

National Three Lakes Challenge

Open Water Swim the Highest Lake/Loch/Llyn in
England, Wales and Scotland in 24hrs!

Information Pack

Safety Cover Provided by;

Mark Lewis Adventures

www.marklewis.co



Mark Lewis Adventures T&C for Safety Cover

1. The booking organisation retains ownership of the event
2. Mark Lewis Adventures does not get involved with any fundraising or collection of monies from participants.
3. Mark Lewis Adventures provides fully insured and qualified Mountain leaders to lead you on each mountain.
4. Mark Lewis Adventures has the right to remove anyone from the event, or cancel the event at any time on the basis of safety.

Costs £430 per participant, maximum of 10 participants – door to door service.

Included;

- Minibus transport from your location to Cairngorm, between the lakes, and back to your location
- Accommodation on the first night in shared bunkhouse facilities in Aviemore
- Mountain Leaders to guide you
- Non-walking drivers to transport you between peaks
- Non-walking medic to assist between peaks
- Water top-ups throughout
- Challenge registration
- Certificates of achievement

Not Included;

- Equipment
- Food and Drinks (other than Water)
- Additional Accommodation

National Three Lakes Challenge

The National Three Lakes Challenge involves walking to the three highest bodies of water in Scotland, England and Wales, often within 24 hours, but more realistically done, especially in winter, in 48hrs with an overnight camp near Helvellyn – depending on the weather, either tents or in bunkhouse accommodation.

The total walking distance is 23 miles (37km) and the total ascent is 3064 metres (10,052ft). The total driving distance is 462 miles.

The three water bodies are:

In the UK the highest lake is Loch Coire an Lochain, a remote freshwater loch set deep within the central Cairngorms plateau, in the Cairngorms National Park, located in the eastern Highlands of Scotland. It is the highest water body of its size in the UK, the surface being 997 metres above sea level. This is a round trip of 14km from the nearest road.

The highest lake in England is Red Tarn, a small lake in the eastern region of the English Lake District, in the county of Cumbria. It is high up on the eastern flank of Helvellyn, beneath Striding Edge and Catstye Cam. Red Tarn was formed when the glacier that carved out the eastern side of Helvellyn had melted. This lake is located at 718 metres above sea level. This is a round trip of 6km from the nearest road.

In Wales, Llyn Llyffant is the highest lake in Wales, its name translates into English as “frog lake”. It lies at an elevation of approximately 815m above sea level. It is, even by Welsh standards, tiny. This is a round trip of 8km from the nearest road.

We run this as a summer and a winter challenge, although in winter it will be made tougher due to the cold, the ice and snow which may be present.

Kit & fitness requirements: this event requires walking boots, rather than trail shoes, and a fair level of fitness. The pace is quite demanding to achieve the 24hr window.

Typical Itinerary

Day 1: 7am – Leave your location.

Day 1: 2pm – Pick up any people from Edinburgh Airport (who may wish to make their own travel arrangements).

Day 1: 6pm – Arrive at Aviemore. Overnight in a local Bunkhouse.

Day 2: 6am - Safety briefing before beginning the Challenge, and hike to the first lake, Loch Coire an Lochain in the Cairngorm.

Day 2: 11am - Complete Loch Coire an Lochain, to be driven on to Glenridding in the Lake District.

Day 1: 5pm - Arrive at Glenridding, dropped at the YHA and begin ascent to Red Tarn

Day 1: 10pm - Complete Red Tarn and overnight if doing it in two days. drive on to Snowdon

Day 2: 2am - Arrive at Snowdonia and begin ascent of Carnedd Llewellyn to Llyn Llynfant.

Day 2: 5am - Complete descent from Llyn Llynfant and finish the challenge!

Please note that while we will aim for the above schedule, this can be affected by weather, traffic and other elements, which may cause delays.

Organisational Guidelines

1. Walking Team Size

We recommend organising a group of between ten and twenty.

2. Transport Recommendations

Transport is included from a mutually agreed central location back to the same location.

3. Drivers

We will be providing dedicated drivers, who won't be walking with you, as your support and medics, this is really important to ensure your safety when travelling between the mountains.

