

eco escapes



ITINERARY 12

FIELDS, FELS AND FOOD

Stretching from the high fells of the Bleasdale Horseshoe to the sharply etched ridge of Longridge Fell, the southwestern fringe of the Forest of Bowland combines amazing striking scenery with rich farmland and superb local produce.

This largely rural area is a walkers and cyclists' paradise, criss-crossed with some outstanding circular walks and quiet country lanes to cruise along on two wheels. Why not combine an active day exploring the gorgeous little villages by bike with regular pitstops at the welcoming country cafes in this mouth-watering corner of Bowland.



DAY 1 Walk Nicky Nook 5 miles
DAY 2 Ride Grizedale and Bleasdale 27 miles



DAY 1: BIG VIEWS ON FOOT

The rolling hills that rise behind Lancashire's coastal plain offer splendid views over Morecambe Bay and beyond to the Lakeland fells. On a clear day, the views stretch from the mountains of Snowdonia away to the southwest and across to the Isle of Man to the northwest.

The most expansive views are to be had from the main ridge of the Bleasdale Fells which keen fellwalkers can climb via Parlick Pike above the pretty village of Chipping, but for a less demanding walk, we recommend heading to Scorton and heading up the popular local summit of Nicky Nook.

This varied walk weaves its way through a pretty wooded valley up onto the foothills of the Bleasdale Fells, passing reservoirs where waders and wildfowl often gather, before returning through the attractive gardens of Wyresdale Park.

www.forestofbowland.com/walking#47400852

Natural Highlights

Look out for the rare whimbrel roosting at Barnacre Reservoir near Oakenclough. These close relatives of the curlew are pretty scarce in the UK, but there is a small population at Barnacre, where these elegant waders fly in to roost during the breeding season in April and May. Good views from the public footpath to the south of the reservoirs.

Lunch

After a bracing walk, you have every excuse to indulge in a few sweet or savoury treats at one of the locale's noted cafes or farm shops. The Barn at Scorton is an extremely popular destination with local cyclists in search of a good coffee and something sticky and sweet, while The Apple Store at Wyresdale Park is a must-visit destination for any fan of traditional English Afternoon Tea.

Afternoon

The verdant pastureland along the western boundary of the Forest of Bowland is dairy country, where hundreds of happy cows happily munch their way through tonnes of fresh grass.

Much of the high-quality milk they produce is turned into cheese by a handful of local artisan cheesemakers. Lancashire Cheese is famous throughout Britain for its astringent tang and characteristic crumbliness and Mrs Kirkham's, near Goosnargh, and Dewlay, on the edge of Garstang, are two of the biggest producers of this subtle local cheese. Both Mrs Kirkham's and Dewlay have farm shops which are open to the public. Or why not book a Bowland and Bay Artisan Foodie adventure with a brilliant local guide? <https://bowlandandbay.co.uk/>

EXPLORE MORE

Go Wild In Bowland

[Bowland Wild Boar Park](#) is one of the most popular visitor attractions in the area – hosting thousands of visitors every year. This out of the way farm and wildlife park is especially popular with families and schoolchildren, who love getting so close to the farm animals and exploring nature on one of the Park's wildlife walks.

Linger Longer

There's plenty more to see and do in the area to extend your break a while. The entire Forest of Bowland AONB is criss-crossed with footpaths and cycle trails. Picturesque villages like Slaidburn, Chipping, Waddington and Wray are within just an hour or so in the saddle, while the towns of Clitheroe and Bentham have more shops and entertainment to offer and are linked with good onward public transport connections. [Click here for more ideas and itineraries.](#)

DAY 2: TWO WHEELED TOURING

The quiet roads and mountain trails make this part of Bowland a paradise for cyclists. Both on and off-road routes all feature undulating terrain and some challenging climbs. Scorton is the start point for our recommended route – an undulating 27-mile ride through the foothills of the Bleasdale Fells. Navigating the maze of quiet country lanes via the hamlets of Oakenclough and Bleasdale, this route winds up in the pretty farming village of Chipping, where there are ample opportunities for refreshments before heading back to Scorton via Beacon Fell and the picturesque Brock Valley.

