

# SCOTLAND

**From ancient sites to wild landscapes**



**EXPERTLY GUIDED JOURNEYS THROUGH ISLANDS,  
GARDENS AND HISTORIC CITIES**



**RATED EXCELLENT WITH OVER 1,600 REVIEWS**





## Discover the spectacular scenery of Scotland this summer

For over 30 years, Brightwater has been creating holidays in Scotland, drawing on deep local knowledge to offer journeys that are personal, meaningful and truly unforgettable.

We are thrilled to present this selection of holidays, thoughtfully put together and guided by some of our most knowledgeable and engaging Tour Managers. From historic houses and hidden treasures to majestic mountains, great rail journeys and glorious gardens, this land is wonderfully diverse and its appeal is endless. And because our expertise lies in Scotland, we know the very best places to uncover.

Experience the breathtaking wildlife and landscapes of the Scottish Highlands on *Scotland Highland Wildlife Safari*, learn more about royal palaces and famous connections on *Castles, Palaces and Abbeys of Eastern Scotland*, or take a ride on the Jacobite steam train to visit the beauty spots that showcase the Victorian era's railway legacy in *Scotland: Scenic Scottish Railways*.

Whether you wish to discover somewhere new or return to an old favourite, Brightwater can take you there.

Each itinerary is brought to life through the passion and expertise of our Tour Managers, exclusive visits and thoughtfully paced itineraries.

There is so much to discover, so we invite you to explore the pages ahead and see what captures your imagination. Be sure to visit our website to view our full range of Scotland tours and more.

We hope to have the pleasure of your company soon.

Warm wishes,

*Alison Wilson*

Managing Director

### EXCLUSIVE OFFER

**SAVE 10%\***

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31<sup>st</sup> May 2026.

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**FOR SELECTED  
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Offers ends 13<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

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AT THE TIME OF BOOKING**

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**844 583 8199**

## Get in touch with an expert

Give our Specialist Sales Executives a call, Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm, on:

**844 583 8199**

Alternatively, send us an email to:

**info@brightwaterholidays.com**

For further details, please visit our website:

**brightwaterholidays.com**





## Our Scottish Expertise

Scotland is at the heart of Brightwater Holidays. We are experts in crafting thoughtfully paced holidays across our home country, drawing on deep local knowledge and first-hand experience. Between us, the Brightwater team has personally explored every destination and island featured in our Scottish programme, allowing us to design itineraries that go beyond the expected and reveal the character of each place.

Our range reflects the extraordinary breadth of Scotland itself, from the islands of Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides to northern Scotland and the Highlands, iconic rail journeys and wildlife encounters, castles and historic sites, glorious gardens, seasonal landscapes and the culture and architecture of Scotland's cities. Each tour is brought to life by knowledgeable, trusted Tour Managers and enriched by exclusive visits and behind-the-scenes access unavailable to other operators.

This depth of experience allows us to create journeys designed for insight rather than intensity, combining expert guidance, carefully chosen accommodation and meaningful access to Scotland's landscapes, heritage and stories.

## From Skara Brae to Steam Trains: Scotland's Icons Await



### Jacobite Steam Train

Sit back and enjoy the views aboard the iconic Jacobite Steam Train, passing over the breathtaking Glenfinnan Viaduct, alongside sparkling lochs and through the striking beauty of the Western Highlands – this is Scotland's most scenic rail journey for good reason.

### The Outer Hebrides

Discover the serene beauty of Scotland's western isles, from white-sand, Caribbean-like beaches in Barra to the wild landscapes of Harris and ancient standing stones on Uist – we know the best ways to travel around this magnificent part of the UK.

### Skara Brae

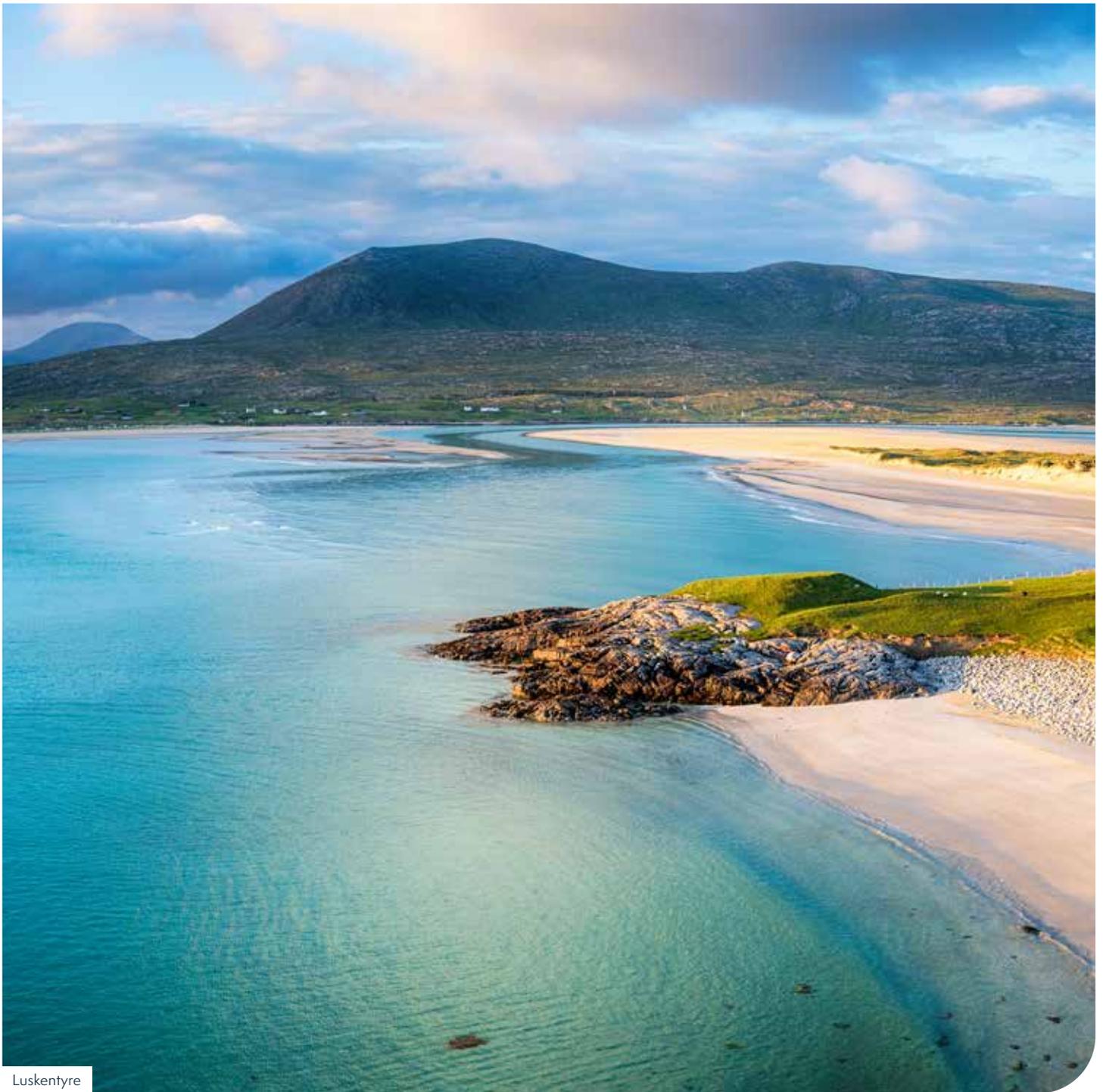
The ancient wonders of Orkney awaits, where just one highlight includes Skara Brae. Journey into prehistoric Scotland at one of Europe's best-preserved Neolithic settlements, framed by Orkney's dramatic coastline and layered history.

### Scotland's Glorious Gardens

From the subtropical plants of Logan Botanic Garden on the southwest coast to the tranquillity of Edinburgh's Mallery Garden, Scotland boasts an extraordinary variety of horticultural treasures, featuring walled gardens, castle grounds and coastal havens.

### Art Treasures & City Architecture

Explore Scotland's urban heritage with expert-led visits to the Burrell Collection in Glasgow, showcasing ancient Chinese porcelain, French paintings and medieval artefacts, along with architectural gems across both Glasgow and Edinburgh.



