



2008 Holiday Dossier

Guided Walking Holidays and Courses in Scotland from
the leading experts
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HIGH CAIRNGORM BACKPACKING

(Grade 3, 4 days, 5 nights)

If you're looking to totally immerse yourself in the mountains, then there's no finer way than backpacking. If you want the perfect place to do it, then look no further than the Cairngorms. We avoid the repeated ups & downs of other mountain ranges. Once the 'plateau' edge is gained, we're left to relax & enjoy. The holiday is 2 journeys deep into remote Cairngorm splendour & an ideal introduction to the skill of wilderness backpacking.



Arrive: Fraoch Lodge on Sunday 27th July 2008. Try to aim for between 5 & 7pm so that you have time to settle in and meet the rest of the group before dinner, which is usually served about 7.30pm.

Expedition 1 (2 day trip)

Day 1: We begin with a gradual climb to the high ridges above beautiful Glen Feshie. With expansive views over distant mountain horizons we reach the summit of Sgor Gaoith. Not until the very last moment does the incredible sight of Loch Einich far below reveal itself. Encircled by huge cliffs and sheer slopes, this gigantic amphitheatre is a sight to behold. We skirt around this incredible feature to our camping spot.

Day 2: After breakfast & breaking camp we ascend to the source of the River Dee. At over 4000ft it's the highest in Britain. It's then on to Braeriach's lofty summit but not before reaching the edge of 'The Rough Coire' - on one side the

expanse of high mountain 'plateau', on the other continuous cliffs & precipitous slopes & wonderful views down the length of the famous Lairig Ghru - the finest of high level routes. It's back to Fraoch Lodge for the night.

Expedition 2 (3 day trip)

Day 3: is a gentler day as we walk in to the beginning of this 'Grand Traverse' over one of the highest & remotest parts of the Cairngorm National Park. Passing by noble Caledonian Pines we rise up over wind swept moor with distant views to the sea to then descend for a night in a bothy.

Day 4: starts with a steady climb to the high top of Beinn a' Bhuird. Again, yards from the summit there's another abrupt change as glaciers of long past have cut deep into this mountain mass. With the hard work now done it's on to Ben A'an, & its mysterious rock formations before our camp at a high Lochan.

Day 5: begins with a brief rise to gaining the ridge. From here we look out over rolling hills to the distant sea as we begin the descent down to follow the meandering River Don to the 'watering hole' of the Allargue Inn! A route of surprises & never-ending interest.

Depart: Saturday 2nd August 2008 after breakfast

Price: £462 (5 days, 6 nights)

fully inclusive of: all guiding or instruction, accommodation at Fraoch Lodge & camping (tents & camping equipment provided by Mountain Innovations if required), full board, transport, and transfers to Aviemore Station or Inverness airport* if required.

We advise guests to arrive at Fraoch Lodge between 5 - 7 pm if possible.

Mountain Innovations advises all clients to take out suitable insurance cover. For clients resident in the UK we can offer insurance cover against personal accident, cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Please phone 01479 831 331 for full details.

* Mountain Innovations Ltd will pick up from Inverness airport at approx. 5pm, unless otherwise arranged.

GRADING INFORMATION

The grading of each holiday is based on the average length of the day for that holiday. The time takes an accurate account of the distance and amount of ascent & descent. Additional time is also included for breaks. These calculations have then been tempered by walking the routes with any necessary adjustments having then been made to the grading. For the easier grade holidays (grades 1 & 2) the day length has been adjusted to give a slower pace more suited to the tempo of the holiday.

Grade 3: this is challenging walking. These holidays involve 6 - 7 hrs walking with the need to maintain a steady pace. They're suitable for fit hill walkers or anyone who takes regular (weekly) exercise. The routes may include steep ascents/descents over rough mountain terrain. The steeper gradients usually total up to around 800m of ascent.

It's important for your own and the rest of the group's enjoyment, that you choose the right holiday for your ability. If you are in any doubt to the suitability of a particular holiday please don't hesitate to give Andrew a ring on 01479 831 331 so we can better advise you.

Since time is often given over to photography and due to the vagaries of the mountain environment the average day length should only be regarded as an estimate.

