

Discover Bowland Itinerary – N°5

# 72 Hours on The Roof of Lancashire: The Secrets of Pendle Hill



Pendle's slopes and summit have the wilderness feel of genuinely unspoiled landscapes and yet this famous hill lies within easy reach of Blackburn, Burnley, Preston, Manchester and the wider northwest.

Pendle Hill forms the boundary between urban Lancashire and the vast tracts of wild countryside that lie to the north. For those with an appetite for adventure, it's incredibly accessible and provides a tantalizing foretaste of what lies beyond.

For walkers, there are at least seven different routes to the top and a wealth of walks through the pretty villages and picturesque valleys surrounding the hill. On a clear day the views are truly

spectacular and a fitting reward for the challenging climb to the top.

Pendle is also popular with road cyclists, offering challenging climbs and exhilarating descents and a chance to stop off for a cuppa at the last surviving Clarion House in Britain.

And after an invigorating day on the trail or in the saddle, the area has a profusion of pubs, cafés and restaurants providing top notch tucker for weary wayfarers.

**Whether you're on the trail of the famous witches, in search of a new challenge, or simply want to admire the view from the summit, your epic Pendle Hill adventure starts here...**

## DAY 1: PM

After arrival and checking in to your accommodation, if it's still light, head to the Nick o' Pendle above Sabden to watch the sun go down over Morecambe Bay. There's very little walking involved, and as well as the amazing views from this vantage point 1200ft above sea level, it's a great way to get your bearings.

## DAY 1: EVENING

After enjoying a spectacular sunset, descend into Sabden for dinner at the White Hart Inn. Look out for earlybird deals mid-week or just enjoy a pint of well-kept cask ale accompanied by some tasty tapas-style nibbles.

## DAY 2 AM:

### *Conquer The Big End*

There are at least seven spectacular routes to the summit of Pendle Hill – all of which have their distinctive qualities. Keen walkers will want to try at least a couple, or maybe even combine two routes to really get to know the contours and cloughs of this extensive massif.

The classic Pendle Route involves ascending the infamously steep gradients of 'The Steps' from the pretty village of Barley. The route is simple to follow and after an initially gentle ascent through the foothills, the incline ramps up to the summit beacon or 'Big End' as the locals refer to it. The last 500ft involve a breathless ascent to the summit shelter and trig point, from where the amazing panoramas open up quite suddenly.

These are the views that inspired George Fox to establish the Religious Society of Friends – better known as the Quakers – after he climbed the hill in 1652. After the obligatory summit selfies, descend using the cart track for a well-earned pint or cuppa and maybe a spot of lunch at the Barley Mow.

Or to make a day of it, from the summit head south to descend via the flagstones into Ogden Clough before swinging back east to Barley via the two reservoirs.

## *Pendle Hill Access Code*

Most of the Pendle Hill landscape is accessible to the public with much of the hill itself designated as open access land where walkers have the right to roam. But it's still important to respect the landscape and those with whom we share it – including livestock.

Here are the golden rules:

- Keep dogs under close control, preferably on a lead
- Stick to designated footpaths
- Clear up after your dog
- Take litter home



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DAY 2 PM:

## Uncover The Real Story of The Pendle Witches



Pendle's association with witchcraft goes back more than four centuries and while the hill's allegedly diabolical denizens put it on the map, the truth surrounding what was actually a monumental miscarriage of justice has only recently emerged.

Back in the 17th Century a fearful and ill-educated rural populace was easily manipulated by those prepared to abuse their influence to curry favour with local nobles and King James I, who was obsessed with witchcraft.

In Newchurch, look for the 'Eye of God' on the church tower and the 'Witch's Grave' – a tombstone inscribed with skull and crossbones at St Mary's Church. Pop into Witches Galore for souvenirs then head to Roughlee to find the poignant statue of Alice Nutter, one of the best known of the 'Pendle Witches' – in chains – as she would have travelled on that fateful final journey over the Bowland Fells to stand trial at the Lancaster Assizes. Enjoy a spot of lunch at the community-owned Bay Horse Inn – rescued and restored by the villagers after a devastating fire in 2016.