Luskentyre

## A Grand Tour of the Outer Hebrides

5 DAYS from \$1,633 | ACTIVITY RATING: 

 PICK-UP POINTS: Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow

Our best-selling grand tour takes in all the beauty and diversity of the Outer Hebrides. Numerous islands and travel by local ferry offers great variety and the sense of a true journey of discovery which will live long in the memory.

Our odyssey begins as we travel north via the Highlands to Ullapool and take the ferry to Stornoway. A captivating journey follows as we travel through the magnificent mountain scenery of Harris, the rolling moorland of Lewis, visiting the Standing Stones of Callanish (\*the main Callanish site will be closed until early 2026 and we will visit the nearby smaller circles instead if Calanais I has not reopened), the tranquil little Norse Mill and the distinctive Black Houses at Gearrannan.

From here we take the ferry to North Uist and cross the causeway to the Isle of Benbecula the 'stepping stone' between the Uists, before visiting the islands of Eriskay, Vatersay and Barra.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head north, stopping en-route for refreshments. We continue to Ullapool in time to catch the early evening Caledonian MacBrayne ferry to Stornoway. On arrival in Lewis we will transfer the short distance to our comfortable accommodation in Stornoway. (D)

**Day 2** This morning after breakfast we travel to the west coast of Lewis for a visit to **Calanais II**, an impressive site comprising of five standing stones and two fallen stones, forming an oval. A further, shorter stone lies pointing towards the centre. There may originally have been more stones in the 'circle'. Its diameter of nearly 20 metres makes it almost twice as big as the circle at **Calanais I\*** (which is around 11-12m across). Inside the 'circle' is a low round cairn that was probably a later addition; it will have contained a burial chamber, but it has been badly damaged. When peat was first cleared away from this monument,



Croft on Isle of Lewis

shortly after 1857, people found traces of pebbles that had probably supported upright wooden posts inside the 'circle'.

*\*Please note: that primary Callanish Standing Stones site (Calanais I) is currently completely closed due to a major redevelopment of the visitor centre taking place until Spring 2026. The entire site is closed for construction during this time. Should the site be reopened, we will visit Calanais II instead.*

From here we move on to the **Black Houses at Gearannan**, typical of the crofting settlements which until relatively recently were found throughout the Western Isles. Lunch will be available here *(not included)*. The final visit on our circular tour is the **Norse Mill at Shawbost**, a reconstruction of the type of grain mill used originally by Viking settlers and by islanders up until the 1930s. A short walk past a small lochan leads to two beautifully restored little thatched buildings with a fine view to the ocean beyond. We then return to our hotel where dinner will be served in the evening. *(B,D)*

**Day 3** After breakfast, we check out of the hotel and travel south to **Harris**, which in contrast to the rolling moorland of Lewis, is more mountainous, as becomes apparent within minutes of crossing the 'border' with a magnificent mountain vista to the right. There are further outstanding views as we travel along the coast, including the island of Taransay of 'Castaway' fame and the wonderful beaches at Horgabost, Borve and Scarasta. Continuing to the southern end of Harris we visit

**St Clement's Church** at Rodel, built on top of an earlier structure in the 16th century by Alasdair Crotach, 8th chief of the Macleods of Harris and Dun Bheagan. The church tombs are among the most spectacular in Scotland. We then take the ferry from Leverburgh to Berneray on North Uist, and continue over a series of causeways *(keeping a careful eye out for otters)* to Benbecula, the 'stepping stone' between the Uists. Here we check in to our comfortable accommodation, where dinner will be served in the evening. *(B,D)*

**Day 4** This morning following breakfast we depart for **Barra**, travelling via the little island of **Eriskay**, just three miles long and two miles wide, with a great sandy beach known as Prince Charlie's Bay — Bonnie Prince Charlie having landed here in July 1745. From Eriskay we take the mid morning ferry to Barra and have a tour of the island. Please note that Kisimul Castle is currently closed for conservation work but we are able to view it from the shore.

We visit **Cockleshell Beach**, the unique runway whose use is governed by the tides. When approaching the airport keep an eye out to the left for the much-loved former home of Sir Compton Mackenzie, the author of 'Whisky Galore', which is forever associated with the island. A little further on from the airport we will see St Barr's Chapel and visit Sir Compton Mackenzie's grave. In fact, it was on the neighbouring island of **Vatersay**, which we visit by means of the causeway linking the two islands, that the classic film adaptation was made. On the way to Vatersay, we will see a war memorial to the crew of a Catalina aircraft that crashed in 1944 while on the island itself, and at a beautiful location overlooking a wide sandy beach, we see a monument to the emigrant ship Annie Jane which was wrecked here in 1853 on a voyage to Quebec. During our tour today we also hope to see some of the hundreds of species of wildflowers that grow on the island, particularly on the machair, the fertile, grassy pastures that lie between the moorland and the sea. *(B,D)*

**Day 5** This morning we check out of the hotel and take the Caledonian MacBrayne ferry from Lochmaddy to Uig in Skye. Breakfast is served on board. We then continue our homeward journey, arriving back at our original pick-up points during the evening. *(B)*

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

*Our 16th September departure operates in reverse starting in Benbecula and finishing in Stornoway.*

## Key Highlights

-  The unique airport at Cockleshell Beach
-  5,000 year old standing stones
-  The tranquil location of the Norse Mill at Shawbost
-  Four scenic ferry crossings

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights dinner, bed & breakfast: two nights at the Dark Island Hotel, Benbecula and two nights at the Cabarfeidh Hotel, Stornoway *(breakfast served on board the ferry on day 5)*
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel and all ferry crossings
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON STORNOWAY TO BENBECULA

24 - 28 Apr	<del>\$1,815</del> \$1,633
2 - 6 Oct	<del>\$1,815</del> \$1,745

## BENBECULA TO STORNOWAY

16 - 20 Sep	<del>\$1,955</del> \$1,885
25 - 29 Sept	<del>\$1,955</del> \$1,885
Single Supplement	\$280

## 6 DAY PACKAGE OPTION

10 - 15 May	<del>\$2,375</del> \$2,135
2 - 7 Aug	<del>\$2,445</del> \$2,375
Single Supplement	\$350

## 7 DAY PACKAGE OPTION

30 May - 5 Jun	<del>\$2,655</del> \$2,387
Single Supplement	\$420

SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS



Dun Carloway Broch

## Ancient Stones of the Outer Hebrides

5 DAYS from \$2,165 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌸 🌸 🌸

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth, Inverness

In about 1800 BC, at around the time that the Middle Kingdom of Ancient Egypt was flourishing, an equally vigorous civilisation was leaving its mark on the far-flung islands of the Outer Hebrides. The Standing Stones at Callanish, tall and slender slabs of silvery Lewisian gneiss, are the enduring testament to the skill and knowledge of a long-vanished and mysterious community, who laid out these stones according to precise astronomical observations, lining up the main avenue with the point at which the full moon of midsummer sets. Later settlers have left their mark too, and the tranquil islands of Lewis and Harris are blessed with an abundance of archaeological remains. Neolithic cairns, Bronze Age standing stones, Iron Age houses, Norse mills and Blackhouses from a couple of centuries ago – the islands are a living timeline and a paradise for the amateur archaeologist.

In the company of a local specialist guide, we will tour a succession of sites, from the rolling moorlands and sweeping beaches of Lewis in the north to the dramatic mountains of Harris in the south. Our four nights in Stornoway will also provide an insight into modern island life, where the ancient Gaelic culture is as vibrant as ever and celebrated in music and song.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head north to **Ullapool**, where we catch the evening ferry to Stornoway and settle into our hotel.

