

# Snowdonia Slate Trail

**Trip style:** Guided trails

**Destination:**  Snowdonia

**Trip code:** BELST

**Grades:** 1, 4



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Walk Snowdonia National Park's Slate Trail, an incredible route that takes you into the heart of Wales' slate mining past. Centuries of slate mining has not only carved the landscape we see today but created tight-knit mining communities. Journey through historic slate mining villages and explore abandoned quarries that tell the story of a proud industrial heritage. From the sea at Bangor to the towering slate mountains this remarkable walk visits some of the lesser-known parts of Snowdonia while providing a fascinating insight into the lives of Welsh slate workers.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Exploring lake, river, forest, and mountain landscapes in Snowdonia National Park
- Discovering Welsh slate mining history from Roman Britain to the Industrial Revolution
- Visiting traditional Welsh villages with proud mining heritage
- Snowdonia's people and past
- A mix of moderate to challenging walking, ideal for those looking to test their stamina while enjoying a rewarding experience
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 15 people)
  
- Comfortable en-suite rooms in our partner accommodation(s)
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Half-board
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided walks with experienced HF Holidays Leaders
- All transport to and from walks where necessary

## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Arrival day

Check in at the hotel is available from 3pm. Your leader will be at reception at 6:30pm to meet the group and give you a quick introduction to the holiday before dinner.

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### Day 2: BANGOR TO LLANBERIS

Distance: 13.5 miles (21.5km) Ascent: 2050 feet (640m) Descent: 1800 feet (540m) We start our trip on the seafront at Bangor, following the tree-lined Lon Las Ogwen (Ogwen Green Lane). We walk beside the Afon Ogwen, with views of Penrhyn Castle, then ascend through farmland to circle the upland village of Rachub. We'll have great views of the Carneddau mountains before descending to the slate town of Bethesda. Passing Penrhyn Quarry we cross open moorland and descend through the Padarn Country Park beside the National Slate Museum – the former slate workshops of the Dinorwig quarry. We'll walk between two lakes to finish in Llanberis.

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### Day 3: LLANBERIS TO DYFFRYN NANTLLE

Distance: 10 miles (16km) Ascent: 1,800 feet (540m) Starting in Llanberis we ascend to the back of the town with widening views of the Glyder range, the Snowdon massif, the coastal plain and Anglesey beyond. The route passes low hills then descends to Waunfawr, crossing the Welsh Highland Railway. We ascend again to the west, passing the remains of ancient settlements accompanied by views of the dramatic Nantlle Ridge. We visit the upland village of Y Fron and walk through the remains of Dorothea quarry to finish in the Nantlle valley.

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### Day 4: DYFFRYN NANTLLE TO NANTMOOR

Distance: 11.5 miles (18.5km) Ascent: 1,450 feet (440m) Descent: 1,700 feet (520m) Today, we'll walk beside Llyn Nantlle Uchaf and continue east through the valley. It's then on to the lower slopes of Mynydd Mawr and through woodland to Rhyd Ddu village which has a pub and a café. The route passes the attractive lake Llyn y Gader and continues on the Lon Gwyrfaï path through woods to the pretty village of Beddgelert. From here we walk beside the Afon Glaslyn, initially pastoral then becoming a rocky gorge to Pont Aberglaslyn before finishing our walk at Nantmoor.

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### Day 5: NANTMOOR TO BLAENAU FFESTINIOG

Distance: 9 miles (15km) Ascent: 2,450 feet (740m) Descent: 1,750 feet (540m) This is a lovely, varied day of walking. We'll begin with a stroll through Nantmoor village then ascend on an old drovers' road to arrive at the village of Croesor. We ascend diagonally up the flank of Moelwyn Mawr to the remains of Croesor quarry and on through rough terrain to Rhosydd quarry. We follow a track down to Cwmorthin, passing beside the lake and an eerie ruined chapel, continuing down to Tanygrisiau, crossing the Ffestiniog railway. From here it is a simple walk into Blaenau Ffestiniog, the iconic slate town.

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### Day 6: BLAENAU FFESTINIOG TO CWM PENMACHNO

Distance: 13.5 miles (21.5km) Ascent: 2,900 feet (880m) Descent: 3,000 feet (920m) We leave Blaenau Ffestiniog to the south, walking through the beautiful undulating valleys of Cwm Bowydd, Cwm Teigl then on to Llan Ffestiniog. We

visit Cwm Cynfal, a spectacular gorge with waterfalls and torrents and follow the river's valley up to open moorland that offers a sense of wilderness. We pass the iron age hillfort of Bryn y Castell, before a steep descent to the remote ruined village and quarry of Rhiwbach. From here we continue down to Cwm Penmachno, one of the most settlements in North Wales.

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### **Day 7: CWM PENMACHNO TO TY HYLL**

Distance: 11.5 miles (18.5km) Ascent: 1,950 feet (600m) Descent: 2,150 feet (660m) From Cwm Penmachno we'll follow forest tracks along the side of the valley to Penmachno and continue north to join the Conwy valley. We pass the delightful Fairy Glen and continue ahead to Betws y Coed, passing our hotel. We walk through the town and continue beside the Afon Llugwy, passing the Miners' Bridge and Swallow Falls before arriving at Ty Hyll meaning 'The Ugly House'.

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### **Day 8: TY HYLL TO BETHESDA**

Distance: 13.5 miles (21.5km) Ascent: 1,950 feet (600m) Our final day follows tracks through the Gywdyr forest then descends to Capel Curig. We take the green lane through the pass between the Carneddau and Glyderau ranges. At Llyn Ogwen the magnificent U-shaped valley of Nant Ffrancon opens up ahead and the remaining walk is an easy stretch on the old road around the purple slate tips of Penrhyn quarry. Finally, we walk the Afon Ogwen back to Bethesda where a statue marks the end of the trail.

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### **Day 9: Departure Day**

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

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## Gwydyr Hotel

Nestled in the heart of Betws y Coed, Gwydyr Hotel is a splendid Victorian-era gem dating back to the 1800s. In the town, you'll discover charming shops, a railway station with a captivating museum, and a tourist information centre. The hotel has a bar, restaurant, and drying room. Comfortable en-suite guest rooms all come with TV, tea & coffee making facilities, and free Wi-Fi. The hotel is dog-friendly, so you may perhaps make some four-legged friends in 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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