

Cairngorm experience (self-sufficient)

Holiday summary

This holiday is available as a three-day or a five-day trip. If you would like to spend more time getting used to the kit trailers and sharpening your camp craft skills, then you can choose the five-day version, which begins with two days of skills training before setting out on a real adventure.

We start our self-sufficient holiday in Braemar, deep in the heart of the Cairngorms, packing the kit trailers and heading off through Glen Feshie, one of the most beautiful areas in the Highlands, where you will experience truly unspoilt countryside.

Then we'll pedal through the Rothiemurchus Estate to Glenmore and over the wonderful, rocky Ryvoan pass. We'll spend a night near Tomintoul, the highest town in the Highlands of Scotland and finally, ride through the remote Glen Avon and descend back into Braemar.



Itinerary

Day 1 (optional)

We will meet in Inverness, then drive down to our accommodation in Braemar, where we will discuss our plans for the next few days over a coffee. We will be staying in a good quality B&B for the first two nights, before starting our adventure in earnest, and wild camping for the next three nights. When we're ready, we'll head off on a relatively easy ride in the eastern Cairngorms to get used to the trailers and start building up the necessary skills for tackling all terrains with a kit trailer.

Day 2 (optional)

Today we will embark upon a more challenging route to allow you to ride more technical trails with a fully-loaded trailer and build up your confidence with it. We'll also work on some camp craft, including finding and constructing the best camp site, kit familiarisation and safety. Once everything is packed away, we will head back to our accommodation for another comfortable night before our adventure begins in earnest in the morning!

Day 3 – total distance 25km

Starting in Braemar, at the heart of the Cairngorms, we'll ride through the Linn of Dee on nicely undulating 4x4 tracks. We'll pedal alongside the Geldie Burn then onto some more technical singletrack as we head into the back of Glen Feshie. As we reach the west side of Glen Feshie we will peel off the trail to our wild camp for the night, where we can sit and look back up the glen and relive the first day of our adventure.

Day 4 – total distance 62km

After a fantastic night sitting under the stars, eating, drinking and chatting, we will rustle up a hearty breakfast to prepare us for another exciting day's mountain biking, starting with a cycle through Inshriach Forest, which spans an impressive 8,000 acres, and into Rothiemurchus estate. Within its boundaries Rothiemurchus has one of the largest remaining parts of the ancient Caledonian Forest, which is of exceptional beauty as well as national significance. Then we will ride through Glenmore and over the rocky Ryvoan pass, with a stop at a cosy bothy for a cup of tea and a rest. Once revived, we'll head through Glen Brown to Tomintoul, the highest town in the Highlands of Scotland.

We will camp on the Glenlivet estate, which will provide another night under the stars and also the opportunity for us to walk to the local pub for dinner and a few drinks from the Glenlivet distillery at the end of the road.

Day 5 – total distance 42km

Again, after a good breakfast, we will pack the trailers and head out for the last leg of our adventure that will see us cycling along the River Avon and into the fantastic but remote Glen Builg. We will pass Loch Builg on some lovely singletrack before climbing on 4x4 track to a height of 730 metres, near the summit of Culardoch. All that's left for us now is a flowing descent into Braemar and then a nice pedal out past the Linn of Quoich, a recognised beauty spot, and back to our transport at the Linn of Dee.

Holiday dates 2008

9th or 11th to 13th April
14th or 16th to 18th May
21st or 23rd to 25th May
16th or 18th to 20th July
23rd or 25th to 27th July
3rd or 5th to 7th September

Holiday price

Three-day holiday: £300 per person, based on a group size of six people

Five-day holiday: £460 per person, based on a group size of six people



This includes:

- All food required for the (three-day) trip
- All group camping equipment
- Kit trailers
- The services of a qualified and experienced mountain bike guide for the duration of the trip
- Transportation from the meeting point in Inverness to the start of the ride, and then back again to Inverness at the end of the trip
- All group safety equipment
- Two nights B&B accommodation (five-day trip only)
- Breakfast and lunch on the first two days of the five-day holiday

The price does not include:

- Transport to and from the meeting point in Inverness
- Travel insurance
- Personal safety and cycling equipment
- Bike hire
- Alcoholic drinks
- Any other items not mentioned as included

Bike hire

We can arrange bike hire for you for the duration of the trip.
The cost of mountain bike hire is as follows:

- Good quality hard-tail mountain bike with disc brakes - £20 pp, per day
- Good quality full-suspension bike with disc brakes - £35 pp, per day



Accommodation and food

The Cairngorm experience is one of our fully guided, 'self-sufficient' holidays, which means that our accommodation and food will be carried with us in kit trailers attached to the back of the bikes. If, however, you choose the five-day version of the trip to build up your skills with the kit trailers, the first two nights will be spent in a good quality B&B in Braemar, and breakfast and lunch will be included on these first two days.

This is a truly unique way to experience the breath-taking scenery and fantastic trails found in this part of the Scottish Highlands. The kit trailers are attached to the bikes by a specially designed skewer and, to many people's surprise, will go just about anywhere the bike will go. In comparison with panniers or rucksacks, the kit trailers are much more balanced, enabling you to manoeuvre freely on technical trails.

We've designed this holiday to be a real adventure, so naturally, we'll be wild camping out in the beautiful landscape of the Cairngorms. There are plenty of hours of daylight in the Highlands during the summer and there's a good chance that we'll see some glorious sunsets. The tents and food will be divided between the group at the start of the trip and everyone will have a hand in setting up camp and preparing meals, which will encourage the team to work together and will add to the whole experience and enjoyment of the weekend.

Highlands and Islands Adventures guides

Our mountain bike guides are qualified to the very highest level in the UK, through the Scottish Mountain Bike Leader Award scheme. They are qualified in first-aid and for this type of trip they also hold an expedition leader award, which means that they have the knowledge and experience to lead a group safely in these very remote, wild and unpredictable parts of Scotland.

In addition to formal qualifications, our guides have years of experience in the saddle on the Highland trails and will be able to enhance your holiday with facts and fables on local history, flora and fauna.

They're also genuinely nice people and will do their best to make sure that everyone in the group has a great time.

How to book

Once you've had a chat with us about your specific requirements for the Cairngorm experience weekend, we'll provisionally book you a place on your preferred dates.

Within seven days of us taking your provisional booking you must send us the completed booking form along with a non-refundable deposit of 25% of the price of the holiday. When we receive your booking form and deposit we will send you written confirmation of your booking.

Please read carefully the full terms and conditions on our [website](#) before booking your fabulous Cairngorm experience weekend with us.

We require all of our customers to have their own comprehensive insurance before coming on any holiday with us. This must cover you specifically for mountain biking holidays.

If you have any queries at all, please contact us on the numbers below, we'll be delighted to hear from you.

