On the Lake
From the rugged backdrop of mountains to wooded shores and secluded bays, Windermere is surrounded by some breathtaking scenery – best appreciated from the lake itself.

**Windermere Lake Cruises (SD401968)**
Cruise in comfort, with sailings all year round between Bowness, Ambleside and Lakeside or enjoy a special 45-minute island sightseeing cruise. Summer sailings to Brockhole, Wray Castle, Ferry House and Fell Foot Country Park. Evening buffet cruises with traditional live jazz music (summer only).
Tel: 015394 43360 www.windermere-lakecruises.co.uk

**Fell Foot (SD382871)**
A restored Victorian park with lakeside access to Windermere and children’s playground. Hire a rowing boat and head out on the lake, or enjoy a picnic and a paddle. There is a ferry across to Lakeside and Windermere Lake Cruises stops at Fell Foot during the summer months.
Open all year round (Oct-Mar only).
Tel: 015395 31273 www.nationaltrust.org.uk

**Shepherds Windermere Ltd**
Hire a self-drive motor boat or electric cabin cruiser and explore Windermere at your leisure.
Windermere, Bowness-on-Windermere, Bowness Bay, LA23 3UJ
Tel: 015394 46004 www.shepherdswindermere.co.uk

Around the Lake
Even without leaving dry land there is plenty to do all year round. Take a leisurely stroll along the lakeshore, explore the area by bicycle or open-top bus, or visit one of the numerous historic houses or gardens.

**Viewpoints**
The short walk to Orrest Head (SD415994) is as well worth the uphill effort, for at the top is an outstanding panoramic view of the lake and surrounding fells. Orrest Head carpark can be found at Birksey Howe (SD409969), Post Knott (SD409694), Hammar Bank (SD405991) and Queen Adelaide’s Hill (SD403987).

**Holohed Gardens (NY410009)**
This 10-acre hillside garden, managed by the Lakesland Horticultural Society, has been transformed from an abandoned rock garden into a ‘garden for all seasons’, with specimen trees, a walled garden with herbaceous borders, and displays of alpine plants. The National plant collections for astilbe, hydrangea and pseudotsugia are here.
Tel: 015394 46008 www.holohedgardens.org.uk

**Blackwell, the Arts & Crafts House (SD401946)**
Blackwell was built as a holiday home for Sir Edward Hort, a wealthy banker from Manchester. No expense was spared in creating a finely detailed home that takes its inspiration from nature. The house was completed in 1900 to a design by Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott – one of the foremost architects of the Arts & Crafts movement. Changing exhibitions on contemporary and historic crafts.
Tel: 015394 46139 www.blackwell.org.uk

**Cross Lakes Experience**
A family-friendly walk that starts at Lakeside (in conjunction with Windermere Lake Cruises) or Haverthwaite (with car parking, restaurant and woodland picnic area).
Tel: 015395 31594 www.lakesiderailway.co.uk

**Windermere & Bowness**
The towns of Windermere and Bowness at the heart of the Lake District have been a magnet for visitors since Victorian times. With easy access to the lake shore of Windermere and panoramic views of the lake and surrounding fells, the area remains just as popular today.

Windermere, England’s longest lake, is a narrow finger of water some 17 km (10.5 miles) long, stretching from Ambleside in the north to Nearby Bridge in the south. In the 14 islands, the largest of which is Belle Isle (formerly known as Longholme) with its unusual circular house. A ferry service has operated across the narrow point of the lake (Bowness to Ferry House on the western shore) since the 15th century.

Originally a small hamlet called Birthwaite, the town of Windermere rose to prominence with the completion of the railway line from Kendal in 1847. The railway came and so did the visitors – some 120,000 in its first year, mainly from the industrial towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Horse-drawn carriages were laid on to ferry passengers from the station to the lakeside, whilst charabancs took hotel guests on sightseeing excursions around the area.