**Day 2** Crossing to the island of Great Bernera, we visit the fascinating **Bosta Iron Age Village** and its nearby **museum**. Later, we marvel at the 5,000-year-old **Standing Stones of Callanish**, a highlight of the Western Isles. In the afternoon, we explore **St Columba's Ui Church**, a key archaeological site on Lewis. *(B)*

**Day 3** After breakfast, we journey south to **Harris**, a land of mountains and pristine white beaches. Highlights include **St Clement's Church** at Rodel, with its ornate tombs, and the **Genealogy Centre** at Northton, where we delve into island heritage. We visit the ancient standing stone **Clach Mhic Leoid**, overlooking Taransay, before returning to Stornoway to explore **Lewis Castle**. *(B)*

**Day 4** We uncover Lewis's stunning landscapes and history, spanning the Bronze Age, Norse settlement, and beyond. Sites include **Dun Carloway Broch**, **Black Houses**, **Norse Mill**, and the standing stone **Clach an Trushal**. *(B)*

**Day 5** Our adventure concludes as we ferry back to Ullapool and return to our original pick-up points. *(B)*

**Inc. meals:** *B: Breakfast*

\*The main Callanish site will be closed until early 2026. Should the sit not have reopened will visit the nearby smaller circles instead.

### Key Highlights

-  Bosta Iron Age Village, the Outer Hebrides' version of Skara Brae
-  The remarkable and mysterious Callanish Standing Stones
-  Glimpses into a not-so-distant past at the Blackhouses of Gearrannan and Arnol
-  Echoes of vanished lives at the Genealogy Centre
-  The incomparable scenery of the Western Isles

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights bed & breakfast at the Royal Hotel, Stornoway
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel and all ferry crossings
- ▶ Services of archaeologist Carol Knott as tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

14 - 18 Aug	<del>\$2,235</del> \$2,165
Single Supplement	\$315



Standing Stones of Callanish



Ardreck Castle

# Scotland's Northern Edge featuring the North Coast 500

LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

5 DAYS from \$1,568 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌸 🌸 🌸

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth, Inverness

Scotland's northern coast is breathtaking, where wind and sea clash against ancient rock. Highlights include Duncansby Head with sea stacks and seabirds, John O'Groats, Dunnet Head and the Castle of Mey, former summer home of the Queen Mother. From Kinlochbervie, explore Strathnaver's haunting valley and Smoo Cave at Durness, with its waterfall and blowhole, revealing the raw power and timeless beauty of this remote coastline.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head to our hotel in Thurso. (D)

**Day 2** We visit **Duncansby Head**, which offer stunning views from the cliff top. After a brief stop at **John O' Groats**, we continue to the **Castle of Mey**, the former holiday home of the late Queen Mother, and **Dunnet Head**, which boasts some of the most extensive views in northern Scotland. (B,D)

**Day 3** We travel to **Tongue**, where we have some free time for lunch before we visit the impressive **Smoo Cave** then continue to our hotel in Kinlochbervie. (B, D)

**Day 4** We travel to **Knockan Crag**, an open-air visitor centre within the North West Highlands Geo Park. We continue to the ruins of **Ardreck Castle** and then on to **Lochinver** for some free time and an opportunity for lunch (*not included*). After a visit to **Highland Stoneware**, we continue via **Drumbeg** and **Eddrachillis Bay** back to Kinlochbervie. (B, D)

**Day 5** We journey home today, travelling via **Laxford Bridge**, **Loch More**, **Loch Shin**, **Lairg**, **Bonar Bridge** and finally **Tain**. We return to our original pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

-  The famous Stacks of Duncansby Head
-  Journey's End signpost at John O'Groats
-  Summer gardens at the Castle of Mey
-  The magical Smoo Cave

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights dinner, bed & breakfast: two nights at the St Clair Hotel, Thurso (*or similar*) and two nights at the 3-star Kinlochbervie Hotel
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

5 - 9 May	<del>\$1,745</del> \$1,568
9 - 13 Jun	<del>\$1,745</del> \$1,675
8 - 12 Sep	<del>\$1,675</del> \$1,605
20 - 24 Sep	<del>\$1,675</del> \$1,605
Single Supplement	\$170



Smoo Cave

## Scotland's Extreme North West

LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

4 DAYS from \$905 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌿 🌿

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth, Inverness

Scotland's rugged north-west coast is at its most majestic in early spring and autumn, with Atlantic waves crashing dramatically against the shore. Based in Kinlochbervie, with panoramic views over lochs and hills, we explore coastal gems such as the white sands of Oldshoremore and Smoo Cave at Durness. Evenings are spent enjoying fine food, good company and a welcoming fireside dram in our highland hotel.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head north, stopping en route for refreshments. Our journey leads us to **Kinlochbervie** on the north-west coastline, where we settle into the Kinlochbervie Hotel, overlooking the fishing harbour and the open sea. (D)

**Day 2** After breakfast we explore **Assynt**, an extraordinary landscape of vast, undulating moorland studded with hundreds of freshwater lochans. The coastline is equally beautiful, with cliffs, impressive sea stacks and a series of stunning white beaches, such as the one at Achmelvich Bay. We spend some time in **Lochinver**, a large village with a busy harbour, set on the shores of Loch Inver with superb views inland to the famous mountain of **Suilven**. Though relatively small in Scottish terms at 2389ft, Suilven presents a fearsome sight with its seemingly unconquerable summit, which we can expect to be flecked with snow at this time of year. (B, D)

**Day 3** This morning, we enjoy a walk along the beach at **Oldshoremore**, one of Scotland's most beautiful beaches. Formed from eroded sandstone and seashells, the white sandy beach is surrounded by 'machair', dunes of marram grass which are among the richest dune areas in Britain. Later, we travel up the single track road through spectacular scenery to **Durness**, where we visit the beautiful old church graveyard of Balnakeil, home to the grave of the famous Gaelic poet **Rob Don**. This is a most interesting cemetery overlooking one of the finest sandy beaches in the UK. We also visit the wonderful chocolatier at **Cocoa Mountain** where there's the opportunity to buy the finest hot chocolate drink anywhere in the world (official!) and gorgeous handmade chocolates. Originally, these

buildings were used as an early warning station in case of nuclear attack, and they were turned into a craft centre in 1964. Given the small size of the chocolatier shop, we may have to split the group between Balnakeil Church and then swap over. Next is **Smoo Cave**, which boasts the largest entrance of any sea cave in the British Isles. Recent excavations show that the cave was in use 6,000 years ago by the earliest settlers in the north. The "blowhole" and waterfall can be observed from an observation point above the cave. We continue via **Loch Eriboll to Tongue**, whose name has old Norse origins: it comes from tunga, a tongue of land projecting into the loch. Although the Norse people probably lived here between the 900 and 1200, nothing certain has been found of their settlement. When Thomas Telford completed the road south to Lairg in 1828, Tongue changed from being an island community relying on the sea for its communications. (B, D)

**Day 4** We begin our homeward journey, travelling via **Laxford Bridge, Loch More, Loch Shin and Lairg**. In the 1950s, a hydro-electric dam was constructed, raising the level of Loch Shin by over 30 feet, which now forms one of the major attractions of the area, complete with a spectacular salmon leap. At one time, the majority of the inhabitants in **Lairg** area resided on the high moorlands and straths, with the children of tenancing shepherds walking miles to school over rugged hill paths. Gradually, these dwellings have been vacated in favour of a move down to the more accessible present village on the southern shores of the loch, which developed from around 1812. Continuing via **Bonar Bridge and Tain**, we return back to our original pick-up points. (B)

### Key Highlights

-  The magical Smoo Cave
-  The spectacle of the Suilven Mountain
-  Officially the best hot chocolate in the world at Cocoa Mountain
-  White sands of Oldshoremore

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the 3-star Kinlochbervie Hotel
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

7 - 10 Apr	<del>\$1,045</del> \$938
17 - 20 Apr	<del>\$1,045</del> \$938
6 - 9 Oct	<del>\$975</del> \$905
Single Supplement	\$210



Achmelvich Bay



Tobermory

## Mull, Staffa and Iona

4 DAYS from \$2,165 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌸 🌸 🌸

 **PICK-UP POINTS:** Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow

The Isle of Mull offers tumbling burns, towering peaks, and silent beauty. Together, we'll explore Tobermory's colourful waterfront, sail to the Treshnish Isles and Staffa's basalt cathedral, and visit Duart Castle, home to Clan MacLean's Chief, before reaching the sacred isle of Iona. Adventure awaits on this remarkable journey!

