

# Wandering Aenqus Treks



## The Dales, Lakes, Coasts and Castles Walking Tour



Grade: Moderate

### Introduction

This superb tour visits three of the most important and scenically stunning hiking regions in England. In each of these areas we base ourselves in hotels, old coaching Inns and country houses at the very heart of the region - a home from home for our explorations. The trip begins in the limestone country of the Yorkshire Dales with hikes in and around the magnificent gorges and coves of Malham. We have a day trip to nearby Haworth visiting the family home of the Bronte sisters and taking a walk up to the lonely ruin of Top Withins, the inspiration for Emily Bronte's haunting novel 'Wuthering Heights'. For our final hike in the Dales we tackle one of the famous Yorkshire 'Three Peaks' before transferring to England's premier National Park, the 'Lake District'. Here we stay in Beatrix Potter country and make a series of hikes through this lovely landscape. On this part of our trip we will also enjoy a lake cruise and visit to the splendid home of one of England's most influential thinkers John Ruskin, and the more modest, perfectly preserved rooms of Potters' Hilltop Farm. The last of our three regions is the rugged coast of Northumbria, studded with sandy bays, high cliffs and more than its fair share of impressive castles dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Based in the historic market town of Berwick with its cobbled streets, narrow alleys and fine stone buildings, we have three days of superb hiking, exploring both the coast and the Cheviot Hills of Northumberland's National Park. Along the way we will visit some of the medieval castles guarding the Scottish border and take a boat trip out into the North Sea to the Farne Islands to visit the seals, and to the romantic Holy Island. The finale of this unique tour is a visit to Edinburgh, the first city of Scotland. After exploring the castle the rest of the day is free for sightseeing and souvenir buying before a final dinner in a restaurant we have chosen to represent the best of Scottish traditional fare. For its variety of landscape, historical interest and superb hiking, this tour is hard to match.

### Itinerary

#### Day 1. Arrive Malhamdale, walk to Malham Cove.



We have a courtesy pick-up from Manchester Airport at 10.30 am and make the approximately 1½ hour transfer to the Yorkshire Dales, one of ten areas of outstanding natural beauty in England and Wales which were designated as protected National Parks in the 1950s. Straddling the Pennines, the backbone of England, this expansive area of hill country is composed predominantly of limestone giving rise to many impressive 'karst' features such as caverns, sink holes, limestone pavement, vertical cliffs, waterfalls and gorges. In the centre of the Park a cap of erosion resistant millstone grit has created a mountain area rising most famously in the 'Yorkshire Three Peaks', to over 2,300ft (700 metres). Throughout the national park, rivers have cut numerous

deep valleys or dales each with a distinctive character and atmosphere. One of the most picturesque is Malhamdale and this will be the base for our explorations in the Yorkshire Dales. After checking into our accommodation, we take a short walk out of the village to visit the impressive Malham Cove. Standing some 260 feet high and almost a thousand feet in length, this curving cliff of limestone was formed at the close of the last ice age when millions of gallons of melt-water would have produced a waterfall bigger than Niagara.

#### Day 2. Hike: Goredale Scar, Malham Tarn and the Limestone Pavement – a circular tour.

Today's walk starts with a stroll through pleasant woodland to the pretty waterfall known as Janet's Foss which cascades over rocks into a deep plunge pool. From Janet's Foss we follow the stream to the mouth of Goredale Scar where vertical cliffs tower on each side.



A short scramble over the rocks beside the stream that tumbles through the narrows leads to a good trail in the upper part of the Gorge. Climbing from the confines of the gorge we emerge in a splendid open landscape of rolling green hills and limestone escarpment leading to the delightfully located Malham Tarn. This lake - an unusual feature in porous limestone country - was created by an underlying 'plug' of impervious slate.



We follow the outlet stream to a sinkhole where it quite suddenly disappears to emerge over 2 miles away and some 600 feet below our feet. Continuing along the now dry valley we reach the impressive limestone pavement above Malham Cove. Limestone pavements are outcrops of rocks which have been dissolved by water over millions of years into 'paving blocks' and are home to a number of rare and unusual plants. There is very little limestone pavement found anywhere in the world, and this one at Malham is among the most spectacular examples anywhere. From the lip of the cove we make a steep descent to reach the foot of the cliffs and follow the path back to our accommodation.