Until the 19th century, Bowness-on-Windermere was a fishing village. But once the railway came to Windermere, hotels, villas and boarding houses rapidly sprang up to accommodate the tourists that started pouring onto Windermere. For wealthy Victorian businessmen from the urban areas, the Lakes was a haven of scenic tranquility, and many of them acquired grand country retreats on Windermere, such as Starrs Hall (now a hotel) and Brockhole (now the Lake District National Park Visitor Centre).

Today, the area is a focus for pleasure cruisers and a variety of watersports, such as sailing, kayaking and windsurfing. Away from the lake shore you’ll find a variety of heritage sites, historic houses, gardens and other visitor attractions.

**By Bus**
Services run frequently between Windermere and Bowness. Other bus services connect with Brockhole Visitor Centre, Coniston, Hawkshead and the Langdale Valley.
Service 39A runs frequently between Bowness Pier (Windermere) and Grasmere (via Windermere rail station and Ambleside, Seasonal Sunday service).
Service 555 operates between Kendal and Keswick (via Windermere, Ambleside and Coniston) at regular intervals every day.
Service 555 – daily service to Hawkshead and Coniston.
Service 516 – daily service to Windermere, Low Wood Bay and Lakeside (via Ambleside and Coniston).
Service 517 – seasonal service to Glenridding (via Troutbeck and the Kirkstone Pass). Check timetables for dates and times.
Service 618 – daily service between Ambleside and Bowness-in-Furness (via Brockhole, Windermere, Bowness, Nearby Bridge and Ulverston), with connecting services to Windermere Lake Cruises at Waterhead (Ambleside) and Bowness.

A rail-and-road road train provides a circular service between Grasmere, Bowness, Lakeside and Windermere, providing magnificent views over the lake. (For more information on cycling in Cumbria generally go to www.cyclingcumbria.co.uk)

**By Train**
The railway station at Windermere has trains departing every hour or so to Oxenholme – The Lake District, on the main intercity route between Scotland and London. The railway station at Windermere has trains departing every hour or so to Oxenholme – The Lake District, on the main intercity route between Scotland and London. Information Centre offers 4-day Explorer and 7-Day Gold Rider tickets (passport required). Explorer tickets allow travel on all Stagecoach buses in Cumbria and Lancashire. Ticket can be purchased on any Stagecoach service. Grasmere station, with connecting services to Windermere Lake Cruises at Waterhead (Ambleside) and Bowness.

A rail-and-road road train provides a circular service between Grasmere, Bowness, Lakeside and Windermere, providing magnificent views over the lake. (For more information on cycling in Cumbria generally go to www.cyclingcumbria.co.uk)

**Cross Lakes Experience**
Explore without the car – a combination of lake cruises, minibus and coach can deliver you to the door. Services operate between Windermere, Bowness, Nearby Bridge, Grasmere and Coniston. Pick-up isleather from a Tourist Information Centre, Windermere Lake Cruises or Mountain Goat and plan your adventure.
Tel: 015394 49161

**Mountain Goat**
Victoria Street, Windermere, LA23 1AD
Full and half day themed Lake District tours by minibus. Full and half day tours take in Beatrix Potter Country, Lake District and Yorkshire Dales. Tel: 015394 99099

**Bicycles**
Bicycles can be taken on the Windermere steamers and most launches.

**World of Beatrix Potter Attraction (SD403971)**
Bringing all 23 of Beatrix Potter tales to life, complete with sights, sounds and smells! Discover Peter Rabbit in Mr McGregor's garden, visit Mrs Tiggy-winkle in her kitchen and explore the woodland glade with Jeremy Puddleduck. The Miss Potter Room uses film, displays and virtual technology to explore the author’s life.
Tel: 015394 88444 www.hop-skip-jump.com

For more information on how to reach Windermere by road, rail and ferry timetable and fare information go to www.traveline.org.uk
Tel: 0871 200 22 33

**By Car**
Windermere & Bowness. Parking is available in the town centres.

For more information about Grasmere, Ambleside, Hawkshead and Coniston, go to www.english-heritage.org.uk

Family Activities
In and around Windermere and Bowness, there is a huge choice of activities for the whole family to enjoy.

