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## 2017 Walking in Britain

### 27 June - 17 July 2017 - updated 8 Feb

**DAY 1** Tue 27 Jun **London - Heathrow** After arriving in London check in at the **Premier Inn London Heathrow Hotel Bath Road** from 1400 on. The hotel is within easy reach of Heathrow airport by bus or taxi - specific directions later. We meet at 1900 to have a welcome dinner in the hotel dining room. We are staying for **2 nights** at the **Premier Inn London Heathrow Hotel D**

**DAY 2** Wed 28 Jun **Windsor Castle and/or Hampton Court** After breakfast we will drive to two nearby royal palaces. Firstly, we will visit **Hampton Court Palace**. In the 16<sup>th</sup> Century this was the favoured palace of Henry VIII and later Elizabeth I. The original Tudor design was altered considerably by William III who introduced Baroque elements. George II was the last monarch to reside in the palace. After lunch we will be able to visit **Windsor Castle**, the home of the present monarch, Elizabeth II. It dates back to Norman times and is the longest occupied palace in Europe. All monarchs since William the Conqueror have used the palace. **B**

**DAY 3** Thu 29 Jun **The Jurassic Coast - Dorset** **WALK 1 ABBOTSBURY SWANNERY 4 km Grade 2** We will be heading south west today on the M3 motorway towards the county of Dorset and the world famous Jurassic coast; a 150km stretch of spectacular coastline rich in geological history. After a lunch stop in the New Forest we expect to arrive in the village of **Abbotsbury** early in the afternoon. We can then stretch our legs on a short walk in and around the village before ending at the Swannery – the only managed colony of nested mute swans in the world. We will stay **2 nights** at the **Lulworth Cove Inn, Lulworth Cove B**

**DAY 4** Fri 30 Jun **Lulworth Cove** **WALK 2 DURDL DOOR 6km Grade 2/3** The section of the Jurassic Coast near Lulworth Cove is spectacular with soaring cliffs, arches and stacks. A short but strenuous climb will take us from the cove to one of the most famous formations – **Durdle Door**. The return walk will take us through fields and forest back to the hotel. Dorset is well known as the setting for **Thomas Hardy's** novels and the countryside is very evocative of scenes from "Far from the Madding Crowd" to name but one. So after lunch we will travel inland to the county seat, Dorchester, to visit the house where the famous author was born. **B D**

**DAY 5** Sat 1 Jul **The Jurassic Coast – Devon** It will be farewell to Dorset today as we travel west towards Devon. We will pass Weymouth before arriving at **Lyme Regis** for lunch. This town was a very popular seaside resort in Victorian times and it retains a lot of that charm today, mixed in with modern-day tourist tackiness. However, it does have a lovely beach and a dramatic stone pier – **the Cobb**, made famous by the film "The French Lieutenant's Woman". We will also visit the village of **Beer** with a secret guest speaker. Our final destination today will be another seaside resort – **Sidmouth**. This is a lot more to my taste - You be the judge! We will stay **2 nights** at the **Woodlands Hotel, Sidmouth B**

**DAY 6** Sun 2 Jul **Sidmouth** **WALK 3 SALCOMBE HILL 5 km Grade 3** The walking gets a bit more serious today along another scenic section of the Jurassic Coast. The track goes through farmland down to the coast at **Salcombe Mouth**. There will be ample time to have a picnic lunch before we tackle the steep climb up Salcombe Hill. In the afternoon you may choose to explore the town and beach at Sidmouth or take a drive west to **Ladram Bay** for more jaw-dropping coastal scenery. **B**

**DAY 7** Mon 3 Jul **Shropshire – Ludlow** Now for something completely different as we leave the coast and head north towards the Midlands and eventually, North Wales. This is essentially a driving day, mainly on the M6 motorway. Passing Bristol, we will cross the Severn into Wales before stopping for lunch at **Tintern Abbey**. Built as a Cistercian abbey in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, Tintern flourished for 400 years until Henry VIII dissolved the monastic orders. It gradually fell into the atmospheric ruins we see today. After lunch we will go north past Hereford to beautiful **Ludlow** in Shropshire. Then we will have a look at nearby **Stokesay Castle**. We will stay **1 night** at the **Feathers Hotel, Ludlow B**

