

Vermont Inn to Inn Walking
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Vermont Inn to Inn Walking Tour, 2023 Season Frequently Asked Questions

We know that our *Vermont Inn to Inn Walking Tour* is a unique concept; for most people it generates a lot of enthusiasm ...and questions. Read through the information below and then if you're still pondering something, don't hesitate to contact us. Our email address and toll-free phone number are listed at the top of every page.

The Vermont Inn to Inn Walking Tour includes four nights with dinner and overnight lodging, each followed by breakfast and a self-guided scenic walk of up to 13 miles per day. We deliver your luggage to the next inn for you, so you carry only your day pack and the snacks we give you for your walk.

Your fourth and final walk is *after* your fourth overnight of the Walking Tour, bringing you back to your car in the afternoon, after having just walked up to 13 miles. Consider booking a fifth night at an inn of your choice so you can relax and dine out after your final walk, saving your travel home for the next day. You'll be glad you did.

How the tour works:

The walking route is a circle. You leave your car at the first inn and eventually, on your final walking day, you walk back to it.

You start by checking in to your first inn (between 3 and 6pm) and enjoying dinner and overnight lodging. After breakfast, you begin your first walk. Repeat this three more times. So, your fourth night of lodging is followed by breakfast and then your fourth long walk (back to your starting point).

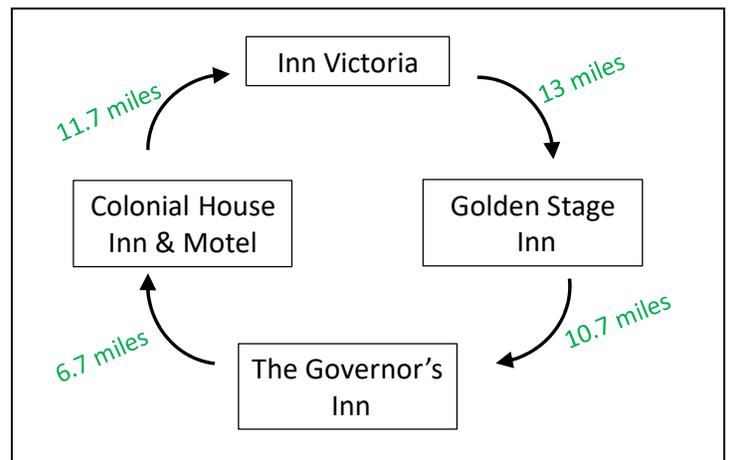
With this, we encourage guests to plan their travels accordingly. **Booking a 5th night directly with the inn of your choice is the perfect way to end the walking tour.** It gives you a place to shower after your final walk (you'll want one!), and you'll have your car so you can drive to dinner (you'll want some!) and conclude with a great night's rest (you'll need one!), saving your travels home for the next day.

When are the tours offered?

We offer tours from May 15 through the end of October, starting on the following dates in 2023:

May 15, 21, 26, 31
Jun 5, 11, 16, 21, 26
Jul 5, 10, 16, 23, 30
Aug 6, 13, 20, 27
Sep 10, 17, 24
Oct 1, 8, 15, 22, 27

On the start date you should plan to arrive at the first inn by 6pm for dinner, with your first walk starting the next morning after breakfast. For all dates, we agree with you on a starting date, and then we assign the starting location.



When is the best time to travel? And when is the foliage at its peak?

Truly, each season has its own right to brag. Spring in Vermont is even less crowded than its typical uncrowdedness, and the trees are bursting with spring shades of green. Summer starts most days cool and then only rarely do we get super hot (mid-90s). And September and October? Oh, we could go on for paragraphs about the beauty of these months in Vermont. If you're looking for the "best foliage," typically the colors peak somewhere between the last week of September and the first two weeks of October.

What are the inns like?

Whether in the village or on remote rural roads, whether updated with the newest spa bathrooms or still reflecting the Vermont inn simplicity of yesteryear, each of the four inns is charming, clean, and eager to welcome you after your long day's walk. Rooms at all of the inns have one queen bed (unless a room with two beds is requested by you and confirmed by us at the time of booking), and all rooms have a private bathroom, which may be located ensuite or across the hall, but is never shared with other guests. Preference for a king bed can be noted as a request in your reservation, but it cannot be guaranteed.