**Lakes Aquarium (SD378873)**
This freshwater aquarium is home to more than just fish. You can see otters, British sharks and diving ducks and interact with hippos and crocodiles in the virtu dive belly. Easily accessible from the Windermere Lake Cruises jetty at Lakeside.
Tel: 015395 30153 www.lakesaquarium.co.uk

**Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway (SD378875)**
Take a nostalgic steam-powered trip along a scenic section of railway from Haverthwaite to Lakeside. Trains can be boarded at Lakeside (in conjunction with Windermere Lake Cruises) or Haverthwaite (with car parking, restaurant and woodland picnic area). Special event weekends.
Tel: 015395 31594 www.lakesiderailway.co.uk

Look out for special combined tickets which include travel by steamer (or launch) to Lakeside, entry to the Lakes Aquarium and a ride on the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway.

**World of Beatrix Potter Attraction**
Bringing all 23 of Beatrix Potter tales to life, complete with sights, sounds and smells! Discover Peter Rabbit in Mr McGregor’s garden, visit Mrs Tiggy-winkle in her kitchen and explore the woodland glade with Jeremy Puddleduck. The Miss Potter Room uses film, displays and virtual technology to explore the author’s life.
Tel: 015394 88444 www.hop-skip-jump.com

Cover image: Windermere and the Langdale Pikes

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what to see & do...

Other places to see

Lake District Visitor Centre at Bowness (NY380018)
Tel: 015394 46061 www.lake-district.gov.uk
Activities for all the family. There are exhibitions on Lakeland and landscapes, special events and workshops, and active gardens with an adventure playground for children. The café serves home-made food and refreshments. Free admission, but with on-site parking charges. Amenity by bus, boat, bike or on foot and your visit is completely wheelchair accessible.

St Martin's Church, Bowness (NY410061)
Built in 1862, this is one of the earliest surviving churches in Cumbria. The magnificent east window incorporates the coat of arms of John Washington, an ancestor of the first president of the USA George Washington. His likeness, a star and stripes is thought to have inspired the American flag.

Hall Top (SD370055)
Step into the world of Beatrix Potter in this 17th century farmhouses, which provided the inspiration for 13 of her books including The Tale of Tom Kitten and The Tale of Jemima Puddleduck. Owned by the National Trust, it remains much as when she lived here, with many of her paintings, furniture and toys on show. Admission charge and timed entry system (to avoid overcrowding). Accessible by ferry and bus from Bowness.

Penfold Gallery (SD400720)
Tel: 015394 49200 www.penfold-gallery.co.uk
Showcasing glassware, ceramics and jewellery, mainly from Cumbrian artists. The gallery runs several glassmaking workshops every year. Open: Wed-Sat (10:30-5:00). Sun (11:00-4:00). Closed January.

Things to do

Budgie Bikes
Tel: 015394 308410 www.budgiebiketours.co.uk
Hire point at White Cross Bay, Ambleside Road, Windermere. Mix-and-match service at Windermere Railway Station. Bikes can be dropped off at most Youth Hostels throughout Cumbria – check website for details.

County Lanes Cycle Centre
Tel: Windermere Railway Station, Windermere, LA23 1AH
Tel: 015394 45454 www.countylanes.co.uk
Also at Lakeside, Windermere (Bridge Road 015394 307778)

Holehird Tarn (NY100003)
Stunning estate lake with carp, tench, bream and perch. Fishing permits from Bowness Bay Tourist Information Centre and Windermere Service Station. Contact Windermere and Ambleside District Angling Association www.lakesdistfishing.net

Lakes Leisure
Leigh Grove Building, Rylrigg Road, Windermere, LA23 1BP
Tel: 015394 47100 www.lakesleisure.org.uk
A range of water activities for all ages and abilities. Learn how to windsurf, canoe, kayak, or try your hand at angling under the guidance of qualified instructors. Children’s multi-activity courses. Also walking, climbing and family walks.

