

## ENGLAND – EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK, SELWORTHY

8-day / 7-night centre-based at Selworthy GUIDED walks in England's magnificent South-West



Experience the best of Exmoor – dramatic coastline, high sea cliffs, wild moorland, rolling hills covered with heather, wooded combes and valleys cutting steeply into the landscape, ruined medieval villages, Iron Age settlements, and prehistoric barrows. Visit the locations made famous by the tale of *Lorna Doone* and the poets Coleridge and Southey, and perhaps see the ponies or famous red deer on Exmoor and the Quantock Hills. Vibrant yellow gorse and wild purple heather blanket the countryside in season. Selworthy Beacon, with its extensive views, is nearby, and Dunkery Beacon, the highest point on Exmoor, is easily accessible. Based near the picturesque village of Selworthy at a historic country house, this guided walking tour is an ideal way to explore the contrasting scenery – high moorland and rugged coastline – of the Exmoor National Park.

A typical centre-based walking holiday offers a choice of up to three guided walks each day. You choose the option which best suits your interests and fitness. There is also a free day mid-week, allowing you to relax, explore independently, or join your tour leaders for a local excursion (paid locally) if there is enough interest.

**Cost from:**                    **\$2695** per person (twin share).                    Single room supplement on request.

**2024 Departures:**    1, 22, 29 March,    12 April,    3, 10, 17, 31 May,    21 June,    5, 19 July,  
9, 30 August,    6, 20, 27 September,    11, 18 October,    1 November

**Includes:**                    7 nights in a comfortable room with ensuite bathroom, full board (breakfast, picnic lunch and dinner), experienced walks leader, guided walks, transport with the walks and social activities in the evenings.

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

**Accommodation:**        **Holnicote House** lies at the heart of a large estate in Exmoor National Park. Leased from the National Trust, this historic building is set amongst peaceful gardens and has a heated outdoor pool. There are 32 bedrooms, in the main building and Butlers and Guns cottages. A limited number of **premium rooms** are available – with a surcharge – ask for details.



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

**Trip Grading:** Moderate to long distances, mostly on good paths, though some routes are over rougher terrain or along rugged coastal footpaths. Most walks will have some sections over steeper terrain, and some may require sustained ascents or descents. Easier walks 8-13km with up to 460m of ascent, medium walks 12-15km with up to 600m of ascent, harder walks 14-20km with up to 980m of ascent in a day.

**Suggested itinerary (routes are determined each day by walk leaders – subject to change):**

#### **Day 1: Arrival day**

Plan to arrive at your accommodation mid-afternoon. Ask when booking about local transport or taxi transfer options from Taunton railway station.

#### **Day 2: Holnicote & Selworthy Beacon**

We explore the area around Holnicote House including Selworthy, rebuilt in 1828 by the Acland family to house the elderly workers of the Holnicote estate. The tearoom is a delightful spot for refreshments at the end of the walk. The medium and harder walks both ascend to the summit of Selworthy Beacon which offers great views (weather permitting) that stretch across the Bristol Channel to the Welsh coast.

#### **Day 3: The Doone Valley to Watersmeet**

We explore 'Doone Country', with several of the buildings and sites made famous by RD Blackmore's tale of feuding families, including Oare Church, where the fictional John Ridd and Lorna Doone were married. We walk along the wooded gorges and valleys of Oare Water and Badgworthy Water, whilst the harder walk crosses wild moorland and descends alongside waterfalls. All walks finish at the National Trust tearoom in Watersmeet.

#### **Day 4: Free day**

Free day, with are no organised walks. You may like to explore the area independently, or relax at the country house. Travel on the West Somerset Railway, Britain's longest steam railway, or visit historic Dunster Castle.

#### **Day 5: Along the coast to Lynmouth**

The easier walk is a delightful route from Countisbury Common mostly downhill through forest to the harbour at charming little Lynmouth, with its many tearooms and pubs. The medium and harder walks both follow coastal paths, including part of the South West Coast Path, with extensive sea views down to Lynton and Lynmouth. Poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge often walked this landscape, sometimes with his friend William Wordsworth, and it served as one of the inspirations for his poems *Kubla Khan* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

#### **Day 6: Dunkery Beacon & Horner Water**

The easier walk takes in the pretty village of Horner, the Horner Wood Nature Reserve and Horner Hill before returning to the country house. The more challenging walks leave from various starting points to Dunkery Beacon, the highest point on Exmoor, and ascend to its summit for views that stretch to Dartmoor and across the Bristol Channel to Wales. This walk is a good opportunity to spot red deer in Horner Wood Nature Reserve.

#### **Day 7: The Quantocks**

We walk along the ridge of the Quantock Hills, taking in Will's Neck, the highest point. The easier walk finishes in Nether Stowey, where there is time to visit the Coleridge Cottage, while the medium and harder walks both descend to the sea at East Quantoxhead. The beach here has interesting, tessellated pavement and rock formations along with a wealth of fossils, including ammonites and reptile remains. The Quantock Hills are another area where we may spot red deer or Exmoor ponies.

#### **Day 8: Departure day**

Tour ends after breakfast.

**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 challenging **Coast-to-Coast** trail, the **Cotswolds Way**, the spectacular coast of **Cornwall**, the **Yorkshire Dales**, the **West Highland Way** in Scotland or in **Snowdonia**, Wales or in Ireland on the **Ring of Kerry**. In France see the Dordogne, Alps, Provence or Riviera Coast, walks too in Austria, Spain or Italy. Walk the **Way of St James** from Le Puy in France to Santiago in Spain or the **Via Francigena** – the pilgrims' Road to Rome.

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

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