



Pennine Way National Trail

England/Scotland

Start Old Nag's Head, Edale, Derbyshire End Border Hotel, Kirk Yetholm, Scottish Borders Distance 268 miles (431 km) Time 14–16 days Grade Strenuous Type Country paths Info goo.gl/2XNqbE

It was Tom Stephenson—journalist, champion of walkers' rights, and from 1948 the secretary of the Rambler's Association—who wrote in an article published in the *Daily Herald* on June 22, 1935 titled "Wanted: A Long, Green Trail" that it was about time England had a national trail of the type the United States had been introducing. What he proposed eventually became, thirty years later at its official opening in 1965, the Pennine Way, a 256-mile-long (412 km) route across the backbone of the Pennines, separating northeast and northwest England, running from the Peak District in Derbyshire to Kirk Yetholm in Scotland. It is not a walk for novices. Covering its entire length will see you walk across more than 200 bridges and through almost 300 gates, and pass by more than 450 waymarkers. Of course, you are also free to do as little or as much of it as you like by joining the trail at one of its more than 530 access points.

Most walk it from south to north because the guide books are oriented that way, but from whichever end you begin, walking it will be a life-changing experience: Yorkshire Dales National Park, Hadrian's Wall, and Northumberland National Park, from the South Pennines' gritstone moors to the remoteness of the North Pennines and the glorious bleakness of the Cheviot Hills. There are many highlights. For some it is the clints and grikes of the carboniferous limestone pavements above Malham Cove; for others it is the descent from Auchope Cairn to the mountain hut above Hen Hole. Whatever it is, wherever it is, be sure to come here and find it. And have something awe-inspiring about which to tell your grandchildren. **BDS**



"Offers some of the finest upland walking in England. A once in a lifetime experience."

www.nationaltrail.co.uk

📍 The Pennine Way crossing Hadrian's Wall near Roman defensive structure Turret 37a in Northumberland.

📍 Outcrops of carboniferous limestone paving above Malham Cove in North Yorkshire.



Slovenian Mountain Trail Podravska to Obalno-Kraska, Slovenia

Start Maribor **End** Ankaran **Distance** 310 miles (499 km) **Time** 6–8 weeks **Grade** Strenuous **Type** Mountain and ridge trails, forest paths **Info** goo.gl/6Lji6M

There are more than 6,000 miles (9,656 km) of trails weaving their way through Slovenia, and of those, more than 80 percent are mountain trails. The E7, which runs from the Black Sea to the Atlantic, enters Slovenia in the region of Primorska and runs through the south of the country before exiting into Croatia. The E6 runs from the Adriatic to the Baltic seas, enters Slovenian territory at Koroska in the northwest, and runs south to Notranjska. Slovenia can be proud of its mountain trails, and not only its segments of Europe's long-distance footpaths, either. Long before there was an E6 or an E7, or any other Es for that matter, there was the Slovenian Mountain Trail, Europe's very first long-distance trail.

Opened in 1953, this popular trail, so beloved of the Slovenian people, was initially meant to be a circular trail that began and ended in the northeast in

the medieval town of Maribor on the Drava River. It was then changed to link up the country's wealth of mountainous hiking trails and now runs for 310 miles (499 km), from Maribor to Ankaran in the country's deep southwest near the Italian border overlooking the Gulf of Trieste. The trail traverses all of the country's primary Alpine ranges, including the volcanic Pohorje range, and the limestone-encrusted Julian, Kamnik, and Karawank Alps. If you hike through, you'll have ascended an astonishing 28 miles (45 km) on a direct route that includes the summit of Mount Triglav itself, which, at 9,396 feet (2,864 m), is Slovenia's highest point, as the trail makes its way south over a series of east-west alpine ridges on its final approaches into sunny Ankaran. **BDS**

 Walk Europe's very first long-distance trail.



Risnjak National Park Primorsko Goranska, Croatia

Start/End Risnjak National Park entrance, Bijela Vodica **Distance** Various **Time** Various **Grade** Easy **Type** Grass and forest trails **Info** goo.gl/LIHP5K

Located in the mountainous "great green heart of Croatia," Risnjak National Park is part of a lovely crescent-shaped range of mountains that begins to the north of Croatia in Slovenia and arcs its way south in a mesmerizing mix of limestone-riddled valleys and forests full of bare, rocky peaks and hidden dells. The area has been a magnet for scientists and botanists since the early 1800s because of its exceptional diversity of flora and fauna, and in 1949, botanist Ivo Horvat suggested the area be set aside as a national park. A small section was protected in 1956, and this was later enlarged and the park established in 1997. It is small, just 24.5 square miles (63.5 sq km), but it is nevertheless a key area of conservancy, a meeting point for coastal and continental vegetation zones and an overlapping region between the Dinaric and Alpine zones.

The park is characterized by karst features, such as dry meadows, underground streams, and deep caves. The Risnjak and Snjeznik massifs connecting the Alps and Dinaric mountains are an important biological corridor for plants and animals, including wolves and lynx, and its seldom-seen brown bears.

Naturally, there are numerous trails, but it would be negligent to single out any one trail and divert attention from the rest. Everywhere you walk, there is a trail, whether you're walking on a carpet of narrow-leaf bluegrass, carnation grass, or evergreen sedge, whether on the junegrass around dwarf pines or through meadows of tall oat grass. This was a palette of green, long before anyone thought to put down a trail. **BDS**

 Risnjak is Croatia's beating heart of biodiversity.