

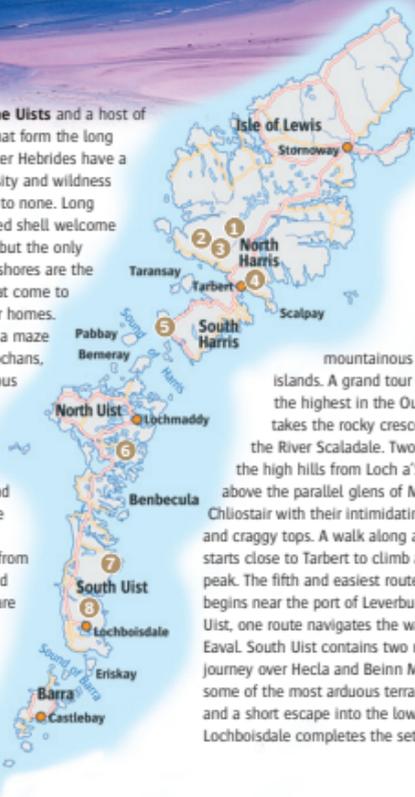


Lewis, Harris, the Uists and a host of smaller islands that form the long wedge of the Outer Hebrides have a geographic diversity and wildness of terrain second to none. Long beaches of crushed shell welcome the Atlantic surf, but the only crowds on these shores are the flocks of birds that come to make their winter homes.

The hinterland is a maze of machair and lochans, with bogs as porous as sponge. From these flatlands rise the mountains: craggy, savage and unfrequented. The islands are well served by ferries from Ullapool, Skye and Oban, and there are also several air routes.

This section features five routes on Harris, the most

mountainous of all these islands. A grand tour of Clisham, the highest in the Outer Hebrides, takes the rocky crescent around the River Scaladale. Two routes enter the high hills from Loch a'Siar to walk above the parallel glens of Meavaig and Chliostair with their intimidating buttresses and craggy tops. A walk along a nature trail starts close to Tarbert to climb a single peak. The fifth and easiest route on Harris begins near the port of Leverburgh. On North Uist, one route navigates the waterscape of Eaval. South Uist contains two routes: a long journey over Hecla and Beinn Mhór traverses some of the most arduous terrain in Britain; and a short escape into the low hills of Lochboisdale completes the set.



The Outer Hebrides

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| 1 | The Clisham | 8 | |
| | Exposed ridge walk that climbs the highest point in the Outer Hebrides with views over the peaks and lochans of North Harris | | |
| 2 | Mighty cliffs of Sron Ulladale | 10 | |
| | Circuit of Tirga Mór on Harris with a varied approach and views of a natural landmark on the return | | |
| 3 | High on Harris | 12 | |
| | Varied route following fine ridges to climb Uisgnaval Mór and Teilesval. Few paths higher up, but good tracks to return | | |
| 4 | Road to Reinigeadal | 14 | |
| | Intricate route to climb Toddun on Harris, with a nature trail to start, a lochside return and coastal views | | |
| 5 | On the Toe Head machair | 16 | |
| | Fascinating half-day walk over one gentle peak and along the coast on a rich and varied peninsula of South Harris | | |
| 6 | Eaval's maze | 18 | |
| | Well-known peak at the centre of North Uist's wildest terrain, with spectacular views. Good navigation skills are essential | | |
| 7 | Uist wilderness | 20 | |
| | Venture into some exceptionally challenging terrain, over Hecla, Beinn Corodale and Beinn Mhór. Keen navigation required | | |
| 8 | Hills of Lochboisdale | 22 | |
| | Short route over two small hills near the village of Lochboisdale on the island of South Uist | | |

The Clisham

An Clisham (799m),
Mulla-Fo-Dhaes (743m)

Walk time 6h40 Height gain 1200m
Distance 17km OS Map Landranger 14

Multiple summits with plenty of ascent and complex ground on a rocky ridge. Some high mountain paths and a good track to return.

Start at the sign for the Frith Rathaud (Harris Way), 800m south of the Scaladale Centre (GR186096). (Good roadside parking.) The sign marks the start of a renovated track, once the postal route to Tarbert from Stornoway. After a gentle

southwards climb for about 1.5km, the track takes you to a bealach with a bench and lochan. Leave the track here to bear westwards across bog: complex knolls make for a tough ascent to reach the better slopes of Tomnaval's east ridge. Climb this to the top, which is marked by a cairn. Descend on the west side and begin the steep slopes of An Clisham. Take these directly up the eastern face, where a band of crags at the top can be easily breached to reach the rocky summit (GR155073) (3h). The ridge around Loch Vistem is a great experience, with views to all sides and some exposure over steep drops. To



descend, hop north over jagged boulders for 200m before the west ridge takes you more easily down to a bealach. Climb several small knolls before the craggy Mulla-Fo-Dhaes. This can be taken direct on its ridge or along an exposed path on the northern side to reach the summit. Drop northwards from the top and climb Mulla-Fo-Thuath, passing a noticeable band of quartz en route to the steep craggy top. Descend north

through awkward boulderfields, keeping close to the steep eastern corrie to reach another bealach. Continue over Mullach an Langa and drop steeply over grass and scree to Cnoc a'Chaisteil, a boggy bealach. Rather than climb Mò Vigadale, contour NNE over boggy ground to gain Bealach na h-Uamha after 1km. Follow an excellent grassy track east from here to the main road at Bàgh Vigadale. Walk south along the road back to the start (6h40).

The Gatliff hostels

Assistant Secretary in the Treasury, Herbert Gatliff was closely linked to the development of the many outdoor access movements in the 1930s, including the National Trust, Youth Hostel Association (YHA) and the Ramblers Association. A frequent visitor to the Hebrides, he decided to set up hostels on the Western Isles where the YHA had no base. There are currently Gatliff hostels at Reingeadal, Howmore, Berneray and Garenin.

