

Wandering Aenqus TREKS

THE LAKES EXPLORER TOUR



Grade: Moderate

This carefully constructed itinerary offers an overview of the various charms of the Lake District. Each day consists of an easy to moderate walk of 5 to 7 miles. During the week we aim to visit several different areas to show the variety of scenery within England's premier national park. The itinerary also includes a visit to Grasmere and Wordsworth's Dove Cottage, and lake cruises on Derwentwater and Ullswater. It is possible to extend the trip either before or after and we can arrange accommodation and also give you lots of ideas for independent sightseeing or further walks.

Day 1. AFTERNOON ARRIVAL AND LOCAL WALK

Arrive at your hotel in the very picturesque Lakeland market town of Keswick situated on the shores of Derwentwater. Once a place where sheep and cattle were traded, Keswick is today a Mecca for outdoor recreation. Hikers, mountain bikers and paddlers are well provided for here and the town's cobbled main street boasts a wide selection of cafes, pubs, restaurants, and shops. There is also a park and gardens with a 'pitch and put' course, a theatre, a cinema, and a variety of boats for hire to get out onto the lake.

This afternoon tea we take a short walk up nearby Latrigg for wonderful views over the lake and surrounding fells. Having stretched our legs, the evening is free to explore the many delights of the town. Dining options are extremely varied and include local fish and chip shops, Indian and Chinese restaurants, Italian and Mexican cuisine, the stylish Morrels restaurant and several excellent local pubs where you can eat a traditional English supper in an informal atmosphere with a pint of locally brewed ale.

Today's walk is approximately 4 miles with just over 1000 feet of ascent.



Day 2. THE NORTHERN LAKES



After a leisurely breakfast, we head down to the lake where we board the Keswick launch for a 20 minute cruise on Derwentwater into the heavily wooded valley of Borrowdale. Lakeland's most famous poet William Wordsworth said of Borrowdale that it was "unique" among valleys "having sublimity on all sides". Another famous son of the Lake District declared that this valley contained the "best square mile in all the Lake District. Right in the centre of this square mile is the low lying fell of Castle Crag at an altitude of 905 feet and this is our objective for the day. Disembarking at Lodore Falls we walk along the road for approximately a mile to the tiny village of Grange, and here turn onto a rustic track which in olden times was a main route to the Honister mines. Today it is stony and grass covered and provides a way at a reasonable gradient to the foot of Castle Crag. We have some steep ground to negotiate now but it is short lived and the tremendous views from the top of Castle Crag are ample reward for our efforts extending north over the lake and south to the highest hills in England. We will take our lunch in this lovely spot before making our way down to the River Derwent whose clear waters we follow back to Grange. Finally we take a footpath along the western shore of Derwentwater as far as the boat landings of Hawes where we can catch the launch back to Keswick and return to our hotel.

Approximately 7 miles and 900 feet of ascent.

Day 3. A BUTTERMERE ROUND



We start today with a drive along the impressive road across Newlands Hause which climbs out of the Bassenthwaite valley improbably crossing the high fells which form the west/east watershed. We descend to the idyllic village of Buttermere located between the lakes of Crummock Water and Buttermere. From here we will make a circuit of Buttermere Lake a beautiful walk with spectacular views. Having completed the approximately five mile circuit we drive back to Keswick across the Honister pass, one of England's highest and steepest roads. At the top of the pass is the recently re-opened slate mine which has become a Lake District attraction. We will stop here and anyone who wishes can take an underground tour or you may want to have a go on England's first and only 'via Ferrata' (these activities are extra cost). The shop here is also a good place to buy uniquely Lakeland souvenirs. The road from the top of the pass winds down in a series of switch-backs to reach Borrowdale and we drive along Derwentwater to return to Keswick. If time allows we will stop along the way to visit the 'Bowder Stone'. This is a monstrous boulder which was deposited in the valley by the glacier which carved out Borrowdale during the last ice age. Such objects are known to geologists as 'glacial erratics'. Back in Keswick you can try out a different restaurant or perhaps take dinner in the convivial atmosphere of a typical Lakeland pub. Approximately 5 miles walking an 500 feet of ascent.