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head for **Oban**, where we board the late afternoon ferry to **Mull**. (D)

**Day 2** Today we will drive through the spectacular scenery of the Ross of Mull to Fionnphort, from where we cross as foot passengers to the 'sacred isle' of **Iona**. Here you have the opportunity to visit the **Abbey** and wander over the island, taking in the atmosphere of calm and contemplation which attracts visitors from all over the world. (B, D)

**Day 3** Today we depart for **Tobermory**, the island's 'capital', and the starting point for our wildlife cruise to the **Treshnish Isles** and **Staffa**. We will land on the idyllic Isle of Lunga, the largest of the Treshnish Isles, which is surrounded by wildflowers and stunning scenery. The main

attraction that can be seen close up (*June departure only*) is the large puffin colony nesting in burrows on the grassy hillside. Next, we take the short crossing to the geological wonder of Staffa, which was formed by volcanic eruptions over 50 million years ago. We have a chance to explore the island and the massive natural cathedral known as **Fingal's Cave**. (B, PL, D)

**Day 4** Today we visit **Duart Castle**, the 13th-century home of the Chief of Clan MacLean. We can explore the dungeons, the state rooms and appreciate the strategic position of the castle from the top of the keep before our ferry crossing back to the mainland and our original pick-up points. (B)

### Key Highlights

-  Sailing out of Oban Bay as the holiday begins
-  Wildlife cruise from Tobermory plus the amazing spectacle of Fingal's Cave
-  Taking in the view towards Ben Cruachan from the top of the keep at Duart Castle
-  Moments of peaceful contemplation at Iona Abbey

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at a comfortable hotel on the Isle of Mull
- ▶ One packed lunch
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel and all ferry crossings
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

13 - 16 Jun	<del>\$2,235</del> \$2,165
19 - 22 Sep	<del>\$2,235</del> \$2,165
Single Supplement	\$585



Blackwaterfoot

## Arran, Scotland in Miniature

5 DAYS from \$1,760 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌸

 **PICK-UP POINTS:** Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow

As we approach the island, Goat Fell rises from the Firth of Clyde, hinting at Arran's magic. "Scotland in Miniature," blends northern granite peaks and glens with southern farmlands. Explore villages like Whiting Bay, Lamlash, Brodick, Corrie and Sannox, passing the '12 Apostles' at Lochranza. Brodick Castle impresses with its dramatic setting and gardens, bursting with seasonal interest.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head for **Troon** in time to catch the afternoon ferry to Brodick. On arrival on Arran, our coach will transfer us to **Blackwaterfoot**, where our accommodation has been organised for the next four nights at the Kinloch Hotel. (D)

**Day 2** Today, following breakfast, we have a circular tour of the island of **Arran**. Only 56 miles around its coastline, the small villages are compared to 'jewels on a necklace' strung out like pearls around the island. From **Blackwaterfoot**, we will visit **Whiting Bay, Lamlash, Brodick** - the capital of Arran; **Corrie** and **Sannox** under the shadow of Goat Fell and other mountains, and then down the west coast to **Catcol** and **Pirnmill** with its '12 Apostles'. Also included today is a visit to the **Isle of Arran Brewery**, where we will enjoy a tour and learn about the brewing and conditioning process and the ingredients that go into the beer. We will also have the opportunity to taste some of the beers on offer. (B, D)

**Day 3** Today will be free to relax in the hotel and its surroundings. Alternatively, for those who wish, we have organised an optional excursion to the little Hebridean island of **Gigha** (not included). Nestling close to the mainland just off the Kintyre peninsula, this is a gem of an island often overlooked by the island hopper. We will depart after breakfast and catch an early morning ferry from Arran Lochranza to Claonaig. We then cross the Kintyre peninsula to the Gigha ferry at Tayinloan. Once on the island, we will have lunch at a local café and then we will visit **Achamore Gardens**, the former home of the Horlick family. Sir

James Horlick (*of bedtime drink fame*) who came here in 1944 and started to create a woodland garden. The mild climate, combined with high levels of rainfall, means that there is always something in bloom.

*Due to the problems of getting a modern coach onto the island, we will walk to the gardens from the café and jetty, a gentle stroll of half a mile. Local transportation can be arranged at approximately \$5.00pp (paid locally); however, this must be booked in advance. Please advise if you require this when booking your excursion.*

**Day 4** This morning, we have included a visit to **Brodick Castle and Gardens**. Brodick Castle occupies a splendid position, well protected from westerly winds and looking east across the Firth of Clyde. The present garden dates from 1932, when the Duchess of Montrose started an ambitious woodland garden with a collection of rhododendrons. From the castle, paths wind downhill towards the seashore, and in a shady place there is a fernery and a delightful Bavarian summer house embellished with rustic work and lovely inlaid panels of pinecones. A walled garden, dating from 1710, has been restored, and mixed borders on three sides retain the gardener's interest throughout the year. The afternoon will be free in **Brodick**.

**Day 5** Sadly, today we must head for home. This morning, following breakfast, we will travel to the ferry port in time for the crossing to Troon, where we expect to arrive early afternoon. Thereafter, we will return to our original pick up points to arrive late afternoon/early evening. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

-  Sailing across the Firth of Clyde and watching the mountains of Arran draw ever nearer
-  Highly scenic circular tour of the island
-  Brewery tour and tasting
-  The incomparable setting and colourful gardens of Brodick Castle
-  The comfortable Kinloch Hotel, located on the 'sunset side' of the island

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the 3-star Best Western Kinloch Hotel, Blackwaterfoot
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel and all ferry crossings
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

18 - 22 May	<del>\$1,955</del> \$1,760
7 - 11 Jun	<del>\$2,025</del> \$1,955
10 - 14 Aug	<del>\$2,095</del> \$2,025
21 - 25 Sep	<del>\$2,025</del> \$1,955
Single Supplement	\$455
Optional excursion Gigha:	\$120



Brodick Castle and Gardens



St Ninian's Isle

## Highlights of Orkney & Shetland

6 DAYS from \$2,387 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌸 🌸 🌸

 **PICK-UP POINTS:** Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth, Dundee, Forfar, Stonehaven, Aberdeen

Sail away to lands steeped in history, wildlife and stunning scenery – the Orkney and Shetland isles. Many people have landed there before us, some as early as 3000 BC. Most famous of all were the Vikings, but they were not alone and all around you historical treasures can be found. Both Orkney and Shetland have their own identities - Orkney is green and fertile, while Shetland has rugged cliff and sea loch landscapes. However, both share a colourful history of Picts, Norsemen, ancient antiquities and seafaring legends – bound together with an independent spirit that sets them apart from the rest of Scotland. We sail with Serco Northlink Ferries aboard their modern, purpose-built vessels overnight from Aberdeen to Lerwick, and then there are two full days to tour Shetland. After rejoining the ship for an evening sailing to Kirkwall, we have two days to explore Orkney.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points for Aberdeen and take the overnight ferry to Lerwick. (D)

**Day 2** We leave the ship after breakfast and start our **Shetland** tour. Our first stop is **Sumburgh Head** with its RSPB reserve and then onto the Prehistoric and Norse Settlement of **Jarlshof**. Over three acres of remains are here, spanning 3,000 years since the days of the Stone Age, including Bronze Age houses, Iron Age broch and wheel houses, Viking long houses and medieval farmhouses. We then continue to **Scalloway**, the former capital of Shetland, where we see the ruined castle. (B, D)

**Day 3** Our day starts at the spectacular **cliffs of Eshaness** and the narrow isthmus known as **Mavis Grind**. This remarkable location is often referred to as the place where the Atlantic Ocean meets the North Sea, offering stunning views and a chance to witness the unique geological formations shaped by millennia of erosion. Afterwards, we head to **Lerwick**, a charming town with its narrow lanes, unique shops and historical landmarks such as Fort Charlotte. The waterfront area is particularly picturesque, offering stunning views and a chance to observe local fishing boats and wildlife. Later, we take the evening sailing to Kirkwall, with dinner

served on board. On arrival, we transfer to our hotel. (B, D)

