

Cape Wrath Classic Guided Trail

Trip style: Guided trails

Destination: 📍 Scotland

Trip code: XCI08-LDW11

Grades: 1, 4

Carbon Footprint: 🌿 197kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Walk through the wild and dramatic landscapes of mainland Britain's most north-westerly point with a guided trail around Cape Wrath. Journey along rugged wave-washed coastline home to some of the highest sea cliffs in the country, marvel at sky-high Scottish mountains, and keep your eyes peeled for rare wildlife including red deer and golden eagles. Please note, this is not the long-distance Cape Wrath Trail, but is inspired by it, visiting the remote and scenic corners of Cape Wrath.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Walking from Cape Wrath to Lochinver
- Exploring mainland Britain's most north-westerly point
- Marvelling at the dramatic mountains of Ben Stack and Suilven
- Taking the ferry to Handa Island Wildlife Reserve
- Strolling along the banks of the salmon-filled River Laxford
- The warm and welcoming hospitality of our partner hotels
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 11 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite rooms in our partner accommodation(s)
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided walks with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from walks where necessary
- Luggage transfers
- Group transfer to and from Inverness at the start and end of the holiday

TRIP SUITABILITY

Cape Wrath Classic is graded 4, with walks/hikes of long distances in remote countryside and rough and often pathless terrain, occasionally requiring river crossings. Sustained ascents and descents and occasional sections of rocky and steep ground are encountered. Weather can be unpredictable. You will require a good level of fitness as you will be walking every day. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant fitness and equipment required to join this holiday. A sustained effort is required to complete each walk and provision cannot be made for anyone who opts out. Please be sure you can manage the mileage and ascent detailed in the daily itineraries. Each walking day on this holiday will vary between approximately 6 and 9 hours and it is important for your own enjoyment, and that of your fellow guests that you can maintain the pace.

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

Join us in Inverness for a group transfer to your accommodation. The journey takes approximately 2 hours 30 minutes and includes a short stop on the way. Your leader will be at reception at 6:30pm to meet the group and provide an introduction to the holiday before dinner.

Day 2: Highlights of Durness

Our first day gives us a chance to familiarise with the area and the type of walking we can expect for the next two days. We start on the coast just east of Durness and explore the abandoned township of Ceannabeinne, before heading steeply up Beinn Ceannabeinne itself with stunning views in all directions. Taking an easier route down, we head for the famous Smoo Cave and the beautiful coastal scenery of the area. Passing the delightful Sango Sands beach and the village of Durness, we finish our walk at Balnakeil Craft Village, with time for an explore or maybe a paddle on Balnakeil Beach. 8½ miles (13.5km) with 1,600 feet (490m) of ascent.

Day 3: Cape Wrath

We use a ferry to cross the Kyle of Durness and a minibus takes us to Cape Wrath, the most north-westerly point on the mainland in a stunning setting with its lighthouse sitting on top of some of the highest cliffs in Britain. From Cape Wrath you'll walk across pathless terrain to Sandwood Bay and its famous sea stack, Am Buchaille. This is a wild and remote area. There are no escape routes or vehicular access and the route can involve crossing rivers, bog and peat hags. The rewards however are spectacular. 14 miles (22 km) with 1,500 feet (450m) of ascent.

Day 4: Ben Stack

Walk along the delightful banks of the River Laxford, one of Scotland's finest salmon rivers, followed by an ascent of the pyramidal Ben Stack. The walk on Ben Stack is steep in places with only intermittent paths and leads to a fine summit ridge with fine views to Arkle and Foinavon. 7½ miles (12.5 km) with 2,500 feet (760m) of ascent.

Day 5: Achfary to Glen Coul

Follow a good path across to Kylesku at the mouth of Loch Coul, with spectacular views of the local mountains and amazing geology and bird life. If the weather's looking good, we've time to climb one of those mountains too, Ben Dreavie. 8 miles (13km) with 1,320 feet (400m) of ascent. (including Ben Dreavie 11 miles (18km) with 1,640 feet (500m) of ascent)

Day 6: Handa Island

A short ferry crossing takes you to this RSPB Bird Reserve where we have plenty of time to watch the sea birds and enjoy a superb cliff top walk around the island visiting the Great Stack of Handa. Occasionally dolphins and even whales can be seen. 4 miles (6.5 km) with 500 feet (150m) of ascent.

Day 7: Bealach na h-Uidhe

A walk from Loch an Gainmhich through wild and remote scenery to the delightful Loch Bealach a Bhuirich. From here an excellent stalkers' path brings us up to the pass between Glas Bheinn and Beinn Uidhe, where ptarmigan can sometimes be seen, before descending across country to our hotel at Inchnadamph. 10 miles (16km) with 2,250 feet (680m) of ascent.

Day 8: In the shadows of Suilven

Trek through some of the wildest and most dramatic scenery in Scotland beneath Canisp and the iconic Suilven, whose ever changing form and dramatic outline will captivate you. The route finishes at Lochinver. 12 miles (19km) with 800 feet (245m) of ascent.

Day 9: Departure Day

Transfer back to Inverness airport and rail station.

Inchnadamph Hotel

Inchnadamph means 'meeting place of the deer' and you'll see plenty of red deer here. The rather isolated Inchnadamph Hotel lies at the foot of the main mountains of Assynt such as Ben More Assynt and Conival and nearby are the well-known 'Bone Caves', where relics of lynx, arctic fox, reindeer, polar bear and human skeletons have been found. The area is also a mecca for geologists. The hotel offers a public and residents' dining area along with a popular walkers' bar. Many rooms have views out to Quinag. Rooms have tea and coffee making facilities and hairdryer (on request). There are no TV facilities at this hotel, limited WiFi and very poor mobile phone reception. Drying facilities for clothing and boots is excellent. This hotel is dog-friendly so you may meet four legged friends in some of the communal areas.

Kinlochbervie Hotel

Situated in one of north west Scotland's most stunning coastal locations, the Kinlochbervie Hotel offers a warm and welcoming stay. Just 10 miles south of Cape Wrath and overlooking Loch Clash, this family-run hotel is the perfect base from which to explore. Public areas take advantage of the beautiful panoramic views over lochs and hills to the open sea, and locally caught fish is served in the bistro. En-suite bedrooms are basic but comfortable, and all come equipped with tea and coffee making facilities, flat screen TVs, and hairdryers. What's more, there's free internet access and parking available, too. This hotel is dog-friendly so you may meet four legged friends in some of the communal areas.