Find out more about the real story of the witches along with the rich industrial history of the area at Pendle Heritage Centre in Barrowford – a quirky little mill village nestling beside Pendle Water, where you'll find a good selection of boutique shops and cafés. Historic Higherford Mill next to the bridge over Pendle Water is now home to a community of artists and makers who have opened studios there – they are open most weekends.

DON'T MISS:

### *Stunning Views Without the Climb!*

Thousands of visitors make a beeline for the Nick of Pendle to admire the definitive 'view' from Pendle, but the vistas stretching north-east up the Ribble Valley into Yorkshire from the Barley to Downham road over the 'shoulder' beneath the Big End are just as impressive – especially on a clear summer evening.

## DAY 3 AM:

### Take On The 'Tour De Pendle'

It may only cover 15 miles, but this challenging circuit for road cyclists includes some of the most brutal hill climbs in England. Expect a handful of 20 per cent gradients and plenty of 10 per cent ascents as you circumnavigate the hill via Sabden, Clitheroe, Worston, Downham, Barley and Newchurch.

There's more than 600m of ascent involved and fortunately, there are plenty of cafes along the way to rest and recuperate. If you happen to be here on a Sunday, take a short detour along Jinny Lane for a brew and a natter at Britain's the last remaining Clarion House just outside Barley (Grid Ref: SD 831 396).

For the less energetically inclined, the picture postcard village of Downham beckons. This idyllic stone-built hamlet is one of the prettiest in Lancashire, where the trappings of 21st Century life have been resisted by the Lord of the Manor, so you won't see satellite dishes or even TV aerials.

This is where the cult black and white classic, *Whistle Down the Wind* was filmed in 1961, and more recently, was the setting for the BBC drama series, *Born & Bred*.

Park in the little car park at the information barn and walk across to feed the ducks in the stream or enjoy an ice cream on the village green. Try one of four circular walks (details available in the info barn) before adjourning to the Assheton Arms (known as the Railwayman's Arms in the fictional TV village of Ormston) for a glass of wine and some excellent food at this popular gastro pub.

## DAY 3 PM:

### Down On The Farm

For great views of Pendle Hill and the chance to get an insight of the workings of a traditional family-run organic farm, take the short trip from Downham to Gazegill Farm at Rimington where the farm shop sells organic lamb and raw milk, cream and butter fresh from a herd of rare breed cattle. Or visit the Milking Parlour, Sabden for raw milk direct from the Gill family's Freisian herd.



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## FOOD & DRINK

From the earthy delights of Barley Cabin, which still serves 'Stew 'n' Hard – a unique local delicacy – to the Michelin-starred White Swan at Fence, Pendle has more than its fare share of outstanding pubs, cafes and restaurants.

*Tuck into some fantastic local food at:*

**White Hart, Sabden** – ambitious bistro food served in a traditional village pub

**Barley Cabin, Barley** – a firm local favourite, this is the perfect place to stock up for a picnic or enjoy a home-cooked light lunch after a bracing walk to the summit

**The Barley Mow, Barley** – upmarket gastropub favourites served in a lively village pub

**The Freemasons, Wiswell** – multiple award-winning contemporary British cuisine in an informal pub setting

**The White Swan, Fence** – Michelin-starred cuisine from the kitchen of talented chef Tom Parker

**La Locanda, Gisburn** – authentic Italian cuisine using the best local ingredients

**The Swan with Two Necks, Pendleton** – CAMRA Award-winning cask ale pub serving hearty home-made dishes

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The regular 67 bus service links Clitheroe and Nelson via the Pendleside villages of Downham, Barley, Roughlee, Blacko and Barrowford. Click [here](#) for timetables. The number 66 takes a similar route, but stops off in Fence and Newchurch instead of Blacko and Barrowford. The 64 serves Clitheroe and Burnley via Sabden.

## PARKING AND ACCESS POINTS

Bear in mind that the car parks near the Nick o' Pendle and Barley get VERY busy at weekends and during the holidays. We recommend that visitors consider some of the alternative access points at Sabden, Spring Wood or Downham at peak times.



