



# Take a Walk

Words: Lynn Nicholson

When you suggest a walking holiday to some people they look at you in almost disbelief, 'how on earth can a walking holiday be a holiday and how exactly do you see that as relaxing?'

**F**irstly, just by being on foot you actually get to see where you are, rather than being a passenger on a coach trip. You get to breathe in the air, you get to hear the noises of nature and you get the perfect opportunity to just 'be'. It will take a few days for some to actually calm down and relax and get into the spirit of a walking holiday, but once tried you will want to come back for more. You soon realise that you have the opportunity to think through problems and issues and within the tranquillity of a beautiful location you will start to find solutions and not add to your problems. Walking is a perfect way to meditate. You may think that meditation can only be carried out in a quiet room, in the sitting position with your eyes closed, but combining

walking with meditation is a wonderful experience. Buddhism teaches walking meditation, that of walking with your eyes open, and really absorbing your outside environment which will return to you with extreme mental clarity. You do not need any special skills or training you simply put one foot in front of the other and you focus on each step. Once you have mastered this you will find yourself walking with meditation at every opportunity. By concentrating on each step that you take, thinking if it feels heavy or light you remove yourself from other troubles that may want to come into your head, it gives you time of total peace and if you can do this for around 20 minutes a day you will start to feel the benefits.

Walking has many health benefits,

you burn calories, you exercise your heart and you improve blood flow to various parts of your body which allows them to function more effectively. All this without having to join a gym and this way you are improving your mind as well as your body.

If this has captured your interest then you should check out Upland Escapes. They offer walking holidays across some of Europe's most beautiful and unspoilt areas and they pride themselves on finding locations where you can really relax and absorb yourself in your surroundings. This is not about a 5 minute stop in a village to grab a picture, this is about taking real time out. There are no real schedules, only advice and help on what you want from your holiday, it is about you deciding where,



you want to just amble through the countryside then off you go. This approach makes these holidays perfect for everyone of all levels and when you return in the evening you will have much to talk about, experiences to share, rather than nothing to say since you were all on the same trip!

Food is incredibly important on a walking holiday. You need good high grade fuel for your body to function correctly, so food is taken very seriously.

It is really important to experience authentic local food and there is great advice on which restaurants to try and when you are out walking you can have a wonderfully prepared pack lunch to take with you. All are freshly prepared each day by staff who know what you will need. They are healthy and well balanced with a wide selection of locally produced, and often, organic products. You will find fruits, vegetables, meats, cheeses, bread, grains and pulses all designed to keep you energised with slow burning carbohydrates and energy foods. Your Upland Manager takes pride in using the seasonal produce that clients see in the fields through which they are walking. These might include salami infused with fennel seeds, and home-cured ham from the village butcher, fresh mountain cheeses, locally produced pasta, salads made entirely from foraged ingredients, a host of fresh fruit and vegetables picked from nearby gardens, and delicious home-baked pastries. This is not a packed lunch based on a dry old piece of



French stick, an even drier piece of cheese an O.A.P apple and a bag of crisps!

So if you really want a holiday that will work on both your physical, emotional and mental wellbeing check out Upland Escapes and check out the destinations and you could soon find yourself in a mountain in Italy wondering why you had not done this sooner.

[www.uplandescapes.com](http://www.uplandescapes.com)  
[reservations@uplandescapes.com](mailto:reservations@uplandescapes.com)

Based in the rural heart of the Cotswolds, Upland Escapes has a team of three founders, all passionate about what they do, and with 40 years of combined experience of providing top quality holidays and walking itineraries. With 3 responsible tourism awards in the four seasons they have been operating for their low-impact, sustainable tourism you know these are the people to guide through the whole experience.

#### Packed Lunch Kits.

These are just brilliant, and even if you are not booking a holiday you should definitely invest in one of these. They have an individual cool bag, air-tight containers, stainless-steel cutlery, freezer-packs and recipe cards with lots of great ideas for a really brilliant packed lunch. Perfect for walking, school trips, concerts, travel in fact, just brilliant! £29.99 + p&p

