



▶ A Stargazers' Guide

Did you know Cumbria has some of the darkest skies in the country, making it a great place for stargazing? If you're lucky, you may even catch a glimpse of the Northern Lights. Pick a place to stay and head outdoors when the sun sets.

★ Highlights

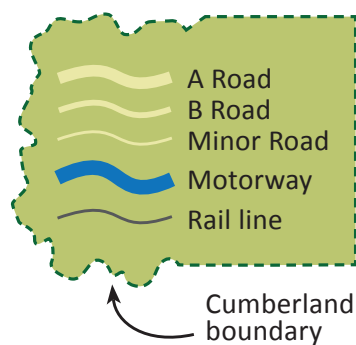
- Remote valleys
- Michelin stars
- The Northern Lights



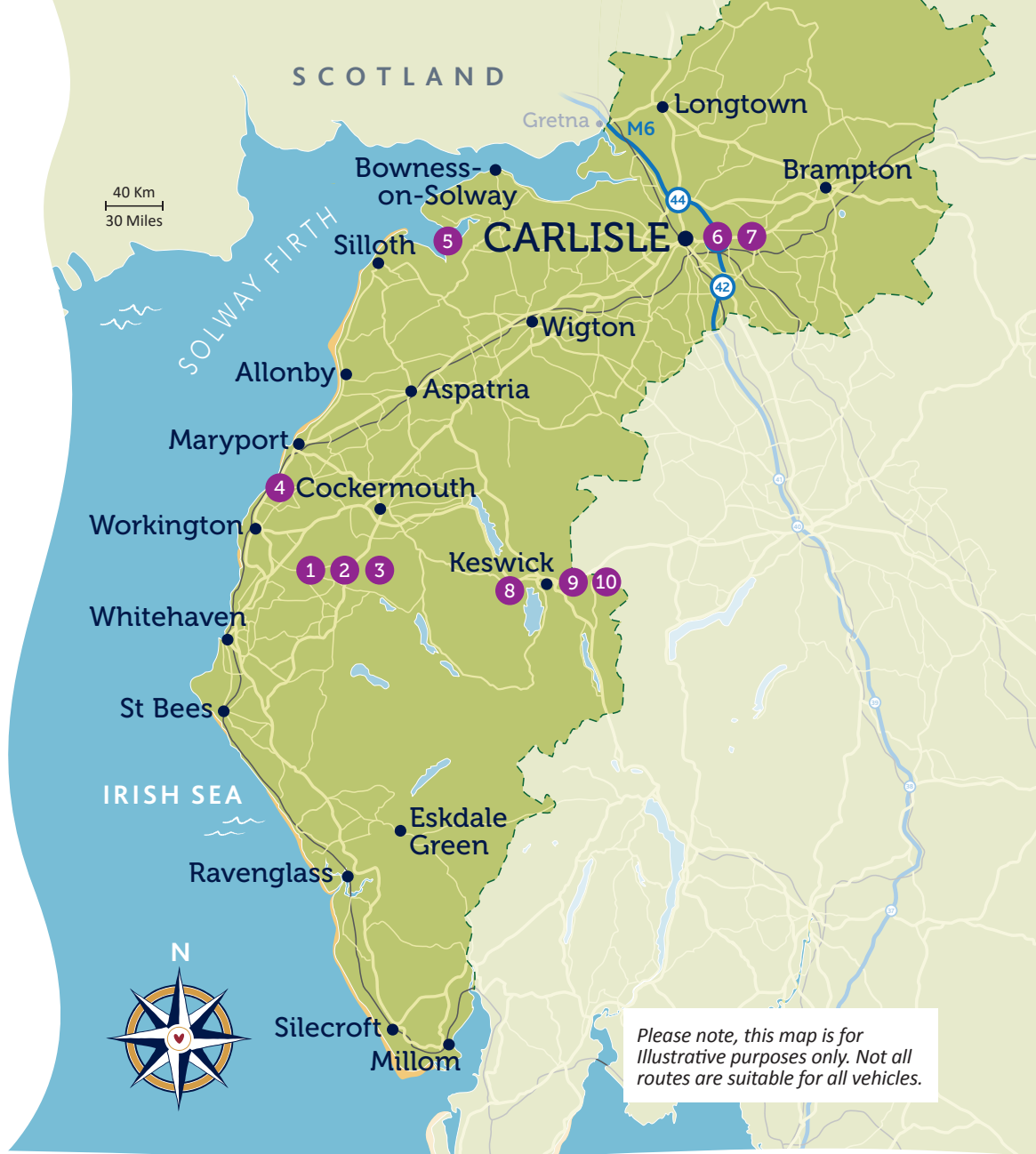
© Castlerigg Hall

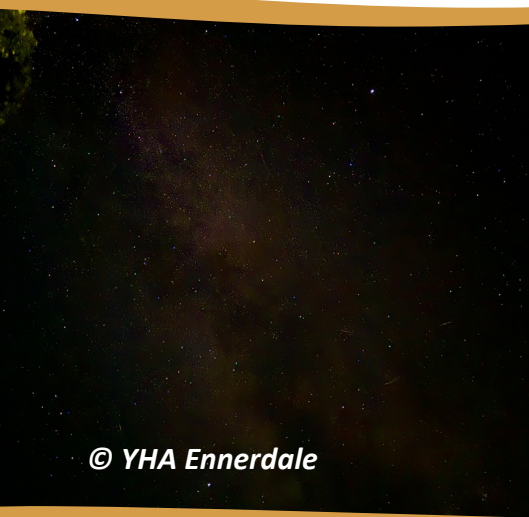


MAP & KEY



- 1 Points of interest
- Open all year
- On public transport route
- P Parking
- P Accessible Parking/
Drop off point
- Wheelchair access
- WC Accessible toilets
- Hearing loop
- Refreshments available
- Wifi
- Dog Friendly
- ACCOMMODATION ONLY:**
- ★ Star Rating
- £ Price indicator
- VE/AA Visit England / AA