**DAY 8** Tue 4 Jul **Snowdonia – North Wales** **WALK 4 CYM IDWAL 4 km Grade 3** An early day will be necessary to achieve our target today. Firstly we will turn North west to Church Stretton for morning tea which will take the place of lunch before taking the A5 back into Wales. After about 3 hours on the road we should arrive in Betws-y-Coed early in the afternoon. After a quick brew we will be off to Lake Ogwen and our walk in an alpine cirque. This is a great little walk in Snowdonia. At about 1700 we will wearily arrive at our hotel. **B D** We will stay **2 nights** at the **Royal Oak Hotel, Betws-y-Coed**



Hadrian's Wall



Ullswater – Lake District



Tudor house

**DAY 9** Wed 5 Jul **Snowdonia – Bets-y-coed** **WALK 5 SNOWDON PYG TRACK 12 km Grade 5**  
OR **LLANBERIS PATH 7 km Grade 3** OR **CATCH THE SNOWDON MOUNTAIN RAILWAY Grade 0** All our walks are weather dependent, none more so than walks in Snowdonia. However, let's be positive about this day when we will tackle Snowdon, the highest peak in England and Wales. For the intrepid there is the option of the **Pyg track** to the top and a return on the **Miners' track**. Hard going but in good weather, very satisfying. Another option is the **Llanberis path** which is a long 7 km slog up the exposed southern slopes of Snowdon. Once there however you can come down on the railway. For those who do not wish to tackle the peak on foot, a return trip on the **Snowdon Mountain Railway** is your option. **B**

DAY 10 Thu 6 Jul **The Lake District** Essentially another driving day to get to the Lake District from Snowdonia. After passing through some old shale mining towns in North Wales our direction will be east towards **Chester**. This historic walled town is impressive and a good place for lunch and shopping. Then we will be on the motorway past Manchester before regaining the M6 north into **Lancashire**. Finally we will sight the "fells" of the Lake District before arriving in **Windemere**. We will stay **3 nights** at the **Bridge House Hotel, Grasmere** **B**

DAY 11 Fri 7 Jul **The Lake District** **WALK 6 ULLSWATER 11km Grade 3**, Let's get away early for what will be an unforgettable walk. Firstly we have to drive over the challenging Kirkstone Pass before descending to Glenridding. Here we will board a steamer for the trip up the lake – Ullswater to Howtown. The walking is great and the views delightful. After a packed lunch half way along, we should arrive in time for a celebratory pint at the Glendridding pub before returning to Grasmere in time for a visit to Dove Cottage, the birth place of William Wordsworth. **B D**

DAY 12 Sat 8 Jul **The Lake District** A free day in the Lake District with lots of options. There are trains to ride and ferries and yachts on the lakes while Windemere, Ambleside and Keswick are just some of the interesting towns to explore. Of course there are hills to climb ranging from Scafell Pike (the highest peak in England) to famous fells like the Old Man and Helvellyn. The choice is yours **B**

DAY 13 Sun 9 Jul **The Scottish Highlands – Glen Coe** **WALK 7 WEST HIGHLAND WAY 8km Grade 3/4** Heading north on the M6 we will leave the Lake District at Penrith and head towards Scotland. The drive through the Scottish borders is attractive and you will find the journey through Glasgow interesting. Once over the Clyde we will regain the countryside and get a hint of the Highlands as we drive past Loch Lomond. Our lunch stop will be **Tyndrum**, at the "Green Welly". A little further on we will enter one of the great glens of Scotland – **Glencoe** and stop at the Bridge of Orchy. Here the **West Highland Way**, a 154km long distance path crosses the A82. This will be the start of Walk 7 across the moor, to **Inveroran** along the West Highland Way. We will stay **3 nights** at the **Creag Mhor Lodge, Onich** **B**