ABOUT US

Established in 1998, we're an owner-run provider of guided walking holidays and mountain courses in the Highlands of Scotland. We firmly believe 'the day' doesn't finish with the walk; we don't hand you over to someone else, you arrive back to 'Cake O'Clock' - a welcoming mug of tea and some of Rebecca's home baking.

Andrew's knowledge of the mountain environment is extensive, having a background in geology and

being interested in natural history and conservation from an early age, he's a mine of information. The fine food and relaxed atmosphere mean that access to some of the wildest places in Britain is a safe, fun and exhilarating experience.

We are always on hand to ensure your stay exceeds expectations and are very proud of all the great testimonials we receive. Come and enjoy a complete adventure with us.

YOUR HOSTS

Both Andrew and Rebecca have travelled widely. Andrew's mountaineering experience of 15 years is complemented by a number of independent expeditions to such places as the Karakoram mountains of Pakistan, the Indian Himalaya, the Alps, Mount Kenya and the High Atlas of Morocco.

Rebecca has trekked extensively in New Zealand and Australia. She has worked in Taiwan and travelled throughout China, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and many other parts of SE Asia. She brings her knowledge of global cuisines to the preparation of her highly regarded and creative menus.

FRAOCH LODGE - YOUR ACCOMMODATION

Our Highland base is Fraoch Lodge. The Lodge provides a very comfortable dining room with wood burning stove & a separate lounge with open fire.

Single guests generally share a twin room with a member of the same sex.

Full details of Fraoch Lodge are available from our web site at www.scotmountain.co.uk

CATERING

Rebecca's meals have been described as 'blue-riband events'. Bread is baked daily and all dishes are home-prepared using as much of our organic, home-grown ingredients as possible. There are a variety of options for breakfast. Packed lunches are imaginative but practical. There are home made cakes on our return and the evening meal consists of 2 courses, with the option for seconds, followed by tea or coffee.



We operate a BYO policy for dinner.

RECOMMENDED KIT LIST

- Windproof/Waterproof jacket with hood
- Windproof/Waterproof trousers
- Gaiters (optional)
- Proper Walking boots and socks (not walking shoes nor sneakers/approach shoes)
- Walking poles (optional)
- Ruck Sack - 50 - 70 litre capacity
- Warm clothing - (e.g. fleece or 2 x thin wool jumpers)
- Hat (warm & sun hats)
- Gloves
- Walking Trousers (not jeans)
- Sun block
- Sun glasses (optional)
- Water bottle/flask
- Slippers/indoor shoes
- Outdoor shoes for bus, etc
- Thermal underwear top or warm shirt (preferably not cotton)
- Shorts and T-shirt (optional)
- Sleeping bag (good to -7°C)
- Sleeping mat or thermarest

Clients are advised to avoid wearing clothing made out of 100% cotton for walking in Scotland since cotton loses a lot of its thermal potential when wet. It is far more versatile to opt for a number of thin layers, as opposed to a couple of thick layers with regards to warm clothing.

If you have any doubts on the suitability of your kit please don't hesitate to contact us: 01479 831 331.

OUR RESPONSIBLE POLICY

On all our holidays we have a 'leave nothing, take only photographs' policy. Our guides are asked to explain and encourage this policy.

For example, leaving an apple core or feeding a seagull on a mountain summit may seem innocuous but it detracts from the 'untouched wilderness' aspect and can have a detrimental knock-on effect on the indigenous wildlife. Our guides are there for your safety & enjoyment & to informally share their knowledge of the mountain environment - from its geological beginnings through to contemporary land management and its associated politics.

We compost all biodegradable waste in 3 large compost heaps built from scrap wood and use this to fertilise the garden, especially our vegetable patch.

The lodge is mainly heated by a multi-fuel stove which is supplied by wood from the garden, deadfall in the local woods and cutoffs (a waste product) from the sawmill at Carrbridge

We have been awarded Silver under the Green Tourism Business Award.

We will be carrying out all our rubbish. All recyclable materials will be returned to Fraoch Lodge to be sorted.

TRAVEL TO THE HIGHLANDS

If you are intending to fly you can find all options on the Inverness airport web site at www.hial.co.uk Alternatively you could take the train to Aviemore. Direct services run from London with GNER & Scotrail (the sleeper).

Mountain Innovations are offering a £15 GREEN TRAVEL DISCOUNT for clients travelling to Fraoch Lodge/Aviemore by train or bus.

