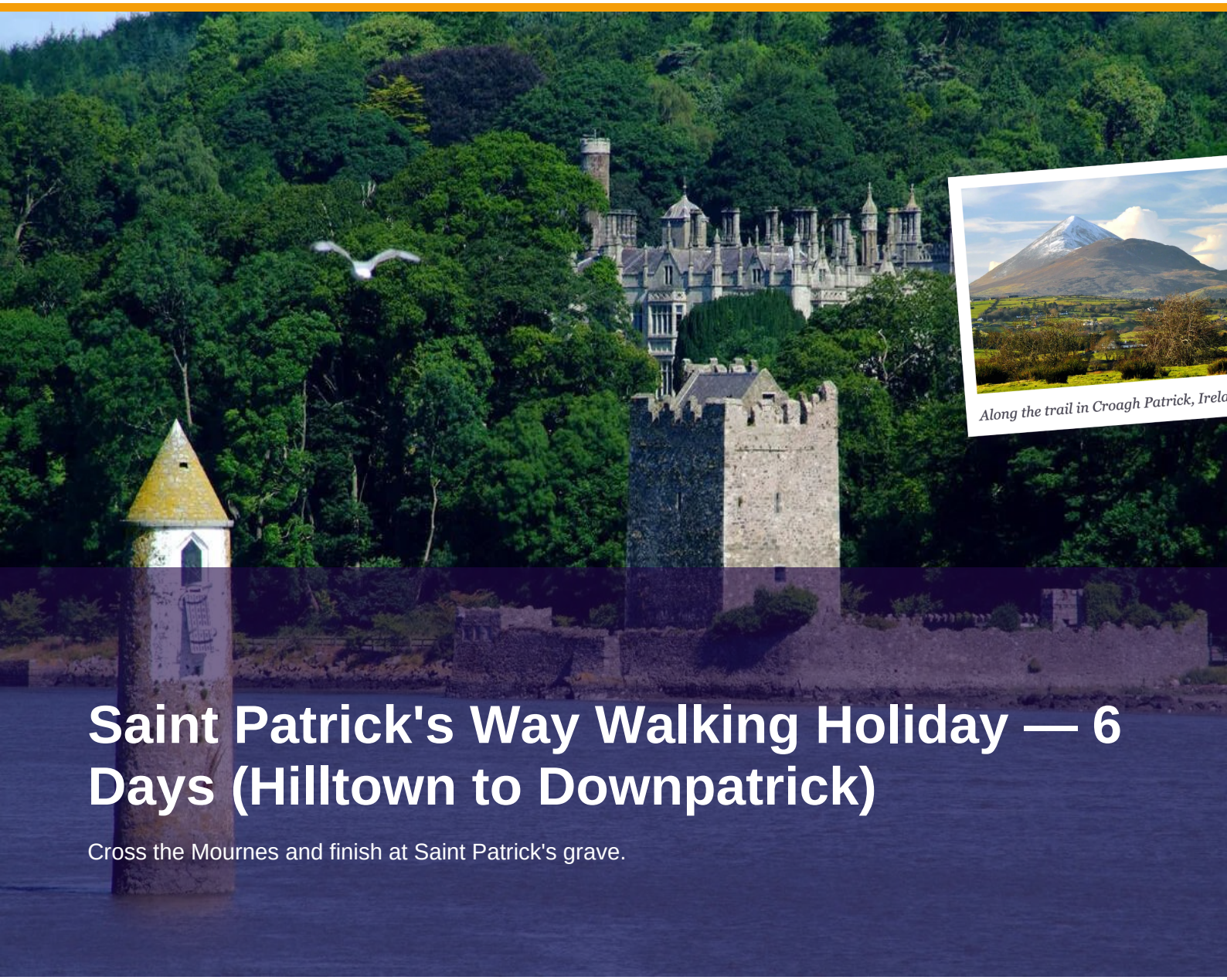


Saint Patrick's Way Walking Holiday — 6 Days (Hilltown to Downpatrick)

Cross the Mournes and finish at Saint Patrick's grave.

DURATION	WALKING DAYS	TOTAL DISTANCE	GRADE
6 days	3	57.2 km	Moderate

From

€755

per person

Book or enquire at

walkingholidayireland.com/walking-tours

See website for current rates

About This Tour

Walk the Mournes from Hilltown to Newcastle, take a rest day under Slieve Donard, then complete the pilgrimage along the coast to Saint Patrick's grave at Downpatrick. 5 nights, 3 walking days, Pilgrim Certificate.

Tour Highlights

- **The Mourne Mountains Crossing**
  Day 2 is the headline: 26km from Hilltown across the western Mournes to Newcastle. Heather moorland, granite peaks, Tollymore Forest Park, and a finish where the mountains sweep down to the sea.

- **Rest Day in Newcastle**
  A full day in Newcastle below Slieve Donard — Northern Ireland's highest peak. Beach, harbour, Victorian promenade. Climb Slieve Donard if you have the legs, or just sit by the sea and watch the Mournes you crossed yesterday.

