



MAN

Weekend
Breakaway

Wander Land

The British Midlands offer engaging trails to those who know where to look.

IT'S AN EASY TRAIN RIDE FROM THE BUSINESS HUB OF ENGLAND'S NORTHWEST TO OUTDOOR ADVENTURE—but the options require a bit of clarification. First, the **moody, memorable landscapes** of the Peak District don't include high peaks. (The Lake District has lakes, but it's really the home of England's highest peaks.) Head to Peak District summits and you'll find they're flat plateaus topped by mysterious moors. Below, streams **drop from crags to fertile, sheep-dotted valleys**. The Pennine Way, England's first "long distance" trail (429 kilometers, 268 miles), starts in tiny Edale, just 45 minutes from Manchester's Piccadilly Station. Grab a map at the new Moorland Centre and head left at the Old Nag's Head pub for **an easy out-and-back stroll on the Pennine Way** or stay straight up the wild valley above for a longer, strenuous circle on the high moors of Kinder Scout. Picnic while you ponder map sites like "Grouse Butts," "Fox Holes," "Sheep Folds," and the stray "Druid's Stone."

If your feet need a rest after all that walking, take to the water via a steam ferry on Ullswater. Visit ullswater-steamers.co.uk.

More intrigued by the poetry of lakes, with higher peaks to boot? **Follow Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Robert Southey** to the Lake District. In picturesque Windermere, wander down High Street, cross the cable ferry, and turn right for an lakeshore stroll through lush ferns and towering trees with a gnarled, literary bent. Best option? Peek at the peaks from Orrest Head, an easy walk from the information center by the train station. Buy the hike brochure and wind your way past rock walls and an inquisitive donkey through England's most storied landscape. **■—Randy Johnson**

Choose Your Entrance

For the posthike peckish, there's no better pause than the **Old Nag's Head** on the way down to the train in Edale. One of England's oldest pubs and a **landmark since 1577**, it's the "official start" of the Pennine Way. Don't be put off by the two entrances—one marked "Hikers Bar," the other, "Locals Bar." Everyone's welcome through either door at this **friendly, richly atmospheric, and cozy** old eating and drinking spot. This is hearty, filling fare, so the filled jacket potatoes, with five stuffings (among them Prawns Marie Rose, English Cheddar, and baked beans) are **not at all for a stuffed-shirt** sort of patron.



Weekend hikers will love the traditional Sunday roast, or choose from vegetarian dishes, burgers, salads, and traditional main courses. Out back, the inn's Grindsbrook and Kinder Cottages are recent conversions from barn buildings **dating from the 16th century**. They offer comfortable accommodations that make the perfect base for exploring. *Tel: 44-1-433-670291.*