

ENGLAND: WAINWRIGHT'S COAST TO COAST WALK

17 days / 16 nights **CHALLENGING** long-distance **GUIDED** inn-to-inn walk



This is the quintessential English hill walking and long-distance trail experience: 190 or so miles traversing three national parks and a lot of fascinating landscapes, old towns and villages, pubs and churches in between. It is amazing to think that this most famous of routes, totally eclipsing the Pennine Way in terms of popularity and variety, is still not classified as a national trail.

Starting at the Cumbrian seaside resort of St. Bees on the Irish Sea we head east, with the wind, to the Lake District passing some of its most famous lakes and crossing some important passes and perhaps an ascent of Helvellyn. On into the Yorkshire Dales and over the mystical Nine Standards Rigg, before following the beautiful River Swale for a couple of days into the old market town of Richmond. There follows a marathon section to link up with the North York Moors National Park from where we roller coaster around to the North Sea coast and make a triumphant entrance into Robin Hoods Bay. Along the way you will be amazed at the variety of the dry-stone walls, the charming little villages, cosy small hotels, guesthouses and pubs and just how much that you get to eat for a full English cooked breakfast!

Explore on foot the dramatic landscapes of the Lake District with its majestic lakes and rugged mountains. Appreciate the classic rural countryside of rolling hills and pretty villages of the Yorkshire Dales. Experience the satisfaction of completing one of Britain's best long-distance hikes from the Irish Sea to the North Sea coast. Walk in the company of your guide and enjoy the hospitality of your hosts along the route.

2024 Departs: 5 May, 7 July, 11 August*, 8 September *Itinerary variation with a rest day in Richmond.

Cost from: **\$5940** per person twin share Single supplement on request (limited availability)

Includes: 16 nights' accommodation in hotel/guesthouses/B&Bs (ensuite where available otherwise share facilities) with breakfast daily, transfer of one piece of luggage (20kg maximum) per person, welcome briefing, experienced walking guide, emergency telephone assistance.

Not included: Dinners, lunches, drinks, entry fees, travel insurance, personal expenses such as laundry and phone calls, unscheduled transfers required during the trip.

For clients short on time and seeking a challenge, we offer a two-week **Coast to Coast Classic** version:

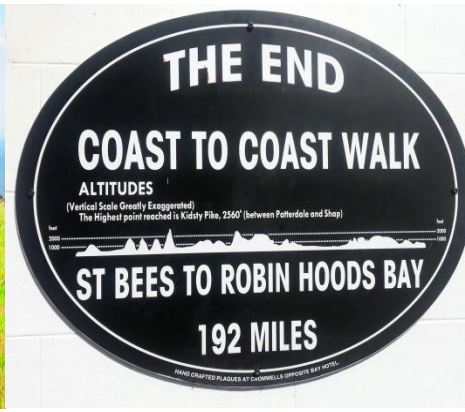
Duration: **15 days / 14 nights** ESCORTED inn-to-inn walk

Departs: 9 June 2024

Cost from: **\$5460** per person twin share

Ask for a day-by-day itinerary and availability.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details & reservations



Grade: Challenging - recommended for experienced walkers with a high level of fitness. We cover an average of 20km per day – 6 to 9 hours of walking per day – over undulating terrain with some steep ascents and descents. There are several longer days.

The pace of the group is 4 to 5km per hour and walkers are expected to keep up this pace. Trails, especially in the Lake District, can be rough or rocky underfoot, and you should also be comfortable climbing over stiles and walking on coastal terrain. Expect mixed and changeable weather, including rain, strong winds, low cloud and fog, and varying temperatures.

Suggested itinerary:

Day 1 Arrive St Bees

Travel to the starting point on the edge of the Irish Sea with views across to the Isle of Man. Take the train to St Bees from London, Manchester or Glasgow via Carlisle. Allow time to visit the Abbey church, which has features on the local history and has a display on a mummified knight discovered in a lead coffin in the graveyard. Spend an extra night here (at additional cost) to follow the coastal path to the attractive town of Whitehaven, with its marina and great museum. It is famous in the annals of the US Navy as the site of an elaborate raid on the British mainland by one John Paul Jones during the American War of Independence.

Day 2 To Ennerdale Bridge

walking @ 15 miles (24km) - 6 hours

We climb from the beach taking a footpath along red sandstone coastal cliffs of St Bees Head with England's only breeding colony of Black Guillemots, then inland over hilly ground to the edge of the Lake District National Park. Dent Hill is the first real fell that we cross and will give you some indication as to whether you are fit enough for the days ahead! Although short, there follows possibly the steepest descent of the whole tour down to Nanny catch Gate and beck a delightful stroll along which brings us to the final descent to leafy Ennerdale Bridge at the edge of the Lake District National Park.