4. Food

Food is worth planning well. Ideally you don't want to eat junk food as it's not going to give you as much long lasting energy as some healthy snacks. Go for wholegrain and wholemeal foods, as these carbohydrates provide energy for longer. Bring whatever food and drinks you require with you as there are no shop on the hills. We will stop at service stations en-route where you will be able to refill your supplies as required.

FAQ

1. When do I sleep?

We have about two sections where we are travelling for approx. Six and four hours to rest and sleep during the early hours, in the minibus while travelling between the peaks.

2. Do I need Insurance?

We recommend that you take out travel insurance as you might for an overseas trip, to protect against missed travel connections and lost belongings.

3. Where do we start?

At a mutually agreed location

4. Where do we finish?

At a mutually agreed location

5. Is accommodation provided during the event?

Yes – We provide 1 nights accommodation on the first night in Fort William. It is a shared room in a bunkhouse. You will require a sleeping bag to stay here. Food is not included.

6. Is there any food and drink provided during the event?

No food is provided during the event.

We suggest you bring food that includes things like sandwiches, flapjacks, pork pies and bananas. Water top-ups are available from taps each time we return to the vehicles. You may want to bring your preferred snacks to carry with you during the climbs (Kendell mint cake and sweets recommended).

Avoid fizzy drinks, energy drinks and caffeinated drinks!

See our food / nutrition section at the end of the document.

7. Can I leave bags in the vehicle whilst I climb the mountains?

Yes, you're welcome to bring an overnight bag which we will store for you. Spare kit not required on the mountains can be stored in the minibus.

8. How hard is the Three Lakes Challenge?

It's pretty hard, although the experience tends to vary greatly between different people. Sleep deprivation plays a part here, affecting some people more than others, particularly with awkward sleeping conditions. With an appropriate fitness plan beforehand, it will be much easier.

Kit List for the Three Lakes Challenge events

In order to be adequately prepared for the National Three Lakes Challenge, it is recommended that you take the following equipment. Some of this equipment is mandatory - please refer to the event kit list. We recommend that everyone in the group should have a copy of the walking maps, and know how to use the maps with a compass.

Please note that mandatory items - unsuitable footwear is our most common kit issue.

We will conduct a kit check prior to the start of the event. If a participant does not have the correct mandatory kit, they will not be allowed to participate.

Mandatory

- Walking boots (with ankle support, not trail shoes or trainers)
- Headtorch & spare batteries
- Waterproof & windproof jacket and trousers
- Hiking socks (wearing a single pair recommended, rather than using a liner sock)
- Backpack (approx. 20-40 litre size)
- Water container (2 litres minimum to be carried on each ascent)
- Gloves & Hat (covering ears)
- Warm dry robe or equivalent for post swims.

To carry with you

- Hill snacks
- Backpack rain-cover
- Spare socks
- Blister plasters
- Sunglasses & sun-cream
- Recommended: walking poles
- Recommended: Hill maps - Cairngorms, Snowdonia and Helvellyn.
- Recommended: Compass

Kit to wear

- Walking trousers (lightweight hiking trousers, not jeans or tracksuit trousers)
- Sports top (not cotton)
- Recommended: Thermals

Keep in the car

- Food (main supplies, & carry some snacks)
- Changes of clothes
- 4 litres of water per person
- Light shoes / sandals
- Sleeping bag / blanket

Safety Equipment

The following equipment will be carried by all of the safety leaders;

- Hill maps (<https://shop.threepeakschallenge.uk/products/os-national-three-peaks-challenge-maps>)
- Compass
- GPS
- Emergency shelter
- Safety blanket
- First aid kit

Emergencies

- Fire, Police, Ambulance, Coastguard, Mountain Rescue:
- Dial 999 and ask for the appropriate service.

National Three Lakes Challenge Driving Route

The National Three Lakes Challenge driving route is 462 miles long, and takes around ten hours in total, in good traffic - the first section from Cairngorm to Glenridding is five-and-a-half hours, and the second section from Glenridding to Carneddau takes around four-and-a-half hours.

You will be driven between the peaks by non-walking drivers.

Three Lakes Challenge postcodes for your information.

