

7 Night South Downs Walking with Sightseeing Holiday

Trip style: Walking with sightseeing

Destination: 📍 South Downs

Trip code: ABW07-WOD01

Grades: 1

Carbon Footprint: 🌱 130kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

These holidays offer a perfect mix of short, guided walks (4-5 miles), combined with time spent sightseeing. Visit a selection of standout highlights in the South Downs with hassle-free coach travel and the help of an HF Holidays Leader.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Visiting Petworth Park created by Capability Brown
- Admiring the beautiful Elizabethan Parham House
- Walking from the harbour village of Bosham to Fishbourne Roman Palace
- Discovering the heritage of Sussex at the Weald and Downland Living Museum
- Following the river to historic Arundel with its impressive castle and cathedral
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 15 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided walks and sightseeing visits with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from walks and sites of interest
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

Please note - Entrance fees are not included. See more information tab for details.

TRIP SUITABILITY

Enjoy walks up to 5 miles (7½km) with up to 650 feet (200m) of ascent; walking is generally on quiet village roads, town pavements, and field and woodland paths, but one day is a little more strenuous - taking you up onto the Downs for fabulous views. Any extra effort is well worth it!

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Check-in at the hotel is available from 16:00. If you are a member you can arrive at the house from 14:00. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea at 16:30 and meet other guests.

Day 2: West Dean to the Weald & Downland Living Museum

Distance: 4.25 miles (6.75 km) Total ascent: 575 feet (175m) Today's walk begins at West Dean Gardens and takes the Monarch's Way gently uphill around West Dean Park's wooded perimeter. We then make our way over St Roche's Hill passing the Trundle – an Iron Age hill fort – enjoying wonderful views of the coast to the south and rising downland to the north. From here we walk downhill through fields to reach the village of Singleton and the opportunity to spend time exploring the extensive Weald and Downland Living Museum.

Day 3: Amberley Village and Parham House

Distance: 4 miles (6km) Total ascent: 650 feet (200m) We start our walk in the picturesque village of Amberley, with its village pottery and castle (now a hotel). We then head up onto the Downs, to Rackham Hill, for superb views all round. The ascent out of Amberley, and the descent down from Rackham Hill is steep, but we take it slowly. Any extra effort on this walk is more than rewarded by the superb far-reaching views which greet us; views over the Arun Valley one side and over Littlehampton to the English Channel on the other. Our walk then takes us on to the beautiful Elizabethan Parham House & Gardens (also visible from the top of Rackham Hill), leaving us plenty of time to explore. The house is surrounded by a large deer park which is home to around 350 fallow deer.

Day 4: Free Day - South Downs

Discover more about Abingworth Hall and the local area for ideas on how to make the most of your free day.

Day 5: Arundel and the Park

Distance: 3 miles (4.5km) Total ascent: 330 feet (100m) A day spent in and around Arundel with a chance to visit the spectacular Arundel Castle, home of the Dukes of Norfolk for nearly 1,000 years. We start by visiting the cathedral as we make our way to Arundel Park. We have a leisurely walk through the beautiful park passing Swanbourne Lake and the Wetlands Centre on a circular loop that takes us back into the town. We've left plenty of time for a visit to the castle with its exquisite collections of furniture, tapestries and paintings, and its wonderful gardens, or the chance to explore the shops and tea rooms.

Day 6: Bosham and Fishbourne Roman Palace

Distance: 4½ miles (7km) Total ascent: minimal We begin with a walk taking us to the picturesque winding streets and quaint cottages of the pretty harbour village of Bosham, a honeypot for arts and crafts shops. Leaving Bosham our walk takes us across fields to the Fishbourne Channel estuary of Chichester Harbour. Following the estuary inland we reach Fishbourne and the impressive Roman Palace, with its museum and gardens. There's time to discover the reconstructed Roman gardens and probably the best collection of Roman mosaics in the country, plus

there's a good tea shop too!

Day 7: Halfway Bridge, Petworth Park and Petworth House

Distance: 4 miles (6.5km) Total ascent: 450 feet (140m) We begin our walk near the village of Lodsworth, taking us through rolling countryside to Upperton, where we enter Petworth Park. Created by Capability Brown, we take one of the various routes through this beautiful park, looking out for fallow deer as we make our way to magnificent Petworth House.

Day 8: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

Abingworth Hall

Country living just got cosier at this former farmhouse. Abingworth Hall is just a skip away from the village of Thakeham at the foot of the South Downs – a landscape of ancient woodland, hidden valleys, chalky cliffs, and high-backed hills so deserving of its national park status finally bestowed in 2010. While the views from the doorstep are as wow-worthy as you'd expect, the walking opportunities around the sightseeing greats such as Devil's Dyke, Seven Sisters Country Park, Kingley Vale, Parham House, and the Clayton Windmills (known locally as Jack and Jill) are equally standout. You'll also be within easy driving distance of several historic towns and cities, most fabulously Arundel, Chichester, and Brighton.

A warm welcome

We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

Evening entertainment

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, HF Holidays Inter-House Quiz night held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

Our HF Holidays walk leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on guided walking holiday arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's guided walks (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

The walking day

Prior to setting off on guided walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.

Walking safety - SHARED WITH ALL

Walks may be changed for safety reasons and are subject to a maximum and minimum number of guests. Leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole, and may need to alter or curtail the walk if the conditions dictate. Your leader may refuse to accept a guest where clothing, equipment or behaviour is unsuitable. In the event of a problem all leaders carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, group shelter, spare maps and a compass. Please note: If you choose to leave the group your leader is no longer responsible for you. If you have a particular health condition or disability please put this on your guest registration form. This information will be confidential to your leaders and the house manager, but leaders do need to take account of any issues when planning walks. Please carry a copy of these trip notes with you, or note down the contact phone number for your accommodation (details in the travel section) should you need them in case of emergency.

Packing list - UK Guided Walking

The UK has a famously unpredictable climate so it's best to be prepared for weather that's sunny one minute and raining the next. To make it easier, here's a list of items you should consider packing. Essentials Suitable footwear such as waterproof walking boots that provide ankle support and good grip Waterproof and windproof jacket Comfortable clothing (jeans & waterproof capes are not suitable) Mid-layer(s) to keep you warm. Fleeces make a good choice Waterproof overtrousers Gloves and a warm hat Rucksack with waterproof liner Flask for hot drinks Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity) Sunscreen UV sunglasses For holidays operating October through to the end of March, please also bring the following on your walks: spare warm clothing spare high energy food head torch and spare batteries please note for the October to March season your waterproof jacket needs to offer a high level of waterproofing and wind resistance, and a hood. Look for a waterproof jacket with sealed/taped seams and a minimum HH (hydrostatic head - this is the rating given on waterproof jackets) of 10,000mm+ Recommended Several base layers (long-sleeve or short-sleeve) Cushioned walking socks to avoid blisters First aid kit, including plasters and insect repellent Sit mat Waterproof pouch for valuables Rubbish bag (remember to always leave no trace) Wallet/purse Camera Walking poles
