



**ADVENTURES**

IN GOOD COMPANY



## **CHAMPS MEMBERS ONLY - HIKING WALES**

**AUGUST 17 - 27, 2019**

### **TRIP SUMMARY**

#### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Hiking in Wales three National Parks: Brecon Beacons, Pembrokeshire, and Snowdon
- Going to the top of Mt Snowdon, on foot or by train
- Visiting some of Wales' famous historical castles, churches, and ruins
- Learning about Welsh culture and its tumultuous history

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## TRIP AT A GLANCE

<b>Dates:</b>	August 17 - 27, 2019
<b>Location:</b>	Cardiff, Wales
<b>Cost:</b>	\$3,395.00
<b>Activities:</b>	Hiking
<b>Arrive:</b>	Arrive at our hotel in Cardiff by 4pm on August 17
<b>Depart:</b>	We'll have you to the Bangor train station by 9:30 or the Manchester airport by 11:30 on August 27

### TRIP OVERVIEW

Discover the essence of Wales on our hiking trip to all three of Wales' National Parks. Although a small country, it is second to none in its fascinating history, varied and stunning topography, and a warm and welcoming tradition of hospitality, and our hiking trip is a perfect mixture of hiking in stunning landscapes, interwoven with cultural encounters and experiences. We begin our adventure in the vibrant capital city of Cardiff before heading off to the wild windswept escarpments of the Brecon Beacons National Park. Then it's on to the coast of Pembrokeshire, widely regarded as the spiritual heartland of Wales. Finally we head North to the rugged mountains of Snowdonia, a stronghold of Welsh culture. Castles and fortresses dot the landscape, a reflection of its turbulent history. And while a part of Great Britain, Welsh culture has survived largely intact, as demonstrated by the bilingualism we'll find everywhere. Croeso I Gymru!

### RATING

This trip is for women who have some experience hiking and want to combine hiking with immersion in the history and culture of the area. We spend 3-6 hours hiking on most days at elevations ranging from sea level to 3560' (Mt. Snowdon). Hiking in Wales is quite varied from good mountain footpaths to uneven ground. **Rating:** 1 2 **[3]** 4 5 . A rating of 3 requires aerobic conditioning for a minimum of 30 - 45 minutes 3 to 4 days a week.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Two local Welsh guides
- Ten nights double occupancy lodging
- All meals from dinner on September 8 to breakfast on September 18
- Ground transportation in Wales, including airport transfer on the last day
- All activities on the itinerary,

**Not included:** Travel to and from Cardiff, transportation to the hotel on day 1, guide gratuities, optional activities, and travel insurance.

# OUR ITINERARY

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

## DAY 1

### AUGUST 17, SATURDAY



Arrive Cardiff any time before 4 pm today. We'll gather at our hotel at 4:30pm for welcome and introductions, followed by a trip orientation. Our Welsh guide will then take us on a brief walking tour of Cardiff on our way to dinner. Those of us who just arrived will undoubtedly be jetlagged so we'll make sure we get to bed early. D Overnight [Angel Hotel, Cardiff](#)

## DAY 2

### AUGUST 18, SUNDAY



From Cardiff, we will drive for about an hour through the South Wales Valleys. This area once fueled the Industrial Revolution with her coal, leaving behind only scars in the mountainside and the faded glory of the architecture to remind us. Leaving the coal valleys behind, we enter Brecon Beacons National Park, the first of 3 National Park on our adventure. Our first walk will be along the tranquil Brecon and Monmouthshire canal. In the past, horses pulled the barges and we will follow their trail along the ancient towpath. By its very nature this is level walking and a superb walk for our first day. The pace is slow, allowing us to ease into the rhythms of rural Wales and enjoy our first lunch in a cozy pub. Hiking: 5 miles, 120 feet elevation gain. B, L, D Overnight [Fourcroft Hotel](#), Tenby (3 nights).

## DAY 3

### AUGUST 19, MONDAY



Now that we've recovered from jet lag, we're ready for some more serious hiking. After picking up a picnic lunch from the local bakery, we set off from our hotel along the Offa's Dyke footpath. This is one of Wales' National trails. Offa was a 9th century Saxon king who built a stone and earth barrier to delineate his kingdom from that of the troublesome Celts in the west. Our walk will take us from the lush Wye valley up onto the wild and windswept tops of the Black mountains, where we climb to the top of Hay Bluff (2220 feet). This is border country; the views here stretch out over and beyond Wales, to the English counties of Hereford and Gloucestershire. Our bus will pick us up at Gospel pass and drive us down to the romantic ruins of Llananthony Abbey. Rebuilt in the 13th century, what stands today are the picturesque remains. Hiking: 5 miles, 2000 feet elevation gain. B, L, D Overnight: Fourcroft Hotel, Tenby.