**Day 4** This morning we have a full day excursion of west mainland **Orkney** visiting the **Heart of Neolithic Orkney – World Heritage Sites**. We begin at **Maeshowe**, the finest chambered tomb in Western Europe. Built before 2700 BC. Maeshowe was raided by Vikings in the 12th Century. It thus houses the largest collection of runic inscriptions to be found in any one place in the world. We shall also visit the **Standing Stones of Stenness**, with the adjacent Neolithic village of **Barnhouse**, before continuing to **Skara Brae**, with its new visitor centre depicting the history of this world famous monument and **Skail House**, a fascinating architectural medley to the side of Skara Brae. (B, D)

**Day 5** This morning, we have free time to explore **Kirkwall**. Later, we tour the south end of Orkney, crossing the **Churchill Barriers** and visiting the charming **Italian Chapel**, which was built on a former prisoner of war camp. (B, D)

**Day 6** After breakfast we catch the ferry from Stromness back to the mainland. From here, we return to our original pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

-  The multi-period settlement of Jarlshof
-  Neolithic Orkney – a UNESCO World Heritage Centre
-  Spectacular sea cliffs at Eshaness
-  The Churchill Barriers and Italian Chapel, poignant reminders of more recent history
-  Multitudes of seabirds at Sumburgh Head (May-July)

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ One nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Scalloway Hotel, Shetland (or similar) and three nights bed & breakfast (plus two dinners) at the Kirkwall or Shore Hotel, Orkney (or similar)
- ▶ All ferry crossings, including one night in two-berth inside cabins on Serco Northlink Ferries MV Hrossey/Hjaltland on the outward sailing
- ▶ One breakfast and two dinners on board ship
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

18 - 23 May	<del>\$2,655</del>	\$2,387
17 - 22 Jun	<del>\$2,795</del>	\$2,725
2 - 7 Sep	<del>\$2,655</del>	\$2,585
14 - 19 Sep	<del>\$2,655</del>	\$2,585
Single Supplement		\$695
Outside Cabin Supplement		\$85



Standing Stones of Stenness



Lerwick

## Orkney & Shetland by Air

5 DAYS from \$2,765 | ACTIVITY RATING: ✿ ✿ ✿

 DEPARTURE POINTS: Aberdeen or Edinburgh

You asked and we answered! As it's a long way by road and sea, we have launched this alternative itinerary that explores the glorious and wild Orkney and Shetland Isles by air. Over five memorable days, we will explore lands steeped in history, wildlife and stunning scenery, far from the jostling crowds as we lose ourselves in the haunting beauty of the Orkney and Shetland Isles.

Many people have landed there before you - some as early as 3000 BC. Most famous of all were the Vikings, but they were not alone and all around you will find historical treasures. Both islands, but particularly Shetland, in summer have virtually no darkness and the beauty of this 'Simmer Dim', as it is called locally, has to be seen to be realised.

**Day 1** We depart this morning on a flight from Aberdeen or Edinburgh to Sumburgh. On arrival we will transfer to **Sumburgh Head**, where the North Sea meets the Atlantic Ocean. The cliffs here are quite spectacular and home to an RSPB reserve. We will then visit the outstanding Prehistoric and Norse Settlement of **Jarlshof**, spanning 3000 years since the days of the Stone Age. This afternoon we will transfer to **Scalloway**, the former capital of Shetland where we see the ruined castle built in 1600 by the infamous Earl Patrick Stewart. We then continue north to the spectacular **cliffs of Eshaness** - look out for the 'Otters Crossing' sign at the narrow isthmus known as Mavis Grind. (D)

**Day 2** After breakfast, we will head to the island's capital town of **Lerwick**, where we enjoy some free time. You may wish to visit the state of the art Shetland Museum. Later, we will travel through small local communities until we reach Sandwick, where we will cross as foot passengers on the ferry over to the little island of **Mousa**, where we will visit the 2000 year old iron age **broch**. (B, D)

**Day 3** Today we depart from Sumburgh Airport to **Kirkwall**. On arrival, we will depart on a tour of the south end of **mainland Orkney**, crossing the **Churchill Barriers** which were built

after the sinking of HMS Royal Oak in October 1939. We also stop off at the beautiful **Italian Chapel**, built on the site of a former prisoner of war camp. We then return to Kirkwall, the capital of Orkney, where we have free time to explore at leisure. (B, D)

**Day 4** This morning after breakfast, we have an all day excursion of west mainland Orkney visiting the **Heart of Neolithic Orkney – World Heritage Sites**. We begin at **Maeshowe**, the finest chambered tomb in Western Europe. Built before 2700 BC. Maeshowe was raided by Vikings in the 12th Century. It thus houses the largest collection of runic inscriptions to be found in any one place in the world. We shall also visit the **Standing Stones of Stenness**, with the adjacent Neolithic village of **Barnhouse**, before continuing to **Skara Brae**, with its new visitor centre depicting the history of this world famous monument and **Skaill House**, a fascinating architectural medley to the side of Skara Brae. (B, D)

**Day 5** After breakfast we transfer to Kirkwall Airport where we will take the flight back to Aberdeen or Edinburgh. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

-  Mousa Broch – the best preserved Iron Age tower in existence
-  Spectacular sea cliffs at Eshaness
-  The multi-period settlement of Jarlshof
-  Neolithic Orkney – a UNESCO World Heritage Centre
-  The Churchill Barriers and Italian Chapel, poignant reminders of more recent history

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Two nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Busta House Hotel, Shetland and two nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Kirkwall or Shore Hotel, Orkney
- ▶ Flights from Aberdeen to Sumburgh, Sumburgh to Kirkwall, and Kirkwall to Aberdeen (Edinburgh flight supplement \$225pp)
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

12 - 16 May	<del>\$3,075</del> \$3,005
11 - 15 Aug	<del>\$3,075</del> \$2,765
Single Supplement	\$415



The Italian Chapel



Westray

# Undiscovered Orkney

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

5 DAYS from \$2,305 | ACTIVITY RATING: ING:

PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth, Inverness

Orkney's 70 islands offer unique history, charm and landscapes. Based on the Mainland, we explore hidden gems across the North and South Isles. Sail Westray's Old Norse routes, cross Scapa Flow to Hoy with its dramatic scenery and discover the 'Heart of Neolithic Orkney' on Mainland, including the Stones of Stenness and Skara Brae. This itinerary also features part of the scenic North Coast 500.

**Day 1** We depart by coach from our designated pick-up points and travel north to Scrabster to catch the Northlink ferry to Stromness. Dinner is served on board. On arrival in **Orkney**, we transfer to Kirkwall and our hotel. (D)

**Day 2** After breakfast, we enjoy a full-day excursion of mainland Orkney, beginning at **Maeshowe**, the finest chambered tomb in Western Europe, built before 2700 BC and later entered by Viking raiders, leaving the largest collection of runic inscriptions found anywhere. We continue to **Skara Brae**, with its excellent visitor centre, before visiting the **Standing Stones of Stenness**, set beneath the Orphir Hills. Later, we visit the **Italian Chapel**, created by Italian prisoners of war during the Second World War, its interior beautifully painted by Domenico Chiocchetti. Our day concludes with visits to the **Pier Arts Centre** and **Highland Park Distillery**, where traditional methods of whisky production have been used for over 200 years. (B, D)

**Day 3** This morning, we travel by ferry across Scapa Flow to the **island of Hoy**. After arriving at Lyness, we head north to the **Dwarfie Stone**, Britain's only prehistoric rock-cut chambered tomb, carved from a single block of sandstone around 3000 BC. Set in a dramatic landscape, it is a place of striking stillness. We continue to **Rackwick Bay**, a beautiful beach framed by high cliffs and shifting seascapes, once home to composer Sir Peter Maxwell-Davies.

