



The Lake District & Cumbria

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Best Places to Eat

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Best Places to Stay

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Why Go?

For knockout natural splendour, nowhere in England can compare to Cumbria. This green, grand, glorious county is a place of nonstop superlatives – home to the nation's longest lake, smallest church, steepest road, highest town and tallest peak. At the heart of the county is the breathtaking Lake District, one of England's oldest and best-loved national parks, still considered by many to be the spiritual heartland of English hiking.

But there is so much more to this region than just fell-walking and fine views. There's a wealth of historic pubs, literary landmarks, tumbledown castles and stately homes to enjoy, and the little-explored coastline is ideal if you're looking to escape the crowds. And whether it's cruising across a lake at twilight or surveying the scene from the top of a cloud-capped fell, one thing's for certain – this is one corner of England that definitely knows how to inspire.

When to Go

Cumbria's largest mountain festival is held in Keswick in mid-May, followed by the town's lively Beer Festival in June. The Kendal Calling Music festival kicks into action at Lowther Park in late July, while Grasmere's annual sports day takes place on the August Bank Holiday.

In November, the world's greatest liars congregate on Santon Bridge for their annual fibbing contest. Crowds can be a problem at Easter and in July and August, so try to visit in late spring or early autumn when the weather is also usually at its most settled.

The Lake District & Cumbria Highlights

- 1 Conquer the top of England's highest mountain, **Scafell Pike** (p697)
- 2 Take a cruise in an antique steam launch on **Coniston Water** (p693)
- 3 Wander round William Wordsworth's homes at **Dove Cottage** (p688) and **Rydal Mount** (p688)
- 4 Feel the whiff of wildness around the dramatic valley of **Wasdale** (p697)
- 5 Cycle round the wooded trails of **Grizedale Forest** (p692)
- 6 Tackle the iconic fell-tops around **Great Langdale** (p696)
- 7 Delve the depths of the slate mines around **Honister Pass** (p705)
- 8 Catch the miniature steam trains of **La'al Ratty** (p713) into Eskdale