Day 3 Scenic walk to Borrowdale

walking @ 17 miles (27km) - 7 hours

We follow a quiet and scenic footpath along the shore of Ennerdale Water, with an easy scramble under Angler's Crag at Robin Hood's Seat. A long walk on a forest track then continues to Black Sail Hut, which is the smallest youth hostel and originally a shepherd's hut. A steep climb follows up the Lowther Beck before traversing some of the Lakeland fells, perhaps with views down to Buttermere. Finally, we reach the 'drum house' which marks the descent path to the Honister slate mine workings (with its useful café) to Borrowdale; perhaps the most delightful valley in the Lakes with its crags and broadleaved trees. This is a delightful ensemble of hamlets: Seatoller (the wettest place in England), Longthwaite, Rossthwaite and Stonethwaite. Delightful riverside paths connect the places and their pubs together if you have sufficient energy in the evening. We stay in a heritage-listed guesthouse; ensuite facilities are not available due to its listed status.

Day 4 Classic Lakeland scenery enroute to Grasmere

walking @ 9 miles (14km) - 6 hours

Classic Lakeland scenery over Greenup Edge to Easedale and Grasmere. Grasmere is one of the Lake District's most celebrated villages and, if time permits, we visit the Wordsworth Museum at Dove Cottage, William Wordsworth's grave at the church and the famous Gingerbread shop!

Day 5 Another great walking day via Grisedale Pass

walking @ 8 miles (12km) - 5½ hours

Over Grisedale Pass (610m) and around the small mountain lake of Grisedale Tarn to Patterdale or Glenridding. In good weather if we are feeling strong, the best option is to take the route up St. Sunday Crag for some exceptional views down across Ullswater, possibly the most breathtaking of the trip. This adds around 1½ hours to our walking day. A detour via the summit of Helvellyn adds 2 miles and 2 hours.

Day 6 Walk to Shap over Kidsty Pike**walking @ 16 miles (26km) - 7 to 9 hours**

Some would say this was the most difficult stage especially in bad weather. The day starts with a steep climb up past pretty Angle Tarn, and then up and onwards to a critical cairn where we turn off the route to High Street to go up and over Kidsty Pike (780m / 2560 feet, the highest point on the whole route) and then descend to walk along Haweswater, a huge body of water conceived in 1929 to supply Manchester with drinking water, drowning villages in the process. We then walk through undulating fields to Shap Abbey, the most easterly point of the Lake District National Park. This was the last Abbey to be founded in England in 1199AD, and the last to be destroyed in 1540AD. It nevertheless is a pretty place to pause with some new interpretation signs. After this continue into Shap, a former granite mining town with several pubs and shops.

Day 7 Entering the Yorkshire Dales: Shap to Kirkby Stephen**walking @ 21 miles (33km) - 8 hours**

A long day starting with a hilly section across Limestone Moors with limestone pavements in places strewn with 'erratic' boulders moved there by glaciers. We drop into the gentler climes around Orton, a quaint picturesque village. Walking now between Cumbria and the Yorkshire Dales mostly over farmland with a section of moors around Sunbiggin Tarn, which is an important site for birds. A steep descent to the Scandal Beck at Smardale Bridge makes for a nice lunch stop. Then ascend over Smardale Fell for the pretty descent into Kirkby Stephen, an attractive market town, with St. Hedda's Church containing the 8th Century Loki Stone depicting Loki, the mischief-maker and god of chaos from Norse mythology.

Day 8 Kirkby Stephen to Keld**walking @ 15 miles (24km) - 6 hours**

Climb out of town to the cairns of Nine Standards Rigg (661m / 2170 feet) with its array of obelisks. It marks the Watershed of England. Next, we cross squelchy moors down to Keld in Swaledale. If it is a wet and cold day, we might relish a scone and tea made on the farm at Ravenseat, where they breed prime rams. The moors then become increasingly gentler as you walk into Keld with its many waterfalls and old stone barns.

Day 9 Cross wild moorland or via Swaledale to Reeth**walking @ 12.5 miles (20km) - 5 hours**

There are two options to Reeth. The slightly longer and higher route is over wild moorland with long-abandoned lead mines, a magnet for the industrial archaeologist. If we have unfavourable weather or we just prefer a lower level walk, the pretty alternative route via Swaledale is a lovely option. There is a really nice pub in Gunnerside on this route. We end in Reeth, an attractive Green Village which flourished at the height of the mining age and today does well out of tourism, hence its collection of pubs and tea shops.