Day 4. GRASMERE, AMBLESIDE AND THE LANGDALES

After a hearty Cumbrian breakfast we take a 20 minute drive through the heart of the Lake District passing the sombre, tree shrouded lake of Thirlmere and crossing the Dunmail Raise to enter South Lakeland. Descending into the beautiful vale of Grasmere, our exploration today starts with a visit to Dove Cottage, home to William and Dorothy Wordsworth from 1799 to 1808. The cottage retains much of the original furniture and fittings and, save for the addition of electricity, is little changed since it was occupied by the Wordsworths. Nearby is a museum dedicated to the poet with an educative presentation on his life and containing various paintings and original manuscripts (including the daffodils). From Dove Cottage we take a stroll into Grasmere and visit the 13th century church of St Oswald where Wordsworth and many of his family are buried. After a pleasant walk through this most picturesque of Lakeland villages we make a short drive into bustling Ambleside to see the 'Bridge House'. Like Keswick, Ambleside is a centre for visitors to the Lake District and a good place to buy gifts and souvenirs of your visit.

Leaving Ambleside we drive to Skelwith Bridge on the River Brathay, the start of this afternoon's walk. Here we leave the road behind as we walk past the Skelwith Force waterfall and the meandering river above, which leads in a little over a mile to the most picturesque Elterwater and its tiny village where we pause for some refreshment at the Britannia Hotel. Our walk then continues on a pleasantly undulating trail giving stunning views of the Langdale Pikes at the very heart of Lakeland. From Elterwater it is 2½ miles of delightful walking to the head of the Langdale valley and a welcome pint at the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel. We can relax a while here, taking in the magnificent scenery of the Central Fells of Lakeland before boarding the local bus back to Skelwith Bridge where we pick up our tour bus and make the return journey across Dunmail Raise to Keswick. 5½ miles. 850ft. of ascent.



Day 5. ULLSWATER



Today we will explore Eastern Lakeland, and the beautiful Ullswater, Queen of Lakes. From Keswick it's a 20 minute drive over the low fells where narrow winding roads are framed by the ubiquitous Lakeland 'dry-stone' walls and sheep graze on the emerald green fields beyond. We arrive at the lakeside town of Glenridding where we board one of the refurbished 19th century Ullswater 'steamers', the 'Raven' or the 'Lady of the Lake'. We take a 30 minute cruise to Howtown pier and the start of a wonderful, meandering walk along the lake shore below sprawling Place Fell. There are spectacular views across Ullswater to St Sunday Crag, Catstycam and Helvellyn. We will take our lunch in one of the most picturesque spots imaginable, watching sailboats weave across the Lake and the Ullswater 'steamer' ploughs a straight furrow up to Pooley Bridge and down to Glenridding. Continuing our ramble after a leisurely picnic we reach Side Farm at the head of the Lake close to the quiet village of Patterdale and a perfect place for refreshment. A short walk along the road past Patterdale Church then brings us back into Glenridding where we pick up our transport and return to Keswick where Wandering Aengus Treks' services end. It is possible to arrange an extra night or night's accommodation if you do not wish to return home this evening. 6 miles. 950ft. of ascent.

LAKES EXPLORER 2012

(5 Days/4 nights) £475/\$745*

Single supplement: £100/\$156*

Thu 5 Apr – Mon 9 Apr (Easter)

Thu 23 Aug– Mon 27 Aug (August Bank Holiday)

We have given this tour the grade of **MODERATE**. Participants should have a reasonable level of fitness but it is not necessary that you are an experienced hiker. On this trip the accent is on a relaxed and easy pace. Except for the occasional short section, the walks are not steep and for the most part are on good, well maintained trails.

Accommodation:

We use established hotels and guest houses recognised and accredited by Cumbria Tourist Board as 3 star or above. Accommodation is in twin/double rooms with private bathroom. All accommodation is on bed and breakfast and twin share basis. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired up with another individual guest of the same sex. If you prefer to have a single room this can normally be arranged at a supplement. Note that the provision of single rooms is dependent on availability at the time of booking. Please contact us for a quote if you wish to request a single room.

The price includes:

- ❖ The services of an experienced, professional local guide
- ❖ All transport during the tour by private car or minibus
- ❖ Accommodation as stated in the above itinerary and your booking confirmation
- ❖ Farmhouse breakfast and a packed lunch
- ❖ Maps of all the areas we walk
- ❖ European V.A.T @ 17.5%

The price does not include:

- ❖ Entrance fees to historical houses and boat fares.
- ❖ Single supplement if you choose not to share a room (please contact us if you wish to have a single room)
- ❖ Evening meals. The estimated total cost of evening meals on this tour is £40 – 60
- ❖ Beer, soft drinks etc.

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

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.

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WANDERING AENGUS TREKS

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