Postcodes for the popular start locations for each mountain are:

- Cairngorm (Coire Cas Car Park) — PH22 1RB
- Hellvellyn (Glenridding YHA) — CA11 0QR
- Carnedd Llewellyn (Melynlllyn Quarry Road) — LL32 8SH

Loch Coire an Lochain

- Distance: 7 miles - 14 Km (there & back)
- Ascent: 2,372 feet - 723 metres
- Time: About 4 to 5 hours (there & back)
- Grade: Hard Strenuous Walk
- Start/Finish: Coire Cas Car Park in the Cairngorm Ski centre. (NH989061)
- Parking: At Cairngorm Ski Centre – maybe a charge
- Post Code: PH22 1RB
- Relevant Map: OS Explorer Map OL57



Red Tarn

- Distance: 3miles – 6miles (there & back)
- Ascent: 2,952 feet - 900 metres
- Time: About 4 hours (there & back)
- Grade: Hard Strenuous Walk
- Start/Finish: Glenridding YHA — CA11 0QR
- Parking: Glenridding YHA — CA11 0QR.
- Post Code: CA11 0QR
- Relevant Map: OS Explorer Map OL5



Llyn Llynfant – 998mtr

- Distance: 7 miles - 11 Km (there & back)
- Ascent: 2,372 feet - 723 metres
- Time: About 6 hours (there & back)
- Grade: Hard Strenuous Walk
- Start/Finish: Carnedd Llewellyn (Melynlyn Quarry Road) — LL32 8SH
- Parking: view parking information
- Post Code: LL32 8SH
- Relevant Map: OS Ordnance Explorer OL17 (Snowdon & the Conwy Valley)



Training Overview

Clearly the National Three Lakes is a big effort and requires some training in advance. We don't give out specific training programs as everyone of us is different. However, we do give out some guidelines that if people achieve and can maintain, they will be in a better physical position for doing so.

We usually say that we expect people to be doing 1-2 hours of brisk walking 2-3 times a week. Then try going on a longer 2-5 hour hike at the weekends. Always have a daypack on you to mimic what you'll need to carry on the day (see kit list above).

However, we also say that nobody should be doing exercise in the last 3 days before an event. The science behind that is that muscles will load maximally with sugar when they take a workout four days prior to an event and then rest for the next three days. However, training three or four days before an event decreases the amount of sugar that muscles can store, predominantly because training damages muscles and interferes with their ability to store sugar. There is no evidence that training in the three days before an event will help during that event. Training tears down muscles and it takes several days for the muscles to heal sufficiently to improve performance.

Good 1-2 hours of brisk walking on the fifth and fourth day before the event, and don't train at all on the last two to three days prior to it should suffice.

However, depends on your current fitness, will depend on how well you cope with the overall effort.

A big percentage of the challenge is mental, so being physically fit helps with the mental challenge of endurance and perseverance.

Diet

What we do recommend is Carb Loading; On the National Three Lakes Challenge participants will be working relatively hard, it's feasible that you could deplete your carb stores within two to three hours, after which your session could become rather difficult as your body struggles to maintain blood sugar levels.

However, a common mistake is to load purely with starchy wholefoods and roughage to which your body may not be well-adjusted, which can cause stomach upset. To avoid this, be sure to get a mixture of carbs from a variety of sources. Another mistake is eating more than you need, leading to your arriving at the event feeling bloated and heavy. It's often enough to simply reduce your training load for several days and eat a little more carbohydrate than usual. The strategy is beneficial because the event lasts multiple hours. With fully stocked carb stores, you'll likely get further into the before feeling tired and lethargic. The difficulty is ensuring we have enough fuel in the body to get around the event. So, when there's a fast increase in blood sugar from the ingestion of simple carbs like sweets, cakes, white bread and sports drinks, your body will stabilise the blood sugar by converting it to fat or even eliminating it in urine - so too much of this is just wasted. Generally, your body is more likely to store (retain) slow-release carbs because eating them results in less of a sugar spike.