What are the walks like?

The daily walks range from 7 to 13 miles, averaging just over 10 miles per day. Some of our walks are door to door, while some of the routes require that the innkeeper drives you to a starting location. The routes are not trail walking. You will be walking on a lot of packed dirt roads, but many paved roads too, virtually all of which are open to traffic. However, the routes are through rural areas, so "traffic," as most people think of it, is not a significant factor in this walking tour.

Unlike the European walking tours many of our guests have enjoyed, our walks do not go through little villages. You will be walking on rural roads, with no bathrooms or picnic areas. (The wooded areas along the roadside will need to be your provider of both.) The walking routes are through "rural residential" areas, passing New England architecture, green pastures, winding rivers, and occasional mountain vistas. Miles and miles of wooded roads promise serenity and contemplation.

The routes are hilly. We are often surprised at how often our guests are surprised by the hills, so this paragraph is here to stop that common cycle. We are IN the Green Mountains. The walks consist of long, sustained hills. You're virtually always walking up or down. But don't let this info-byte alarm you. You can walk at your own pace and take breaks as often as you'd like. Yes, this is a challenging series of walks, and yes you should train in advance for your comfort and safety, but this tour is not reserved for athletes only.

What if I get tired on the route? Can I call for a ride? Get an uber?

Well, Uber and Lyft haven't yet discovered rural Vermont, and you won't have cell service on most of your walking routes to make a call anyhow, so calling *anyone* for a ride is not a reliable strategy. Instead, we can modify routes in advance by dropping you off at a delayed starting point. Have crazy blisters and you want to walk only 5 miles instead of that day's full route? No problem. We'll drop you off on the route with only 5 miles left to go. Don't want to walk at all that day because of an injury or stormy weather? No problem. We'll drop you off at the next inn when we deliver luggage. We will require your flexibility to work around our innkeeper schedules, but with that we will help you modify the route as needed. However, once you are on the route, it is self-guided and self-reliant.

Can I just drive the routes?

If you do not want to walk *any* of the routes, yes, you may drive from inn to inn. We have many guests who choose to do this due to health concerns (or mere lack of desire to walk 40+miles in four days!). Instead of missing out on this trip, they opt to enjoy each inn and the many surrounding attractions (shops, historical sites, short & easy walks, etc.). This works wonderfully, but it does eliminate the ability to participate in *any* of the walking routes. For logistical reasons, you cannot drive some days

and walk others as you'd be separating yourself from your car. Innkeepers will not shuttle guests back to their vehicles.

What fitness level is required for this Walking Tour?

Logically, we're going to start this section with the advice that you should consult with your doctor if you have *any* questions or concerns regarding your ability to complete this tour safely. You need to remember that this tour includes walking more than 42 miles uphill and downhill over the course of four days and that you will not have a trail guide or consistent access to cell service. All that said, we have seen all ages, shapes, sizes, and abilities complete this tour. It is very accessible for the average healthy, fit person. And very rewarding!

Is this safe for a single female?

This is a hard one to answer for someone else. Each of our innkeepers reports they would feel safe walking these routes alone. Many single female travelers complete this tour and none have reported that they ever felt unsafe. That said, it is an unaccompanied walking tour, and you will be walking alone in very remote areas without cell service. Many of our walkers choose to bring pepper spray for the "just in case" encounter with a bad dog, bear, or human. (No one has ever used it.)

Should I train for this?

Yes! Although many people can complete the Walking Tour with no training, those who do train typically enjoy it more, reporting fewer blisters, aches, and pains. This isn't just walking ten miles in a day – it's doing so four days in a row. (Try to include hills in your training.)

What shoes should I pack?