Maplin Yachting
Marina Village, Bowness-on-Windermere
Tel: 07889 773292 www.maplinsailing.co.uk
Open; sailing courses, local tuition

Skiing
Ferry Nab, Bowness-on-Windermere, LA23 3HN
Tel: 015394 53339 www.skiferry.com
Skiing courses with qualified instruction. Yacht hire available.

Old Laundry Theatre (SD403071)
Craig Drive, Bowness-on-Windermere, LA23 3BX
Tel: 015394 84444 ext. 223 www.oldlaundrytheatre.com
Cumbria’s only professional in-the-round theatre, founded in 1992 in conjunction with playwright Alan Ayckbourn and housed in an old Edwardian laundry building.

Windermere & Bowness scenes

Cruising on Windermere

Blackwell

GF: UNE at Troutbeck: Swimming Pool & Gym
Tel: 015394 43543 www.ueinstitute.org
Gunflint, indoor swimming pool and 31 station gym. Day membership passes and swim session prices. Please call in advance to check times.

Pooley Cinema (SD400702)
Lake Road, Bowness-on-Windermere
Tel: 015394 43994 www.nm-cinemas.co.uk
Offers the latest releases and selected screenings of less mainstream films.

Windermere Canoe Kayak
Ferry Nab Road, Bowness-on-Windermere, LA23 3HN
Tel: 015394 64450 www.windermerecanoeandkayak.com
Full or half-day hire of canoes and kayaks. Other activities arranged from climbing and abseiling to mountain biking and archery. Tuition by fully qualified instructors.

Windermere Golf Club (SD419062)
Clasterwark, Windermere, LA23 3NB
Tel: 015394 65123
Tee times available for individual and club members.

Windermere Lake Holidays
Ferry Nab, Bowness, LA23 3HN Tel: 015394 43431 www.lakewindermere.net
Sailing boats for hire.

LakeCumbria
Alexandra Buildings, Windermere, LA23 1BG
Tel: 015394 68180 www.lakecumbria.co.uk
The home of creative kitchenware. Overlooking with innovative ideas to make food preparation, cooking, freezing and preserving so much easier.

Local facilities

Post Office – Castlehead Road, Windermere. St Martin’s Parade, Bowness-on-Windermere

Public Parks – Queens Park, Park Road, Windermere; bowling, tennis, children’s play area, skatepark/park. The Galleon Recreation Ground, Bowness-on-Windermere (18-hole mini golf, putting, tennis [Baseball City]).

Car Parks – Windermere Railway Station, Broad Street, Windermere. Haermar Drive, Windermere. Rylrigg Road, Bowness. Quarry Mount, Windermere. Ambleside District Angling Association Car Park, Rylrigg Road, Bowness (created by Windermere Lake Cruises), Ferry Nab Road, Bowness. Brathwaite Fold, Bowness.

Petrol Stations – Troutbeck Bridge, Main Road, Windermere. Rylrigg Road, Bowness.

Public Toilets – Broad Street, Windermere. Rylrigg Road car park, Bowness. Dane Road, Windermere. Also disabled toilet by the Buttermere clock tower. Quarry Mount car park, Bowness. Gielde Road, Bowness (also to Tourist Information Centre). Brathwaite Fold car park, Bowness. Ferry Nab car park, Bowness. Ringgo Point car park, Bowness.

Windermere

In 1883 Windermere became co-bound for 6 weeks, making it possible to walk from one side of the lake to the other. Under the command of St Martin’s Church is the mass grave of 47 people who drowned in 1852 when their ferry capsized on the way back from a wedding in Hawkshead.

Legend says that whenever misfortune is about to happen in the area, a ghostly white horse and rider may be seen. The railway station is a focal point for the local community and part of the story of Windermere.

Windermere & Bowness were the second towns in England to have electric street lighting. The power was supplied from a hydro-electric plant at Troutbeck Bridge.

An aircraft factory was once sited at White Cross Bay, near Troutbeck Bridge, operating the Avro Seaplane Pleasure Flight Company.