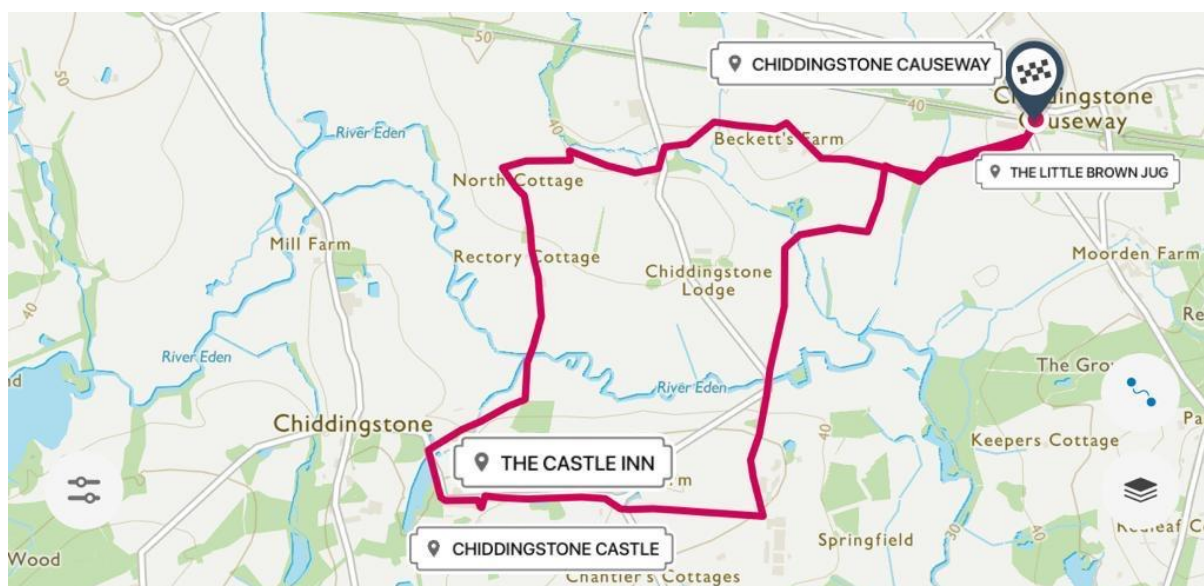


Walk 15 – The Castle On The Hill

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Description: A circular walk to the picture-perfect Tudor village of Chiddingstone, including a visit to the mythical Chiding Stone, spectacular hilltop views and the opportunity to explore the curious castle.

Length: 4.06 miles / 6.5 km (approximately 2 hours, longer if visiting Chiddingstone Castle and the village)

Grade: Leisurely

Good for: Tudor history and rural tranquillity.

1. Begin your walk at the Little Brown Jug, opposite Penshurst Station. Cross over the road and cross the footbridge. Exit the platform, then walk through the car park next to the builders yard. Go through the small metal gate and turn right, walking along the track.
2. At the end of this track, walk through the large metal gate and then cross the field. When you reach the hedgerow, turn left and walk on, keeping the hedge to your right. Turn right through another metal gate, then cross this smaller field before climbing the stile into a larger field.
3. Follow the path beneath the trees, aiming for the opposite hedge. In the distance you will see a farm and some oast houses. As you get closer you will see a gap in the hedge guarded by a stile. Climb over and then walk on through the field, passing to the right of the oast houses.

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4. Follow round the oasts until you reach another stile, then climb over and cross the driveway. At this point turn left, walking towards the farmyard, before turning right after the tree and climbing another stile.
5. Walk downhill and pass through the large gate into the next sheep field. This section gets very muddy, even after just a small amount of rain, so it's best to plan ahead with suitable footwear. Follow the path diagonally across the field, then when you reach the hedge on your right, continue straight ahead aiming for the large metal gate. To the left of this there is a ramshackle stile. Climb over with care and then turn left up Hampkins Hill Road.
6. Walk along the lane with care for 85 metres until you come to a track on your right. Turn right and continue along the track, passing Chested House and a Shepherds hut. Just before the end of the track you will come to a stile, climb over this and then turn right, walking past Fissenden house.
7. When you reach the corner of this field climb the stile and continue straight on. Continue uphill through the next field, this time with the tree line on your left. Once you come to the top left-hand corner of the field, climb the stile and turn left down the gravelly track.
8. Walk past North Farm and then carry on downhill past Keepers cottage and rectory cottage. After the old poor house, the track becomes a path once more. Follow this under the oaks and between the hedgerows. Continue along the causeway and after a short distance you will come to a wooden bridge crossing the River Eden.
9. Cross over, then follow this path alongside the field, then as it meets the woods, turn right and cross through the long grass. Continue through the trees and then walk on with more trees to your left.
10. Follow the path past a pond and then continue until you reach the road. At this point turn left here before walking carefully up the road and over the bridge as you walk past an attractive lake.
11. Continue uphill and into the village of Chiddingstone. The castle grounds can be accessed via the gate besides the pub. Please pay the small entrance fee using the honesty box in the car park.
12. Having explored the castle, exit via the high street gate and continue through the village. After the school, take the first path on your right directing you to the Chiding stone. This is a little detour off the route but is worth the additional short walk.
13. Walk the short distance back to the main road and then turn right, following the road with care for approximately 400 metres. Take the road to the right of Triangle Oast

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and then as you start to walk downhill, turn left after the pond and follow the path over Hampkin Hill.

14. At the end of the path turn left, walking downhill into the right hand corner of the field. Continue into the woods and you emerge onto a driveway. Turn left and continue until you meet the road at Vexour bridge.
15. Cross the bridge with care and then turn right, climbing over the stile. Take the left-hand path, aiming between the two hedges. Once you draw level with these, continue straight on to the next hedge.
16. When you reach the footpath markers at the end of the hedge, turn right and follow the path over a wooden footbridge leading into another sheep field. Cross the bridge and continue with the hedge to your right.
17. As you pass the hedge, turn right, walking to the end of the field where you will reach a stile. Climb the stile and then turn left, following the path alongside the hedge until you reach another stile.
18. Climb this stile and then turn right, where you will come to another stile. Climb over, walk across the short field before turning left at the gate. Continue back along the hedgerow and then turn right and walk across the field and through the large metal gate.
19. Then continue back along the track through the sheep field until you reach the small metal gate. Cross the car park/yard and then walk over the footbridge at Peshurst station, ending your walk.

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When enjoying this walk, please remember to follow the countryside code:

Respect other people

Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors

Park carefully so access to gateways and driveways are clear

Leave gates and property as you find them

Stay on footpaths but give way to others where it's narrow

Protect the natural environment

Leave no trace of your visit - take all your litter home

Don't have BBQs or fires

Keep dogs under effective control

Bag and bin your dog poo.

Enjoy the outdoors

Plan ahead, check what facilities are open, be prepared

Follow advice and local signs and obey social distancing measures