

Derbyshire Gritstone Way Guided Trail

Trip style: Guided trails

Destination:  Peak District

Trip code: POP07-LGR01

Grades: 1, 2, 3

Carbon Footprint:  115kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Devised by members of the Derbyshire Area Rambler's Association in 1970, the Derbyshire Gritstone Way takes walkers through meadows, ancient oak woodlands, parkland, and heather clad moors. Discover the Gritstone Edges that run from Chatsworth in the south to Stanage and beyond in the north and expect plenty of easy-to-navigate walks, interesting wildlife, and sweeping panoramas.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring the Derwent Valley and famous Gritstone Edges
- Walking the Great Ridge from Lose Hill and over Mam Tor to Edale
- Visiting Chatsworth House on the banks of the River Derwent
- Crossing the iconic Ladybower Dam wall
- Spotting peregrines at Derby Cathedral
- Staying at The Peveril of the Peak, our country house in Thorpe
- 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
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- All transport to and from walks where necessary
- Guided walks with experienced HF Holidays Leaders (Please note that we choose our walk leaders primarily based on their capabilities, skills and experience. You may therefore have either a male or female walk leader on your holiday.)

TRIP SUITABILITY

This Guided Walking/Hiking Trail is graded 3 which involves walks/hikes on well-defined paths, though often in hilly or upland areas, or along rugged footpaths. These may be rough and steep in sections and 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 required to join this holiday.

Your fitness

We want you to be confident that you can meet the demands of each walking day and get the most out of your holiday. Please be sure you can manage the mileage and ascent detailed in the daily itineraries. It is important for your own enjoyment, and that of your fellow guests that you can maintain the pace.

It makes a lot of sense to spend time getting some additional exercise before your holiday. We suggest that you try to fit in a number of longer walks, including some on hilly terrain. Other exercises such as cycling, jogging and swimming are also excellent for developing increased stamina.

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: Derby to Belper

From Derby Cathedral the route embraces The Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage route and follows the River Derwent. We take a brief visit to the Cathedral to view the peregrines and then on past Lombe's Silk Mill erected in 1717, the earliest factory in the world. Leaving the urban environment, we walk through Darley Park and Darley Abbey village, home of Evan's cotton mill settlement. Turf fields are crossed to pass through the pretty village of Breadsall en route to Little Eaton, once the terminus of various horse-drawn tramways that linked the coalfield to a spur of the Derby Canal. A climb to Holbrook before descending through Jedidiah Strutt's cotton mill village of Milford and an ascent of The Chevin (part of the ancient Portway route) and a descent to Belper. Good footpaths and lanes throughout. 11½ miles (18 km) with 1200 feet (390m) of ascent.

Day 3: Belper to Cromford

Leaving Belper we pass the Wyver Lane Nature Reserve home to numerous wetland species of bird. Picking up a section of the Midshires Way we pass through Shining Cliff Woods and delightful Alderwasley Park. Continuing high above the Derwent Valley with views East to Crich Stand and ahead to Alport Heights. We pick up historic Intake Lane which was used to transport much of the material required to build the Mills at Cromford. From Bolehill we descend the Sheep Pasture Incline to High Peak Junction (Eastern Terminus of the amazing High Peak Railway). A final trek along The Cromford Canal takes us to Sir Richard Arkwright's Cotton Mills at Cromford (with the option of the village trail to explore). 9 miles (14½ km) with 1400 feet (430m) of ascent.

Day 4: Cromford to Rowsley

A steep ascent takes us out of Cromford onto Bilberry Knoll and onto the fine viewpoint of Riber Castle. Descending to pass through the historic spa town of Matlock, home to John Smedley's Hydro (now Derbyshire's County Hall). The Derwent Valley Heritage way is followed along the river before an ascent of Oaker Hill, the Peak District really begins to shine as we climb to the high plateau of Stanton Moor and its wealth of historical sites including numerous burial mounds and barrows. Quarrying and Lead Mining were the major industries here. After the Trig Point we visit Nine Ladies Stone Circle before descending, with views of the Derbyshire Wye Valley, to Rowsley at the confluence of the Wye and Derwent rivers. 11½ miles (18 km) with 1900 feet (590m) of ascent.

Day 5: Rowsley to Grindleford

Field paths from Rowsley take us to Beeley village and then we enter Chatsworth Park. From Chatsworth House an ascent to The Hunting Tower, a traverse of Dobb Edge then across to Nelson's monument on Birchen's Edge and then to Wellington's Monument on Baslow Edge. Passing the Eagle Stone, a prominent local landmark, means the hard work of the day is done. Our route hugs the top of Curbar and Froggatt Edges with wide ranging views west towards the plateau of the White Peak. We'll look down on 'Colditz' and admire Chatsworth's Emperor Fountain from

a distance as the full grandeur of the Peak district begins to unfold before descending into Grindleford. 12 miles (19 km) with 1650 feet (500m) of ascent.

Day 6: Grindleford to Yorkshire Bridge, Bamford

The brook-side ascent through steep sided Padley Gorge with its ancient oak woodland takes us into the National Trust managed Longshaw Estate home of the imposing Longshaw Lodge built by the Duke of Rutland. We follow Burbage Brook heading for the skyline of Burbage Edge. Open moorland surrounds us as we head for Stange Edge, used by Himalayan mountaineers for their training in the 1960s. We see evidence of ancient packhorse ways that used to cross this Pennine wilderness area – the call of the red grouse often the only sound hereabouts. The day's finish ascends Bamford Edge to Great Tor looking down on the spectacular Upper Derwent Valley and the famous Derwent Dams (training ground of 'The Dambusters'.) 11 miles (17 km) with 1900 feet (590m) of ascent.

Day 7: Yorkshire Bridge, Bamford to Edale

From Yorkshire Bridge, Bamford we cross the iconic Ladybower Dam wall and ascend to the summit of Win Hill giving superb views of the Hope Valley, Upper Derwent Valley and across to the Kinder Plateau. A descent to cross the Vale of Edale near Townhead and then another steep ascent to the summit of Lose Hill where we meet the Great Ridge. The walk follows Back Tor, then Hollins Cross (an ancient track-way through the lowest point of the ridge) and on to Mam Tor our final and fittingly highest summit of the route, the site of an Iron Age hill fort. Below us we see the effects of the 'Shivering Mountain' on the old main road and views south towards Winnats Pass and Castleton village. The descent is to Edale village in the stunning Vale of Edale with the National Park Information Centre with its exhibition of Moorland Management and The Nag's Head Pub – start of The Pennine Way. 9½ miles (15 km) with 2500 feet (770m) of ascent.

Day 8: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

The Peveril of the Peak

Named after Sir Walter Scott's Peak District-set novel, this characterful country house is less than a mile from the famous Dovedale Stepping Stones and on the doorstep of Thorpe Cloud - a cone-shaped limestone hill that offers impressive views over the rolling green landscape that forms the Staffordshire/Derbyshire border. Both are easily accessible from the rear of the property. There are plenty of big-name walking destinations nearby including the Roaches, the impressive Stanage Edge, and the Twelve Apostles - a group of rock spires best viewed from the limestone promontory known as Lover's Leap.

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.