Returning south, we visit the **Scapa Flow Museum**, located on the former naval base at Lyness, which explores Orkney's vital role during both World Wars through artefacts, photographs and film. After time for lunch (*not included*), we visit the **Martello Tower** at Hackness and the nearby **Naval Cemetery**. We then return by ferry to the mainland and drive back to Kirkwall for dinner. (B, D)

**Day 4** Today we travel by ferry to Westray, known as the 'Queen of the Orkney Isles', sailing past Egilsay and Eday along an old Viking sea route. Our first stop is the dramatic **Scaun Natural Arch** at the island's northern tip, where seabirds are often seen. We then visit the 10th-century Norse site at Quoygrew and the **Kirk of St Mary** in Pierowall. After lunch (*not included*), we explore Castle O'Burrian and the **Westray Heritage Centre** before visiting **Noltland Castle**, an unfinished 16th-century stronghold built by Gilbert Balfour during the turbulent reign of Mary, Queen of Scots. With its thick walls and numerous gun loops, it offers a vivid insight into Scotland's unsettled past. We return by ferry to Kirkwall for dinner. (B, D)

**Day 5** We check out and transfer to Stromness for our late-morning ferry to Scrabster. On arrival, we continue south, stopping at the **Timespan Museum and Arts Centre** in Helmsdale, which explores the heritage of the Highlands. We then continue our journey home. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

- The Scaun Natural Arch and the spectacular sea cliffs, Westray
- Views of the Old Man of Hoy as we sail to Scrabster
- Discover Orkney's Naval history at the Scapa Flow Museum
- The UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Maeshowe, Stones of Stenness and Skara Brae
- A dram of the finest whisky at Highland Park Distillery

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Kirkwall or Shore Hotel, Orkney (*or similar*)
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel and all ferry crossings
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

8 - 12 Jun	<del>\$2,375</del> \$2,305
17 - 21 Aug	<del>\$2,375</del> \$2,305

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT



The Italian Chapel - Interior



Bressay Island

## Shetland and its Outer Isles

5 DAYS from \$2,095 | ACTIVITY RATING: \* \* \*

 **PICK-UP POINTS:** Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth, Dundee, Forfar, Stonehaven, Aberdeen

If you want to get away from it all, Shetland is the place to be. As close to Norway as it is to Scotland, Shetland is rugged and remote, with a raw natural beauty, a unique culture and wonderful wildlife. There are over a hundred islands here, only 16 of which are inhabited, each with its own individual character, and our tour offers the opportunity to visit four of them, providing a real taste of the diversity of this amazing archipelago, not to mention the simple pleasure of travelling by boats, both large and small, as the indomitable inhabitants of these islands have done for hundreds of years. We visit the little island of Mousa, whose Iron Age broch is the best-preserved example anywhere in the world, the Shetland Croft House Museum which gives an insight into a typical 19<sup>th</sup> century croft, while Jarlshof provides a unique archaeological time-capsule, spanning 3000 years of successive settlements. Finally we have a tour of the northernmost islands of Yell and Unst, a day of stunning seascapes and air so fresh it takes your breath away.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and travel to Aberdeen. From here, we sail overnight to Lerwick. (D)

**Day 2** Arriving early in Lerwick, we enjoy a full Scottish breakfast on board before a full-day tour. In the South Mainland, we visit the **Shetland Croft House Museum**, a restored 19<sup>th</sup>-century thatched croft house. Then, we explore **Jarlshof**, a Prehistoric and Norse Settlement spanning 3,000 years of history, with dwellings from the Stone Age to medieval times. In the afternoon, we cross to **Mousa** to see its 2,000-year-old broch, the best-preserved globally. Later, we head to our hotel for dinner. (B, D)

**Day 3** After breakfast, we tour the northern isles of **Yell** and **Unst**. Travelling via **Tingwall** and **Girlsta**, we pass Sullom Voe. A short ferry takes us to Yell and onward to Unst, where highlights include **Muness Castle** and views from **Saxa Vord Hill**, the UK's northernmost accessible point by coach. We return via East Yell and Burravoe for dinner at our hotel. (B, D)

**Day 4** After breakfast, we check out and visit **St Ninian's Isle**, known for its ancient church and the 9<sup>th</sup>-century silver treasure hidden from Viking raiders. In **Scalloway**, Shetland's former capital, we explore its ruined castle built in 1600. After lunch (*not included*), we pass Tingwall Valley, the old Norse parliament site, before returning to Lerwick for free time in the historic town. Later, we re-board the Northlink ferry for the overnight return to Aberdeen with dinner on board. (B, D)

**Day 5** We disembark in Aberdeen after breakfast on board, returning to our original pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

-  Rich wildlife on the Island of Mousa
-  3,000 years of archaeological history at Jarlshof
-  Muness Castle – the most northerly castle in the British Isles
-  The stunning sea cliffs of Noss
-  Bobby's bus shelter in Baltasound – surely the most famous in the world!

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Two nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Busta House Hotel and two nights in two-berth inside cabins on Serco Northlink Ferries
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

22 - 26 Jun	<del>\$2,165</del> \$2,095
12 - 16 Aug	<del>\$2,165</del> \$2,095
Single Supplement	\$555
Outside Cabin Supplement	\$85



Mousa Broch





Aberlemno Pictish Stone

## In the Footsteps of the Picts

4 DAYS from \$1,185 | ACTIVITY RATING: ING:

PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh

Journeying beyond Rome's northern frontier, we meet the Picts of Dark Age Scotland, famed as 'painted ones'. Known for their fierce battles against Rome, they left few traces of homes but gifted us exquisite carved stones and jewellery, marking them among Europe's finest early medieval artisans.

**Day 1** We set off from our pick-up points, heading to the **National Museum of Scotland**. Here, we explore their Pictish collection, featuring jewellery and sculptures, including the remarkable **St Ninian's Isle Treasure**, the only complete Scottish hoard of fine metalwork from this era. *(D)*

**Day 2** Our journey takes us to **Aberlemno**, home to four stunning Pictish stones. Next, we meet professional stone-carver **David McGovern**, who demonstrates Pictish stone carving techniques exclusively for us. Afterwards, we visit the **St Vigens Museum of Pictish Sculpture**, housing one of Western Europe's most significant early medieval sculpture collections. *(B, D)*

**Day 3** We begin at **Eassie**, viewing its symbol-inscribed cross-slab depicting angels and a cloaked figure. Then, we head to the newly

re-opened **Perth Museum**, following its \$27 million redevelopment. Finally, we visit Dundee's **McManus Museum**, where we encounter a digital reconstruction of a Pictish woman. *(B, D)*

**Day 4** This morning we drive to **St Andrews**, where we see the decorated stone sarcophagus of a great Pictish king, featuring biblical royal imagery along with artistic influences showing their European connections. Our final visit is to the **East Lomond Hillfort**, for a specially arranged tour led by the leader of the current archaeological investigations. We return to our original pick-up points. *(B)*

**Inc. meals:** *B: Breakfast, D: Dinner*

LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

### Key Highlights

- Pictish jewellery and sculpture in the National Museum of Scotland
- Magnificent Pictish stones at Aberlemno
- Pictish stone carving demonstration
- Specially-arranged tour of East Lomond Hillfort

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the 4-star Links Hotel, Montrose
- ▶ Coach travel and all visits as outlined
- ▶ Services of archaeologist Kelly Kilpatrick

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

7 - 10 Aug	<del>\$1,255</del> \$1,185
Single Supplement	\$125



Fair isle knitting

# Knitting in the Shetland Isles

6 DAYS from \$2,583 | ACTIVITY RATING: ING:

**PICK-UP POINTS:** Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth, Dundee, Forfar, Stonehaven, Aberdeen

Explore knitting in the Shetland Isles with workshops led by skilled artisans. Visit Nielanell Design Studio for wool souvenirs and enjoy other textile-related experiences. Discover the islands' heritage and scenery, including Jarlshof and Sumburgh Head's cliffs. Travel in comfort on the overnight ferry from Aberdeen to Lerwick, combining relaxation, scenic cruising and an unforgettable crafting holiday in this remote and inspiring archipelago.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and travel northwards to Aberdeen, where we board the Northlink Ferry for our overnight crossing to Shetland. Dinner is served on board this evening. *(D)*