We're so glad you asked this! Some guests prefer the ankle support of their hiking boots while others prefer their sneakers and still others love their hiking sandals. Any of these should be fine. When choosing footwear, remember there is a LOT of downhill walking. Be kind to your toes. You will be walking on roads, not trails, so you have a lot of freedom in your shoe choice. However, we have two pieces of advice for you. 1. Bring at least two pairs. If you get blisters from one pair, it's great to put on a different pair the next day, offering those sore spots some relief. 2. Don't buy new shoes for your trip. A forty-two mile walking vacation is NOT the time for breaking in a new pair of shoes. Break in your shoes over the course of time and your feet will thank you.

Can I bring my dog?

No, dogs are not invited. Although we love pooches, and a couple of our inns even have some furry friends for you to love, we cannot allow guest dogs as part of the Walking Tour.

If you are allergic to dogs or cats, please note that some inns have pets that spend time in the public areas and interact with guests. However, these pets do not enter the guest room areas of the inns, so your room will be pet-free. Just let us know when you make your reservation that you have a pet allergy, and we'll help keep our furry friends away from you during your stay.

Can I bring my bicycle?

No, bicycles are not invited. Some of the routes require a drop off by car, and we cannot transport bikes. (Nor can we transport bikes in the event of lightning storms or injury. Just leave them home.)

How many other people will be a part of my tour?

Based on when you travel, you could be the only party on the tour or you could be a part of a group of up to 10 guests. At some inns, all guests dine together at one table, while at other inns, parties dine separately. As for walking, some parties choose to walk separately, while many enjoy the conversation and comradery of their group and choose to walk together. It's entirely up to you (and those in your group).

What food is served as part of the Walking Tour?

At every inn, you will be served a 3-course home-cooked dinner and a full hearty breakfast. Most inns prepare one set meal, planned around the advanced-stated dietary needs and preferences of the group. (If you have allergies, special diets, or even strong preferences, please let us know when you make your reservation.) Then we'll send you off for the day after breakfast with trail snacks and greet you at the next inn with some more snacks to hold you over until dinner. Although a traditional lunch is not included, most guests report *not* wanting a full lunch but feeling fully satisfied with the food offered. That said, if you want to pack a small cooler with added goodies or sandwich-making treats, we'll happily transport that from inn to inn with your luggage (see luggage requirements).

Can you accommodate my special dietary needs?

With advance notice, yes. We will happily accommodate allergies, special diets, even strong preferences, but you need to let us know in advance. Most inns offer only one set meal per group and we design that meal around such accommodations. Be upfront and clear about how strict your needs are so we can prepare accordingly. (Highly allergic to gluten or just trying to eat less carbs? Diabetic diet but because you're walking you won't resist the chocolate cake? Knowing this would be helpful and will help us gauge how to prepare our meals.)

What about alcohol?

We get it! This is an important part of vacation for many! All four of our inns are BYOB. You are welcome to bring your own favorite beverage and enjoy it during your visit to the inn. We will move your alcohol (up to one cooler or box per room) from inn to inn along with your luggage so that it's waiting for you at your next location.

Is there a limit to the amount of luggage we can bring?

The answer is a resounding "YES!" **There is a 30-pound limit per bag, with a 2-bag limit per guest.** Although we innkeepers like to think of ourselves as superheroes, alas, we are mere mortals. We have aging knees and bad backs. We live in historic buildings with narrow staircases and no elevators. We are moving not just your luggage, but the luggage of ten individuals on any given day. You may bring up to 2 bags per person, plus the cooler/box noted above for your alcohol/snacks, but PLEASE keep the weight of your luggage limited to *30 pounds per bag* and *2 bags per person*.

Packing for a trip longer than your four-day walking tour? Please leave all that extra gear in your car (or ask your innkeeper if there's a space at the inn). You do *not* need to bring your two-week-vacation's worth of luggage with you from inn to inn. We thank you. Our staff thanks you. Our backs thank you. Thirty pounds per bag, 2 bags per guest -- it IS realistic.

I'm traveling with friends. Can we have separate beds?