- **Murlough Nature Reserve**
  Day 4 threads through Murlough National Nature Reserve — Ireland's first nature reserve, a 6,000-year-old sand-dune system managed by the National Trust. Marram grass, wading birds, views back to the Mournes.

- **Saint Patrick's Grave**
  The final day finishes at Down Cathedral and the boulder marking Saint Patrick's grave. Present your stamped Pilgrim Passport at the Saint Patrick Centre for your Certificate of Achievement. You have completed Ireland's Camino.

Who Is It For?

Your fitness level
Moderate, with one demanding mountain day. Day 2 — Hilltown to Newcastle — is 26km across exposed Mourne foothills with 743m of cumulative ascent. You need proper hiking boots, waterproofs and the experience to walk in mountain terrain for a full day. The other two walking days are shorter and easier.

The right kind of traveller
You want the mountain stage and the pilgrim finish without committing to the full 9 days from Armagh. You may have already walked Part A (Armagh to Hilltown) on a previous trip — or you simply want the most dramatic half of the route.

Solo, couples, groups
Strong solo walkers love the Mournes crossing. Couples motivate each other through the big day. Small groups share the mountain experience.

Day-by-Day Itinerary

DAY 1

Arrive Hilltown

Overnight: Hilltown

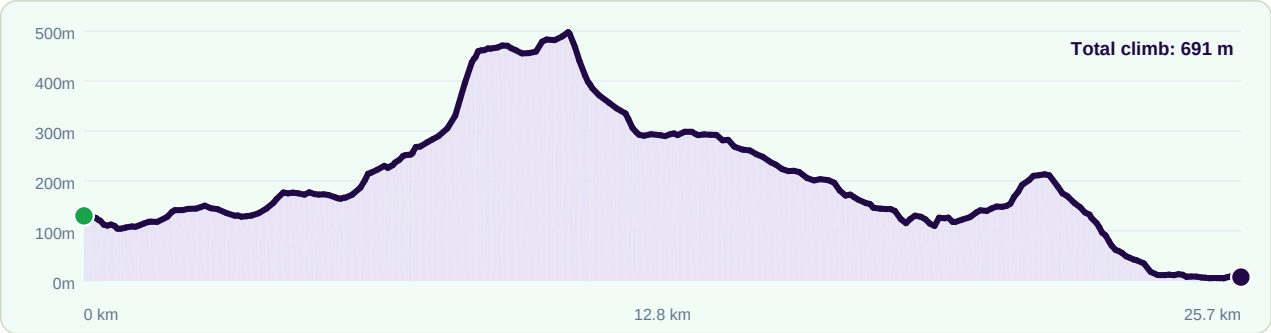
Arrive in Hilltown, the upland gateway to the Mournes — eight pubs on the main street and the high peaks rising to the east. Settle into your B&B, collect your route notes and Pilgrim Passport, and walk down to the River Bann if there's daylight. Quiet evening, early night — tomorrow is the Mourne crossing.

DAY 2

Hilltown to Newcastle — Mourne Mountains

Walk: SPW Hilltown to Newcastle (26 km) · Overnight: Newcastle

ROUTE 26 km · 521 m ascent · Challenging



26 km · 7–9 hours · Mourne foothills + Tollymore Forest

The big day. From Hilltown the trail follows the Mourne Way along the northern foothills of the high Mournes — Slieve Bearnagh, Slieve Commedagh, Slieve Donard rising in the distance. The route contours rather than summits, but the exposure and the views are real. The second half drops into Tollymore Forest Park, an 18th-century demesne of stone bridges, ancient oaks and stepping-stone river crossings (a Game of Thrones filming location). Down through the park to Newcastle — where the Mountains of Mourne sweep down to the sea.

DAY 3

Rest Day in Newcastle

Overnight: Newcastle

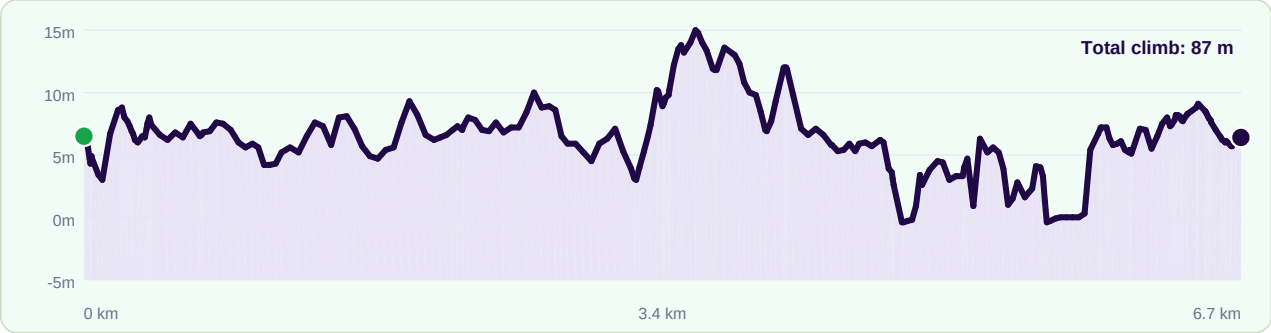
A built-in rest day under Slieve Donard. The beach is yours. Walk the Victorian promenade, visit the harbour, eat well. If your legs are willing, the trail up Slieve Donard (850m, Northern Ireland's highest peak) starts from the seafront — 9km return, the finest view in Ulster. If not, sit and let the Mournes sit with you.

