



## Coast to Coast (Self-Guided)

Please email us at [info@alpineexploratory.com](mailto:info@alpineexploratory.com) to chat about this holiday.

You'll find all the latest information at [www.alpineexploratory.com/holidays/coast-to-coast.html](http://www.alpineexploratory.com/holidays/coast-to-coast.html).



Ullswater and Patterdale

**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** St Bees

**Finish** Robin Hood's Bay

**Region** Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors

**Country** England

**Length** 14 walking days and 15 nights

**Total distance** 314km or 196 miles

**Typical day** 22.5km (14 miles), 550m ascent

**Highest altitude** 792m on Kidsty Pike

**Grade** Red3

**Introduction**

The famous Coast to Coast walk in England runs for nearly 200 miles between the Irish Sea on the West coast (start point St Bees) and the North Sea on the East coast (a triumphant finish at Robin Hood's Bay).

This self-guided walking holiday treks the route in its entirety over the course of a fortnight. We tackle the route in 14 stages; many variations on this schedule are possible and we're pleased to book longer or shorter trips to suit.

The Coast to Coast walk was devised by Alfred Wainwright, the well known author of guidebooks to the Lake District, and published in his book *A Coast to Coast Walk* in 1973. The aim was to cross England and visit the national parks of the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales and the North York Moors. Over the three decades since, the walk has become one of, if not the most, popular treks in the British Isles. The clever route and the sheer beauty of the views make sure of that!

Walking the whole route, or any of the tougher stages, is a challenge. As well as pastoral footpaths and shady woods, there are sections over rough open moor and mountain landscape. Especially over the initial Lake District stages, proper outdoor equipment and experience are essential.

Compared to some long distance trails in the UK, the paths underfoot are a real mixture. Where the West Highland Way for example has many purpose-built stony paths, the Coast to Coast runs on pre-existing paths and tracks, and these vary from wide and smooth to narrow, boggy and sometimes unclear.

The real charm of the Coast to Coast lies in the genuine and unspoilt places met along the way. Hidden corners of England reveal themselves as you cross the country. This is true trekking, passing through the landscape and enjoying new aspects every day.

**Our approach to the Coast to Coast****Your route**

Your route follows the Coast to Coast, as officially as the slightly relaxed nature of the route allows. Set off from St Bees and reach the headland above cliffs before breaking away inland towards Ennerdale. Cross the centre of Lakeland, past the Black Sail hut into Borrowdale, then through Grasmere and across to Patterdale. Over the ridges of High Street reach Shap and some gentler ground. Pass Orton to reach Kirkby Stephen, then cross into the Yorkshire Dales on Nine Standards Rigg, the barrier between East and West and a major milestone. Swaledale beckons, all the way to Richmond, past Keld and Reeth. Cross the flat Vale of York to Ingleby Cross and Osmotherley before setting off for the last section on the North York Moors. High and open walking on good ground leads you past Blakey Ridge and down to Glaisdale and Gosmont. A final stage leads to the coast with a few short clifftop miles left before Robin Hood's Bay.

**Half the route?**

We also offer the route in two more easily managed chunks of a week each. We break the trek up at Kirkby Stephen and call the trips CTC West (6 days) and CTC East (8 days).

**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 in St Bees and ends at Robin Hood's Bay. Travel to St Bees and from Robin Hood's Bay is not included in the holiday price - we leave it to you to make the arrangements that suit you best. St Bees is on the train line around the edge of Cumbria and Robin Hood's Bay is linked to Whitby by bus. Your info pack contains full information on travel options. It is possible to leave a car at either your first or last night's accommodation. If you would like to do this, please let us know.

**Itinerary****Arrival day: Arrival in St Bees**

Settle into this pretty village near the sea.

**Guesthouse, St Bees****Stage 1: St Bees to Ennerdale Bridge**

(24km or 15 miles) Start the Coast to Coast with a highly scenic stretch along the cliffs. Turn inland, climb Dent (352m) and walk to Ennerdale Bridge.