## DAY 4

## AUGUST 20, TUESDAY



Our scenic drive will take us over the north side of the Brecon Beacons National Park, west toward Pembrokeshire. We will stop briefly in the ancient and old-fashioned Drover town of Landover, home to a memorial to the Welsh drovers. Our hike today is an undulating circuit following footpaths around and up to Carreg Cennen Castle, a striking 12th century fortress that changed hands many times between the English and Welsh and is arguably the most romantic castle in Wales. Whether or not you agree, a visit to this dramatic fortress is a must and the climb up to it is well worth it. Finishing our hike we continue the last leg of our journey to the brightly colored seaside town of Tenby and our beautifully located family-run hotel, an older but classic 'by the seaside' lodging with that great historic Wales atmosphere. Following dinner at the hotel, we'll complete our day with a twilight walk with resident storyteller, Marion Davies. Hiking: 5.5 miles, 1,000 feet elevation gain. B, L, D Overnight: Fourcroft Hotel, Tenby.

## DAY 5

## AUGUST 21, WEDNESDAY



National Geographic magazine called Pembrokeshire the world's second best coastal destination and ranked the Pembrokeshire coast second in the world's top ten long-distance paths. We'll hike today on the All Wales Coast Path, with spectacular cliff top views. We'll keep our eyes open for gannets fishing and playful choughs catching the updrafts. Barafundle Bay is surely one of the loveliest beaches in the world and an inviting place for a swim. You might think coastal paths are flat and easy hiking, but you would be wrong, and a break at the Boat House tearoom at Stack pole quay to sample the local wares will be most welcome.

We then continue onwards to the freshwater Bosherton Lakes, famous for their lilies and resident otters. This landscape, designed by the Cawdor family as a setting for their country house, is a lovely contrast to the dramatic clifftops. Today the main house is gone, but the estate is an internationally important nature reserve and a listed designed landscape. Our coach will then take us back to Tenby for dinner. Hiking: 8 - 10 miles. B, L, D Overnight: [Angel Hotel, Abergavenny](#) (2 nights).

## DAY 6

## AUGUST 22, THURSDAY



Today we are heading to the spiritual center of Wales and the birthplace of its patron saint, St David. According to tradition, David was born in a lightning storm on the headland, less than a mile away from where the village's cathedral stands today. Tucked away on a river and out of sight from marauding Vikings, the cathedral became one of the most important shrines of medieval Christendom, when two pilgrimages to St. David's was equal to one to Rome. Inside we will see St. David's shrine, as well as the sarcophagus of Edmund Tudur, Henry VII's father. After lunch on your own with some time to explore the village, in the afternoon we'll walk another section of the Wales Coast Path. We'll go from St David's to St. Non's Bay, where David was born, and then to Porthclais before returning to St David on another path. Before driving back to Tenby, we might call in at Solva Woollen Mill, Pembrokeshire's oldest working woolen mill. B, L, D Overnight: Angel Hotel, Abergavenny.

## DAY 7

## AUGUST 23, FRIDAY



We get an early start today as we bid farewell to Tenby and head towards North Wales. This will be our longest drive (about 5 - 6 hours of driving) and we'll break our journey along the way. Although farmers are notoriously difficult to pin down in advance, our plan is to stretch our legs with a visit to a farm and a chance to watch sheepdogs work. We'll then continue to Snowdonia National Park. This was Wales' first National Park and home to its highest mountain and largest lake. Its rugged landscape is a complete contrast with everything we've seen previously. B, L, D Overnight: [Black Boy in Caernarfon](#) (4 nights).

