

Cairngorms National Park & Royal Deeside

Trip Code: WCD

Version: WCD Cairngorms National Park & Royal Deeside



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



LEISURELY



HIGHLIGHTS

- Hike on ancient whisky smugglers' trails and visit Scotland's first licensed whisky distillery
- Explore the majesty of the glens, clear rivers and deep lochs on expertly guided walks
- Discover the wide variety of wildlife to be found in the Cairngorms National Park

- Excellent home-cooked meals, all transfers and accommodation are included

AT A GLANCE

- 5 days walking
- Join at Inverness

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- All meals included
- 6 nights Guesthouse

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

National Geographic recognised how special the Cairngorms were, naming the area one of the 50 Must-Visit Places on Earth, while the Queen herself holds the spot especially dear - her Scottish residency is at Balmoral, Royal Deeside. Meanwhile, the Cairngorm National Park delights at every turn. On this walking holiday, we enjoy some of the greatest easier hikes in the Cairngorms National Park as we explore Strathspey, where the high plateau soars above charming villages, Royal Deeside and Highland Perthshire. Our exploration of Scotland's largest National Park will be based around two centres and wherever we hike we'll enjoy the fantastic scenery, sense of wilderness and rich history and heritage. As well as hiking in the wilderness, we'll visit a 13th century Highland Castle, a wildlife reserve and truly savour the heritage of the region at a whisky tasting in a local distillery.

Is this holiday for you?

This holiday is suitable for active travellers who are reasonably fit and enjoy moderate hikes. We walk at a comfortable pace and you can expect to be out for 5-6 hours a day. The terrain will be small paths (not paved) and hill trails but these can still be muddy and rough in places and you will need to be confident hiking on uneven ground at times. Some hikes may involve an ascent up to a max of approx 1,500 feet / 450m. Distances will be typically 8-10km but there may be the odd slightly longer day.

Daily hike details are available in the itinerary. The weather in Scotland can be unpredictable and at times can make activities more challenging. Please do bear this in mind when thinking about what trip to join. If our guides feel that you are not able to complete a scheduled hike they may ask you not to join in that day.

Itinerary

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DAY 1

Meet the group at Inverness train station at 10:30am. Walk the trails of Royal Deeside.

From Inverness, a transfer south-east takes us to Royal Deeside, best known for being the Scottish home of the Royal family, but it also boasts fine walks in an ancient wooded landscape. We'll enjoy a short walk, taking in stunning views and spotting some of the local wildlife. We finish up the afternoon by transferring to the beautiful village of Braemar and our guest house accommodation for the next few nights.

Meals: **L D**



Accommodation
Guesthouse



Ascent
300M



Time
3 hrs walking



Distance
9KM

DAY 2

Walk on one of the best circular walks in Royal Deeside, up to the edge of the Cairngorm plateau.

This circular hike is one of the best in Royal Deeside. We follow a good trail north to the edge of the Cairngorm plateau, where some of the highest peaks in Scotland rise from the deep glens. The wilderness is striking and the beauty is all around. The rivers are a real highlight with the striking rock features of the Linn of Dee and the Devil's Punchbowl most notable. Overnight Royal Deeside.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Guesthouse



Ascent
200M



Time
6 hrs walking



Distance
17KM





DAY 3

Circular walk with fantastic views of Glen Muick and in the shadow of Lochnagar.

This superb circular hike explores Glen Muick, which lies in the shadow of the famous peak of Lochnagar. It takes us through ancient pine forest, past one of Queen Victoria's hunting lodges and beneath

towering cliffs as we circumnavigate beautiful Loch Muick. It's also a great place for spotting wildlife - look out for red deer and golden eagles. Overnight Royal Deeside.

Meals: **B L D**





	Accommodation Guesthouse		Ascent 200M		Time 5 hrs walking		Distance 12KM
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DAY 4

Transfer into Highland Perthshire for a beautiful walk in the grounds of a 13th century castle. Tour of the interior of the castle.

We transfer west into Highland Perthshire, where we make our way to a 13th-century castle for a hike on its vast estate. We enjoy a level route through a beautiful forest in a steep-sided glen. We finish back at the castle, with time for a tour of its interior and perhaps the gardens too. A short transfer north takes us into Strathspey and our base for the next 3 nights, a small B&B in a sleepy Cairngorm village.

Meals: **B L D**





	Accommodation Guesthouse		Ascent 100M		Time 5 hrs walking		Distance 9KM
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DAY 5

Walk in Glen Feshie through pine forest. Excellent day for wildlife spotting.

Glen Feshie is widely considered one of the most beautiful Cairngorm glens, and as the estate is undergoing an extensive rewilding program it is only getting more lovely. This has brought new vigour to the ancient pine forests, so we will walk through a beautiful mix of young trees and magnificent old pines. We will do an out-and-back hike along the floor of the glen, admiring the views of the hills and forest with excellent wildlife spotting potential.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Guesthouse		Ascent 250M		Time 6 hrs walking		Distance 12KM
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DAY 6

A circular walk in Abernethy Forest and time in the afternoon at a local Wildlife Reserve.