**Inn, Ennerdale Bridge****Stage 2: Ennerdale Bridge to Rosthwaite**

(25km or 15.5 miles) This classic Lakeland crossing to Borrowdale walks the length of wild Ennerdale, crosses Honister Pass and drops to Rosthwaite.

**Small hotel, Rosthwaite****Stage 3: Rosthwaite to Grasmere**

(15km or 9.5 miles) Link up Borrowdale with the village of Grasmere in the heart of the Lakes. An option is the entertaining ridge walk to Helm Crag.

**Guesthouse, Grasmere****Stage 4: Grasmere to Patterdale**

(13km or 8 miles) Cross Grisedale Hause today on the way to Patterdale. Fairfield, St Sunday Crag and Helvellyn are all options to add excitement.

**Guesthouse, Patterdale****Stage 5: Patterdale to Shap**

(26.5km or 16.5 miles) Some of the grandest walking is over the High Street range today with the high-point Kidsty Pike (792m) before dropping to Haweswater. **Guesthouse, Shap**

**Stage 6: Shap to Kirkby Stephen**

(33km or 20.5 miles) With the Lakes firmly behind you, enjoy this long, gentle stage across moorland and through fields to bustling Kirkby Stephen.

**Guesthouse, Kirkby Stephen****Stage 7: Kirkby Stephen to Keld**

(18.5km or 11.5 miles) A distinct section of the route starts today with an ascent of Nine Standards Rigg, a moorland ridge. Drop down over the moors to Keld. **Guesthouse, Keld**

**Stage 8: Keld to Reeth**

(17.5km or 11 miles) Follow old moorland mine tracks, past ruins, to Reeth. An easier alternative follows the Swale through the valley, visiting Muker.

**B&B, Reeth****Stage 9: Reeth to Richmond**

(17km or 10.5 miles) Gentle walking with a mix of woodland and open fields leads all the way to Richmond. Arrive in Richmond with time to see the castle. **Guesthouse, Richmond**

**Stage 10: Richmond to Danby Wiske**

(22.5km or 14 miles) Start the two-day crossing of the Vale of York, a flat agricultural area between the Dales and North York Moors. Fields and country lanes make it easy going. **B&B, Danby Wiske**

**Stage 11: Danby Wiske to Osmotherley**

(19.5km or 12 miles) Watch the North York Moors draw closer. The terrain is flat for much of the day but rises into woodland before you drop to Osmotherley, a charming village. **Inn, Osmotherley**

**Stage 12: Osmotherley to Clay Bank Top**

(19km or 12 miles) Three days on the North York Moors start with an undulating route on the edge of the hills. Your stay is in a B&B off the route. **B&B, near Clay Bank Top**

**Stage 13: Clay Bank Top to Grosmont**

(38km or 24 miles) Follow easy tracks over moors to Blakey Ridge, with its isolated pub, and down to the scenic valley around Glaisdale and Grosmont. **B&B, Grosmont**

**Stage 14: Grosmont to Robin Hood's Bay**

(25.5km or 16 miles) Cross moors and walk through old woodland on the way to the sea. The final clifftop miles mirror those of St Bees at the start. **Guesthouse, Robin Hood's Bay**

**Departure day: Departure from Robin Hood's Bay**

Morning departure from Robin Hood's Bay.

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 and 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.

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

**Food**

The food of Northern England 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 recommend 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 vary from wooden or metal Coast to Coast finger posts, through small yellow arrow waymarks, to nothing 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! Excursions to local towns might be possible by bus or train. As well as these options 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 Lakes, Dales and North York Moors between April and September 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 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.

**Passports and visas**

Passport holders of the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore do not need a visa to enter the UK.

**Money in the UK**

The currency is the Pound Sterling (GBP).

**Local expenses**

Local expenses include food and drink other than breakfast, which is included, 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@alpineexploratory.com](mailto:info@alpineexploratory.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.