## DAY 8

## AUGUST 24, SATURDAY



The village of Beddgelert is blessed: it lies on the confluence of two mountain rivers and is surrounded by wooded hills in the heart of the Snowdonia National Park. The quarrymen's cottages that make up the village are prettily decorated with window boxes, and the village often wins prizes for its joyful floral displays. We set off on the banks of the river Glaslyn. Our first stop is at 'Gelert's Grave'. Gelert was a brave legendary dog, from which the village takes its name. Wales is a land of myth and legend, and there are still a few to tell today. The river gathers speed as it narrows into a gorge, and we will negotiate the fisherman's path. We will soon turn up into a secret valley, with contrasting landscape. The mountain views will be amazing today (weather permitting): Cnicht (The Welsh Matterhorn), Snowdon, and Dinas Emrys, where legend has it the Welsh Red Dragon fought the English White Dragon and reigned supreme. Dinner is on your own tonight so you'll have time to explore the town. B, L, D Overnight: Black Boy in Caernarfon.

## DAY 9

## AUGUST 25, SUNDAY



After our hearty Scottish breakfast we drive to the magnificent seaside town of Conwy, known for its UNESCO designated medieval castles and churches and particularly for Conwy Castle. We'll have a guided tour of it, and then head to the village of Llanafairfechan for the start of our hike. On our hike we will stop for lunch at the mountain farm of Rhian Jones, known for her artistic Blacksmith work. As well as stunning coastal scenery and perhaps even views of the Isle of Man on a clear day, this upland hike over heathery moorlands offers up a wealth of archaeology, from stone circles to Iron Age forts. Hiking 10 miles, 960 feet elevation gain. Tonight we'll enjoy a home-hosted dinner with a local Welsh family in the comfort of their home. B, L, D Overnight: Black Boy in Caernarfon.

## DAY 10

## AUGUST 26, MONDAY



In just a fifteen-minute drive to Llanberis we are at the foot of Snowdon. Snowdon, or Yr Wyddfa in Welsh, is the highest mountain south of the Scottish highlands. At 3560 feet, it is not high in terms of mountains of the world, but it is still one cracker of a mountain. Shaped by glaciers, this majestic mountain is reminiscent of a starfish from above, with magnificent ridges radiating from the central pyramidal peak. We will all ride the historic Snowdon mountain railway to the summit. Once there, enjoy the views, hike the trail and learn about this beautiful mountain. Depending on both energy and weather, hiking down or riding down will both be options. Whatever option you decide on, we will all undoubtedly have earned a pint-sized mug of tea at the famous climber's cafe, Pete's Eats. Or perhaps a pint of something stronger at The Heights pub!

Tonight we share one final farewell dinner at the charming Royal Welsh Yacht Club, in the heart of Caernarfon. It's a fitting end to our time in this most amazing country. B, L, D Overnight: Black Boy in Caernarfon.

## DAY 11

## AUGUST 27, TUESDAY



After breakfast, it's unfortunately time to leave. We'll arrive first at the Bangor railway station at 9:30 and then continue on to Manchester airport, arriving approximately 11:30 am for flights or connections to other trains. Hwyl fawr! B

# ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

## GETTING THERE

Our trip starts in Cardiff, Wales. You can either fly directly to Cardiff (CWL) or to one of the London airports and then take the train to Cardiff.

If you fly into Cardiff airport, there are multiple ways to get into downtown, including bus (there is Express and regular service) or train. A shuttle bus service from the Airport to the train station is available. The journey takes approximately 10 minutes and costs 1 GBP. From there a train can take you downtown. Check this website for details: <https://www.cardiff-airport.com/to-and-from/>

You may find it more convenient to fly into a London airport and then take a bus from London Victoria Coach Station or a train from Paddington Station. Buses and trains depart for Cardiff approximately every hour. See <https://www.thetrainline.com/> for the train schedule) and <http://www.nationalexpress.com/routes/london-to-cardiff.aspx> for the bus schedule.

If you would like assistance with your airline tickets we recommend contacting our travel agency, Exito Travel. Start by submitting the form you can find here: [https://pay2.exitotravel.com/referral\\_form?affiliate\\_id=1090&client=1](https://pay2.exitotravel.com/referral_form?affiliate_id=1090&client=1). If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053. Be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company. **Please note:** If reservations are made thru participating airlines, there is no booking fee. If reservations need to be made thru non-affiliated airlines, there is a \$35 processing fee. Most major airlines are affiliated with Exito Travel. When calling, for international flights, please choose the extension that most closely corresponds to the country you will be traveling to.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

We'll be staying in locally owned inns and lodges, in double occupancy rooms with en suite bathrooms. Please note: Not all lodgings will have elevators (lifts). It is essential that you following the packing list closely, pack light and be able to handle your own luggage - including carrying up multiple stairs.

