

lakesculture

Exploring Families

Overview: Travelling with children aged 8-15. In their leisure time they are seeking high-quality family time – also to expand kids' horizons and expand on the school curriculum. They enjoy learning experiences that enrich both parents and children and want to engage with nature and history.

On holiday: Looking to escape from routine, relax and explore, 'edutainment' for kids. Soft adventure, history, culture. They take several short breaks and a main holiday each year. They are active and will go horse-riding, cycling, fishing etc., but also seek more unusual activities such as den building, food foraging, wildlife safaris, workshops and special events at historic locations. Accommodation: Quality self-catering, glamping, B&Bs, hotels with good family rooms/facilities.

On culture: Curated Venues. Festivals. Performance

Key messages: "Lots to do – mix of outdoors and quality cultural things to do" "Making memories together" "Exercising children's imaginations" "Lots of stories to be told and shared" "Things to learn together" "Fun and entertainment" "England's best-known landscape" "It's part of our cultural heritage" "Potential World Heritage Site"

Top 5 Experiences

Discovering art, stories and music together...in England's best-loved landscapes

1. Follow the sculpture trails through Grizedale Forest – hire bikes for all the family and follow the forest roads and bridleways, seeking out the unique sculptures of stone and wood among the trees, in places that inspired the artists. Enjoy the wonderful panoramic views across England's best-loved landscape, both west towards Coniston Old Man and North towards Ambleside, the Langdale fells and Helvellyn beyond.

2. Take a ferry ride to a world-famous farmhouse – take the ferry across Windermere to Far Sawrey – then walk up through the woods to Beatrix

Potter's farmhouse Hill Top. She bought it with the proceeds from her first book, the Tale of Peter Rabbit, and left it to the National Trust with strict instructions about how it should be preserved. It's a time capsule: full of her favourite things, the house appears as though she's just stepped out for a walk – and every room tells a story. There's a half-mile nature walk from Hill Top to Esthwaite Water too – with storyboards about Potter's characters.

3. Play the Ruskin Rocks at Brantwood – although most rocks simply give a dull thud when struck, some rocks 'ring'. Scientists have created a 21st century version of John Ruskin's slate lithophone, using four different types of 'ringing rocks' found across Cumbria. It's a 49-key, four octave instrument ... and you can play it when you visit Ruskin's home Brantwood, on the edge of Coniston Water.

4. Write on Wordsworth's walls – partially restored and undecorated following a fire in 2011, Allan Bank – where Wordsworth lived for three years – is a visitor attraction like no other. It's a place where parents can relax in front of a warm fire with a cup of tea while the children play the piano in the hall, draw or paint in the art room, play board games, follow the woodland trail, and yes, they can even write comments and ideas on the walls. Instead of a regular tea room, there's a warm and homely kitchen where you can sit at the big refectory table and help yourself to sandwiches, soup, cakes, snacks and drinks. The whole idea is to make yourselves at home in this, "the loveliest spot that man hath ever found" (Wordsworth).

5. Walk among mysterious stones – from Keswick, walk along the disused Threlkeld railway line then turn off to a sweeping plateau where there's a mysterious sight: 38 chunks of volcanic stone that have stood here for 4,500 years. Local legend says the stones are men, petrified for their sins. This is Castlerigg, one of the UK's earliest stone circles, thought to have been built by Neolithic farmers 1,000 years before Stonehenge. With its backdrop of England's highest mountains – Skiddaw to the north and Helvellyn to the south – it may have been an astronomical observatory and a place for meeting and trading.