**Day 3. A walk through Bronte Country**



One of the wonderful qualities of this area is the way really dramatic changes in the landscape can be seen within just a few miles. Less than a half hour's drive from the pastoral limestone valleys of the Yorkshire Dales we enter Bronte Country. The geology here is predominantly Millstone Grit, a dark weather-resistant sandstone which lends the rolling hills and outcrops here an air of bleakness and desolation. This windswept landscape of heather and wild moors provided the inspiration for the Bronte sisters to write their classic novels, including "Wuthering Heights". We start our tour of this fascinating area in the village of Haworth which clings to the hillside high above the Worth Valley. We visit the parsonage which was home to Charlotte, Emily and Anne Bronte, now preserved as a 'period house' with the Brontes' furniture, domestic objects, artworks and personal belongings set out as they were in their own time. Setting out on today's hike, we begin with a lovely walk through the delightful Penistone Country Park. We pass a series of stepped cascades over weathered grit-stone shelves known as the Bronte Falls and climb onto the moors. Here we find the ruins of a farmhouse known as 'Top Withins' which was the inspiration for the Earnshaw's ancestral home in Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights. After a picnic lunch we enjoy a splendid walk across the highest part of the moor with fantastic views of the surrounding countryside, before returning by a different route to Haworth. From here we drive back to our base in Malham.

**Day 4. Ascend one of the famous Yorkshire Three Peaks**



We have an excellent hike today, making an ascent of one of the Yorkshire 'Three Peaks' of Ingleborough, Wharfedale, or Pen-y-Ghent. Though they vary slightly in difficulty, each of these peaks provides a challenging and rewarding hike and superb views in good weather. The particular peak we choose will depend upon the prevailing conditions. All the walks start at or close to Ribbleshead which is just a 15 minute drive from our hotel. This will be a circular walk and at the finish we drive back to Malhamdale to enjoy our final evening in our Yorkshire Dales base.

**Day 5. Transfer to the Lake District.**



After breakfast we move our base westwards, travelling into the county of Cumbria and entering the Lake District, England's premier National Park. We enter a landscape different again to the limestone dales and the Yorkshire grit, to a charming world of sheep farms and little market towns set beneath the highest mountains in the country. We travel first to Lake Windermere the longest of England's Lakes where we spend some time to explore the lakeside town of Bowness. From here we take a ferry across the lake and continue our drive to the village of Hawkshead which was home to Beatrix Potter, beloved author of 'The Tale of Peter Rabbit' and featured in the film 'Miss Potter' with Renée Zellweger in the title role.



Hawkshead is an ancient market town with whitewashed houses dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century connected by a haphazard arrangement of archways, cobble-stone alleys and squares. Cars are banned from the village and it is a pleasant place to stroll around. In the town is the Beatrix Potter Gallery which has original book illustrations by the author and information about her life and works. Tonight we will stay in a country pub or guest house in 'Beatrix Potter Country'.

### Day 6. Follow the Cumbria Way to Coniston Village

This morning we have a short and very scenic drive through Grizedale Forest to Lowick Bridge where we cross the River Crake and follow a narrow country lane to the place known as 'Kiln Bank'. We now join the Cumbria Way as it follows the high pastures above the beautiful Crake Valley. The walking is delightful as we climb gently towards the Blawith Fells and the wild and remote Beacon Tarn fringed with reeds and decorated with water lilies. Beyond the tarn we cross a little col between the low hills of Blawith and suddenly the mountains of the Lake District heart stand before us. A track now winds down to the tumbling Torver Beck at Sunny Bank. Beyond, as we top a small rise the beautiful lake of Coniston Water comes into view and we follow its shoreline on a gently undulating trail through mixed woodland of oak, birch, copper beech and conifer, until we reach the charming village of Coniston set beneath the crags and slopes of the 'Old Man'.