Each inn has only a very limited number of rooms with two beds, so availability sometimes runs out quickly. If having two beds is a *requirement*, be sure to state this upfront when booking. It may limit the dates that are available for your party, but this might be better than cuddling with your companion. If you're traveling with a lifelong BFF and sharing a bed is worth getting the dates you want, just let us know that getting two beds is *preferred*, and each inn will accommodate as they are able.

Seeking triple occupancy? This is a great way to reduce the cost of the trip per person (see rates below), but this will absolutely require bed sharing for two of you as each inn typically offers a room with one queen and one twin.

Of course, renting separate "single occupancy" rooms is a great way to travel with a friend -- without sharing a bathroom or a bed. We have slightly discounted rates for single occupancy rooms in May through August, but rates in September and October are the same whether single or double occupancy.

How much does a Vermont Inn to Inn Walking Tour vacation cost?

Our 2023 rates for May 15 through August 31 are:

- \$2198 for double occupancy (*No, that's not per person, it's per duo.*)
- \$1898 for single occupancy
- \$3297 for triple occupancy (queen plus twin, limited availability)

For September and October, our rates are:

- \$2798 (double or single occupancy)
- \$4197 triple occupancy (queen plus twin, limited availability)

Rates include all lodging, breakfasts, dinners, trail snacks, luggage delivery, and taxes. The only items the package rate does not include are alcohol, a full lunch (but lots of snacks, see notes above), and your optional-but-recommended fifth night. (Rates vary by room and by inn. *Please book directly with the inn of your choice after securing your Walking Tour dates.*)

What about tipping? Are gratuities included?

We've noticed that our guests often feel awkward when asking about this topic, so we figure we'll address it here so you won't have to. As innkeepers, we are more than happy to provide the services and amenities for a fantastic Inn to Inn Walking Tour without anticipation of a gratuity. But each inn has a housekeeping staff who works so hard to get the rooms spiffy and clean for each guest. Even a small tip is a wonderful gesture that brings a smile and sense of 'being appreciated' to our staff. Are tips required? No. Do tips make our staff smile big? You betcha'!!

How do I book?

Booking for 2023? On December 5, 2022, we begin taking 2023 reservations. On Day 1, we accept reservations *by email only* for parties reserving three rooms or more. On Day 2, we accept reservations *by email only* for all parties. On Day 3, we accept *all* reservations *by phone or email*.

Thinking about 2024? We typically start accepting reservations for any given year in early-December preceding that year. If you give us your email address and tell us to add you to our "2024 interest" list, we'll send out a reminder announcement prior to our opening the books.

When it's time to make a reservation, be prepared with the following information:

Names of all travelers

Billing address

Cell phone number you'll likely be traveling with

Email address of the party who will receive the invoice for each room (Please note we will send one invoice per room, which can only be paid with one credit card. We cannot divide the invoice for individual parties.)

Any allergies or dietary restrictions the inns will need to accommodate

If you need any bed configuration other than one bed (*we have very limited availability for rooms with two beds and rooms for triple occupancy*).

When and how do I pay?

Fifty percent of the tour cost is due at the time of reservation. We will send you an electronic invoice that can be paid securely online with a credit card. We cannot take your card information over the phone. The remaining fifty percent of the tour cost will be invoiced in the same manner approximately two weeks prior to your tour start date. Please familiarize yourself with our strictly enforced cancellation policy (below) because nobody likes surprises, especially those that involve our wallets.

What if I need to cancel? Or just postpone?

This is not a fun topic. No one books a trip planning to cancel (or postpone). We've seen all the very real and often tragic reasons that require guests to change plans unexpectedly – sudden illness, an extreme weather event, a death in the family. While we acknowledge that no one cancels for a happy reason, as small businesses we cannot afford to absorb the cost of cancellations or postponements.

With this, know that our cancellation policy described below is strictly enforced. Changing your tour dates impacts us similarly to a cancellation, and therefore the same policy applies. We encourage you to purchase trip insurance from a third party to protect yourself in case of a crisis. Check with your credit card before booking your trip; some cards offer it. Or purchase it independently. A couple of our innkeepers swear by Allianz Travel, but of course you can do your own research.