Some super foods that help with endurance events are;

1. Oatmeal - Oatmeal has a high soluble fibre content, is high in complex carbohydrates, is a good source of protein and has a low glycaemic index, which provides a sustained release of energy into the bloodstream.
2. Cherries - Cherries are one of the most antioxidant-rich fruit and provide a wide range of health benefits, as well as performance and recovery benefits for athletes. Research has shown that endurance athletes who consumed tart cherry juice, twice a day for seven days a week prior to an event, had strikingly less muscle pain following a the event.
3. Kale - Kale is a member of the cabbage family and contains high levels of vitamins: A, K, B6, calcium and iron. It's an antioxidant-rich vegetable that helps regulate the body's inflammatory process. Kale also contains carotenoids and flavonoids, two powerful antioxidants that protect cells from free radicals that cause oxidative stress, as well as a high fibre content that helps lower cholesterol.
4. Milk - Milk is loaded with carbohydrates and protein, which makes it an ideal post exercise muscle recovery beverage for endurance athletes. When carbohydrates and proteins are consumed together, muscle tissues are repaired at a faster rate than if consumed separately.
5. Bananas - Bananas are one of the best pre- and post-workout snacks. Loaded with potassium and vitamin B6, bananas help maintain low blood sugar, regulate digestion and re-stock your body with lost electrolytes after any sort of physical exertion. Vitamin B6 in bananas acts as an anti-inflammatory agent that helps ward of cardiovascular disease.
6. Chia Seeds - Chia seeds are a nutrient dense super food that contains a high amount of fibre, three times the amount of antioxidants than blueberries, and are loaded with calcium, iron and protein. They also contain a high amount of omega-3 fatty acids and hydrophilic properties, which means that the seeds have the ability to absorb more than twelve times their weight in water, thus allowing prolonged hydration. The seeds help in retaining moisture and regulate the body's absorption of nutrients.
7. Walnuts - Walnuts are a plant-based protein, rich in fibre, B-vitamins and antioxidants, such as vitamin E. They contain the most Omega-3 fatty acids than any other nut and the anti-inflammatory nutrients are great for bone health. Walnuts have also been shown to lower LDL cholesterol, are beneficial for a healthy heart and make a great healthy and energizing snack on-the-go.
8. Sweet Potatoes - Sweet potatoes are a starchy vegetable, rich in vitamins A and C, which are both powerful antioxidants that work in removing free radicals from your body. They help lower blood pressure and are a powerful food for athletes because of its high vitamin and mineral content. The potassium, iron, manganese and copper are all minerals that many athletes lack; manganese and copper being crucial in healthy muscle function.
9. Whey - Whey protein isolate is the purest form of whey protein and is a complete protein that contains all of the essential amino acids. It's absorbed quickly and efficiently into the body, making it an athletes dream. It doesn't contain any fat or cholesterol. The protein and array of amino acids are essential in muscle re-building, especially after a strenuous workout or race. For athletes, it's a great fast recovery method because it helps prevent muscle breakdown and is the fastest digesting protein.
10. Pork Pies - The pork pie is underestimated! It contains everything you need for fuel. It's hard to stop eating them. Two small pork pies is fantastic rocket fuel on the mountains.

11. Tomatoes - Tomatoes are also a great source of many vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin B6, and iron, which helps more oxygen get to your muscles. This is vital when on the mountain and helps relieve lethargy.

Other Fundraising Challenge Events We Run

Group Challenges;

- National Three Peaks Challenge
- Welsh Three Peak Challenges
- Abseils
- Everest Base Camp Trek
- Kilimanjaro Trek
- Aconcagua Trek
- Sea Fishing Challenge Day
- Snorkelling with Sharks Day
- Offa's Dyke 5 day Challenge
- Corporate Team Building Days

Individual/Family Challenges;

- Scuba Diving Try Dives
- Rock Climbing Experience Days
- Adventure Challenge Days
- Caving Adventure Days

Training Courses;

- First Aid Training L2 and L3
- First Aid for Mental Health Training L2 and L3
- Medications Training L2
- BLS Training L2
- Health & Safety L2
- Manual Handling L2
- Infection Control L2

We also are happy to discuss with you arranging and running bespoke fundraising challenges to suit you.

For more information please get in touch with Alex Hunt on 07485 553237 or email her on alex@healthandsafetyconsultancy.org