

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **What's included in our walks**

A personal service from experienced and knowledgeable staff who provide well planned holidays and tours and carefully chosen and researched walks, so that you can enjoy a relaxing break with healthy exercise in good company and get a whole new view of the countryside around you.

## **GUIDED WALKS**

### **Day Walks**

Following enrolment you will be sent details of the walk starting point, condition of the ground, start and finish times etc. during the week before the walk.

Walks normally start at 10:00am and finish between 3:00 and 5:00pm depending on the length and the amount of daylight. You are given a booklet to accompany each walk providing a general background and describing the points of interest.

We try to plan the walk to take in a public house for lunch but you can bring sandwiches. On some walks there is not a convenient pub so we all bring sandwiches.

### **Weekend Breaks**

Before the holiday you will be sent details of the programme with directions to your accommodation.

Friday – Meet for drinks and dinner at 7:00pm followed by slides of the Cotswold Landscape

Saturday – Bed and breakfast, guided walk and dinner

Sunday – Bed and breakfast, guided walk finishing at around 4:00pm

On each day you will receive information on the weather forecast, the condition of the ground, directions to the start point, the start and finish times etc. You will also be given a booklet to accompany the walks giving a general background and describing the points of interest. See our programme for a description of the walks on a given weekend.

### **Week Holidays**

Before the holiday you will be sent details of the programme with directions to your accommodation.

Saturday – Meet for drinks and dinner at 7:00pm followed by slides of the Cotswold Landscape

Sunday to Tuesday – Bed and breakfast, guided walk and dinner

Wednesday – A free day for exploring, shopping or simply relaxing

Thursday and Friday – Bed and breakfast, guided walk and dinner Saturday – Departure or stay on to further explore the area independently.

On each day you will receive information on the condition of the ground, directions to the start point, the start and finish times etc. You will also be given a booklet to accompany the walks giving a general background and describing the points of interest. See our programme for a description of the walks on a given weekend.

Guided walks do not include the cost of lunch or entrance fees.

## **SELF-GUIDED WALKS**

For all self-guided walking tours we book accommodation in single or multi-locations, arrange luggage transfer if required, provide details of the route and a map.

For Cotswold Discover Walks we also provide information booklets describing the history and

nature of the landscape along the route. For Cotswold Discover Walks we also provide information booklets describing the history and nature of the landscape along the route.

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### **How can I arrange one-off Events and self-guided walks?**

Please contact us if you would like us to arrange a private walking break for you and your friends.

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### **What walking conditions will we encounter?**

Most of the walks are on well used footpaths with a fairly even terrain. Some walks are along minor roads and occasionally along short stretches of main roads. When on public roads, the guided walk leaders wear luminous jackets and warn of approaching vehicles but it is the responsibility of the walker to walk on the road verge and where appropriate stick to the side of the road facing oncoming traffic.



Walkers are likely to encounter mud on any of the walks and it can be slippery underfoot especially if there has been recent rain, snow or a thaw. This is particularly likely when crossing unsown fields or passing along tracks and gates used by farm vehicles and livestock. Gaiters are good for protecting trousers.

You may also encounter animals in fields, including bulls, inquisitive bullocks and horses. Landowners have a duty not to let animals that might attack visitors roam freely where the public has access and if they do will be liable for any resulting harm. If you encounter animals and the path is open, walk confidently across the field – but please avoid walking between a mother and her offspring, be it horse and foal, ewe and lamb or cow and calf. Sometimes the landowner blocks off the path and provides an alternative route. If no alternative route is provided, or if you are concerned about crossing an area, check your map for an alternative route.

Toilets are few and far between but there are usually plenty of bushes and trees to hide behind.

There are often stiles on the walks and on some there are quite a few. They are usually built by men with longer legs than women! We also pass through five-barred gates and kissing gates. On our guided walks you will be part of a small group, with the maximum numbers of guests of 12 on weekend and week breaks and on day walks of 16. Groups are very friendly, informal and relaxed and the leaders are welcoming to all, and especially to new walkers who are not

sure whether they are fit enough or single people who are out for the first time on their own. Guests share a common love of the English countryside and are interested in each other and in the Cotswold countryside.

Guided walks go ahead in almost all conditions, it would not be England without the rain, and in fact it would not be Britain if you sometimes did not see all the seasons in a single day. Rain is great but you might like to bring a hat just in case! We will only cancel in the event of very bad weather, e.g. strong winds, heavy rain or if the ground has become impassable. Please come prepared with suitable clothing and protection for conditions likely on the day, e.g. for hot sunshine and showers in the summer, and for wind, heavy rain and cold temperatures in the winter. Please, always carry a bottle of water.

We try to arrange lunch in a local public house or cafe but this is sometimes difficult so we lunch on sandwiches. If you prefer not to go to the pub you can bring sandwiches. To help us with our planning, please let us know if you have any special dietary requirements or food allergies.