Here we take a boat across the lake to Brantwood. This fascinating house with its beautiful gardens was the home of John Ruskin, a remarkable 19<sup>th</sup> century philosopher, author, poet and artist whose influential ideas of 'Christian Socialism' led to the establishment of the modern welfare state in Britain. His influence on literature, art and architecture were no less widespread stretching from Leo Tolstoy to Frank Lloyd Wright, and around the world Ruskin had many followers. Marcel Proust translated his works into French and Mahatma Gandhi said that Ruskin had been the single greatest influence in his life. Today Ruskin's house perched on a steep bank above the lake, is a popular visitor attraction. The original seven rooms that he used during his lifetime are open to the public and filled with original furniture, art and objects, while his lovingly created gardens preserved or restored by the estate, offer an eclectic mix of ancient broad-leaf woods, scented azaleas and bluebells, and flower gardens.

### Day 7. Visit to Beatrix Potter's House and Mountain Hike



We start today with a visit to Hill Top Farmhouse where Beatrix Potter wrote many of her children's stories. We then make an ascent of one of the Coniston Fells (pictured above) for a splendid panorama of lakes, mountains and coast. There are several options for hikes of around 6 or 7 miles up to 2,600 feet above the Village including the 'Old Man of Coniston'.

### Day 8. Transfer to Berwick-upon-Tweed

We move across to the East of England today to the third of our areas of outstanding natural beauty visited on this trip, the Northumbria Coast. Our base for this part of the trip is the historic town of Berwick situated at the mouth of the River Tweed. This is border country, rich in the history of Scottish – English rivalry and war. To get to Berwick we must first cross into Scotland where we travel through the hills of the so called 'Lowlands'.



We stop en-route at Melrose to visit the 12<sup>th</sup> century Abbey there. Melrose Abbey is a magnificent ruin on a grand scale with lavishly decorated masonry. Originally built in 1131 it was burnt down by the English King Richard II in retaliation for a raid by the Scots in 1385. The Abbey was then rebuilt to its former glory during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The Abbey is thought to be the burial place of Robert the Bruce's heart, marked with a commemorative carved stone plaque within the grounds. Visitors can also visit a small museum housing a display of artefacts found within the abbey. We take our lunch in Melrose before continuing our journey east through Scotland, finally re-entering England for the last few miles to Berwick.



This historic border market town changed hands between England and Scotland no less than 14 times between its first capture by the Scots (around 1018) and its eventual retaking by the English in 1482. It is still very much a border town and the River Tweed is considered a Scottish River. Prior to its final fall to the English, Berwick was Scotland's most important seaport. The raids and sieges did not stop for a further two centuries and Elizabeth I built extensive defences to protect the town and these remain the most complete set of Tudor town walls in Europe. For our accommodation in Berwick we use a variety of historic halls and houses adapted as guest-houses, each chosen for their combination of character, comfort and location within walking distance of all the amenities of the town.

### Day 9. Visit Alnwick Castle. Coast walk to Beadnell Bay

Berwick is the most northerly town in England and was a strategic point in the border defences. Travelling south the next important defensive town was Alnwick which boasts the second largest inhabited castle in England, the first being Windsor Castle. First constructed at the turn of the 11<sup>th</sup> century the castle is today the home of the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland. Except for their private apartments, most of this magnificent Castle is open to the public and is an important visitor attraction in Northumbria. It has also been used as the set for several major films, most recently for the Harry Potter movies. We will spend a couple of hours looking around the castle before heading off to begin today's walk close to the village of Longhoughton overlooking the North Sea coast. This is a delightful walk of approximately 10 miles along cliff

tops, across sandy bays and beside rolling dunes. We follow the coastline north past landmarks with evocative names such as Longhoughton Steel, Sugar Sands, Rumbling Kern, and Cullernose Point, to the quaint village of Craster. Here, a tiny natural harbour has created the ideal location for this fishing village which also has a volunteer for a lifeboat station.



