

Northumberland Coast Path Trail

Trip style: Guided trails

Destination:  Northumberland

Trip code: ALN07-LNP01

Grades: 1, 2

Carbon Footprint:  194kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Stretching from the birdlife-rich dunes of Cresswell in the south to the walled border town of Berwick in the north, this route along the Northumberland Coast Path follows one of the finest stretches of National Landscapes-awarded coastline in the country. Over the course of 62 miles, you'll enjoy long stretches of golden sands, timeless fishing villages, and incredible castles that played a key role in British history. You'll also walk through no less than two National Nature Reserves for some wildlife-spotting and spend time on the ancient and myth-steeped tidal island of Lindisfarne.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring the island of Lindisfarne, also known as Holy Island
- Discovering some of Britain's finest coastal walking
- Spotting a wealth of wildlife as you walk
- Learning of border battles, Viking visitors, and Northumbrian tales
- Marvelling at Warkworth, Bamburgh, and Dunstanburgh castles
- 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

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: Cresswell to Warkworth

Distance: 11.5 miles (18km) Ascent: 380 ft (120m) Walking south to north, our trail begins at wildlife-rich Druridge Bay. It's eight miles of golden sands, dunes, and is home to a string of nature reserves with a fascinating array of birdlife. From Druridge, we pass through the bustling port of Amble with views out to the RSPB reserve of Coquet Island. Our trail ends at Warkworth, known for its impressive castle and equally impressive selection of coffee shops and a fantastic chocolatier.

Day 3: Warkworth to Craster

Distance: 13.5 miles (21.5km) Ascent: 820 ft (250m) We'll walk through dunes and coastal grasslands to Alnmouth, passing St Cuthbert's cross along the way. Continue through the town and back out along the beach to the former smuggling haunt - now sleepy fishing village - of Boulmer. North from here is Sugar Sands and the rocky headland that's home to hundreds of kittiwakes during the summer months. The final leg of our journey takes us to Craster, home to the famous Robson's Smokehouse, known for their Craster kippers.

Day 4: Craster to Seahouses

Distance: 10.5 miles (16.5km) Ascent: 380 ft (120m) From Craster, we'll set off over the rocky headland and ruins of Dunstanburgh Castle, which overlooks swathes of golden sands and Embleton Bay. There's Newton Pool Nature Reserve to explore before we cross Beadnell Bay to arrive at the busy port of Seahouses. From here you can spot the Farne Islands in the distance, a cluster of isles home to the UK's largest colony of grey seals.

Day 5: Seahouses to Belford

Distance: 10 miles (16km) Ascent: 800 ft (240m) Probably one of the most photographed sections of coast is on our route today as our walk takes us through the pretty village of Bamburgh. The vision of the mighty sea facing Bamburgh Castle set behind golden sand dunes is one that thousands of visitors flock here to see each year, and rightly so. Leaving the hubbub of Bamburgh, the peace and tranquillity of Budle Bay welcomes us - another fantastic spot for birdlife. Heading inland a little, Belford is our final call. Sample a little of the local brew at the Blue Bell, or treat yourself to some cake at the café.

Day 6: Belford, Holy Island and Fenwick

Distance: 6.5 miles (10km) Ascent: 540 ft (160m) We contrast coastal scenes with woodland and farmland today and have left plenty of time for a visit to Holy Island. Linked to the mainland by a tidal causeway, this sacred place is where you can follow in the footsteps of St Aidan and the ancient order of monks who built their priory here nearly 1,400 years ago. Don't miss the museum for a chance to learn more about the 8th century manuscript known as the

Lindisfarne Gospels.

Day 7: Fenwick to Berwick upon Tweed

Distance: 12 miles (19.5km) Ascent: 450 ft (140m) We'll complete a much more remote section of coast for the final leg of our journey, leaving behind the busier beaches to enjoy the peace and solitude of Cheswick Sands Nature Reserve and Cocklawburn Beach. The walled border town of Berwick upon Tweed marks the end of our trail, as we reach the border with Scotland, and the end of the Northumberland Coast Path.

Day 8: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

Nether Grange

You can tell that you're in for something special at this former 18th century granary in the heart of Alnmouth – the postcard-pretty coastal village treasured for its colourful cottages, superb walking routes, and peaceful beach where the River Aln meets the North Sea (in its heyday, it was a working river-port, exporting grain, wool, coal, and even the odd pipe of Madeira wine). Not only will you be a 40-minute drive from Northumberland National Park, but also within easy travelling distance of several visit-worthy castles, including Alnwick, Lindisfarne, Dunstanburgh, and Warkworth. If the weather's nice, a boat trip to the Farne Islands that lie just offshore midway between the villages of Seahouses and Bamburgh rewards with sightings of England's largest grey seal colonies.

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.