

Country Walks

for the best in nordic walking, guided walks and weekends away

The Welsh Borders ‘B’ Grade

Friday 24 – Sunday 26 July
(2 nights) (B grade: 7-9 miles daily)

Walking in the picturesque Welsh border country surrounding the charming little market town of Crickhowell

Wonderful walking with magnificent views in glorious border country in the easternmost section of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The walks embrace the best of softly rounded hills in arguably the most beautiful valleys in the National Park with remote, wild hill country. The routes are selected for their accessibility and suitability for the average walker.

The Bear Hotel, Crickhowell

A privately-owned former coaching inn, The Bear is renowned for its welcoming atmosphere, historic character, dating back to 1432, and good food. Its restaurant has won many awards including two prestigious AA rosettes, the “Taste of Wales” Restaurant of the Year and “Pub of the Year” awards.

Deluxe rooms are large, well-appointed and mostly situated off a balcony overlooking the delightful courtyard and gardens. At The Bear there are no single rooms, only doubles for single occupancy. Those at the front of the hotel are quite small and could be subject to traffic noise with double-glazed windows open.

Alternative accommodation is available at The Dragon Hotel, a few minutes away on foot. Whilst the rooms are not as well appointed as those at The Bear, they are clean and comfortable and away from the main road.

Price per person for 2 nights:

The Bear: Small Double for single occupancy (at the front of the hotel) £316; Standard Double for single occupancy (at the back of the hotel) £336

Small Doubles £259, Standard Doubles £269 Deluxe Doubles or twins £280,

The Dragon: Singles £263; Standard Double for single occupancy £294, Superior Doubles or Twins £252, Standard Doubles or Twins £238

Accommodation at The Bear: 6 standard doubles for single occupancy at front of hotel, 4 standard doubles for single occupancy at back of hotel, 2 superior twins and 6 deluxe doubles

Accommodation at The Dragon: 2 single rooms and 1 double room for single occupancy, 2 Standard Doubles or Twins and 2 Superior Doubles or Twins

Price includes:

- En-suite accommodation at either The Bear or The Dragon
- Two 3-course dinners
- Two full English breakfasts
- One packed lunch
- Friday evening walk
- Two full-day guided walks
- Mini-bus travel to and from Sunday's walk
- Two guide-hosts providing commentaries on features of interest along the way
- All gratuities

Price excludes:

- One pub lunch
- Optional teas
- Drinks and items of a personal nature

Itinerary

Friday A welcome meeting and evening walk followed by dinner in the Bear Hotel's award-winning restaurant.

Saturday A short drive to the start of our first delightful excursion into one of the area's remotest recesses. The outward leg involves a modest, fairly short ascent up a grassy slope to enjoy a gentle ridge walk with superb views. Reaching an isolated mountain pass at the head of the Grwyne Fechan valley, we lunch in an idyllic spot at 2,000 ft, surrounded by lofty peaks and distant views over the Wye Valley. This is hill walking at its best. A very gradual descent takes us gently down the hillside, above tumbling water, to the beautiful, remote Grwyne Fechan valley below. The path is easy, the springy turf ensuring delightful walking, before finally crossing the river at Tal-y-maes Bridge to The Hermitage and our waiting cars. (Picnic lunch supplied). *(8.5 miles, 'B' grade)*

Sunday Today we are transported from the hotel by minibus to the Llanthony Valley. We start by visiting the amazing little crooked church of Cwmyoy before setting off for Hatterrall Hill, past dry stone walls and along grassy paths between bilberries and heather, wide views to the east accompanying us throughout. We ascend gradually to join Offa's Dyke Path stretching away into the distance. The views are superb in all directions as we cruise along one of the finest ridge walks imaginable. Soon the distinctive ruins of Llanthony Abbey appear and we make a gradual descent to lunch – a memorable experience in the ancient undercroft. The afternoon walk takes us along a delightful valley back to Cwmyoy and our awaiting minibus. *(8 miles, 'B' grade)*

Travel & Transport

By rail: hourly trains from London Paddington to Abergavenny via Newport (2.12 hours) with onward travel by bus or taxi (6 miles). We can arrange shared travel or taxi-sharing if required. **By road,** total mileage from central London: 176 miles (3.30 hours). We may be able to arrange car-sharing if required. Car parking available at the hotels.

Transport to the walk on Sunday is by minibus; on the Saturday shared cars will be used for the 15-minute drive.