



North Lakes Circuit (Self-Guided)

Please email us at info@ukexploratory.com or call us on +44 (0)1729 823 197 to chat about this holiday. You'll find all the latest information at www.alpineexploratory.com/holidays/north-lakes-circuit.html.



Looking across Buttermere to Hassnes

About these Holiday Notes

These Holiday Notes help you decide whether this holiday is right for you. Before your trip we send you final detailed information.

Details

- Start Keswick
Finish Keswick
Region Lake District
Country England
Length 4 walking days and 5 nights
Total distance 57.5km or 36 miles
Typical day 14.5km (9 miles), 480m ascent
Highest altitude 530m above Honister
Grade Intermediate

Introduction

This holiday is an exploration of the Northern Lake District scene, being a short trek of 4 days starting and finishing in Keswick.

Keswick makes a superb base. It is the focal point of the area and its streets are buzzing in season with outdoor enthusiasts. Spend your first and last nights here.

Your trek takes you to Buttermere, Borrowdale and Threlkeld. Ordinarily one might not see these three quite different locations as natural points on a trek, but a careful look at the map suggests otherwise. The potential for linking each place by exciting and relatively unfrequented trails is what we love about this route.

Your routecards take you on what we consider to be the best routes between the villages, and of course your own explorations are always possible.

Passing through an area is a great way to get to know it, especially if your past experience is

on day walks only. Come with us and see it from all angles.

Our approach

Your route

Your route crosses passes and travels through valleys on a satisfying circuit of many scenic spots in the Northern Lakes. Set off from Keswick into the Newlands Valley. A path leaves to climb a quiet valley and drop down to Buttermere, the small village between Buttermere (the lake) and Crummock Water. The next stage takes a steep path up to the Honister area and drops into Borrowdale, where the villages of Rosthwaite, Stonethwaite and Longthwaite make up the civilisation. Pass through Watendlath and cross the ridge to Thirlmere before a gentle valley walk through St John's in the Vale brings you to Threlkeld, the village underneath Blencathra. Skiddaw House can be visited on the final stage to Keswick, a day of wide and sometimes wild views.

Routecards and maps

Each day's route is explained in detail on your routecards, to bring you to your night's accommodation. We give you the real maps for you to follow, not printouts or photocopies.

Getting there and back

Your holiday starts and ends in Keswick. Travel to and from Keswick is not included in the holiday price - we leave it to you to make the arrangements that suit you best. Keswick is easily reached by a bus from Penrith, on the main train line between London and Glasgow. Your info pack contains full information on travel options. It is possible to park your car at your accommodation. If you would like to do this, please let us know.

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Keswick

Evening arrival in Keswick. Eating out in the town centre is a pleasure.

Guesthouse, Keswick

Day 2: Keswick to Buttermere

(17.5km or 11 miles)
The first day's walk takes you through some quintessentially Lakeland scenery in the Newlands valley, by a choice of easy ridges and valley paths. At the end of the walk, make the short descent to the village of Buttermere between Crummock Water and Buttermere itself.

Guesthouse, Buttermere

Day 3: Buttermere to Borrowdale

(12.5km or 8 miles)

This is a classic Lakeland crossing, involving reaching climbing out of the valley to reach the Honister Pass and then descending into beautiful Borrowdale.

B&B, Borrowdale

Day 4: Borrowdale to Threlkeld

(15.5km or 10 miles)
Today is an intriguing stage, linking up two areas of the Lakes that are rarely thought of as fitting into one walk. But they certainly do fit in, and the breadth of scenery today is wonderful. Reach Threlkeld sited just underneath the mountain Blencathra.

Inn, Threlkeld

Day 5: Threlkeld to Keswick

(12km or 7.5 miles)
Today's final stage is one to be savoured, with a choice of walking from easy to challenging, but with all roads leading back to Keswick and the end of your trek. One possibility for the day is to explore the area around Skiddaw House between Skiddaw and Blencathra, a romantic spot in the heart of some bold mountains, before walking out along good paths to Keswick.