DAY
4

Newcastle to Dundrum

Walk: SPW Newcastle To Dundrum (6.7 km) · Overnight: Dundrum

ROUTE 6.7 km · 9 m ascent · Easy



6.7 km · 2 hours · Coast and dunes

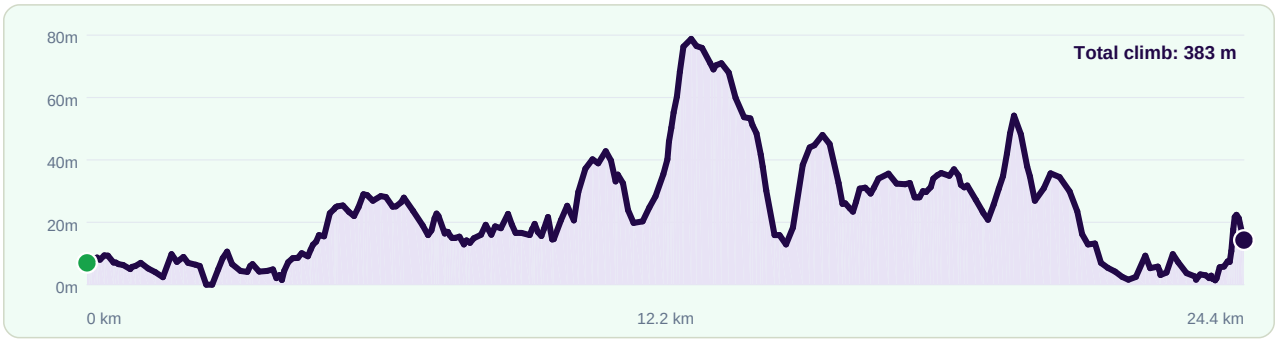
A short, easy recovery day. Past Royal County Down Golf Club and into Murlough National Nature Reserve — Ireland's first nature reserve, an ancient sand-dune system. Boardwalks thread between marram-grass dunes with views back to the Mournes. Into Dundrum village under the ruins of a 12th-century Norman castle; the village is known for its oyster and mussel beds, so eat seafood.

DAY
5

Dundrum to Downpatrick — Saint Patrick's Grave

Walk: SPW Dundrum To Downpatrick (24.5 km) · Overnight: Downpatrick

ROUTE 24.5 km · 183 m ascent · Challenging



24.5 km · 6–7 hours · Heritage trail through Patrician sites

The final pilgrimage day. Out of Dundrum past the Norman castle ruins and back through the edge of Murlough's mudflats, then north through the Strangford & Lecale AONB. The route passes Saul Church — the site of Saint Patrick's first church in Ireland, a barn given to him by the chieftain Dichu in 432 — and Struell Wells, four ancient holy wells traditionally associated with the saint. The trail climbs into Downpatrick to Down Cathedral and the boulder marking Saint Patrick's grave. Present your stamped Passport at the Saint Patrick Centre for your Certificate of Achievement. The pilgrimage is complete.

DAY
6

Departure from Downpatrick

A pilgrim's final morning. Visit Down Cathedral one more time. The Saint Patrick Centre, Struell Wells, and Inch Abbey are all worth an hour if you have it. Castle Ward — Winterfell in Game of Thrones — is 15 minutes away. Transfer to Belfast or Dublin, taking your Certificate and your memories with you.

Ready to Walk Ireland?

Every tour is self-guided with hand-picked accommodation, daily luggage transfer, detailed route notes and GPX files, plus our personal local support throughout your walk. Dates and group sizes are flexible — just ask.

What's Included

- ✓ Accommodation: Welcoming en-suite B&B rooms
- ✓ Breakfast: Full Irish breakfast every morning
- ✓ Luggage Transfer: Daily transfer of your main bag between accommodations
- ✓ Personalised Itinerary and route app for your smart phone that keeps you on the trail at all times.
- ✓ Support: 24/7 emergency support throughout your holiday
- ✓ Pre-Departure Pack: Information pack sent before you travel, so you know exactly what to expect

Not Included

- ✗ Flights: Travel to Ireland is not included
- ✗ Insurance: You'll need travel and walking holiday insurance
- ✗ Meals: Lunches and dinners are not included (though we'll recommend great local spots)

St Patricks Way N.I.

Get in touch

Email:info@walkingholidayireland.com

Web:walkingholidayireland.com

This tour:walkingholidayireland.com/walking-tours/saint-patricks-way-6-days-part-b

FROM

€755

per person

See website for current rates