



## Wishing you were somewhere warmer? Learn to love the cold

It's easy to waste the winter away dreaming of warmer days. This year make the most of the cold, with bracing winter walks, hearty, indulgent breakfasts and chilled romantic dates

**Pull on your beanie** and walking boots and go on a special winter walk. Here are few unmissable hikes that are tailor-made for the season:

- Winter wonderland at Castle Howard, North Yorkshire ([www.castlehoward.co.uk](http://www.castlehoward.co.uk), tel 01653 648444) is at its most beautiful on a cold, crisp morning. Admission in winter is only £3.50 for adults and £1.50 for children.
- A bracing walk to East Beach Café, Littlehampton ([www.eastbeachcafe.co.uk](http://www.eastbeachcafe.co.uk), tel 01903 731903) Then tuck into a late breakfast at this supermodern café.
- A frosty day at Bedgebury National Pinetum, Kent ([www.bedgeburypinetum.org.uk](http://www.bedgeburypinetum.org.uk), tel 01580 211781), famous for its collection of conifers, is magical. Brilliant kids' play equipment in Bedgebury Forest nearby, too.
- Wicken Fen wildlife reserve, near Ely, Cambridgeshire ([www.wicken.org.uk](http://www.wicken.org.uk), tel 01353 720274) has wild Konig ponies and a boardwalk - ideal if you're pushing a buggy, or don't want to get stuck in the mud.
- Alnwick Garden, Northumbria ([www.alnwickgarden.com](http://www.alnwickgarden.com), tel 01665 511350). The must-see here is the huge treehouse, a tree village linked by rope-bridge walkways.

**Book a romantic winter date** Go ice skating together or step back in time with afternoon tea and a steam train ride.

**Learn a new outdoor game** Research shows that children should be getting at least 90 minutes of exercise a day to prevent heart disease in later life \*. So keep everyone warm outside with Red Light, Green Light. Choose one child to be the 'light'. The light stands facing a wall or a tree and the others line up about 6m away. The 'light', back still turned, shouts 'Green Light'. Then soon after they shout 'Red Light'. Players stop in their tracks and the light turns around to see who has stopped. Anyone still moving has to go back to the start line.

**Pack an indoor picnic** and head for one of Britain's brilliant museums. The picnic areas in the Natural History Museum, London ([www.nhm.ac.uk](http://www.nhm.ac.uk)), for instance, have water fountains, so you can travel light, and keep eating and drinking costs down.

**Plan for a day under the covers...** Prepare for a lazy day off, and treat yourself to a pair of the snuggliest pyjamas you can find. Or track down glam thermals (yes, they do exist). Find a selection online at Figleaves ([www.figleaves.com](http://www.figleaves.com)). Go to bed early with an audio book. You can hire unlimited audio books at Audio Books Online ([www.audiobooksonline.co.uk](http://www.audiobooksonline.co.uk)) from £12.50 per month. Cook an indulgent breakfast, then retreat back under the covers. For Chocolate French Toast take thick slices of white sandwich bread, cut a pocket in the

side of each and stuff with slivers of rich, dark chocolate. Dip in beaten egg with a dash of sugar and fry gently in butter.

**Discover cold is the new hot** Try brilliant washing at lower temperatures with Ariel Excel Gel with its outstanding stain removal even at 15°C. [www.coldisthenewhot.co.uk](http://www.coldisthenewhot.co.uk).

(\* European Heart Study, The Lancet, July, 2006)