits. Full-board comes as standard and includes a cream tea on arrival and a hearty breakfast on departure day.

HF Holidays understands the importance of managing allergens effectively to ensure food is safe for guests with food allergies. Whilst we are always able to confidently inform guests which allergens are present in our ingredients and dishes, we are unable to guarantee absolute freedom from the 14 main allergens in our kitchens. Vegetarian and vegan menu choices are available. If you have allergies, food intolerances, or any special dietary requirements, please inform our reservation team at the time of booking.

Accessibility

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on [020 3974 8865](tel:02039748865) or view the accessibility information online for [Holnicote House](#)

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Holnicote House
Selworthy
Minehead
Somerset TA24 8TJ

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1643 862013](tel:+44(0)1643862013)

By Train

The nearest station is Taunton.

Check National Rail for train times and routes.

By Taxi

From Taunton train station it's a 27-mile journey taking 1 hour.

For pricing, please contact Minehead Taxis directly.

Minehead Taxis

You can pre-book a taxi from our recommended company, Minehead Taxis*. We recommend booking your taxi at least seven days in advance by contacting:

Tel: [+44 \(0\)1643 704123](tel:+44(0)1643704123)

A return journey can be arranged on your behalf by the HF Holidays House Manager at Holnicote House.

*Minehead Taxis is not owned or managed by HF Holidays.

By Bus

The number 28 bus runs between Taunton station and Minehead, taking around one and a half hours. At Minehead, change to the number 10 bus to the Selworthy turn (at the end of Holnicote House drive). A two-

minute walk along the drive will bring you to the house.

For bus times, check Traveline.

By Car

There's free car parking at Holnicote House if you decide to drive.

From Bridgwater take the A39 through the southern outskirts of Minehead towards Porlock. You'll find Holnicote House on the left about four and a half miles out of Minehead.

By Air

The nearest airport is London Heathrow.

Take the train to London Paddington station where there are direct trains to Taunton. It's a relatively straightforward journey that'll should take around 2.5 hours.

Bristol Airport is also an option. From here, you can take the bus and train to Taunton.

Check National Rail for routes and train times.

LOCAL AREA

Whether you're enjoying a guided or self-guided walking holiday, there's always the opportunity to linger for longer. Here's our pick of the very best things to see and do within easy travelling distance of Holnicote House.

Selworthy

Less than a mile away, this charming village delights with well-preserved thatched cottages as well as the All Saints church with its painted nave ceiling and 18th century gallery. There are several footpaths leading from the village up to Selworthy Beacon.

West Somerset Railway

As the longest heritage line in England, this true country branch line of the old Great Western Railway has 10 stations on its 20-mile scenic journey from Minehead to Bishops Lydyard. Minehead station is just a 10-minute drive away.

Dunster Castle

A medieval castle transformed into a stately home for the Luttrell family, this characterful dwelling assures fabulous views over Exmoor, Somerset, and the Bristol Channel. Not-to-be-missed interiors include a 17th century carved staircase and rare leather wall hangings.

Lynton & Lynmouth

Located on the spectacular North Devon coast, the small rural town of Lynton and coastal village of Lynmouth are the twin resorts connected by a historic cliff railway. The short walk from Lynton to the Valley of Rocks is a definite highlight.

Coleridge Cottage

A 45-minute drive away, this was the humble home of poet Samuel Coleridge and his wife Sara for three years from 1797. Acquired by the National Trust in 1909, it was here that he wrote *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*,

Kubla Khan, and Frost at Midnight.

Hestercombe Gardens

An hour's drive away, this 50-acre landscape is home to three historic gardens spanning three centuries of design. Coplestone Warre Bampfylde laid out the Landscape Garden while Sir Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll collaborated on the Formal Garden.

Arlington Court

Belonging to the Chichester family for 11 generations until it was bequeathed to the National Trust in 1949, this Regency house is an hour's drive away. In addition to the gardens and grounds, there's a museum in the stables with an interesting collection of over 40 carriages.

Minehead Beach

Also known as The Strand, this mile-long expanse of sand is perfect for sandcastle-building, beach games, and organised activities such as canoeing and paddleboarding. Please note there is a dog ban in force on the entire beach from 1 May to 30 September.

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

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

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

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. Please carry a copy of these trip notes with you, or note down the contact phone number for your accommodation (details in the travel section) should you need them in case of emergency.

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.

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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