**Day 2** In the morning, we disembark at **Lerwick**, the capital town of the Shetland Isles. From here we travel to the southern tip of Mainland Shetland, where we visit the outstanding Prehistoric and Norse Settlement of **Jarlshof**, with over three acres of remains, spanning 3000 years since the days of the Stone Age, including oval-shaped Bronze Age houses, Iron Age brochs and wheel houses, Viking long houses and medieval farmhouses. Nearby is the glorious **Sumburgh Head**, a windswept sanctuary and migration route for all manner of birds. Returning to Lerwick, where we have an opportunity for lunch *(not included)*, in the afternoon we visit the award-winning **Textile Gallery of the Shetland Museum and Archives** for a guided tour to learn all about the knitwear that once supported the island's economy. Our next stop is the **Shetland Textile Museum**, where we find an inspiring collection of local pieces located within a restored 18th-century fishing station, or "böd". Following our visit, we transfer to our accommodation at the **Brae Hotel**, where dinner will be served in the evening. *(B, D)*

**Day 3** After breakfast, we are joined by our local tutor for the first of our **interactive workshops** to learn the basics of Shetland hand knitting. After lunch in the hotel, we depart for a visit to the **Nielanell Design Studio** at Sandwick, where we discover an inventive range of alternative knitwear, including hand-spun batts just waiting to be used. We continue to **Hoswick**, where we call in at the **Visitor Centre**, housed in a former woollen mill. The Centre includes weaving machinery, local items and an interpretation of the Hoswick Whale

case. We also visit the Laurence Odie Knitwear outlet at **Hoswick Woollen Mill**. Dinner is served in the evening. *(B, L, D)*

**Day 4** Following breakfast, we depart on a tour of the western mainland of Shetland with visits to **Walls**, the terminus for the ferry service to the island of Foula, and the headland at **Sandness**, overlooking the island of Papa Stour. We return to the hotel for lunch before settling down for the afternoon at the second of our hands-on **workshops**: a great opportunity to ask your tutor any burning questions, and hone your techniques. Dinner is served in the evening. *(B, L, D)*

**Day 5** A leisurely breakfast sets us up nicely for the last full day of the trip, as we spend the rest of our morning engaged in a **knitting workshop** with a local tutor. After lunch, we check out of the hotel and head for a visit to **Scalloway**, the original capital of Shetland. The castle built by Earl Patrick Stewart *(not a man you would want to have crossed)* still dominates the skyline. More recently, Scalloway was the secret base for the heroes of the Norwegian Resistance and the wartime exploits of the 'Shetland Bus' form a courageous memoir. We continue to Lerwick where the rest of the afternoon will be at leisure. Here we will have the opportunity to browse the **Jamieson's of Shetland shop** and view a video presentation giving an insight into the family-owned business, which has specialised in wool from the native Shetland sheep for five generations. This evening, we board our return ferry to Aberdeen with dinner served in the ship's own restaurant, a chance to reflect on the sights we have seen and the knitting skills we have learned. *(B, L, D)*

**Day 6** This morning, we dock at Aberdeen and after breakfast on board, we join our coach and return to our original pick-up points. *(B)*

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

- Three tutored knitting workshops
- Learn from local experts
- Visits to textile galleries, museums and woollen mills
- See the Nielanell Design Studio at Sandwick
- Discover the picturesque village of Scalloway

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Five nights dinner, bed & breakfast: three nights at the Brae Hotel and two nights in two-berth inside cabins on ferry
- ▶ Three lunches
- ▶ Three knitting workshops with expert local tutor
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

13 - 18 Sep	<del>\$2,655</del> \$2,583
Single Supplement	\$555
Outside cabin supplement	\$85





Ivatt Loco No 46512 heads out of Broomhill

## Scenic Scottish Railways

LOW SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT

4 DAYS from \$1,255 | ACTIVITY RAT-  ING:

 DEPARTURE POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth

The north of Scotland is blessed with some wonderfully scenic railway lines. The challenge of building railways through difficult terrain was taken up by the great engineers of the Victorian age. Their legacy is in the sweeping curves and majestic viaducts of the single track lines which cross wild moors and lonely glens. Highlights on this short break include a visit to the much-photographed Eilean Donan Castle, a ride aboard the Jacobite steam train that takes us over the iconic Glenfinnan Viaduct and a visit to Boat of Garten on the Strathspey Line, which you may recognise from the BBC series, *Monarch of the Glen*.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and travel by coach to Aviemore for a return trip on the **Strathspey Railway**. Our train of maroon-liveried coaches will be hauled by a lovingly restored steam locomotive as we travel to Boat of Garten and Broomhill, with the Cairngorm Mountains providing a scenic backdrop. We continue our journey by coach to our hotel. (D)

**Day 2** We transfer to **Inverness** and board the morning diesel train service to **Wick**. The line takes us along the shores of the **Cromarty** and **Dornoch Firths** and follows the spectacular coastline as far as **Helmsdale**, where it turns inland before reaching the terminus at **Wick**. We re-join our coach and return to our hotel by the more direct but equally scenic coastal route. (B, D)

**Day 3** We depart by diesel train from Inverness, this time heading for **Kyle of Lochalsh**, travelling over what is often considered to be the most scenic of all of Scotland's railway lines. In the afternoon we explore the iconic 13th century castle of **Eilean Donan**, with its impossibly romantic setting on Loch Duich. (B, D)

**Day 4** Today we travel to Fort William, where we join **'The Jacobite'** steam train and experience one of the most memorable and spectacular railway journeys in the world, crossing the famous **Glenfinnan Viaduct** as we steam on a return trip to **Mallaig**. After some free time and an opportunity for lunch (*not included*) in Mallaig, we return on the train to Fort William. We then return by coach to our original pick-up points. (B)

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

-  Iconic views over Loch Shiel from the Glenfinnan Viaduct
-  Eilean Donan situated on an island where three lochs meet
-  The palm trees of Plockton
-  Scenic banks of the Beaulieu Firth

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Carrbridge Hotel, Carrbridge (*or similar*)
- ▶ Comfortable coach and standard class rail travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

27 - 30 May	<del>\$1,395</del> \$1,255
14 - 17 Oct	<del>\$1,325</del> \$1,255
Single Supplement	\$150

NO/LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT



The Jacobite Steam Train

## A Classic Scottish Steam Break

4 DAYS from \$1,003 | ACTIVITY RATING: ING:

PICK-UP POINTS: Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh

Steam locomotion has an enduring fascination for many of us and combined with the wonderful scenery of Scotland it becomes utterly irresistible. The Jacobite steam train, from Fort William to Mallaig, is one of the longest steam-hauled rail journeys available in Britain today, an 84-mile round trip through some spectacular scenery that also includes the 21-arch Glenfinnan Viaduct. We also enjoy a taste of steam as we cruise aboard the newly restored SS Sir Walter Scott on the calm waters of Loch Katrine amid the spectacular scenery of the Trossachs. There are two more boat trips to enjoy as we cruise on Loch Lomond, with tales of Rob Roy MacGregor and other local legends, and take a ride on the Falkirk Wheel, the world's first rotating boat lift and a modern engineering marvel. Back on dry land we visit historic Inveraray Castle, home to the Dukes of Argyll, set in beautiful grounds on the shore of Loch Fyne.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and travel to the **Falkirk Wheel**, the world's first rotating boat lift. Once the wheel has made its ascent to join the **Union Canal** 35m above, we sail under the Antonine Wall, the Romans' most northern frontier. We continue to our hotel. (D)

**Day 2** Today is long but rewarding as we journey back in time aboard the **Jacobite Steam Train** and experience one of the most spectacular railway journeys in the world, the **Fort William to Mallaig line**. From the slopes of Ben Nevis, the line runs through rugged mountains, past sea and inland lochs and on to the coast at Mallaig. (B, D)

**Day 3** Today we head for **Loch Lomond\***, where we enjoy a cruise with commentary on this beautiful stretch of water, followed by a visit to historic **Inveraray Castle** on the shores of Loch Fyne. (B, D)

**Day 4** Following breakfast we cruise on **Loch Katrine**, set among the Trossachs. We continue by Aberfoyle, the Duke's Pass and Loch Venachar to **Callander**, where free time awaits before we return to our original pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

