

The Welsh Castles of King Edward I in Northern Snowdonia

Destinations: Snowdonia & Wales
Trip code: BGHWC



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The 1280s and 1290s saw King Edward I build and strengthen a vast number of castles during his disputes with the Welsh Princes. You'll explore Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy and Harlech, which now make up a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- High-quality Full Board en-suite accommodation and excellent food in our country house
- The guidance and services of our knowledgeable HF Holidays Leader, ensuring you get the most from your holiday
- All transport on touring days on a comfortable, good-quality mini-coach
- All admissions to places of interest that form part of your holiday itinerary, excluding National Trust and English Heritage properties

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit six of Edward's Welsh strongholds
- Explore Beaumaris Castle - the greatest castle never built
- Discover the domineering Caernarfon Castle
- Climb to the top of Conwy's towers and look down upon the town

TRIP SUITABILITY

Our Heritage Tours are your opportunity to immerse yourself in an area of history that interests you, at the same time as exploring the local area with a group of like-minded people. Each day our leaders will provide fascinating commentary on the places visited and share their knowledge with you. This holiday involves some gentle walking, up to 3 miles (5km).

All admissions are included, apart from entrance costs to National Trust or CADW properties - please do bring your membership cards if you're already a member of these organisations. English Heritage gives reduced or free entry to CADW sites.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

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

Day 2: Rhuddlan & Conwy

We join Edward in 1277 as his campaign reaches Rhuddlan, where we view one of his earliest castles built after the First Welsh War. We follow him to the magnificent Conwy Castle to see his huge manifestation of power on the north coast. But, following the town walls, we see and hear how easily his castle was captured.

Day 3: Harlech & Criccieth

Today's highlight is Harlech Castle, dominant and seemingly impregnable on its plinth of rock, but with a history of capture and siege beyond the late 13th century. On the opposite side of the bay, at Criccieth Castle, we can see how Edward improved an existing castle to suit his own purposes.

Day 4: Caernarfon & Beaumaris

First to Caernarfon, where the largest of all the castles still defines the area physically and culturally. Dare you inspect the view from the top of the Eagle Tower? Or take a more leisurely walk around the town walls? Later we explore Edward's final castle at Beaumaris, uncompleted but clearly showing the development of castle-building knowledge.

Day 5: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Craflwyn Hall

In the heart of Snowdonia, Craflwyn Hall at the foot of Mount Snowdon, close to the picturesque village of Beddgelert, is a glorious story of recovery; once a substantial 19th century house in the heart of the Nan Gwynant Valley, the property was allowed to fall into a state of disrepair before being acquired by the National Trust and painstakingly restored. Now a walkers' mountain retreat in a picture-perfect spot, it's the ideal base for exploring northern Snowdonia. As well as places to stay in the main house, the stable block has been imaginatively converted into bedrooms too. Comfy lounges and a snug bar provide other creature comforts. The countryside on the doorstep provides the ultimate attraction though. Wake up early and enjoy the views if the cloud is up, then grab your walking boots and head out on to one of the trails up Snowdon. Or you could go further afield to the Glydrs, Moel Siabod, Cricht and Moel Hebog, as well as the pretty town of Betws Y Coed.

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 the smartly presented rooms in the main house or in one of the handful of bedrooms in the converted

stables behind the house. With 22 rooms, Craflwyn Hall has plenty of space and there's a range of Good and Better Rooms to choose from. Ask for Room 1, a large corner space with great green views, or Room 8, for its giant square picture window.

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 television – upgrade your stay for just an extra £15-20 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, three lounges, library and board games to borrow

After a day rambling over the slopes of Snowdon or summiting a cracking peak, come back to the house and its specially tailored walkers' facilities. Sit out in the grounds with a coffee or great local Welsh ale or take a chance to relax in the small conservatory. If the weather's not so favourable retire to the lounge and sink into one of the squashy leather sofas in front of the fireplace. The snug bar provides a great space to swap stories of mountain days too.

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 Craflwyn Hall is varied and tasty and has a strong emphasis on ingredients from the area and seasonal produce. Kick off your day with a 'Miner's Breakfast'. Once a week the dining room hosts a Local Food Night, when, over a sociable evening, you might try a five-course feast of regional flavours. Look out for highlights including Glamorgan sausages, braised salt marsh lamb shoulder shepherd's pie and a Welsh version of Eve's pudding.

Accessibility

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on 020 3974 8865

TRAVEL DETAILS

Our address is: Craflwyn Hall, Beddgelert, Gwynedd, LL55 4NG
Tel: [01766 890836](tel:01766890836)

By Train:

The nearest railway stations are Porthmadog and Betws-y-Coed; however we would recommend taking the train to Bangor which has the best train service. For train times and route planning by train visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or phone 03457 48 49 50.

By Taxi:

The 25-mile journey from Bangor railway station takes approximately 50 minutes. You can pre-book a taxi from our recommended taxi company, Chubbs Cabs. As a guide price, it cost £45 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:

Chubbs Cabs*
Tel: +44 (0) 1248 353535
Email: dafyddchubb@btconnect.com

The return taxi journey can be arranged on your behalf by the Craflwyn Hall Manager.

