

## ENGLAND – HADRIAN'S WALL COAST TO COAST CROSSING

8-days/ 7-nights **SELF-GUIDED** inn-to-inn walking holiday



Hadrian's Wall was first built in part in 122 AD to defend the lands controlled by Roman Emperor Hadrian against the restless Pictish and Caledonian tribes to the north, to create order and to consolidate the extreme north of the Roman Empire. The wall separated Romans from 'Barbarians' at the narrowest point in northern Britain, from the Solway Firth to the North Sea. This wonderful and evocative **coast to coast** walk stretches 83 miles (133km) across town and country, forest and moorland, World Heritage Site and National Park.

In its original form, the wall was built in 6 years over 73 modern miles (80 Roman miles). It was extended and enhanced with impressive stone defences following natural ridge lines and with a deep ditch (The Vallum) dug alongside it. Later much of the stonework was mortared allowing it to survive the centuries to become one of the oldest structures in England. The amount of work and finance that would have gone into the wall was immense, even with slave or conscript labour. Post forts were built every Roman Mile of the route. At intervals huge garrison forts were built so that a counter attack or a raid could be organised at short notice. These included baths with hypocausts (under-floor heating) and gatehouses controlling the frontier forests and moors. Stone was brought in by boat on the Tyne, to supply areas where it could not be cut locally.

Things are more peaceful today; the Picts have disappeared altogether, absorbed perhaps into other tribes like the Scotti, the Romans have gone and much of the imposing defensive structures were dismantled and used for building and field wall stone. This alternative Coast-to-Coast route is a great walk, with scenic variety from the modern, busy cityscapes of Newcastle upon Tyne to the red sandstone hues of medieval Carlisle, from industrial Tyneside to the quiescence of Bowness on Solway.

**Cost from:**        **\$1845** per person twin share                      Single room supplement from **\$315**

**Departs:**        Daily from 8<sup>th</sup> April to 7<sup>th</sup> October (except 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> September), 2020

**Starts:**            Whitley Bay (Newcastle upon Tyne)        **Ends:**        Carlisle (Cumbria)

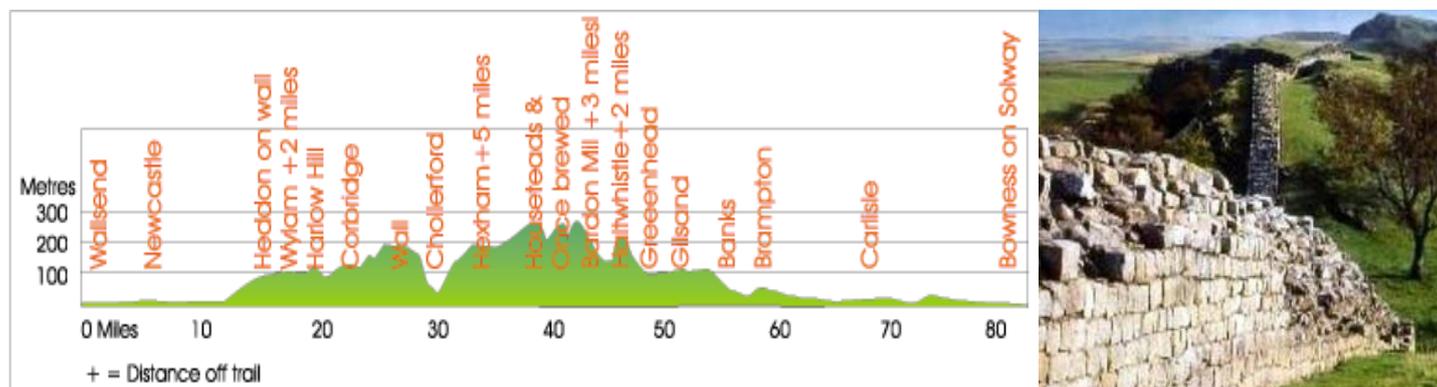
**Includes:**        7 nights' bed and breakfast accommodation with private bathroom facilities where available; luggage transfers from inn-to-inn each day as shown (one piece per person, max 20kg); route notes and map package (one per room); emergency assistance hotline.

**Grading:**        Moderate. Terrain is generally undulating, some long days and steep climbs and descents. In fog or low visibility you may need to use map and compass. Mixed weather can be expected. We would not recommend the route for first time walkers.