Guesthouse, Keswick

Day 6: Departure

Morning departure from Keswick.

Our usual schedule of accommodation might not be available, especially if there is not much time between booking and your trip starting. We will book accommodation as closely as possible to this itinerary and present you a schedule for you to check before we proceed.

Accommodation

This holiday stays in pleasant guesthouses, bed & breakfasts or inns along the route. We place most value on a friendly welcome, comfortable standards and a good location within the village or town.

We book ensuite accommodation except where it is not available, for example in older buildings or more remote locations, and of course in the hostel.

Your info pack contains full details of your accommodation including contact details and directions.

Food

The food of the Lake District is hearty and often locally produced. Classic dishes include Cumberland sausages or lamb shank with mashed potato; steak and kidney pie; and of

course fish and chips. Fish and game are often seen.

You will have enough chances to buy lunch ingredients, or to stop for lunch, along the way. However, on some stages you will have to be self-sufficient throughout the walk. Your routecards show places to eat and stock up on the route.

We include breakfast on all mornings.

The walking

Terrain

The terrain is a mix of the following and more:

Paths in woodland
Walled tracks
Paths through fields (some indistinct)
Country lanes
Paths over the open hillside (some indistinct)
Steep rocky paths or steps

The landscape should be treated as wild terrain in which you will need to be self-reliant. We strongly recommended that you know how to navigate with a map and compass; the skills are easy to learn and your notes include details of some good books.

Signposts and waymarks

Directions on the ground are not universal; paths might have wooden finger posts or small yellow arrows as waymarks, but might also have no markings at all. Please be prepared to navigate!

Your own routes

While your routecards make up the walking for the trip, you are of course free to walk wherever you choose, taking side trips or going by a different route of your own choice. Please note that if you follow your own route you will have left the holiday for the duration.

Local transport

No local transport is needed for this holiday due to its nature as a continuous walk. Your only focus is on the walking – a real break! Your notes and routecards tell you about the options for shortening or missing out entirely each day's walk by using buses and trains, where possible.

Language

English is the local language.

Weather

The weather in the Lake District between April and October is generally very suitable for walking. While snowfall is in theory possible on higher ground all year round, it is very rare in the summer months. April and May can often be excellent months for warmth and relative dryness. Any time in June, July and August is likely to be warm enough for comfort but with a good chance of rain on at least some days. Towards the Autumn, September and October can be quieter and very pleasant, though colder.

This all means that it is sensible to come equipped for and expecting all the types of weather that might be experienced in a typical summer in the UK: from heavy rain storms with a chill in the air, to hot sunshine.

Equipment

You will need the usual equipment for mountain walking in the UK. Especially important are good walking boots, waterproofs and sun protection. Your info pack contains a suggested equipment list. Please also see the Equipment page of our website for more information.

Insurance

We recommend, but it is not compulsory, that you have insurance cover for personal liability, cancellation and your baggage and money. Your info pack contains details of suitable insurance policies.

Money in the UK

The currency is the Pound Sterling (GBP).

Local expenses

Local expenses include food and drink other than breakfasts, plus any local transport, attractions and extras.

Guided days

Hire a professional mountain leader to join you on this self-guided holiday, for one or more days. A leader helps plan and carry out each day's walking and adds interest to your holiday by pointing out local features. Please contact us for prices and more information.

Groups

Walk by yourself or in your own group, or see if we can match you up with other like-minded walkers on the same holiday. Any group will be a maximum of 8 people.

Hazards

Health

The UK does not require tourists to take any vaccinations. However, it is recommended to keep tetanus vaccines up to date.

Safety

This is adventure travel! This holiday takes you to some wild and remote areas, in particular some areas of upland moor and mountain where navigation can be difficult in poor weather. The weather can also be a hazard in itself. During any walking, whether following a routecard or making your own route, you are responsible for your own actions and safety and you should join the trip with suitable skills, experience and equipment.

Further information

Please email us with any questions at info@ukexploratory.com.

Disclaimer

This information is given in good faith and is believed to be correct at the time of issue. UK Exploratory cannot be liable for any loss or injury incurred.