Day 10 A walk through pretty Swaledale to Richmond**walking @ 12.5 miles (20km) - 5 hours**

Walk through pretty Swaledale lined with limestone crags on either side to Richmond, whose Norman Keep towers above the Swale on one side and the ancient cobbled market square on the other. We may also follow the Swale to Town Falls, which are quite impressive when the river is high.

Day 11 A gentle walk to Danby Wiske**walking @ 14 miles (23km) - 5 hours**

A gentle rural day, walking out from Richmond beside the River Swale and across the fields to Catterick Racecourse, then threading our way to Brompton on Swale, where the churchyard is an ideal lunch stop. Then continue rambling beside tiny streams and along quiet country roads reaching the village of Danby Wiske, a sleepy village with one pub that was put on the map by Wainwright.

Day 12 Danby Wiske to Osmotherley**walking @ 10 miles (16km) - 3.5 hours**

Primarily a road walk with some cross-country sections. The two hills are towards the end, a short climb to (what was) East Harlsey Castle, and then, with the North York Moors pressing ever closer, we have to carefully cross the main A19 road to take a lovely woodland footpath up to Osmotherley. On the way if time permits, we may visit Mount Grace Priory (built 1398) – it is a ruin, but some restoration work has been done. Osmotherley is a quaint hill village with 3 pubs to choose from, and Britain's oldest functioning Methodist Church (1754). John Wesley came to preach here.

Day 13 Osmotherley to Clay Bank Top / Chop Gate**walking @ 11-13 miles (18-21km) - 6 hours**

This is a roller coaster walk. A steep stretch from Osmotherley introduces us to the North York Moors, sandy heather clad hills with areas of forest. After coming off Scarth Wood Moor, there is a long ascent up Live Moor and Carlton Bank (408m) before descending to Lord Stones Café, almost hidden in an off-road embankment, ready for coffee time. There then follows the succession of Cringle Moor, Broughton Bank and White Hill all at or over 400 metres. We lose and then re-ascend 100-200m between each one, and we thread through an area of sandstone boulders called The Wainstones on the way up White Hill. In clear weather we have views of Roseberry Topping, Vale of Mowbray and back to the Pennines. We come off the ridge at Clay Bank Top and descend to our accommodation in this remote area which has no real local centre. The group stays in number of guesthouses dotted about and we use the properties' drop-off service to meet up the next morning.

Day 14 Ridge walking to Blakey

walking @ 7-9 miles (12-15km) - 4.5 hours

We follow a moorland ridge up over Round Hill (454m) and maintain our elevation as the path follows the line of the old, dismantled Rosedale railway line. The moor is bleak in bad weather, punctuated with standing stones some marked with inscriptions. There are enticing views at times into the fertile upper valleys of Farn and Esk dales, but especially if it is wet and cold, the arrival at the ancient Lion Inn at Blakey is welcome. This pub hotel has been a refuge from the elements for some 400 years. It offers real ales on tap and great dining.

Day 15 Blakey to Egton Bridge

walking @ 10 miles (16km) - 4 hours

After a bit of a road perambulation past a white cross called Fat Betty, there follows an easy undulating descent down to beautiful, wooded Eskdale. We also get some views opening up to the sea. The latter part of our walk follows a pretty path through the woodlands on the banks of the River Esk, where we come across the 'Beggars Bridge' a parabolic stone structure that has a story of love lost and love re-found. Egton Bridge features a church with relics of the Catholic Martyr, Oliver Postgate. A pretty setting, the river is famous for fly fishing and interesting stepping stones. On occasion we may stay overnight in Grosmont, a mile further along.

Day 16 Egton Bridge to Robin Hoods Bay

walking @ 16 miles (26km) - 7 hours

Following a delightful private road to Grosmont, we might arrive in time to see a steam engine pull out for Pickering. There then follows a very steep pull up across heather moors with views down to Whitby and its Abbey. But the sea and journey's end is still tantalizingly far as the route abruptly changes course to visit the May Beck valley with its Falling Foss waterfall. A last area of high moor brings us to the coast, where the last three miles are spent on the coastal cliff path to Robin Hood's Bay, which appears almost by surprise as you near it. This is a village of red roofed houses clustered around its harbour on the North Sea coast marking the end of this 190-odd-mile crossing of England. Normally we dip our toes in the sea then celebrate with a drink at the Bay Hotel (both optional activities).

Day 17 Departure day.

Tour ends after breakfast in Robins Hood Bay. Take the local bus or a taxi to nearby Whitby or Scarborough railway station for onward travel.



Outdoor Travel offers a wide range of inn-to-inn guided or self-guided walking holidays in most regions of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Walks are also available in France, Italy, Spain, in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and in most destinations in Europe including the **Way of St James** pilgrimage walk. Ask too about walks in the US, Canada, China, Japan, New Zealand or Australia.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more itinerary details and reservations

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