



Mountains of Mourne

Duration: 5 nights

Goat guide: 3 goats

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About this trip

A wonderful start to summer walking in and around the Mourne Mountains and an Area of Outstanding Beauty. This is a wonderful chance to get to know Northern Ireland and all that this beautiful area has to offer. Be assured we walk at a steady pace with lots of rest to admire the views. You can also take time out to relax at your lovely hotel in Newcastle and explore this traditional Irish coastal town.

A wonderful start to summer walking high in the Mourne Mountains and Area of Outstanding Beauty in Ireland. A chance to get away from it all. The Mourne Mountains are in County Down, Northern Ireland 31 miles south of Belfast and offer a range of beautiful walks.

'Why are these Mourne mountains so magical'

Everyone knows, or has heard of, the tallest mountains in England, Scotland and Wales, but do you now the tallest in Northern Ireland? It's the beautifully named Slieve Donard at 853m above sea level and a wonderful hike.

Slieve Donard is described as 'doable for most people with a basic level of fitness'. It's about 2.5 hours walk from Newcastle, although the path can be steep in parts, it's not too technical or difficult.

There is an incredible wall (called the Mourne Wall) that crosses 15 of the summits, and measures nearly 20 miles in length.

There is a song about the area called 'The Mountains of Mourne' written in 1896, and has been recorded by many artists, even Don Mclean.

We also love to share the famous Irish hospitality? It's stated 'Irish hospitality is a thing of legends. Ireland is a land of a thousand welcomes and is ingrained in history and culture. From early Irish Law or the Brehon Laws it's expected that each Irish person is to offer a 'stranger' to the degree they are able to, hospitality. Any person unwilling to provide a meal, drink, bed and company to the stranger risked a fine or shame'

Walking Women are so pleased to offer the magical Mourne mountains trip, to explore not only the beautiful area but some of the famous Irish hospitality.

Trip Overview

Guide: Debbie Walker

Walking Grade: 3 Goats expect 7 to 14m walks with some ascents/descents of 900m+ Always steady pace and doable with a good level of fitness. There will be options for rest days to relax at the hotel or explore the lovely coastal town of Newcastle where you are based.

Base: Avoca Hotel, Newcastle, County Down. An elegant & cosy hotel located at the foot of the Mourne, and a stones throw from the Irish Sea. Right opposite the hotel is the beach and for any swimmers there is the sea and a swimming pool in the town. There are restaurants and cafes and the home made ice cream is delicious!

Nearest airport is George Best Belfast City Airport 33 miles from the hotel. We will arrange a transfer from Belfast City Airport and the port and train station in Belfast. Please arrive between 15.00 and 16.00 on Monday June 17th.

Departures will be afternoon of Saturday June 22nd so please arrange travel for after 15.00

Holiday Includes

- Bed and Breakfast
- 4 x Packed lunches on walking days
- Evening Meal together at the hotel on 4 nights. One night is to eat together in the local town (not included)
- Belfast transfer and return
- Expert guiding
- Any local transport required for walks

Not included:

- Travel to Belfast (we can advise on routes)
- Evening Meal on one night
- Drinks

Itinerary

This is subject to change as it will depend on the weather and any local restrictions on paths. Your guide will guide you and brief you each day. There will be an opportunity to take rest time and be flexible about the walks depending on the group and the weather.

Day 1: Pick up in Belfast between 15.00 and 16.00

Arrival and settle in to the Avoca Hotel. Check in from 3pm. There will be time for an orientation walk of Newcastle before your evening meal together at the hotel.

Day 2: 11km/ 7.1 miles with ascent 849m

We will be walking to the highest point in Northern Ireland, Slieve Donard – meaning mountain of St Donairt, via the Glen River path, a beautiful path that winds itself through Donard Forest, (Subject to fitness levels, we may go onto climb Chimney Rock Mountain (height 656m)

Day 3: 15km /9.24 miles with ascent of 1060m

A long walk today as we cover part of the High Mourne's Epic Circuit. A fantastic loop with stunning views over the mountains. We start on foot from our hotel in Newcastle and we walk to join the Mourne Wall, and climb Slieve Commedagh – meaning mountain of watching/look out, we then follow the ridge to Slievanaglogh, then we drop down to join the Brandy pad, an old smugglers path, and wind our way back to the foot of Slieve Donard and return to Newcastle via the Donard forest.

Day 4: The Silent Valley – 17km/13.9 miles with ascent of 790m

We take transport to the silent valley mountain park, and walk alongside the Mourne wall, with fantastic views of the Silent valley reservoir and Ben Crom reservoir, to steadily climb back up to join the Brandy Pad and the foot of Slieve Donard. We return to our accommodation via the Donard forest.

Day 5: there will be options depending how everyone is after 4 days hiking

We walk the Tollymore Forest park, the area where many scenes of Game of Thrones was filmed. We will follow both the Mourne way and the Ulster way at times.

We may do a longer stretch of 14 km/ 9 miles with ascent of 887m to visit the Bloody Bridge and walk along the Bloody Bridge River. There is an option to climb the Rocky Mountain (525m ascent)

Day 6: Departure Day

Breakfast and a short local walk in the Donard Forest before transfer back to Belfast .



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