**Accommodation:** Our usual accommodation is described below. Please note that accommodation is limited so we may have to find alternatives (supplement may apply) and you will be informed at the time of booking. We aim to reserve rooms with ensuite facilities; however this is not always possible. Note that UK public holiday weekends are busy and should be booked well in advance (Easter, May bank holidays, August bank holiday). Start dates of 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> September are blacked out due to the Great North Run.

**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details and reservations**

## Suggested Itinerary:



### Day 1: Arrive Whitley Bay

The closest airport is in Newcastle, or take the train from London or Edinburgh to Newcastle. Use the Nexus Metro train to reach Whitley Bay (journey time about 1 hour, paid locally). If time permits you might like to have a look around Newcastle before travelling on to Whitley Bay. Once you reach Whitley Bay perhaps stretch your legs with a warm-up walk to the lighthouse at St Mary's Island, accessible at low tide, which offers spectacular coastal views. You stay in a contemporary-styled B&B on the esplanade, only a few hundred metres from the beach in this busy seaside town.

### Day 2: Whitley Bay to Wylam / Heddon on the Wall walking @ 15 miles (24km)

Take the metro train from Whitley Bay to the start of the walk at Wallsend (15 minutes, paid locally). If you have time before setting off on the walk, have a look at the remains of the Roman fort of Segedunum which marks the beginning of the route. This is a multi-award-winning site, with reconstructions of a Roman Bath House and an excellent interactive museum. From the Tourist Information in Wallsend, by the Swan Hunter Ship Yard, the trail heads out following the walls of Segedunum. Take the old Tyne to Blyth railway line (now a footpath) through to Walker where you join the River Tyne at the Riverside Park and pass Byker.

You come into the riverside area of downtown Newcastle upon Tyne with vistas of the elegant Tyne Bridges and of the Newcastle skyline including St. Nicholas Cathedral. There should be time to climb up to Newcastle Keep. Walk out of the city alongside the river, seeing evidence of present and former industrial activity. As you get to the old village of Newburn, the countryside begins to open up. You are now in the county of Northumberland. Just before you would cross the River Tyne for Heddon on the Wall, on the trail, turn off for Wylam and your overnight stop at the end of this flattish day. In Wylam stay in a nice Victorian country house which has been noted by English Heritage. It has been described by some clients as a home from home. On occasion you may continue on to overnight accommodation at Heddon.

### Day 3: Wylam to Wall / Chollerford walking @ 17 miles (27km)

Cross the River Tyne then have your first steep ascent up to Heddon on the Wall, where there are some remains of the wall. The National Trail follows beside the roads that have been built over part of the wall to Chollerford, and beyond. The wall became itself a source of material for the foundations of General Wade's military road. The trail often follows along the Vallum, the ancient ditch line created as a defensive feature when the wall was built. Look out for the remains of Vindobala fort and the reservoirs around Welton.

There is a pub at East Wallhouses after about 6 miles (10km), which may be a good option for lunch or refreshments. You may like to detour to Halton (approximately two miles return) to admire the old keep, which has a pele tower dating to the 14<sup>th</sup> Century attached to a 17<sup>th</sup> Century manor house. Near Wall, stay at a cosy pub described as ideal for walkers, close to Hadrian's Wall. On occasion your accommodation may be in a simple B&B or farmstay in the nearby small settlement of Chollerford.

### Day 4: Wall / Chollerford to Housesteads / Once Brewed walking @ 12 miles (20km)

The route follows the road as far as Fozy Moss, where the road veers off the wall as it reaches the crags of the Whin Sill Escarpment. Walk over undulating terrain to Housesteads, with its famed fort and National Trust Museum. This is the most complete Roman fort in Britain, with remains of the barracks as well as the civilian settlement outside the fort's walls, and it is well worth a visit. There are excellent views over the "Northward Tynescape" to the Bellingham and Simonside Hills.

Now follows arguably the most scenic section of the trip: over Highshield crags and then down via Peel Crags to the National Park car park at Steel Rigg. From here you can walk out to accommodation at Once Brewed, at a farm B&B or friendly pub accommodation, about half a mile north of Hadrian's Wall within Northumberland's beautiful National Park. Be sure to ask the bar staff about the name 'Once Brewed'.