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### **How do we find our way?**

On guided walks our experienced walk leaders will guide you throughout the day, also pointing out lots of interesting and sometimes obscure and tiny clues to history and nature in the countryside.

On self-guided walks we provide a map and details of the route. Most routes follow Public Rights of Way; footpaths, bridle ways and byways. These are usually well signed by finger posts and waymarkers. The sign for a National Trail is the acorn.

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### **What if I'm new to walking?**

You don't have to be an experienced long distance hiker to join us, just averagely fit. We take our time over the walks and stop to look at lots of interesting things (some most obscure) so there's opportunity to take regular short rests, in fact you may be surprised how far you can walk. If you are unsure please contact us and we will advise.

We can offer a shorter option for most of the walks in the programme. The shorter walk will normally be the first part of the longer walk and generally includes many of the points of interest. Please contact us for more information and to make the arrangements.

We have a small supply of waterproofs and warm clothing available for you. However, you should bring your own footwear which is suitable for walking on footpaths and through fields in the countryside.

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### **How do we grade our walks?**

We grade our walks in the following categories:

Easy – Up to 4 miles on fairly flat and even footpaths

Moderate – 4 to 8 miles with gentle ascents or up to 6 miles on hard uneven terrain

Strenuous – 8 to 12 miles or up to 8 miles with up to three steep ascents and/or difficult uneven ground

Very Strenuous – 12 to 20 miles or long steep ascents or extremely difficult ground (not normally encountered in the Cotswolds)

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### **What clothing do you recommend?**

Your most important item is, of course, a pair of comfortable walking boots with good grip and preferably not brand new ones. Although we may have to cross muddy ground at times suede type walking boots will be fine. When it's very wet Wellingtons may be more suitable but they tend to be less comfortable than boots. Please wear a couple of pairs of well fitting socks to avoid getting blisters!

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For walks in winter and spring you need a hat, warm fleece or similar, as well as a waterproof jacket and trousers. Wearing plenty of layers is the best way to keep warm, and they can be shed as you warm up. Gaiters are a helpful addition to protect trousers over wet and muddy ground particularly in spring and autumn.

A hat and sun protection cream, as well as insect repellent are recommended in the summer.

Also, please bring a small rucksack for carrying water (which we strongly recommend you bring), camera, sweater, money etc. and a walking stick is also recommended if you need support. Some people find a pair of plastic carrier bags a useful extra to tie over walking boots and/or gaiters when going into a pub for lunch. It saves the trouble of taking off your boots.

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### **How do I get to the walk start location?**

We provide road directions to your accommodation and to the walk start points. We also welcome clients using public transport and help with planning train and bus journeys to your accommodation and provide transport to the walk start points.

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### **Are health and safety issues assessed in advance?**

In order to make your experience as pleasant as possible we ask you to fill in a medical declaration as part of the booking form.

The walk leader carries out a risk assessment before each walk and the document is readily available. The leader will draw your attention to the risks previously identified immediately before the walk but is important that you understand that you are each expected to be responsible for yourself and should not put other walkers at risk.

The walk leaders are trained in First Aid and we carry a mobile phone (to contact the emergency services) and a basic First Aid Kit with us.

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### **What does Walk the Landscape do for the environment?**



Wherever possible we endeavour to minimise our footprint on the environment.

We work with small groups of clients, which minimises our impact on the countryside. Our staff also share cars and travel by public transport where they can, and encourage our clients to do the same. This also reduces congestion from parked cars in small villages and beside narrow roads. We support local pubs, cafes and businesses rather than larger chains.

We aim for a paperless office communication by email whenever possible. We recycle cardboard, paper, glass and plastic, use low energy products and switch our electrical equipment off when not in use for a prolonged period of time.

Our staff and guests on all types of walks should follow the Countryside Code. There are five guidelines:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
  - Leave gates and property as you find them
  - Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
  - Keep dogs under close control
  - Consider other people
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#### **Our privacy policy**

Any information you provide to us about yourself or your family, verbally or in writing on the booking form, in emails or on any other material will be treated in strictest confidence.

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#### **Equal Opportunities policy**

Our walks are open to anyone who is fit enough to walk a few miles along public footpaths and through muddy fields. If this is not you, and you still want to see the Cotswolds on foot, you are welcome so please contact us and we will endeavour to arrange a holiday to meet your needs.

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#### **Dogs?**

We do not normally allow dogs on our walks (except Guide Dogs) unless agreed in advance. When present, dogs must be kept under control at all times and on a leash when near to farm animals, other dogs and wildlife. They must not enter premises unless the proprietor gives permission for them to do so.

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requirements. We can arrange an amazing walking tour of this beautiful part of the UK – just [Contact Us](#).