- 9/17: The Angel Hotel, Cardiff <https://www.thecairncollection.co.uk/hotels/the-angel/> +44 29 2064 9200
- 9/18, 9/19, 9/20: The Fourcroft Hotel <https://www.whisperhotelscollection.com/our-hotels/fourcroft-hotel-tenby/> Tel: +44 1834 842 886
- 9/21, 9/22: The Angel Hotel, Abergavenny <http://angelabergavenny.com/> Tel: +44 1873 857 121
- 9/23, 9/24, 9/25, 9/26: Black Boy, Caernafon <https://www.black-boy-inn.com/> Tel: +44 1286 673604

Vegetarian (and vegan) options for this trip are available but limited; if you are concerned about having enough protein during your trip, please plan to bring some plant-based protein sources such as nut butter, instant dried hummus, or high-protein energy bars. If you cannot eat gluten or if you have other dietary restrictions, you will need to bring some supplemental food with you. Please call the office so we can help you plan.

## WEATHER

August is typically a beautiful month for hiking in Wales, with average high temperatures in the upper 60s/low 70s and lows in the lower 50s. Rainfall/precipitation during the time you are there is lower than the rest of the year but, like everywhere in the UK, rain is always a possibility.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND TRIP CANCELLATION/TRIP INTERRUPTION INSURANCE, WHICH COVERS YOUR COST IF YOU NEED TO CANCEL OR INTERRUPT YOUR TRIP for medical reasons, trip delay, lost baggage, and other unforeseen emergencies. Adventures in Good Company will send you information about travel insurance with your registration information, or you may purchase coverage through your own insurance company. In order to avoid disappointment and expense in the event that you must cancel your trip we strongly urge you to purchase some type of insurance coverage. You can also sign up for it online at [Travelex Insurance](#). To get the best rates, use 20-0016 as your location number on the Get A Quote page.



# PACKING LIST

## Footwear

- 1 pair of lightweight hiking boots: mid-height or above the ankle and must be waterproof.
- 1 pair comfortable shoes for general use
- 2 – 3 pairs of hiking socks (wool or synthetic equivalent: Smartwool, Thorlo, Darn Tough)

## CLOTHING

- 2-3 pair of long pants for hiking – zip-offs work well.
- 1 pair of shorts (optional, if you have zip offs you're all set)
- 1 lightweight long-sleeved shirt for sun/bug protection - button up front is the best
- 2 – 3 synthetic T-shirts or short-sleeved shirts
- 1 pair lightweight long underwear – top and bottoms: silk, wool or synthetic equivalent (Capilene, Smartwool, MTS, or polypropylene)
- 1 medium-weight top layer: wool shirt/pullover or synthetic equivalent. A lightweight fleece pullover or a fleece vest works well for this layer as well
- 1 fleece jacket or wool sweater
- 1 rain parka with hood and rain pants: coated nylon or a **waterproof**/breathable fabric like Gore-tex. Water resistant rainwear and plastic ponchos are not adequate.
- Underwear/nightwear
- 1 pair wool, Capilene, or Polartec gloves
- 1 warm/lightweight wool or fleece hat
- 1 buff
- 1 – 2 bandanas
- 1 wide-brimmed, baseball style hat or visor for protection from the sun/rain
- Bathing suit (for a dip in the ocean; also there will be swimming pools at a couple of hotels)
- 1 – 2 changes of casual clothes to wear at end of day

## EQUIPMENT/ESSENTIALS

- Passport and copy of your passport**
- 1 daypack (see notes on packing list for recommended capacity)
- 1 pack cover
- 1 pair Trekking poles (strongly recommended)
- Capacity to carry 2 liters of water (Please see Notes on Packing List)
- Sunglasses (100% UV protection) with case and retention strap
- Wristwatch/travel alarm clock
- Ear plugs (for a good night's sleep!)

## TOILETRIES (small everything)

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, hand sanitizer, shampoo, contact lens paraphernalia, sanitary supplies
- Sunscreen and lip protection with sunblock of at least SPF 15
- Personal first aid/patch kit - Band-Aids, 1 safety pin, moleskin, Compeed (or blister bandages), ibuprofen, any personal medications

**Please note: Individuals who have had or have the potential for a severe allergic reaction to insect stings, specific foods or medications must bring an epi-pen.** Please consult your physician and tell your guide.

