



## Lake District Circuit (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/lake-district-circuit.html](http://www.alpineexploratory.com/holidays/lake-district-circuit.html).



Lakeland ridges as far as Grasmoor

**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** Ambleside

**Finish** Ambleside

**Region** Lake District

**Country** England

**Length** 10 walking days and 11 nights

**Total distance** 150km or 94 miles

**Typical day** 15km (9.5 miles), 500m ascent

**Highest altitude** 750m at Sticks Pass

**Grade** Red3

**Introduction**

Complete a notable, magnificent circuit of the whole of Lakeland, in the process visiting most of the major valleys and seeing most of the famous lakes. Moving from point to point is a satisfying way to see this charming area.

The terrain in a circuit of the Lake District is bound to be varied. Our emphasis is on good mountain paths, some stony and hard to distinguish, but generally simple enough to follow. On lower-level sections, paths are sometimes forest tracks or country lanes. The highest peaks of the area, including Scafell Pike which is the high point of England, can be climbed on detours from our normal route for those who wish.

Our usual circuit starts in Ambleside, the bustling centre for the South Lakes and easily reached. We set off East to remote valleys, then cross to the Northern hills around Keswick. The Western sections come next with their rocky steps and exhilarating views. Finally the peace of the Southern district gives a new perspective on the whole trip, distant hills rising above the woods and tarns.

With no need for local transport along the trek, and with all accommodation booked for you,

this holiday provides a real break where your only focus will be on enjoying the walk.

**Our approach****Your route**

This is a full, yet flexible, circuit of the whole of the Lake District. Starting from Ambleside in the South, your route takes to the East, North, West and South areas of the district in turn. This means setting off to cross ridges to Kentmere, then exploring open spaces to Bampton on the edge of the Eastern fells, before cutting back along Ullswater and then Thirlmere towards Keswick. Set off again to Buttermere and wild Ennerdale. Next Wasdale is a highlight across another rough pass. The roughest day underfoot comes to Langdale, and here difficulties ease and your last stages offer contemplation – in distant views – of the hills explored, as you trace the final tranquil steps back to Ambleside.

**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 Ambleside. Travel to and from Ambleside is not included in the holiday price - we leave it to you to make the arrangements that suit you best. Ambleside is easily reached by a bus from Windermere, Windermere being on the local train line from Oxenholme on the main London-Glasgow line. 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****Arrival day: Arrival in Ambleside**

Evening arrival in Ambleside. There is a choice of places at which to eat out in the town centre. **Guesthouse, Ambleside**

**Stage 1: Ambleside to Kentmere**

(12km or 7.5 miles)

Today's first stage leaves the busy Ambleside and starts with a traverse of Wansfell to gain Kentmere, a quiet valley far from the morning's bustle. **B&B, Kentmere**

**Stage 2: Kentmere to Bampton**

(20km or 12.5 miles)

Skip across another ridge this morning to walk further East, arriving in Longsleddale. Now the route turns North as you climb steadily to Gatescarth Pass and drop to Haweswater. This reservoir leads to Bampton, a hamlet on the edge of the hills. **Inn, Bampton**

**Stage 3: Bampton to Glenridding**

(22km or 14 miles)

Turn back to the Lakes today, picking up Ullswater and following its Southern shore for a while. Around the base of Place Fell lies the village of Glenridding in the valley of Patterdale. **Guesthouse, Glenridding**

**Stage 4: Glenridding to Threlkeld**

(20km or 12.5 miles)

This tough day crosses Sticks Pass to Thirlmere, a forested reservoir. From Thirlmere, field paths lead to Threlkeld under the mountain Blencathra. **Inn, Threlkeld**

**Stage 5: Threlkeld to Keswick**

(12km or 7.5 miles)

Today all roads lead to Keswick. Explore the area around Skiddaw House between Skiddaw and Blencathra, a romantic spot in the heart of bold mountains, before good paths to Keswick. **Guesthouse, Keswick**

**Stage 6: Keswick to Buttermere**

(17.5km or 11 miles)

This walk takes you through some quintessentially Lakeland scenery in the Newlands valley, by a choice of easy ridges and valley paths. At the end, make the short descent to the village of Buttermere between Crummock Water and Buttermere itself. **Guesthouse, Buttermere**

**Stage 7: Buttermere to Wasdale**

(16km or 10 miles)

The straight route to Wasdale crosses two passes: firstly Scarth Gap Pass to reach Ennerdale and visit the Black Sail hut, then secondly Black Sail Pass to reach Wasdale. The hamlet of Wasdale Head is your remote home for the night. **Inn, Wasdale**

**Stage 8: Wasdale to Great Langdale**

(13km or 8 miles)

Now head East over ground that is rocky for almost the whole day. Climb to the pass at Sty Head, after which the path threads among famous Lakes peaks. Drop to Great Langdale amid trees and crags. **Inn, Great Langdale**

**Stage 9: Great Langdale to Hawkshead**

(21.5km or 13.5 miles)

Head South today to enter some even more grand scenery. Visit Little Langdale on the way to Coniston, then cross Grizedale Forest. Lastly reach Hawkshead, an enchanting village. **Inn, Hawkshead**

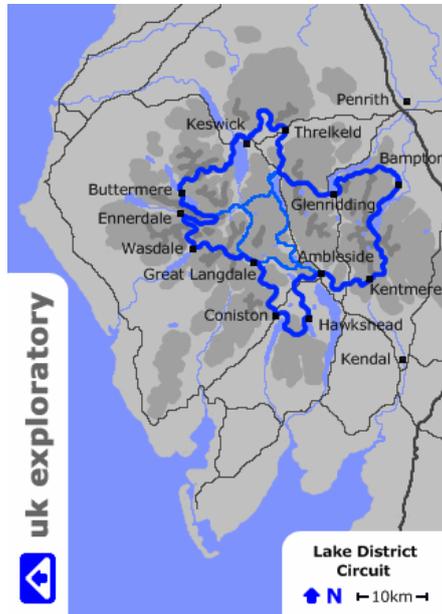
**Stage 10: Hawkshead to Ambleside**

(16km or 10 miles)

The final stage takes you through tranquil terrain; woods and tarns. Hidden spots abound; views are exceptional to Elterwater. Congratulations! **Guesthouse, Ambleside**  
**Departure day: Departure**

Morning departure from Ambleside.

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 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 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 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.

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 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 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 relatively remote areas, in particular some areas of moor and fell 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.