# VISIT, EAT & STAY

Pendle and surrounding villages have an inviting selection of friendly B&Bs and cosy country pubs, cafés and inns.

## Visit

- **Gazegill Organics**  
Rimington  
01200 445519  
[www.gazegillorganics.co.uk](http://www.gazegillorganics.co.uk)
- **Downham Ice Cream**  
Downham  
01200 441613  
[@DownhamIceCreamShop](mailto:@DownhamIceCreamShop)
- **Hudsons of Chatburn**  
Chatburn  
01200 441305  
[@1947HudsonsIcecream](mailto:@1947HudsonsIcecream)
- **Boothman Park**  
Barley  
07837 243014  
[www.boothmanpark.co.uk](http://www.boothmanpark.co.uk)
- **Pendle Heritage Centre**  
Barrowford  
01282 677150  
[www.pendleheritage.co.uk](http://www.pendleheritage.co.uk)
- **Roy Porter Butchers**  
Chatburn  
01200 441392  
[@royporterbutchers](mailto:@royporterbutchers)
- **The Milking Parlour**  
Sabden  
07540616471  
[@Themilkingparlour](mailto:@Themilkingparlour)
- **Whalley Warm & Dry**  
Whalley  
01254 822220  
[www.whalleyoutdoor.co.uk](http://www.whalleyoutdoor.co.uk)
- **Outdoor Elements**  
Simonstone  
01282 416396  
[www.outdoorelements.co.uk](http://www.outdoorelements.co.uk)

## Eat

- **Assheton Arms**  
Downham  
01200 441227  
[www.asshetonarms.com](http://www.asshetonarms.com)
- **The Cabin**  
Barley  
01282 696937  
[@Barleypicnicsite](mailto:@Barleypicnicsite)
- **Barley Mow**  
Barley  
01282 690868  
[www.barleymowpendle.co.uk](http://www.barleymowpendle.co.uk)
- **Sanwitches**  
Sabden  
01282 775006  
[@Sanwitchessabden](mailto:@Sanwitchessabden)
- **Greendale View Kitchen**  
Chatburn  
01200 441517  
[www.greendaleviewbandb.co.uk](http://www.greendaleviewbandb.co.uk)
- **The Freemasons**  
Wiswell  
01254 822218  
[www.freemasonsatwiswell.com](http://www.freemasonsatwiswell.com)
- **The White Swan**  
Fence  
01282 611773  
[www.whiteswanatfence.co.uk](http://www.whiteswanatfence.co.uk)
- **Spread Eagle**  
Sawley  
01200 441202  
[www.spreadeaglesawley.co.uk](http://www.spreadeaglesawley.co.uk)
- **La Locanda**  
Gisburn  
01200 445303  
[www.lalocanda.co.uk](http://www.lalocanda.co.uk)

## Stay

- **Cobden Farm**  
Sabden  
01282 776285  
[www.cobdenfarm.co.uk](http://www.cobdenfarm.co.uk)
- **Higher Gills Farm**  
Rimington  
01200 445370  
[www.highergills.co.uk](http://www.highergills.co.uk)
- **Chestnut Cottage**  
Worston  
01200 440400  
[www.chestnut-cottage.com](http://www.chestnut-cottage.com)
- **Calf's Head**  
Worston  
01200 441218  
[www.calfshead.co.uk](http://www.calfshead.co.uk)
- **Height Top Farm**  
Higham  
01282 772009  
[www.heighttopfarm.co.uk](http://www.heighttopfarm.co.uk)
- **Malkin Tower Farm**  
Blacko  
01282 699992  
[www.malkintowerfarm.co.uk](http://www.malkintowerfarm.co.uk)
- **The Rookery**  
Roughlee  
07738 261279  
[www.therookeryroughlee.co.uk](http://www.therookeryroughlee.co.uk)
- **Smithson Farm Caravan Site**  
Burnley  
01282 420701  
[www.smithsonfarm.co.uk](http://www.smithsonfarm.co.uk)
- **Pendle Valley Caravan Park**  
Roughlee  
01282 614755  
[www.pendlevalleycaravanpark.co.uk](http://www.pendlevalleycaravanpark.co.uk)