*Chubbs Cabs is not owned or managed by HF Holidays

By Bus:

There is a limited bus service which runs past Craflwyn Hall. Any bus route that goes between Beddgelert and Pen-y-Gwryd will pass the end of the drive of Craflwyn Hall. For bus times see www.traveline.info

By Car:

For a lovely drive through the Welsh countryside, head towards Betws-y-Coed. In Betws-y-Coed take the A5, heading towards Bangor, as far as Capel Curig, then turn left onto the A4086. After a further 4 miles bear left onto the A498 at the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel; this road follows the Glaslyn Valley passing two large lakes. The entrance to Craflwyn Hall is on the right hand side of the road, approximately 1 mile after the second lake. Look out for the brown National Trust sign.

Travelling From Overseas

Manchester Airport has the quickest onward connections to Bangor. Trains from the airport take 3 hours, with one change at Crewe or Chester. See www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times.

Flying to London Heathrow airport is another option, but has a longer onward train journey - allow at least 4½ hours to reach Bangor by train. You'll need to head to Euston station in the centre of London, from where there are direct trains to Bangor. See www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times.

LOCAL AREA

The picturesque village of Beddgelert is about 1 mile from Craflwyn Hall. Facilities here are limited and include a post office, pubs and cafés. The nearest town is Porthmadog, about 8 miles away, which has a wide range of shops and facilities

During your visit to Craflwyn Hall you may enjoy visiting the following places of interest:

Welsh Highland Railway

The recently re-opened Welsh Highland railway runs from Caernarfon to Porthmadog, passing through Beddgelert on route. This is a spectacular journey which includes the dramatic Aberglaslyn Pass and views of Snowdon. The steep gradients require powerful locomotives which have to work particularly hard on the climb from Beddgelert to the summit of the line at Rhyd Ddu. www.festrail.co.uk

Great Little Trains Of Wales

Snowdonia is noted for its concentration of narrow gauge steam railways, all of which offer highly scenic journeys. The Ffestiniog Railway and Snowdon Mountain Railways are both within reach. For a truly unique day out you can take the mountain railway to the summit of Snowdon (best to book in advance as tickets can sell out quickly on busy days). www.greatlittletrainsofwales.co.uk

National Slate Museum

Located at Llanberis, the excellent, and free, National Slate Museum tells the story of this once extensive industry. You can see slate being cut by hand, the huge waterwheel that powers the machinery, and the fascinating quarrymen's houses which show their development over the centuries. Llanberis is around 30 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, and can also be reached using the Snowdon Sherpa bus.

www.museumwales.ac.uk/slate

Caernarfon Castle

Built by King Edward I after his conquest of Wales, Caernarfon Castle is one of the most impressive and well preserved fortifications in the principality. Along with neighbouring castles at Harlech, Beaumaris and Conwy it now has World Heritage status. Caernarfon is around 30 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, or can be reached using the Welsh Highland Railway. www.cadw.wales.gov.uk

Criccieth

The seaside town of Criccieth is around 25 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, and full of Victorian character. You could visit the historic castle, relax on the beach, or sample the excellent ice cream at Cadwaders parlour.

Llyn Peninsula

The long arm of the Llyn Peninsula offers beautiful and contrasting scenery, with wild cliffs and white sandy coves. Enjoy the glorious beaches at Aberdaron or Abersoch, or walk to the tip of the peninsula and enjoy the views of Bardsey Island.

Harlech Castle

Harlech Castle occupies a superb vantage point overlooking the coast and the mountains of Snowdonia. Built by Edward I, its imposing walls were built by 1,000 skilled craftsmen between 1283 and 1295. www.cadw.gov.uk

Llechwedd Slate Caverns

Located near Bleanau Ffestiniog, about 30 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, the Llechwedd Slate Caverns are one of the area's most popular attractions. Take the underground railway deep into the mountain where a knowledgeable guide will tell you how slate was hewn by hand. www.llechwedd-slate-caverns.co.uk

Bodnant Gardens

Situated in the Conwy Valley, about 50 minutes' drive from Beddgelert, the National Trust's gardens at Bodnant have impressive collections of colour and views of the Snowdonian mountains. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/bodnant-garden

Plas Newydd

The grand house at Plas Newydd enjoys glorious views overlooking the Menai Straits. Built for the 1st Marquess of Anglesey, the house itself is impressive, as are the extensive gardens. Now managed by the National Trust. Around 50 minutes' drive from Beddgelert. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/plas-newydd

Portmeirion

This quaint Italianate village was the brainchild of the architect Clough Williams-Ellis. It is also well-known as the setting for the cult 1960's TV series The Prisoner. Portmeirion is around 20 minutes' drive from Beddgelert. www.portmeirion-village.com

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

What To Bring

To enjoy your holiday comfortably and safely, it's essential that your clothing and footwear is suitable for the conditions likely to be encountered. Changeable weather is possible throughout the year, so our advice is to

come prepared for all eventualities – hot, cold, wet or dry.

All of our Heritage Tours involve active sightseeing and you should, therefore, be prepared for walking between the sights and wear flat, comfortable shoes. In the evening most guests wear casual clothing. You will probably find a small rucksack or cross-body bag useful for carrying spare clothing, a camera, sun protection, and drinks during the day.

Please be sure to bring your National Trust or English Heritage membership cards if you have them - admissions to sites owned by these two organisations are *not included* in the price of your holiday. If you are a member of an organisation which has reciprocal arrangements with National Trust or English Heritage, do be sure to bring your membership cards too.

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.

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