Our policy for cancelations and postponements is as follows:

If a cancellation is made more than 14 days in advance of your tour start date, 50% of the deposit will be forfeited and 50% refunded (or applied to a future reservation). If a cancellation is made within 14 days of the tour start date, there are absolutely no refunds of any portion of the tour payments.

Postponements are largely regarded the same as cancellations, however if a postponement is made more than 30 days in advance of the start date, we can reduce the forfeited fee to 25% of the deposit, and 75% of the deposit will be applied to the future reservation.

Thinking ahead to packing, what should I bring?

We all have that mental checklist we use just before we walk out the door, right? (Wallet... cell phone... glasses...) You will get a more complete list with your tour confirmation packet, but this is the Walking Tour version of that abbreviated “must have” list.

- Layers (Helps to accommodate a variety of weather)

- Rain gear

- Two pairs of walking shoes (change is good)

- Band-aids / moleskin /blister prevention and treatment

- Ibuprofen

- Sunscreen

- Bug spray

- Sunglasses

- Maybe toilet paper (and definitely a Ziploc bag for transporting your soggy toilet paper)

When packing, please remember our requirement that no piece of luggage weighs more than **30 pounds**. (If you'd struggle carrying it from the car, into the inn, up a flight of stairs, and down a long hallway, so will we!)

How can I best plan my travels to and from the Walking Tour?

Planes, trains, and automobiles! We love that our guests travel from all over the world for our Walking Tour and here we'll try to help you navigate the many choices that are available to you. Keep in mind that we are rural Vermont: this means we do not have a plethora of hired or public transportation available. Advance planning is pretty important when trying to travel in our area.

Car rentals: Even though it may feel pointless to rent a car that will just be sitting at the inn for four days, many guests are happier doing this as it allows you tourist-flexibility on your way to and from the inn. Vermont is rural – This means shops and attractions aren't in close walking distance from the inn and we don't have public transportation, so we rely heavily on driving ourselves from place to place. But if for some reason a car rental is not feasible for you, read on. We can provide* transportation from Dartmouth Coach in Lebanon, Amtrak - Rutland, Amtrak - Bellows Falls, or Rutland airport.

From Boston, MA (Logan Airport): You can rent a car from Boston and then drive 2.5-3.5 hours (depending on traffic) to your starting inn. OR take the bus (Dartmouth Coach) from Boston to West Lebanon NH. Then hire us* to pick you up and bring you to your starting inn. OR take the CapeAir or JetBlue shuttle flight from Boston to Rutland, VT and then hire us* to transport you to the inn.

From New York City (multiple airports): You can rent a car and drive 5 hours to the inn. OR take an Amtrak train to one of our nearby stations (Bellows Falls, VT or Rutland, VT). From there, you can hire us* to transport you from the train station to your starting inn.

Burlington, VT (Burlington International Airport): You can rent a car and enjoy the scenic two-hour drive. (Be sure to choose scenic Route 100 and plan extra time. The journey can be a part of your fun!)

Bradley Airport in Hartford, CT, or Manchester Regional Airport of Manchester, NH, or Albany International Airport of Albany, NY: Rent a car and drive two hours to your starting inn.

***How do I hire transportation services from the Walking Tour?**

If needed, we can pick you up from and drop you off at the two nearby Vermont Amtrak train stations (Bellows Falls and Rutland), or the Rutland airport, or the Dartmouth Coach bus station in Lebanon, NH. The cost is \$125 per ride (so \$250 to pick you up and later drop you off).

Please be in touch with any remaining questions.

We are four distinctly unique inns and we look forward to welcoming you to each of them.

Golden Stage Inn
399 Depot Street
Proctorsville, VT 05153
802-226-7744
www.goldenstageinn.com

Inn Victoria
321 Main St.
Chester, VT 05143
802-875-4288
www.innvictoria.com

Colonial House Inn
287 VT-100
Weston, VT 05161
800-639-5033
www.cohoinn.com

The Governor's Inn
86 Main St.
Ludlow, VT 05149
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www.thegovernorsinn.com