© YHA Ennerdale



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DAY 1

Wild Ennerdale

Visit the landscapes of the remote Ennerdale valley: an area carefully managed to reduce human intervention, with incredible dark skies as a result.

1 Low Gillerthwaite Field Centre Ennerdale, Cleator CA23 3AX

This official Dark Sky Discovery Site is located on a 17th century farm, with a 2-acre private field offering excellent stargazing opportunities. The Field Centre provides self-catering accommodation for up to 40 people, and is popular with groups as well as amateur astronomers.

Keep an eye out for regular stargazing events to light up your visit!



www



2 YHA Ennerdale Cat Crag, Ennerdale Bridge, Cleator CA23 3AX

Alternatively, stay at this friendly YHA which is located in former forestry buildings and offers accommodation for everyone from solo travellers to groups.



www

3 Bowness Knott Car Park Cleator CA23 3AX

Near the shores of Ennerdale Water, this remote car park makes for a great place to gaze at the night sky. Stay in nearby Ennerdale Bridge, where you'll find a range of pubs and cosy accommodation options.



DAY 2

The Solway Coast

With stunning sunsets and incredible dark skies, the Solway Coast National Landscape is an unmissable location for stargazing.

4 Armidale Cottages B&B High Seaton, Workington CA14 1PD

This family run B&B boasts a peaceful location near the Solway Coast, and low levels of light pollution - meaning you'll enjoy wonderful views of the night sky.

There's lots of outdoor space from which to see the stars, and a Dark Sky package includes use of a Sky-watcher telescope as well as blankets, hot water bottles, hot drinks and snacks to help you stay warm while admiring the stars.

📶 🚗 P 📶 ☕ £ - ££ [www](http://www.armidalecottages.co.uk)

5 Campfield Marsh Nature Reserve RSPB Campfield Marsh, Wigton CA7 5AG

On the north of the Solway Coast, this RSPB nature reserve is a great place to watch the sun set before the stars come out.

The Northern Lights in Cumbria

If you're lucky, and conditions allow, you may be in for a real treat with a glimpse of the Aurora Borealis - also known as the Northern Lights! Recent years have seen several sightings of this natural phenomenon, to varying degrees of intensity.

While there's no guarantee, keep an eye on the aurora forecast (several apps and websites will share when it's likely to be visible above the UK) and you may just catch it. From coastal locations like Maryport, St Bees and the Solway Coast to the dark skies of the Lake District countryside, there are plenty of places to enjoy the view.





© Discover Carlisle



DAY 3

Carlisle

Not far from the city lights of Carlisle, you'll find inky black skies and fantastic stargazing opportunities.

6 Talkin Tarn Pavilion

Tarn Road, Brampton CA8 1HN

The pretty Talkin Tarn Country Park is a great place to visit during the day, with watersports, a cafe, and accessible trails around a glacial lake. When the sun sets, it's also a fantastic place to admire the night sky. There's even an open topped Skygazing Pavilion, The Nest: opened in 2023, it's a peaceful place to stargaze.

[www](http://www.talkintarn.co.uk)



7 Farlam Hall

Hallbankgate, Brampton CA8 2NG

Stay at nearby Farlam Hall, where the night sky isn't the only home to the stars! The hotel's restaurant boasts one Michelin star, while there's also a casual dining option, Bistro Enkel. Located in tranquil countryside, see what you can spot from your window.

[www](http://www.farlamhall.co.uk)



© Farlam Hall



DAY 4

Keswick

The countryside around this traditional market town offers regular stargazing events and plenty of photo opportunities.

8 Whinlatter Forest

Whinlatter Pass, Keswick CA12 5TW

England's only true mountain forest plays host to dark sky events throughout the year, from full moon circles to forest bathing beneath the stars. Look out for photography sessions; stargazing walks; and more, as part of Cumbria's Dark Skies Festival every autumn.



9 Castlerigg Hall

Castlerigg Hall, Castlerigg, Keswick CA12 4TE

Sleep beneath the stars at this holiday park near Keswick. As well as camping pitches, there are Hex Pods with skylights if you'd prefer to stay warm! Binoculars are available to borrow, and there's minimal lighting on site at night-time to boost visibility.



Save The Date

Keep an eye out for the Cumbria Dark Skies Festival. Held annually in October / November, it's a celebration of Cumbria's dark skies.

10 Castlerigg Stone Circle

Castle Ln, Keswick CA12 4RN

Standing at around 5,000 years old, this atmospheric stone circle enjoys a dramatic location against the backdrop of Helvellyn and High Seat. With panoramic views and a striking appearance, it's a great choice for the perfect photo of the stars.



DID YOU KNOW? While the circle's purpose remains unknown, many think its arrangement suggests astronomical significance, with some stones aligning with planets and stars!