

# Best of the Pembrokeshire Coast Guided Trail

**Trip style:** Guided trails

**Destination:**  Pembrokeshire

**Trip code:** XAK07-LDW11

**Grades:** 1, 2, 3

**Carbon Footprint:**  136kg CO2



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

From our base in St Davids, Britain's smallest city, you'll strike out on some of north-west Pembrokeshire's most scenic walks. Be wowed by the dark sands of Abereddy, home to Wales' very own blue lagoon and enjoy coastal walks past awe-inspiring natural wonders including the sea arch at Gewni Island and rock formations at The Cradle. Along the way there'll be wow-factor photo opportunities, plenty of wildlife watching, plus a chance to summit Carningli – the myth-steeped Welsh mountain strewn with ancient ruins and megalithic cairns.

## WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Walking the wild, rugged coastal paths of south-west Wales
- Spotting sea birds, grey seals, basking sharks, and dolphins
- Discovering the purple-hued sandstone cliffs of Caerfai Bay
- Admiring the views from Carningli (Mount of the Angels)
- Exploring Parrog, Newport's oldest harbour
- Staying in St Davids, on the doorstep of Pembrokeshire's finest walks
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 15 people)

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite rooms in our partner accommodation(s)
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided walks with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from walks where necessary

## TRIP SUITABILITY

### Your fitness

Having a solid base of fitness before your holiday will ensure you've the best chance of completing the holiday and enjoying it to boot. Here's a few simple tips to help you get fit and ready for your challenge:

- Get out walking - whatever the weather, get out there, and start building your fitness months before your holiday
- Build your distance gradually and get a number of 6-8hr hill days in
- Ideally, try and do two consecutive days training if possible
- Take the stairs every time
- Train on different terrain
- Train with your day pack and your walking boots too, to ensure they're well worn in before your holiday
- Other sports help improve your walking fitness too. The best ones are jogging, cycling, swimming, which will build your stamina, and yoga which will help strengthen your core and improve balance
- Time training will help ensure you enjoy your holiday to the max.

## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Arrival Day

You're welcome to check in at St Davids Cross Hotel from 3:30pm onwards. Located right in the centre of Britain's smallest city, it will be our base for the next few days. Your HF Holidays Leader will be on hand from 6:30pm, when we'll gather to give you a warm welcome and explain the plan of action before dinner.

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### Day 2: St Davids Circular

Distance: 9.5 miles (15km) Ascent: 1,025ft (315m) From St Davids, we'll walk out across farmland to join the coastal path at Porthclais Harbour. Once a bustling port, it's now popular with kayakers and coastal path walkers. From here we'll wind along the high cliffs with views over Ramsey Island and pass through Porthlysgi Bay, Castell Heinif, St Justinian's, Porthselau Beach, and Whitesands Beach - renowned for being one of the best surfing beaches in the country. We'll then loop inland to return to St Davids. It's well worth keeping an eye out for seals, dolphins, and a variety of birds along this stretch of coast.

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### Day 3: Pwllcrochan to Trefin

Distance: 8.5 miles (14km) Ascent: 1,650ft (500m) We join the coast at Pwllcrochan and enjoy good views as we make our way to the pretty bays of Aber Bach, and Aber Mawr, the most important Ice Age settlement in Pembrokeshire. A short detour inland takes us to the delightful 17th century whitewashed woollen mill, Melin Tregwynt. After visiting, we'll retrace our steps back to the coast and continue our journey. There's also Castell Coch, the remains of an Iron Age promontory fort. The peninsula treats us to even more wow-worthy vistas, which are well worth the effort, before the going gets gentler as we approach the hamlet of Abercastle and the beach of Aber Draw to Trefin.

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### Day 4: Free Day

Today you have free time to explore Britain's smallest city or simply relax. Visit St Davids Cathedral, The Bishop's Palace, or take a boat trip to the wild offshore islands for even more wildlife-spotting opportunities.

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### Day 5: Newport Circular

Distance: 9 miles (14.5km) Ascent: 1,400ft (425m) Leaving Newport, we'll ascend to Carningli (The Mount of Angels), a summit steeped in legend and history. On a clear day we'll have stunning 360-degree views across Pembrokeshire. After exploring the remains of the ancient hillfort here and soaking up the scenery, we'll start a steady descent back to the coastal path, passing through the wooded valley of Cwm Rhigian on our way. Quaint coastline and idyllic sandy coves line the way to Parrog, Newport's oldest port. Before silting the estuary in the late 1800s, slates, herrings, wool, and other local products were exported from here. A gentle path leads us back into the town centre.

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### Day 6: Porthgain to Whitesands Bay

Distance: 9.5 miles (15km) Ascent: 1,985ft (605m) Porthgain is a fascinating village, moulded by a short-lived Industrial Revolution in Pembrokeshire. The small harbour was used between 1837 and 1931 to export stone, slate, and bricks. Further along the coast we'll encounter Abereiddy, a popular bay with deep blue water and extraordinary dark

sand. From here there's a fabulous few miles of clifftop walking before we go round the wild heather-covered section of St Davids Head to uncover the crescent-shaped beach of Whitesands Bay. You have the option of catching the Celtic Coaster bus back to St Davids or returning on foot.

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### **Day 7:** Newgale to St Davids

Distance: 10 miles (16km) Ascent: 1,970ft (600m) We'll take the bus out to Newgale to enjoy an exhilarating walk back to St Davids along this classic stretch of coastline. And with one of Pembrokeshire's most impressive sandy beaches behind us, we'll walk over grassy slopes and clifftops to emerge at the old fishing village of Solva with its disused Lime Kilns positioned directly on the water's edge. A steep climb out of the harbour gets us on to an undulating path along the cliff tops. We'll search out the stunning natural sea arch at Gewni Island as well as interesting rock formations at 'The Cradle'. There's also Caerfai Bay's purple sandstone cliffs where you're treated to views out to Skomer and Skokholm island. On the final stretch of our walk, we'll see St Non's Chapel, the birthplace of St David – a fitting finale to this week of extraordinary walking.

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

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before check-out at 10:30am.

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## St Davids Cross Hotel - Pembrokeshire Coast Path

Boasting an enviable location in the heart of Britain's smallest city, St Davids Cross Hotel puts you on the doorstep of Pembrokeshire's finest walks. This history-steeped hotel dates back over 200 years, but after a full refurbishment in 2016, it now offers 16 comfortable en-suite rooms, plus a popular bar and restaurant where you can wind down after a day's walking and choose from a selection of delicious dishes. There's also free internet access and parking available, too. The hotel is dog-friendly so you may meet four legged friends in some of the communal areas.

### 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. Fleeeces 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 (hyrodstatic 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