

# Forest of Dean & Wye Valley Guided Walking

**Trip style:** Guided Walking Holidays

**Destination:** 📍 Gloucestershire

**Trip code:** XAT04-BTB11

**Grades:** 1, 2 & 4

**Carbon Footprint:** 🌳 81kg CO2



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Considered one of the most unspoilt river valleys in Britain, the postcard-pretty Wye Valley is home to ancient woodlands, meandering rivers, limestone gorges, and a vast array of wildlife including otters, kingfishers, and peregrine. You'll also be charmed by world-class sculptures, art installations, and much more in the Forest of Dean – a place of timeless beauty nestled in Gloucestershire's westerly corner, close to England's border with Wales.

## WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- The choice of two walks a day – one easier, one harder
- Soaking up views of Tintern Abbey and the River Wye from the Devil's Pulpit
- Exploring the heart of an ancient medieval forest
- Spotting peregrine falcons and plenty of other wildlife
- Savouring picturesque views of the Wye Valley from Symonds Yat Rock
- Discovering the Seven Sisters Rocks and visiting King Arthur's Caves

## 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

## 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

You're welcome to check in at The Speech House Hotel from 2pm onwards. An unmissable historic building set in the centre of the forest, it will be our base for the next few days. Your HF Holidays Leaders 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:** Tintern and the Devil's Pulpit

Explore the area around Tintern Abbey, one of the great monastic ruins in Wales, and discover Offa's Dyke.

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### **Day 3:** The Forest of Dean

Walk in ancient woodland, see world class sculpture, and uncover history in the Forest of Dean.

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### **Day 4:** Symonds Yat

Explore the River Wye and soak up the views from Symonds Yat Rock.

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### **Day 5:** Departure

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

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## The Speech House Hotel

In the heart of the Forest of Dean, just 5 miles from the Wye Valley, The Speech House Hotel combines original charm with modern comfort. Independently owned and family run, this former 17th-century hunting lodge has 35 stylishly decorated en-suite rooms across the main house and the courtyard. Due to the hotel's rural location, the quality of mobile phone reception can vary. However, the hotel is well-equipped with free Wi-Fi throughout. Free onsite private parking is also available with two electric car charging points. To top it all, the AA Rosette-winning restaurant serves delicious meals using quality local produce wherever possible. This 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.

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### 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

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