Crossing a green swell of pasture which tops a rugged cliff-line above ocean breakers, we head for the eerie skeleton of Dunstanburgh Castle. This imposing ruin of a 14<sup>th</sup> century castle was built on a basalt outcropping of the Great Whin Sill rising over 100ft above the sea, and has long since been a noted landmark for sailors on this coast. After taking the view from inside the castle we descend to the shoreline and continue our coast walk passing through Newton-by-the-Sea to reach Beadnell Bay and meet our waiting vehicle and return to Berwick.

#### Day 10. Visit Bamburgh Castle. Boat cruise around the Farne Islands and visit to Holy Island

This morning we start with a drive to Budle Bay some 15 miles south of Berwick. A bracing walk of around 2 miles following the rocky headland of Budle Point brings us to the dramatic Bamburgh Castle situated atop another Basalt outcrop. There is evidence of fortification on this natural stronghold as far back as the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The foundations of the present castle were probably laid down by the Normans and it has the distinction of being the first castle in England to be defeated by artillery, after a 9-month long siege by the Earl of Warwick during the War of the Roses in 1464. The castle was restored to its former glory during the 17<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and is now the home of the Armstrong family. The castle is open to the public and contains several interesting exhibits as well as some original architectural features and stunning views across to the Farne Islands and inland to the Cheviot Hills.



After our visit to the castle we drive along the coast for 2½ miles to the seaside resort of Seahouses. Making our way to the harbour we board one of William Shiel's boats for a cruise around the Farne Islands. Leaving Seahouses, we sail around Inner Farne viewing many nesting sea birds, and visit the Grey Seal colony at Megstone. Continuing up the coast there are good opportunities to see porpoise before reaching the harbour of Lindisfarne otherwise known as Holy Island. This is the closest of the Farne group and the only one which is inhabited by anything other than seabirds. Holy Island can be reached from the coast by a 3 mile long causeway which is only passable at low tide. Our arrival is timed to coincide with the high tide when the Island looks at its best, and when it is quietly beyond reach of the coach parties who flock to its several attractions. During the 7<sup>th</sup> century the missionary community of Iona who had kept the flame of Christianity burning throughout the Dark Ages of Anglo-Saxon invasion, were invited by King Oswald, to introduce Christianity into northeast England. They chose this island as their base. Four centuries later the Benedictine order built a great priory here and in the 16<sup>th</sup> century a castle was added to the small island's rich architectural heritage. We have 2 hours on the island to visit its sights. There are also several cafes, pubs and shops on the island.

Before the tide retreats and the causeway emerges once more, we board our boat for the return trip down the coast giving spectacular views of Bamburgh Castle. At Seahouses we meet our vehicle for the transfer back to Berwick at the end of a full and exciting day on and off the Northumbrian Coast..



#### Day 11. Hike to summit of The Cheviot

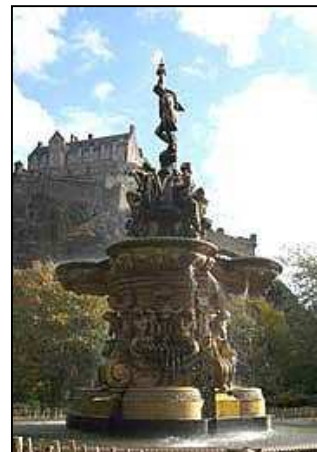
We return to the hills for the day, travelling first for 20 miles to the village of Wooler a small, attractive stone-built town, perched high above the Wooler Water, and the natural gateway to the Cheviot Hills and the Northumberland National Park.



Using either College Valley or the pretty Harthorpe Valley we will make our approach to the hill known simply as 'The Cheviot'. The climb to its 2,675ft summit takes us through wild moorland country and gives excellent views across to the coast and over the rolling hills of the Cheviot range stretching into Scotland. Today's hike is around 10 miles in length and will take approximately 6 - 7 hours.

