

ENGLAND – THE SOUTH DOWNS AT ABINGWORTH

8-day / 7-night one-hotel GUIDED walking tour with a choice of easy to challenging walks daily



The South East of England has a climate all of its own and it is generally warmer and sunnier than most parts of the country – it is an ideal walking holiday destination especially popular in the summer months.

The South Downs Way is one of the most enjoyed of England's National Trails, following the crest of the Downs, with panoramic views over the spectacular Sussex coast and the wooded landscape of the Weald, and we walk the trail on many of the walking options on this holiday. Here we find a history that goes back to Iron Age forts; there are picturesque, timeless, quintessentially English villages and displays of wildflowers, woodlands and hedgerows that are constantly changing and alive. Here are the dens of badgers, nests of squirrels, hides of deer and a home to a host of native and migratory birds. The pinnacle for many on this week of walking is the dramatic chalky white cliffs of Beachy Head that face off defiantly against past invaders from France.

Cost from: **\$2655** per person twin share Single supplement on request.

2024 Departures: 16 February, 8 & 15 March, 5, 12 & 26 April, 10, 17 & 24 May, 7, 14 & 21 June, 5 & 12 July, 9, 16 & 23 August, 13 September, 25 October, 15 November

Includes: 7 nights in comfortable room with ensuite bathroom, full board (breakfast, picnic lunch & dinner), experienced walks leader, 5 guided walks, transport to/from the walks, evening social activities.

Not Included: Transport to/from the house, drinks, personal expenses, transport/activities on your free day.



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Trip Grading: Walk at a relaxed pace, often spending time at places of interest along the way. Shorter to moderate distances on good paths. Some walks may have sections over rough or steeper terrain.

Choice of easier walks of 10-11km with ascent up to 240m, medium walks 14-17km with ascent up to 360m or harder walks of 16-22km with 210-460m ascent in a day.

A typical centre-based walking holiday offers a choice of up to three guided walks each day. You choose the walk that best suits your ability and fitness. Walks leaders make the final decision on which routes are offered; each evening they will brief you about the walks for the next day and answer questions you may have.

Suggested itinerary (Routes are determined by the walk leaders each day and are subject to change):

Day 1: Arrival Day

Plan to arrive at your country house accommodation mid-afternoon.

Day 2: South Downs

Today the shorter walk follows the ridge to the west of the house then south to picturesque Storrington. Alternatively take one of the longer routes, crossing Heath Common to reach the village of Washington. Option to continue east onto the South Downs Way ridge and Chanctonbury Ring, a prehistoric hill fort atop Chanctonbury Hill. Return through field paths to return to the house.

Day 3: Cowdray Park to Petworth

Walk from the northern edge of the polo grounds of Cowdray Park, through attractive woodland and fields to Petworth. Here you can visit the National Trust's Petworth House – a grand property built by the Duke of Somerset in the late 17th Century in the style of Versailles. The extensive grounds were landscaped by 'Capability' Brown and captured on canvas by JMW Turner. The park is currently home to England's largest herd of Fallow Deer. The longer route today begins from Stedham with a walk along the Rother Valley to Stedham Mill then on to Cowdray Park to join the route of the shorter walk to Petworth.

Day 4: Free Day - South Downs

Discover more about Abingworth Hall and explore the local area, perhaps with a visit to Arundel with its stunning castle and cathedral or the Arundel Wetlands Centre, a 60-acre nature reserve run by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust that provides a protected habitat for swans, geese, ducks, and other beautiful wetland birds.

Day 5: The Knepp Estate

Today we walk through Shipley to Knepp Estate, where a pioneering rewilding project has regenerated the once intensively farmed land. You can read more about the incredible transformation in the best-selling book *Wilding* by landowner Isabella Tree. We walk through the estate, with its walled and market gardens and grazing lands. The longer routes continue to Warminghurst, where you can visit the Grade 1 listed church which dates back to the 13th century.

Day 6: Parham Park

The shorter route today takes us to the nearby village of Thakeham and on to Warminghurst church, before crossing fields to Ashington. We return via pretty woodlands to the House. Or walk along the ridge west to the Pulborough Brooks bird reserve then continue south to Parham Park, home to Parham House, a fine Elizabethan residence, surrounded by an extensive deer park. Continue to Cootham, with the opportunity to stop for a drink at The Crown. The longer route ascends onto the South Downs Way ridge and then west to Amberley.

Day 7: The Iconic Seven Sisters

The shorter route starts at Friston church, and we walk south to reach the magnificent chalk cliffs near Birling Gap. The longer walk today takes us from Eastbourne Pier to the start of the South Downs Way, then to Beachy Head and along the glorious coastal path past the Belle Tout lighthouse and over the Seven Sisters to Cuckmere Haven.

Day 8: Departure Day

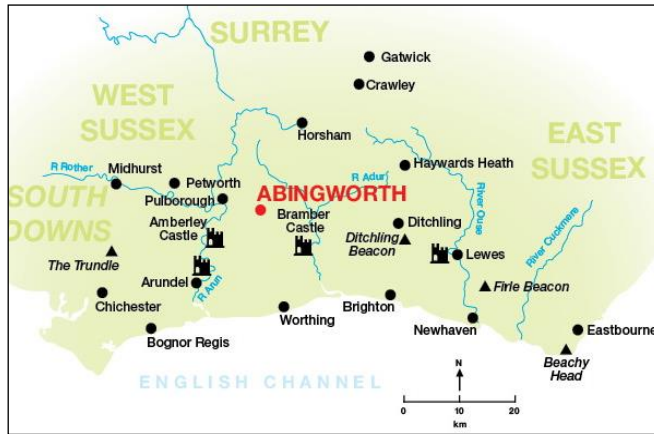
Tour ends after breakfast.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

- Call Toll free 1800 331 582 or (03) 5755 1743 or Fax (03) 5750 1020
- Email: info@outdoortravel.com.au
- Web: <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au>
- Mail: Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd, PO Box 286, Bright, VIC 3741 Australia



Accommodation: Situated in the peaceful Sussex countryside just an hour by train from London, **Abingworth Hall** occupies a country estate that dates back some seven centuries and stands beside its own lake in seven acres of parkland, within the tranquil Weald. With only 26 well-equipped ensuite rooms, there is room to breathe and relax in the sun-filled conservatory, on the terrace, by the lake or in the comfortable and spacious public areas. **Premium rooms** may be available for a surcharge – please ask when booking.



Outdoor Travel walking holidays, guided in small groups or self-guided with inn-to-inn luggage transfers and meals, are available in many parts of the United Kingdom, Ireland and across Europe including the **Coast-to-Coast** trail, the Cotswolds, the rugged coast of Cornwall, the **West Highland Way** in Scotland, or the **Ring of Kerry** in Ireland. In France see the Dordogne, Provence or Alps, walks too in Austria, Spain or Italy. Walk the **Way of St James** to Santiago in Spain or the **Via Francigena** – the pilgrims' Road to Rome.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

- Call Toll free 1800 331 582 or (03) 5755 1743 or Fax (03) 5750 1020
- Email: info@outdoortravel.com.au
- Web: <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au>
- Mail: Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd, PO Box 286, Bright, VIC 3741 Australia