

Somerset & North Devon Coast Path Guided Trail

Trip style: Guided trails

Destination:  Exmoor

Trip code: SEL07-LSN01

Grades: 1, 2, 3

Carbon Footprint:  134kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

This guided trail holiday takes you walking along the coastline of Exmoor and one of the most dramatic sections of the South West Coast Path. All sweeping seafront panoramas, pretty fishing villages, and wild countryside, the route runs from the seaside resort of Minehead to the secluded sands of Croyde Bay. Highlights include popping into Porlock Weir for a harbourside stroll, visiting one of Somerset's best stretches of shoreline at Bossington Beach, and heading up to Selworthy Beacon for brilliant views over the Bristol Channel. You'll also journey through the Valley of the Rocks and visit Baggy Point where Atlantic waves crash into the cliffs.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Walking along the outstanding South West Coast Path
- Discovering landscapes celebrated for their natural beauty
- Visiting picturesque harbour towns including Ilfracombe and Porlock
- Spending time in the stunning villages of Lynton and Lynmouth
- Marvelling at Culbone Church, reportedly England's smallest church
- Soaking up panoramic views both inland and out to sea
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 15 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite rooms in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- 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

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 coastal footpaths. These may be rough and steep in sections and will require a good level of fitness. 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: Minehead to Porlock Weir

From the seafront at Minehead, we ascend gradually to a high-level cliff path which takes us to Hurlstone Point, either via Selworthy Beacon or via a wilder and more rugged coastal path. From Hurlstone we continue to Bossington village and westwards to Porlock Weir across Porlock Marsh. 10 miles (16km), with 1,800 feet (550m) of ascent.

Day 3: Porlock Weir to Lynmouth

Leaving the shore, we make our way through woodland to the cliff path and on to Culbone Church, the smallest parish church in England and the woodland path through Glenthorne Estate. The path then becomes more remote, overlooking parts of the cliff edge with some fine viewpoints. We continue to Countisbury Hill and a spectacular cliff path which takes us down to Lynmouth with hopefully some time to look around. 12 miles (19km), with 3,150 feet (960m) of ascent.

Day 4: Rest Day

A day without any walks programmed, giving you the opportunity to explore the local area independently. Discover more about Holnicote House and the local area for ideas on how to fill your free day.

Day 5: Lynmouth to Trentishoe Down

From Lynmouth, we take the path near the cliff railway which winds uphill to Lynton, and then follow the North Walk along the seaward side of Hollerday Hill and into the Valley of Rocks with its unusual geological features. The coast path takes us past Lee Bay and Woody Bay. After a descent almost to sea level, we climb steeply up out of Heddons Mouth Cleave. We then follow the high level path west above East Cleave until we strike inland for Trentishoe Down and Holdstone Down. 10 miles (16km) with 2,720/3,610 feet (830/1,100m) of ascent/descent.

Day 6: Trentishoe Down to Ilfracombe Harbour

From Holdstone we start along a wide open track leading round to Holdstone Down and the deep valley of Sherrycombe. A steep ascent out of the combe and up to Great Hangman (the highest point on the whole of the South West Coast Path) follows and we continue on to Little Hangman overlooking Combe Martin. After a short stop in the town we continue along the coast path to Watermouth Bay, round the headlands to Hele and up to Hillsborough for its fine views. We then descend into Ilfracombe where there may be time for a Devon cream tea. 10 miles (16km), with 1,930/2,820 feet (590/860m) of ascent/descent.

Day 7: Ilfracombe Harbour to Croyde Bay

From Ilfracombe we ascend through the spectacular Torrs Walk to the old coast track on the open downs. From Lee to Woolacombe the coast path hugs the cliffs and has a remote feel to it, with many ascents and descents. Depending on the tide, we may walk along the sands or along the road/track between Woolacombe and Vention. The path takes us out to Baggy Point, our most westerly point, with its fine views of Lundy Island. We follow the track east into Croyde Bay where we conclude our section of the South West Coast Path. 13 miles (21km), with 2,300 feet (700m) of ascent/descent.

Day 8: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

Holnicote House

There's plenty to look forward to at this beacon of Somerset hospitality near the impossibly pretty village of Selworthy. The location couldn't be more perfect; within rolling-out-of-bed distance from Exmoor National Park and an easy drive from Dunster Castle, Coleridge Cottage, the twin villages of Lynton and Lynmouth, and the sandy delights at Porlock and Minehead. The walking opportunities here are standout, too, not least for the trails around the Quantock Hills, Dunkery Beacon, Bossington, and a section of the England Coast Path that takes you on a glorious journey along the county's coastline.

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.