DAY 14 Mon 10 Jul **The Scottish Highlands – Ben Nevis** **WALK 8 BEN NEVIS 17km Grade 5 OR STEALL FALLS and NEVIS GORGE 4km Grade 2/3** Ben Nevis is the highest mountain in the UK and as such is a magnet for serious walkers. On fine days it is long but with no technical difficulties. In bad weather however it can be dangerous. If we are lucky with the weather, we will be able to start the ascent from near Fort William otherwise we may have a go at the alternative, low level, walk to Steall Falls. **B**

DAY 15 Tue 11 Jul **The Scottish Highlands – Loch Ness & the Isle of Skye** A free day in the Highlands. We could drive to Skye via **Eilean Donan**, one of Scotland's finest castles before visiting the Isle of Skye and **WALK 9 Skye – Fairy Pools and Coire na Creiche 8km Grade 3** Another option would be to take a return trip on the **Jacobite Steam Train from Fort William to Mallaig** (this must be booked well ahead). We could alternatively head north to **Loch Ness** and then on to **Inverness** for the day. **B D**



Windemere – Lake District



Jurassic Coast - Sidmouth



Trafalgar Square - London

DAY 16 Wed 12 Jul **Edinburgh** On leaving the Highlands we will retrace our steps through Glencoe back to Tyndrum and Crianlarich. From here we will head south east towards **Stirling** and visit the impressive castle. Finally we will arrive in the Scottish capital. We will stay **1 night** at the **Royal Overseas League Hotel in Edinburgh** **B**

DAY 17 Thu 13 Jul **Northumbria** – The drive south on the A1 from Edinburgh to the English border at Berwick on Tweed is very pleasant. Our lunch destination is **Alnwick** where we will visit the castle made famous by being Hogwarts in the Harry Potter films and more recently being featured in Downton Abbey. After lunch in Alnwick we will drive to Durham. We will stay **2 nights** at the **Durham Marriott Hotel Royal County Hotel, Durham** **B**

DAY 18 Fri 14 Jul **Durham** **WALK 10 Housesteads 8km Grade 2/3** In the morning we will drive to **Housesteads**, an excavated Roman fort on Hadrian's Wall. Our walk follows the line of the "wall" to the east before swinging away in an arc back to the west. Eventually we return to the wall at a milecastle to complete a wonderful circle. After a picnic lunch on the wall we come back to Housesteads. Then we will drive south to the historic city of **Durham** with its famous cathedral. **B**

DAYS 19 Sat 15 Jul **Train to London** We will return our vehicles in Durham and then catch the train to London Kings Cross station. Tonight we will attend a **West End show**. We will stay **2 nights** at the **Citizen M, Tower Bridge London** **B**

DAY 20 Sun 16 Jul **London** a free day in one of the world's great cities. Farewell dinner **B D**

DAY 21 Mon 17 Jul **London** Our tour ends in London at 1000 **B**

**NB** Hotels subject to confirmation and this itinerary is subject to change in accordance with the terms and conditions in the brochure. **B = breakfast D = dinner**

#### INCLUSIONS

- 20 nights accommodation Breakfast every day + 6 dinners
- Travel by minibus
- the services of qualified English speaking guides and drivers
- 10 guided walks – all optional Comprehensive travel notes
- ENTRY FEES Windsor Castle Hampton Court Palace Abbotsbury Swannery Thomas Hardy house Tintern Abbey Ludlow Castle Stokesay Castle Snowdon Mountain Railway Eilean Donan Castle Stirling Castle Alnwick Castle Housesteads Roman Fort Durham Cathedral
- EXTRAS Royal Yacht Britannia OR Edinburgh Castle Train from Durham to London London West End show Lake steamer – Ullswater

#### NOT INCLUDED

- International airfares and taxes Jacobean Steam Train
- Tips and personal expenses Travel Insurance - COMPULSORY