



Six of the most Scenic British Walks

We think that Britain is one of the best nations in the world to go walking, with an irresistible mix of coast, countryside and charming villages, tons of history, a great path network, and the odd pub or two beckoning at the end of the trail. So how about some proof? Here are six compelling reasons to get your boots on.

Lizard Peninsula, Cornwall

At 1,014 kilometres (630 miles), the South West Coast Path has more ups and downs than Everest, and a good taster of this route is the stage between Helston and Lizard. This 26-kilometre (16-mile) leg of the trail is classic Cornwall, a roller-coaster hike across clifftops and coves, taking in Halzephron, the “Cliff of Hell”; the crab-fishing quay at Mullion; and the famous lighthouse at Lizard Point.

Pack your rucksack and make a weekend of it: our Remote 30 is about right for a two-day walk, with a padded back system and air mesh to reduce sweating on those climbs. If that trip whets your appetite for going the full distance, get hold of the national trail guides from Aurum Press (www.aurumpress.co.uk): typically it takes seven weeks.

OS Explorer map 103

Cleveland Hills, Yorkshire Moors

A whole range of hills in a day? Yes, you can do it... on a hike across the bouldery summits of the Cleveland Hills. Park at Clay Bank on the B1527 and make the short, sharp climb west onto Hasty Bank. Ahead, the trail tiptoes invitingly along high clifftops, with a real sense of the world at your feet.

Path-finding is simple, even in winter snow, and the fang-like pinnacles of the Wain Stones are great for a spot of low-impact scrambling. Double back when you've had your fill of scenery. If you're hungry for more, try the Lyke Wake Walk, which passes this way: a 64-kilometre (40-mile) challenge hike to be completed in 24 hours (www.lykewake.org).

OS Explorer OL26



Loch Coruisk, Skye

Loch Coruisk is a chunk of serious Scottish wilderness, but tackling it can be as hardcore or easy-going as you like. You get there by pleasure boat from Elgol (www.bellajane.co.uk), crossing Loch Scavaig into the Cuillin mountains, a legendary playground for climbers. Coruisk means “cauldron” and the bracing (if boggy) eight-kilometre (five-mile) track around the loch is menaced by jagged peaks. Now you’ve a choice: either return by boat, or pick your way back along a rugged 11-kilometre (seven-mile) trail that clings to the coastline.

You’ll need a head for heights for the notorious scramble across the “Bad Step”, and boots with good traction: the Explorer Trek, our classic fell-walking boot, is ideal, with GORE-TEX® waterproofing and the EHS (ergonomic holding system) for comfort and support. It’s available for men and women.

OS Explorer map 411

Striding Edge, Lake District

There’s loads of competition in the Lake District, but the hike up Helvellyn must be the most charismatic hill climb in Britain. It’s all about the final mile to the summit - across Striding Edge, with its crazy series of dagger-sharp pinnacles. This is not for the faint-hearted, so choose a clear day and pack proper waterproofs, because the weather can do strange things at 914 metres (3,000 feet).

You’ll also want a high-performing base layer, such as the LS Zip Tech T, redesigned for spring 2010 and with silver ion technology for permanent odour protection. The full circuit from Glenridding village, descending via Swirral Edge, takes six hours; or for a less nerve-jangling route up the mountain, choose the western approach, which begins from the A591 beside Thirlmere.

OS Explorer OL5



Bosherston Nature Reserve, Pembrokeshire

The Pembrokeshire Coast Path (www.pcnpa.org.uk) bobs and weaves along 179 miles of world-class shoreline, and the stretch at Bosherston is the most eye-catching of the lot. Hidden behind Broad Haven Beach is an expanse of lily ponds where, come June, thousands of floating flowers explode into bloom.

Getting there is easy: from Stackpole Quay via an exhilarating 11-kilometre (seven-mile) circuit across surf-battered 49-metre (160-foot) cliffs. It's tempting to keep on going - perhaps as far as St Govan's, a hermit's chapel hacked right into the foot of a crag.

OS Explorer OL36

Seven Sisters, South Downs

Here's a great way to step up your walking experience: tackle one of Britain's most iconic landscapes at night. The South Downs Way treads a clear, well-signed route across the Seven Sisters - wait for a full moon and clear skies, and you can't go wrong. Warm up with a scotch at the Tiger Inn in East Dean, then head south to the sea at Birling Gap, to pick up the national trail. Those famous white cliffs zigzag away ahead of you, dipped in moonlight. Keep going for as long as the mood takes you, then double back inland via Crowlink to East Dean. Unforgettable.

OS Explorer OL123

What our athletes think:

"Never too far from the road but offering magnificent walking in an amazingly varied landscape is the Peak District. Lush limestone valleys and windswept gritstone moors, the variety is riveting and will doubtless ensure that you return many times. There are so many walks that I think it's best to simply choose your own from the OS map. Walking guidebooks' recommended routes are always very popular and there's nothing like the satisfaction of finding your own favourite trail. You won't be disappointed!"

Mick Fowler, Berghaus athlete

If you've been inspired to get out there and explore the world then visit our shop for all your essential kit.