PM: Bleasdale Circle

Nestling below the lofty horseshoe escarpment of the Bleasdale Fells, this scheduled ancient monument is worth a visit – if only for the atmospheric of this evocative place, which clearly held some unknowable significance for the Bronze Age tribes who constructed it. There's little to see on the ground, but interpretation boards explain how it may have looked 4000 years ago. Limited parking available at the end of the school drive then walk ¾ mile up the footpath to Vicarage Farm.

www.forestofbowland.com/walking#64897624

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT OPTIONS

The 41 and 42 bus service runs every 20 minutes between Lancaster and Preston, calling in at Scorton en route. Tickets and timetables: www.stagecoachbus.com

Scorton is a level 9-mile ride from Lancaster on National Cycle Route 6.



DISCOVER

1 Bowland Wild Boar Park

Nestling beside the River Hodder in a remote valley beneath the rugged ridgeline of the Bleasdale Fells, Bowland Wild Boar Park provides accommodation and a host of fun activities for the whole family.

discoverbowland.uk/Business/bowland-wild-boar-park/

2 Goosnargh Gin

Forage for wild ingredients and make a batch of your very own artisan gin at the micro distillery featured on BBC TV's 'Hairy Bikers'

discoverbowland.uk/Business/goosnargh-gin/

3 Wild Fox Gin

Founded in 2019, Wild Fox distillery has gone from strength to strength, winning the title of best rural drink business in the 2021 Rural Business Awards.

discoverbowland.uk/Business/wild-fox-distillery/

4 Mrs Kirkham's Lancashire Cheese Shop

Visit one of Lancashire's best-loved family cheese-makers and pick up local delicacies at Mrs Kirkham's farm shop.

www.mrskirkhamscheese.co.uk/farm-shop.php

5 Beacon Fell

6 Bleasdale Circle



EAT

7 The Barn at Scorton

A popular café and restaurant in the heart of the pretty village of Scorton.

www.plantsandgifts.co.uk/

8 The Applestore Café

Distinctive café located on the gorgeous Wyresdale Park estate above Scorton – afternoon teas a speciality.

wyresdalepark.co.uk/applestore-cafe-scorton

9 The Derby Arms

Traditional country inn with rooms on the edge of the bustling town of Longridge – gateway to the western fringe of the Forest of Bowland

www.derbyarmslongridge.co.uk/

10 Little Town Farm Shop

A charming rural café on a working farm nestling under the ridge of Longridge Fell – perfect starting point for country walks followed by a hearty lunch.

www.littletownfarmshop.co.uk/



STAY

11 Gibbon Bridge

A compact country house hotel on the outskirts of the pretty village of Chipping. Luxury accommodation in a beautiful rural location.

gibbon-bridge.co.uk/

12 The Shippon

A comfortable converted farm outbuilding on the edge of Longridge with stunning views over the surrounding countryside.

bowlandbreaks.co.uk/properties/the-shippon-luxury-holiday-let/

13 The Priory

Upmarket boutique B&B in a historic C17th priory in the pretty village of Scorton – a perfect base for exploring the western fringes of the Forest of Bowland AONB.

www.theprioryscorton.co.uk/

1 Bowland Wild Boar Park

14 Brickhouse Touring Caravan

15 Orchard Glamping

A small site located on a beautiful patch of land, part of the Richardson's family farm (featured on Four In A Bed (Channel 4 programme) 2023).

discoverbowland.uk/Business/orchard-glamping/

16 The Garden Cottage

Offers home from home comfort with all you would need to enjoy a getaway longer break with your pets.

discoverbowland.uk/Business/the-garden-cottage/