



STORRS HALL



South Cumbria's notable Gardens, and Plant Centres:

Please check each business website to check on current opening hours, and Covid requirements including pre-booking tickets where necessary for the houses and gardens.

Cherry pick what interests you most for 1 day, or make it a 2 day itinerary - this plan essentially takes you in a scenic loop down Windermere's eastern shore to cumbria's southern coastline and back along the A590 and A591 to Storrs, as the easiest way to manage access to all these gardens.

Check the map to see the locations to aid planning, we have numbered them 1-9 in order of location so that you can pick and plan according to your preference. The lakes have few large roads and very few traffic lights once away from towns, so we've avoided you having to wait to turn right across oncoming lanes of traffic - it's the little things locals know that make the difference to your days out.

This is not an indication of preference, just ease of travel!

The south lakes have a plethora of interesting and varied gardens and plant sellers, all offering something a little out of the ordinary - the beauty of a holiday in the uk is that you are customs free from rules about transporting plants if something catches your eye.

This itinerary covers an approximately 34 mile loop, (under an hour's drive not including time spent at the venues), depending where you choose to visit. At the end we have also added an option for a northeastern trip, either very locally to Holehird, or with an extended trip across the Kirkstone Pass to Lowther Castle & Gardens near Penrith.

1. YEW TREE BARN

We'd say make a visit to **Yew Tree Barn**, at Low Newton, perhaps 20 minutes away. South down the A592 and left on to the A590.

This is a seriously good antiques, salvage, and garden reclamation business, complete with gift shop and cafe. Their stock is high quality, featuring items that are not easily or commonly found. Free parking is at the front of the business and on the country road. When circumstances permit, they host an artists and makers Christmas Fair.

Website: www.yewtreebarn.co.uk

Postcode: LA11 6JP





2. HOLKER HALL

Holker Hall is near Grange over Sands, so it widens the loop a little. From Low Newton head east along the A590 for the roundabout at the foot of Lindale and turn right for Grange over Sands; Abi and Tom of Halecat Nursery have an outlet in Grange. Family owned, Holker is a grand home, (pronounced Hooker). The gardens at Holker are home to a number of very unusual and, in some instances rare plants, including The National Collection of Styracaceae. They also host Winter Markets , welcoming individual makers and artists - perfect for some Christmas shopping.

Website: www.holker.co.uk/the-gardens/
Postcode: LA11 7PL

3. ABI & TOM'S GARDEN PLANTS

Returning back to the A590 at the same roundabout, head east along the Cumbrian S Coast to **Abi and Tom's Garden Plants** at Witherslack.

Tom is the regular garden writer for Cumbria Life magazine, and contributor to some stellar garden publications; along with Abi their centre home-grows over 1,000 plant varieties for your perusal. Their website lists their plant catalogue.

Website: www.abiandtom.co.uk
Postcode: LA11 6RT



4. LEVENS HALL

15 minutes further along the A590 take the exit for Milnthorpe and Levens and turn right for **Levens Hall**, whose grounds are you are just a few metres from. Levens Hall is justifiably world famous for its 17thC topiary gardens wrapping the Tudor house - perfectly preserved in time and the world's oldest surviving topiary garden. Contained within a walled perimeter the 10 acre garden is utterly magical. They also have a cafe onsite, using their homegrown produce, and a gift shop. The Tallulah Rose Flower School is a contemporary centre for floristry, running professional training courses.

Website: www.levenshall.co.uk
Postcode: LA8 0PD



5. CATH'S PLANTS

Just a few minutes away to the north, just over a stone's throw away is sitting between Sizergh and Levens Hall, in the walled garden of what was The Heaves Hotel, is **Cath's Plants**. This small nursery grows their own stock as naturally as possible to ensure strong healthy plants. You can find something different - it's not mass bought in stock here, and handily they list their plant catalogue on the website.

Website: www.cathsgardenplants.co.uk
Postcode: LA8 8EF



6. SIZERGH

Originating as a Pele Tower in the 14th C, **Sizergh** is largely a Tudor building, along with its neighbour Levens Hall, (the two properties are within 5 minutes of each other). Pele Towers are a defensive building particular to the English/Scottish border in Cumbria, and this area is the southern most boundary for them - peppered around the Kent Estuary.

Sizergh also has its environmental project Park End Moss, for which it won a LON Award in 2019.

Combine a visit to Sizergh with a walk to their 'Moss' on the edge of the Lyth Valley - where the glaciers dragged their melting tails to the sea

12,000 years ago. Moss is a particularly Cumbrian term for a specific habitat, most usually where the remnants of open Temperate Rainforest meets and mingles with reed edged expanses of peaty, watery meadow and pools, and S Cumbria is particularly rich with them. The trees and rocks are likely to be coated with moss, and dotted with ferns in the role of their tropical orchid counterparts. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sizergh/trails/sizergh-to-park-end-moss-wetland

Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sizergh
Postcode: LA8 8DZ

7. BEETHAM NURSERIES

If you're making this excursion part of your journey home heading south - **Beetham Nurseries** Gift and interiors shop, plus cafe is worth a stop off too. They have growing fields with a separate shed shop to that of the main site, and extensive free parking.

If you're returning to Storrs from Sizergh join the A591 northbound at the Brettargh Holt roundabout, past Kendal, taking the B5284 at the Plumgarths roundabout; at the staggered roundabout, (a left then right), down Longtail Hill, brings you back to the A592, taking a left to bring you back to Storrs Hall.

Website: www.beethamnurseries.co.uk
Postcode: LA7 7AP



8. HOLEHIRD GARDENS

Just on the outskirts of Windermere to the North, **The Lakeland Horticultural Society garden at Holehird**.

Heading NE just a short drive from Storrs, (10 minutes), at the start of the approach to the Kirkstone Pass, Holehird is home to the lakeland Horticultural Society. It is particularly spectacular in Spring for the vivid colours and adventurous contrasts of tulips, rhododendrons and Azaleas; but their speciality is that they have interest all year round - and they really do. The Society has thought deeply to deliver this intention with depth and vision, and a surprising diversity and number of plants. Their website lists the highlights for each month - so check out what is flavour of the month before you visit.

Website: www.holehirdgardens.org.uk
Postcode: LA23 1NP



9. LOWTHER CASTLE & GARDENS

Digressing from our crowd free south lakes emphasis, if you want to combine two gardens with a mini tour of the lakes and some challenging driving, continue over the Kirkstone Pass, along Ullswater, to **Lowther Castle & Gardens** just over an hour from Holehird. Lowther has been a huge restoration and development project including two new gardens designed by Dan Pearson. The site covers 137 acres, planted for a vegetarian at the end of the 17th C, sitting behind a dramatic ruined castle. The stable courtyard houses a cafe, gift shop and museum on site, with a large adventure playground; it is dog friendly.

Website: www.lowthercastle.org
Postcode: CA10 2HH