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**Day 5: Once Brewed to Lanercost or Walton****walking @ 14 miles (23km) or 17 miles (27km)**

The wall climbs to its highest point over Windshields Crags, before descending to the delightfully named Bogle Hole, then down steps through Thorny Doors and up Cawfields Crags with excellent views onto the Pennines. The way passes by Great Chesters and Magnis (Roman forts) and the ruin of medieval Thirlwall castle and in another mile or so crosses the Cumbria / Northumberland border on the River Irthing at Gilsand. There are interesting Roman defences to visit at Birdoswald, and eventually at Banks you will hopefully find a shop/post office open for refreshment. Banks overlooks the Irthing Valley and Lanercost Priory below. From here there are few signs of Hadrian's Wall remaining so enjoy the last significant portion maintained by English Heritage at Hare Hill. The path descends slowly to Garthside. There are interesting views over the Irthing Valley as the walk heads into Walton. This is easy walking along the edge of fields and beside some old established hardwood trees. On approaching Walton the way drops into the valley below crossing King Water. A section of road takes you into the small village of Walton with its interesting church beside the village green. In Lanercost your B&B was originally a public house and has sandstone flagged floors in the hall and guest's lounge. As with many of the public houses in the area it became a temperance inn during the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. On occasion your accommodation may be in Walton.

**Day 6: Lanercost or Walton to Carlisle****walking @ 15 miles (24km) or 12 miles (18km)**

The route continues undulating across country. After crossing beautiful Cam beck, you briefly join the road at Newtown Village near the green before skipping across the fields. You follow the line of the wall via Old Wall, Blea head and Wall head farms, before detouring on a little "sandy lane" that takes you down to The Stanegate, the old Roman road that leads to the River Eden and Crosby-on-Eden (quite a good place for a refreshment stop). Walk alongside the river for a mile or so. At Linstock there is a medieval 'pele', Peel Tower, which rang in times of danger so that the locals could congregate within its fortifications, then come to Rickerby with its Victorian folly tower.

Cross the River Eden, meander towards Stanwix, then up in to Carlisle – a very interesting historical city, with a castle started by Henry I, extensive wall and other Roman remains and a cathedral. The town has changed hands several times between Scotland and England and this is reflected in parts of the town's structure. Carlisle is a much smaller city than Newcastle. Many of its buildings such as the castle and the Old Town Hall are made of fine red sandstone. The inner city has been pedestrianised making exploration enjoyable around the market square. Visit the Tullie House Museum for a fine collection of Roman remains. In Carlisle stay two nights at a small family-run hotel in a solid Victorian terrace. It has its foundations literally on Hadrian's Wall. There is a bistro/restaurant open every day except Sundays. Free WiFi.

**Day 7: Carlisle to Bowness on Solway****walking @ 14 miles (23km)**

As you stay another night Carlisle, the final walk today can be done in either direction – either take a scheduled bus (at own expense) to Bowness on Solway and walk back to Carlisle, or walk to Bowness and then bus or taxi back (check the timetables if taking the bus). The walk itself from Carlisle follows at first the southern side of the River Eden. The trail follows the Eden once again, more or less parallel with the line of the Wall and Vallum, through Grinsdale and Beaumont where you at last veer away from the Eden. You get good views from just north of the village to the peaks of Skiddaw and High Pike to the south and across the Solway Firth to the West. Through Burgh by Sands, a short detour takes you to the point on the marsh where Edward I died in 1307. In the vicinity of Dykesfield House, the trail joins an old railway embankment for a couple of miles before rejoining the line of "The Wall" near Glasson. From here the route follows the minor road to Bowness on Solway, the site of the Roman fort of Maia and journey's end. There is a pub here that usually opens at 4.00pm. Return to your hotel in Carlisle by bus or taxi.

**Day 8: Departure day.**

Tour ends after breakfast in Carlisle. Carlisle has good rail connections back to Newcastle, north to Glasgow and Edinburgh, or south to Manchester and onwards to London.

**Other 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 UK and Europe including Wainwright's challenging and scenic **Coast to Coast** trail, the **West Highland Way** in Scotland, the pilgrims' **Way of St James** or **Camino de Santiago** from Le Puy in France to Santiago in Spain or the **Via Francigena** the pilgrimage 'road to Rome' in Italy, or the **Tour du Mont Blanc** in Switzerland, France and Italy. We also offer one-hotel, centre-based guided walking holidays, with a choice of graded walks, in Amalfi, Tuscany, Umbria, Provence, Croatia, Greece, Austria or Germany.

**Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations**

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