## OPTIONAL (personal preference, not required)

- Camera (extra battery) and film/memory card
- Book, notebook, journal, pencil/pen
- Seat pad to sit on for picnic lunches
- Electric converter/adaptor (Type G)
- 10 ft. light cord and 4-6 clothespins, detergent
- Wash cloth (European hotels do not supply wash cloths)
- Your favorite snack (snacks will also be provided)

## NOTES ON PACKING

Adventures in Good Company's packing list covers everything you need to assure your safety and comfort. You may not use everything you bring; however, you need to come prepared for all possible weather conditions. At the same time, you must be able to carry your own luggage, sometimes up and down stairs.

**Daypacks:** Your daypack should be large enough to hold the following items: 1 – 2 liters of water, rain gear, lunch/snacks (for the day), sun screen, warm layer (fleece pullover or vest), personal first aid kit, lightweight gloves, warm hat and personal items such as camera, etc. We recommend a daypack with a capacity of between 24 – 30 Liters (1500 and 1800 cubic inches) with a hip belt, padded shoulder straps, and 'lifters'. Line your daypack with a durable plastic bag to keep your belongings dry, and/or have an elasticized pack cover that fits snugly over it. Fanny-packs and hydration packs are not large enough to hold all of the items you will need for the day. **IMPORTANT: Before you leave home check to be sure that it is comfortable to wear all day and has sufficient space for all of your items.**

**Footwear:** Well-fitting, sturdy boots or trail shoes are very important to your safety and enjoyment. If you plan to buy new boots, break them in by wearing them around town and taking some short hikes *before* your trip. For general hiking, lightweight or midweight cordura or leather boots with a Vibram sole work well. If you have weak ankles or are recovering from an ankle injury, get boots that come above the ankle— you'll find that this will give you more support in uneven or slippery terrain. Remember to waterproof your boots before the trip. Even boots billed as 'waterproof' need to be treated with a waterproofing product.

**Clothing:** The clothing listed on the packing list has been chosen for your specific trip conditions and for its versatility for layering. NO COTTON for your active wear! It should all be made from synthetic/synthetic blends, down/down blends or wool/wool blends. Layering is the most practical and efficient method of insulating the body. Several layers of varied weight materials provide better insulation than one thick Layer of clothing. Also, adding or subtracting layers allows you to adjust to the temperature at your particular level of activity.

**Rain Gear:** You will need a parka or jacket made of a coated nylon or a waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex, HellyTech, Membrane, H2No, or Ultrex. **Be sure it keeps water out.** Before making this important purchase, be sure that it fits you properly. It should be large enough to fit over all your layers. In particular, the hood needs to be effective. It should shield your face from the rain and turn with your head. Movement of your arms must not interfere with the hood. Put on your daypack; can you still raise your arms? Your wind/rain pants should be comfortable, allow enough room for your layers, and permit free movement of your legs (for example, can you crouch comfortably?). Partial or full-length leg zippers are useful for easily putting your pants on over your boots. An inexpensive plastic poncho will both leak and tear easily and is not recommended.

**Hydration:** Being able to easily access your water without assistance, so that you can drink frequently, is important to your safety and enjoyment. One method is to have a water bottle attached to your waist strap. Another option is to use a hydration system such as CamelBak, Platypus, and MSR bladder bags, which are collapsible water bags with a hose attachment that you drink from. The bags fit inside or outside your pack with the hose positioned over your shoulder so that you can access your water as you hike. Bladder bags can hold 1 - 3 liters of water.

**Personal First Aid Kit:** Bring a small first aid kit with familiar medicine and first aid supplies you might need. Recommendations include the following: blister or foot remedies like moleskin, Compeed, blister bandages, or similar, a small roll of duct tape (always useful!), remedies for respiratory ailments, stomach ailments, sore muscles or joints. The guides will have a first aid kit but having what you know works well for you is a good idea.

**Trekking Poles:** Trekking poles are highly recommended for this trip. Trekking poles contribute to your safety by improving your balance and stability, and to your health by saving stress on your hips and knees. If you are not familiar with trekking poles, read this blog post that addresses the most commonly asked questions: <http://blog.adventuresingoodcompany.com/blog-women-travel/bid/154714/Trekking-poles-for-hiking-trips-the-4-most-common-questions> .