ADS VENTURES
WALKING HOLIDAYS & SHORT BREAKS

CHRISTMAS IN HARROGATE

Trip notes

Christmas in Harrogate and the Yorkshire Dales

Celebrate Christmas in style at the historic 4* Old Swan Hotel in Harrogate with beautiful walks in the Yorkshire Dales.

- 4 nights half-board accommodation in the beautiful and historic Old Swan Hotel in Harrogate with walks on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.
- Departure date: December 23rd, 2026.
- Cost: £995

- **No single room supplement**
- Grade

Harrogate is made for Christmas with its boutique shops, Winter Gardens, Turkish baths and Bettys tea rooms. This, coupled with its location on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales offering some of the best walking in the country, makes it a truly special location in which to spend Christmas. For our walks we use the beautiful Nidderdale Way to explore this lovely area and staying in the luxurious 4 star Old Swan Hotel with its historic connections, including its role in Agatha Christie's 1926 disappearance, adds a degree of luxury and uniqueness to this break. Christmas activities will include a choir performance on Christmas Eve and evening entertainment on Christmas Day and Boxing Day.
So why not come and join us and celebrate Christmas 2026 in real style?

Holiday highlights

- Discover Nidderdale, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, one of the quieter Yorkshire Dales.
- Walk sections of the Nidderdale Way around Pateley Bridge, Brimham Rocks and Ripley Castle.
- On Christmas Day walk the Harrogate Ringway out to RHS Harlow Carr, returning in time for a pre-Christmas lunch drink in gas-lit Hales Bar.
- Explore the iconic weather sculpted Brimham Rocks; 320-million-year-old Millstone Grit rock formations located on the heather moorland of Nidderdale.
- Stay in the 4* luxurious and historic Old Swan Hotel in the Victorian Spa town of Harrogate.

Accommodation

Grand, elegant, and full of character, the Old Swan is Harrogate’s most iconic Victorian retreat, where grand period features meet modern comforts in the heart of a historic spa town. Famous for its glass-ceilinged Wedgwood Restaurant and the cosy Swan Lounge, this beautiful hotel has been part of Harrogate life for nearly 200 years and even played a part in Agatha Christie’s real-life mystery when she famously disappeared here in 1926.
All rooms are comfortable and ensuite and have tea and coffee making facilities. Meals are taken in the hotel’s famous glass-ceilinged Wedgewood Restaurant.

Located just a short stroll from Harrogate town centre, with its boutique shops, Turkish Baths, tea-rooms, including Bettys, and on the doorstep of Nidderdale, one of the quieter of the Yorkshire Dales, The Old Swan is the perfect base for a luxurious and relaxing Christmas.
The nearest pub to the hotel is actually gas-lit. Do you get more Christmassy than that?

Single supplements and upgrades

No single supplement, upgrades to a double room for sole use are available for a cost of £300

Included

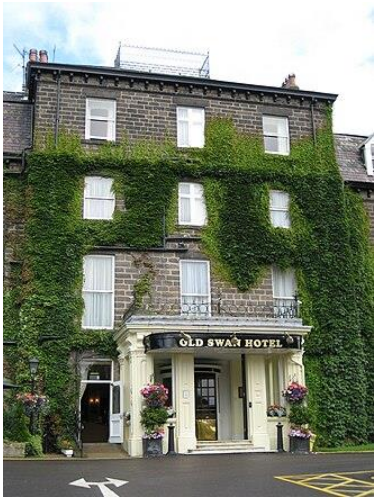
- Half-board accommodation in a comfortable single en-suite room in the Old Swan at Harrogate.
- Breakfast each morning and a three-course evening meal each evening.
- Traditional Christmas Day Lunch served in the glass-ceilinged Wedgewood Restaurant.
- Walks on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day with a qualified and professional leader.
- Transport to the walk on Christmas Eve -we take the bus to Ripley. On Christmas Day itself we walk from the hotel.

Not included

- Lunches on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day. These can be ordered from the hotel or bought locally.
- Incidental expenses such as drinks.
- Transport to Boxing Day's walk. We will drive to and park at Brimham Rocks -please bring your National Trust membership card if you have one.

Detailed Itinerary

The following is the proposed itinerary. However, please bear in mind that in the event of local conditions changing, for example due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances, it may be necessary to change the itinerary.



Wednesday December 23rd

Arrive at The Old Swan in Harrogate and check into your room. Meet at 7pm for a short briefing about the week ahead before our three-course dinner is served in the hotel's restaurant.

Christmas Eve: The Nidderdale Way and Ripley Castle

Today we mainly use the Nidderdale Way to explore the area of Nidderdale just to the North of Harrogate. We take the bus to the small village of Ripley -home of Ripley Castle and from here follow the Nidderdale Way north to Cayton before turning and climbing to Hill Top for splendid views back down over our route. Descending, we pass through the pretty villages of Burnt Yates and Hampsthwaite before continuing to Ripley.

14.5 km (9 miles) ascent/descent 240 m
Meals included: breakfast and dinner

Christmas Day: Harlow Hill

A shorter walk on Christmas Day to work up an appetite for Christmas lunch. Walking from the hotel, we head out on the Dales Way Harrogate link path through Valley Gardens and up onto Harlow Hill for lovely views back over the town. We pass by the RHS gardens at Harlow Carr before descending through the woodland of Birk Crag back to the hotel.

8 km (5 miles) ascent/descent 100 m
Meals included: breakfast, Christmas lunch and dinner.

Boxing Day: Pateley Bridge and Brimham rocks

Today we return to and complete a further section of the Nidderdale Way. We first drive to the National Trust owned Brimham rocks and park there -please bring your NT membership card if you have one. We pick up the Way as it winds through the iconic weather sculpted Brimham Rocks and then climb up onto Brimham Moor for a delightful elevated route, offering wonderful views over Nidderdale as we head down towards Pateley Bridge. Here we drop down to the river Nidd, and follow its course back to Brimham Rocks and our cars.

15 km (9.5 miles) ascent/descent 310 m
Meals included: breakfast and dinner

Sunday December 27th: Farewells until next time!

After a good breakfast we say goodbye, until next time.
Meal included: breakfast

Kit list

For walking each day:

- Good walking boots or shoes
- Waterproof jacket and trousers
- Lightweight, quick drying trousers
- Base layer
- Mid-layer such as a fleece jacket and an additional 'spare' layer depending on the forecast
- Walking socks
- Warm hat and gloves
- Day sack (25 litre capacity is a good size) to comfortably carry your kit, lunch and water
- Dry bag or rucksack cover to keep the contents of your daypack dry
- Water bottle

- Basic first aid kit (plasters, blister treatment, antiseptic etc)
- Some snacks to keep you going
- Walking/trekking poles (if you use them)

Maps: OS Explorer maps 289 and 298

Group size

This guided holiday will have a maximum group size of 14.

Personal expenditure

All breakfasts, evening meals and Christmas Day lunch are included in the holiday cost. You will need enough money to cover lunches and incidental expenses such as drinks.

Any other queries, please get in touch with me.