



The Lake District & Cumbria

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Why Go?

For natural splendour, nowhere in England compares 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's so much more to this region than just fell (mountain) walking and fine views. There's a wealth of historic pubs, literary landmarks, tumbledown castles and stately homes to explore, and the little-explored coastline is ideal if you're looking to escape the crowds. 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.

Best Places to Eat

- » L'Enclume (p605)
- » Drunken Duck (p590)
- » Punch Bowl Inn (p602)
- » Mason's Arms (p582)
- » Yanwath Gate Inn (p608)

Best Places to Stay

- » The Boundary (p581)
- » Wasdale Head Inn (p594)
- » Moss Grove Organic (p588)
- » Old Dungeon Ghyll (p593)
- » Eltermere Inn (p593)

When to Go

Cumbria's largest mountain festival is held in Keswick in mid-May, while the Beer Festival in June welcomes ale aficionados from across the globe. Ambleside's traditional sports day on the last Saturday in July features events such as hound trailing and Cumbrian wrestling; 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.

The Lake District & Cumbria Highlights

- 1 Conquering the top of England's highest mountain, **Scafell Pike** (p594)
- 2 Taking a cruise in an antique steam launch on **Coniston Water** (p591)
- 3 Wandering round William Wordsworth's homes at **Dove Cottage** and **Rydal Mount** (p587)
- 4 Feeling the whiff of wildness around the dramatic valley of **Wasdale** (p594)
- 5 Cycling round the wooded trails of **Grizedale Forest** (p590)
- 6 Tackling the iconic fell-tops around **Great Langdale** (p593)
- 7 Delving the depths of the slate mines around **Honister Pass** (p600)
- 8 Catching the miniature steam trains of **La'al Ratty** (p605) into Eskdale