The Abernethy Forest is thought by many to be the most beautiful in Scotland, with beautiful lochs surrounded by ancient Scots Pine trees and framed by views of the high mountains. We'll enjoy a circular walk, perhaps taking in a section of the Speyside Way long distance trail, and finishing at a wildlife reserve where we'll hope to see red squirrels and many bird species including, in the early part of the summer, the osprey.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Guesthouse



Ascent
100M



Time
5 hrs walking



Distance
8KM

DAY 7

Hike in Cairngorms National Park. Transfer to Inverness train station for 5pm.

There are so many great walks in the Cairngorms that we like to keep the itinerary flexible and decide which hike to take in on the day. One option is a hike close to our accommodation, a favourite of the locals. It ventures into the eastern edge of the Monadh Liath mountains on a circular route to Loch Gynack. It's a wild and beautiful place, so an apt location to end our trip. After the hike, we complete our circumnavigation of the Cairngorms National Park by transferring north back to Inverness for the trip end.

Meals: **B L**



Ascent
200M



Time
5 hrs walking



Distance
8KM

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional English-speaking guide
- All transfers involved in the itinerary
- All accommodation as described
- All meals
- Entrance fees to a whisky distillery
- Highland castle and wildlife reserve

What's not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Visa fees (if applicable)
- Airport transfers
- Drinks
- Miscellaneous personal expenses

Important Notice

This holiday is operated in association with Wilderness Scotland, and they sell their own customers directly on to this trip also. KE acts as an agent for Wilderness Scotland and by booking this holiday you are entering into an agreement directly with Wilderness Scotland under the terms of their [booking conditions](#).

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

On day 1 of the itinerary your guide will meet you at the centre of Aviemore Railway Station at 10.00am.

On day 7 of the itinerary you will be transferred to Aviemore Railway Station for 4:00pm.

Meal Plan

All meals from Lunch on Day 1 to Lunch on Day 7 are included.

Food & Water

Water from the taps is perfectly drinkable on this holiday - please use this to fill your personal bottles for your daily activities. We do not encourage the purchase of single-use plastic bottles.

Food is of paramount importance and our meals are prepared from the best local produce. We'll enjoy wonderful home-cooked meals each evening, with good, healthy portions. Naturally, vegetarians and other dietary requirements are willingly catered for - simply let us know at the time of booking.

On this trip we generally eat dinner as a group however if you would like to make alternative arrangements you are free to do so. Your guide will have an evening off during this trip where they do not eat with the group. They will recommend options for dinner that evening and will help you make any necessary reservations.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

We spend our nights in welcoming and friendly guest houses: three nights in Royal Deeside then three nights in Strathspey. Accommodation is in twin or double rooms with en-suite bathroom facilities. A warm welcome is assured, and you can choose to spend the evenings in the lounge next to the wood-burning stove or in one of the village's local pubs.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by an experienced and qualified leader.

Baggage Allowance

There is no weight limit for your luggage on this holiday, however you will need to be able to lift and move your own luggage easily. There is also limited room in the transfer vehicles, and so one bag to be transferred and one day pack per person is ideal.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates (see *Health & Vaccinations below*), **and visas for your holiday**. Please ensure that you check the [FCDO](#) for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Severe Allergies

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

Currency

The unit of currency in the UK is Sterling.

Climate

The weather in Scotland can be unpredictable and at times can make activities more challenging.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Explore International

This holiday is part of our Explore International range. Participants on these trips can book through KE or through one of our international partners. This helps us to gather together sufficient numbers of like-minded adventurers to get your holiday up and running quickly. Led by an English-speaking guide, the cosmopolitan nature of these groups can be an important part of the experience!

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

You should bring the following items:

- Hiking boots (trail shoes are not suitable)
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer shirts (1 short sleeve, 1 long sleeve)
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- Thermal gloves
- Warm and waterproof gloves or mittens
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Daypack 25 – 35 litres should be sufficient
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottles 1 litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Washbag and toiletries

- Antibacterial hand wash

- Basic First Aid Kit including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, tick tweezers, antihistamines, re-hydration salts

The following items are optional:

- Travel shoes / Trainers
- Gaiters
- Spare laces
- Shorts
- Shirts (e.g. T-shirts)
- Thermal baselayer - leggings
- Thermos flask
- Trekking poles
- Insect repellent
- Camera
- Travel clothes
- Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Midge net
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)
- Reuseable lunch box and water bottles (to avoid plastic waste)

Land Only Information

We sell this holiday on a Land Only basis, joining with the group at Inverness train station at 10:30am on day 1 of the itinerary.

Travel arrangements should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run'.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Experience this beautiful and wild area of the world with highly qualified guides, all meals included and cosy guesthouses.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 01/07/2025 and the trip is subject to change