#### Day 12. Transfer to Edinburgh

As part of this superb tour of Dales, Lakes, Coasts and Castles we have allowed for a full day's sightseeing and overnight stay in the historic Scottish city of Edinburgh. It takes approximately 1 hour to reach Edinburgh from Berwick. Our first stop is Edinburgh Castle on the Royal Mile, where the views of the city from the battlements are simply stunning. After lunch we check into our centrally located hotel and the afternoon is free for shopping and further independent sightseeing. In the evening we rendezvous for a farewell dinner in one of Edinburgh's great restaurants. Extra nights at the group hotel can be arranged for anyone who wants to spend more time in Scotland's first city.



#### Day 13. Transfer to Airport

There is complimentary group transfer to the airport, timed to leave after breakfast. Edinburgh also has excellent rail links to Manchester Airport and to London (either journey will take approximately 4 hours and trains depart regularly).

# DALES, LAKES, COASTS AND CASTLES 2010

13 Days/12 nights - £1625 / US\$2590\*  
Single supplement: £295 / US\$470\*

Sun 4 Jul – Fri 16 Jul

**Grade:** We have given this tour the grade of **MODERATE**. This trip involves some full walking days of 6 - 7 hours and ascents of 1,000 - 2,500ft. However, the hiking is not sustained and harder days are mixed with easier walks and visits to places of interest. This tour is suitable for regular hikers or anyone with a good level of fitness.

**Accommodation** for the **Dales, Lakes, Coast and Castles Tour** is in a variety of hotels and guesthouses chosen for their special character and comfort. Accommodation is in en suite rooms and is based on twin sharing. Clients making individual bookings will be paired with another client of the same sex. Depending on availability it is possible to arrange single rooms for an additional payment.

**Meals:** All meals are included in the trip price. Breakfasts taken at your hotel will consist of cereal, juices, tea or coffee and a choice of cooked breakfast or continental style. Packed or picnic lunches are provided on all walking days and during transfers and in Edinburgh will be taken in local restaurants. Dinner will be a three-course meal taken either in your hotel or at a nearby restaurant.

## **The price includes:**

- ❖ The services of an experienced Wandering Aengus Treks walk guide and a PCV qualified driver
- ❖ A single timed transfer from Manchester airport to Malham on Day 1
- ❖ A single timed transfer from Berwick-upon-Tweed to Edinburgh Airport on Day 13
- ❖ Transfer between hotels and to the start of walks by private minibus
- ❖ Accommodation as stated in the above itinerary\*\*
- ❖ All meals as described
- ❖ All admissions, fees and fares for visits and excursions detailed in the above itinerary
- ❖ Maps of all the areas we visit
- ❖ European V.A.T @ 17.5%

## **The price does not include:**

- ❖ Flights or rail journeys to/from start and end points
- ❖ Single supplement if you choose not to share a room (please contact us directly if you wish to request a single room)
- ❖ Admissions and excursion fares which are not part of the above itinerary
- ❖ Beer, soft drinks, extra tea, coffee etc.

\*Prices quoted in US\$ are approximate and are dependant upon exchange rates at the time of payment.

\*\* We reserve the right to change the advertised accommodation in certain limited circumstances but will always use an alternative of equal standing, and as far as possible we will retain the concept of using accommodation of character and charm. Please note that while we provide en-suite rooms (rooms with private bathroom) wherever these are available, this cannot always be guaranteed.

## **Your complete financial protection:**

**Wandering Aengus Treks** complies with the UK '**Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992**'. Your deposit and final balance is paid into a holding account administered by an independent body and is only released to us upon the completion of your holiday. Full details of this scheme will be supplied with your booking confirmation.

If you are viewing this dossier on screen, click to go to the [Dales, Lakes Coast and Castles](#) page of the Wandering Aengus Treks' website or to [book online](#)

## **WANDERING AENGUS TREKS**

FELLSIDE END ■ FELLSIDE ■ CUMBRIA CA7 8HA ■ UNITED KINGDOM

TEL: +44 (0)16974 78443 ■ WEB: [WWW.WANDERINGAENGUSTREKS.COM](http://WWW.WANDERINGAENGUSTREKS.COM) ■ EMAIL: [INFO@WANDERINGAENGUSTREKS.COM](mailto:INFO@WANDERINGAENGUSTREKS.COM)