

Ingleborough Walks

Walk 6 Ingleborough Summit from Clapham to Ingleton



This walk from Clapham village via Trow Gill and Gaping Gill and over Ingleborough summit to Ingleton is one of the great classic walks of the Yorkshire Dales; a wonderful way of experiencing some of the most spectacular limestone scenery of the Ingleborough area and Ingleborough itself.



The Walk

If coming from Clapham station (1¼ miles) follow the main line signposted to Clapham village - avoid crossing the main A65 by using the underpass. From the 581-bus stop by the old post office return to Clapham Bridge. You way follows the narrow lane to the left of the Clapham Beck, (the stone hump backed bridge leads to National Park Car Park and toilets).

Follow the lane, noting superb views of the artificial waterfalls on Clapdale Beck - source of an early hydro-electric scheme before bearing left then turning right into the entrance of Ingleborough Hall Estate in front of cottages. Go through the gates (small charge payable at the ticket machine gate - this is a private estate and admission charges pay for its upkeep). The track curves up to the left and enters the Ingleborough Estate alongside The Lake which was created by the Farrer

family as a landscape feature and source of water power. The most famous member of the family was Reginald Farrer (1880-1920) explorer and plant hunter who made a major contribution to alpine gardening. Some of the trees and shrubs around lake were originally introduced by Reginald after his Himalayan expeditions. Follow the old coach track which leads alongside the lake through narrow Clapdale to Ingleborough Cave. This is one of the most celebrated show caves in Yorkshire, originally explored by the Farrer family. For opening times ring 01524 251242 or visit ingleboroughcave.co.uk.

Continue through the gate above the Cave into Trow Gill, a steep and narrow limestone gorge originally created by glacial meltwaters and a spectacular limestone ravine. Some scrambling over rough boulders may be required. At the top of the Gill, the gradient eases but you still walk through the shallow valley as it curves left. Continue for another half mile (1km) ignoring the first stile on the left

to where twin stiles take the main Ingleborough path over onto Hurnel Moss, a flatter, area of rough grassland, heading due north west on the well-used path, but bear right again on an obvious link path to view the mouth of Gaping Gill.

This 98 metres (322 feet) deep pothole is one of the largest and most famous in England, where Fell Beck forms the highest (albeit underground) waterfall in England. It is impossible to imagine the size and scale of the vast underground cavern from the surface which is large enough to contain the whole of York Minster. It is also a gateway to extensive cave and pothole systems. Keep well away from the dangerous edges. On Bank Holidays Bradford and Craven Pothole Clubs organise winch chair trips for visitors to experience the awesome cavern.

From Gaping Gill take the clear and well used path that heads due north westwards initially up gentle gradients then up a very steep slope as you ascend the end of the summit ridge, known as Little Ingleborough. You then head due north towards the steep hump-like summit of Ingleborough itself, curving to the east of the summit up a diagonal rocky path steep enough to test the fittest walker, before finally curving round behind Swine Tail to join the main Three Peaks route onto the amazingly level summit plateau. On a clear day, this is one the great viewpoints of England with wonderful panoramic views across Ribblesdale to Pen y Ghent and south to the Bowland Fells, across to the Lancashire coastline and northwards to Whernside and the Howgill Fells. This is also an important archaeological site, with relics of Iron Age religious settlement activity, so please cause minimal disturbance to any stone work or cairns. The wind shelter is modern.

The descent from the mountain needs care. Your route to Ingleton lies directly off the southwest corner, of the summit plateau, a broad, well walked but steep and stony track, which requires care over loose stones and boulders, until the gradient eases and is gradually better defined, generally easy walking though with some boggy areas. After around a mile your reach Crina Bottom Farm from where the track becomes a double walled lane, eventually emerging at Storrs Common and the main B 6225. Turn left here for 120 metres, then right into the one-way street which forms Ingleton's main high street with a choice of welcoming pubs, cafes and shops for the tired walker.

For return transport, head through the attractive village centre as the street winds towards the disused railway viaduct, before which steps, left, lead directly up to the main car park, toilets, tourist information centre and bus stop.

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Travel Information

- Distance:** 8 miles.
- Time required:** 5 hours plus times for stops.
- Start:** Clapham village centre (add 1¼ miles from Clapham station).
- Finish:** Ingleton.
- Travel:** **Outward:** Bentham Line train to Clapham Station (approx. 1¼ mile from Clapham village) or Craven Connection bus 581 to Clapham village.
Return: Craven Connection bus 581 from Ingleton Community Centre.
- Terrain/Grade:** Strenuous - two climbs, one extended and the second steep. Steep descents. Rough tracks and fellside paths - *this route is not recommended in poor weather conditions nor for inexperienced walkers.*
- Refreshments:** Choice of pubs, shops and cafés in Clapham and Ingleton.
- Toilets:** In National Park Car Park in Clapham; by Community Centre) in old station car park in Ingleton.