Please note: \*On the June departure we will sail on the world's last seagoing paddle steamer, the *Waverley*, whilst it is here in Scotland instead of Loch Lomond and Inveraray Castle. (subject to timetable)

### Key Highlights

- Enjoy a journey on the Falkirk Wheel boat lift
- Stunning views from the Jacobite steam train
- Cruise the Firth of Clyde aboard the PS *Waverley* (June date only)
- A captivating sailing on Loch Katrine on the steamship Sir Walter Scott

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Arrochar Hotel
- ▶ Comfortable coach and standard class rail travel on the Jacobite steam train
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

23 - 26 Apr	<del>\$1,115</del> \$1,003
7 - 10 May	<del>\$1,185</del> \$1,065
25 - 28 Jun	<del>\$1,325</del> \$1,255
8 - 11 Oct	<del>\$1,115</del> \$1,045

Single Supplement \$125

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IN APRIL & MAY



Dolphins, Moray Firth

# Highland Wildlife Safari

LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

4 DAYS from \$1,325 | ACTIVITY RATING: ING:

PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth

Scotland's Highlands offer wildlife encounters amid stunning scenery. We visit Loch of the Lowes to see breeding ospreys, deer and red squirrels, then the Highland Wildlife Park with rare animals including snow leopards and polar bears. Highlights include a Moray Firth dolphin-spotting boat trip, the House of Aigas, Inverewe Garden and the Abernethy and Insh Marshes reserves for ospreys and breeding waders.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated departure points and head up the A9, stopping for refreshments, to the Loch of the **Lowes Visitor Centre and Wildlife Reserve**, near Dunkeld. Loch of the Lowes covers 98 hectares and from early April to late August the star attraction is a pair of breeding ospreys. Their nest is situated within 150 metres of the observation hide, allowing osprey family life to be observed through binoculars, telescopes and closed-circuit television. From the hide, you can also spot fallow and roe deer, otters, red squirrel and common woodland birds, including tree creepers and great-spotted woodpeckers. We continue to the **Highland Wildlife Park** near Aviemore, which has an extensive collection of both native and exotic animals and birds. Native species include capercaillie, red deer, red squirrels and the rare and endangered Scottish wildcat and among the non-native animals are the Amur tiger, snow leopard, red panda and the very popular polar bears. (D)

**Day 2** After breakfast, we make our way to Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, for our Moray Firth **Dolphin Cruise**. Though nothing is ever guaranteed where wildlife is concerned, we have an excellent chance of seeing some of the bottlenose dolphins at close quarters, plus common seals, grey seals and porpoise. There is also a wide variety of bird life such as terns, gannets, fulmars, razorbills, kittiwakes, red kites and ospreys, and a variety of wading birds on the shoreline. Following our cruise, we depart for the **House of Aigas Field Centre**, near Beauly. Here we enjoy lunch using produce from the estate (included) before embarking on a guided walk around the estate to view the beaver dam, Scottish wildcat project and other native wildlife such as red squirrels. (B, L, D)

**Day 3** After breakfast, we travel through some glorious mountain scenery to Kinlochewe at the head of Loch Maree. Here we visit the **Beinn**

**Eighe National Nature Reserve**, located on the loch's southern shore beneath the mighty 3000ft face of **Slioch**. It is the oldest nature reserve in Britain comprising 10,500 acres and was established in 1951. The reason for its designation is the 500-acre remnant of the **Western Caledonian Pine forest** which is carefully protected, the whole reserve having been fenced and sheep removed to allow natural regeneration to take place. Now the short nature trail through the ancient woodland of **Scots Pine, Birch, Juniper and Heather** gives a wonderful impression of the Wild Wood of Caledon as it once was, now hopefully preserved forever. After our Woodland Walk, we continue for an afternoon visit to **Inverewe Gardens**, unquestionably recognised as one of the most outstanding gardens in the country with a host of botanical specimens both native and exotic. The balmy Gulf Stream Drift Climate promotes luxuriant growth and today it is a jungle of mature trees and shrubs laced with winding walks, rising and falling, giving sudden glimpses of shimmering water through the foliage. (B, D)

**Day 4** After breakfast we check out of the hotel and travel south to visit the **Abernethy National Nature Reserve** at Loch Garten. In this remnant of the Caledonian Pine Forest, we hope to see a number of different bird species, including the crested tit, crossbills (three species) and more ospreys, which have been nesting here since the 1950s and can be seen from the comfort of the osprey centre. Continuing south, our final stop is at the **RSPB Reserve at Insh Marshes**, near Kingussie. The marshes, part of the River Spey floodplain, are home to large populations of breeding waders, including curlews, lapwings, redshanks and snipes. We depart for home, returning to your original pick-up point in the evening.

Inc. meals: B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

- Ospreys on the nest at Loch Garten and Loch of the Lowes
- The chance to see the famous Moray Firth dolphins seen from the water
- A walk on the wild side at Beinn Eighe
- Spectacular plant life at Inverewe
- Beaver and wildcat at the House of Aigas

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Carrbridge Hotel, Carrbridge (or similar)
- ▶ One lunch
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

22 - 25 Jun	<del>\$1,395</del> \$1,325
Single Supplement	\$210



Inverewe Gardens

NEW  
TOUR



Culzean Castle

# Castles and Abbeys of Western Scotland

LOW SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT

4 DAYS from \$1,185 | ACTIVITY RATING: ING:

PICK-UP POINTS: Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow

Western Scotland, shaped by power, faith, and imagination, reveals its story through castles and abbeys. From aristocratic estates to sacred medieval ruins, this tour showcases the region's heritage against stunning landscapes. Highlights include Culzean Castle, perched on a cliff top over the Firth of Clyde; a private tour and afternoon tea at Mount Stuart on the Isle of Bute; Kelburn Castle's artistic flair; and visits to Paisley Abbey and Robert Burns' birthplace, reflecting Scotland's spiritual and cultural past.

**Day 1** We set off from our pick-up points, journeying into western Scotland's historic heart. Our first stop is the ancient town of **Paisley**, where we visit **Paisley Abbey**, founded in 1163 by Walter FitzAlan, High Steward of Scotland. This former Cluniac monastery, rich in Gothic beauty, is thought to be the burial site of Marjorie Bruce, mother of Robert II. Later, we continue to the seaside town of **Troon** and check in at the South Beach Hotel, just steps from the shore. (D)

**Day 2** We begin with a visit to **Culzean Castle**, a cliff-top marvel designed by Robert Adam. Filled with elegant rooms, fine furniture and a vast arms collection, it was gifted to the National Trust for Scotland in 1945. General Eisenhower stayed in a special apartment here from 1946. In the afternoon, we explore **Robert Burns' birthplace** in Alloway, visiting his thatched cottage, the **Burns Monument**, **Alloway Auld Kirk** and the **Brig o' Doon** from *Tam O'Shanter*. Together, these sites celebrate Burns' life and legacy. We return to Troon for dinner. (B, D)

**Day 3** Today, we head to the Isle of Bute, crossing by scenic ferry to visit the extraordinary **Mount Stuart**. This neo-Gothic masterpiece, built

in the late 19th century for the 3rd Marquess of Bute, blends art, mysticism and innovation. On our **private guided tour**, we explore opulent rooms adorned with stained glass, marble and gilded ceilings, brimming with Victorian grandeur. After the tour, we enjoy a traditional **afternoon tea** and take in the estate's atmosphere. The gardens, with lush woodlands and views over the Firth of Clyde, are equally enchanting. (B, AT, D)

**Day 4** Our final day brings visits to two contrasting castles. First, we explore **Kelburn Castle**, continuously inhabited since the 12th century and renowned for its vibrant 2007 mural by Brazilian artists, blending medieval heritage with modern art. In the afternoon, we tour **Hunterston Castle**, the ancestral seat of **Clan Hunter**. Its 13th-century tower and ancient relics offer a compelling glimpse into Scotland's medieval past. A **guided tour** reveals tales of feudal loyalty, maritime history and clan legacy. We then return to our original pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, AT: Afternoon Tea, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

- Admire the romantic splendour of Culzean Castle
- Explore the richly decorated interiors of Mount Stuart
- Visit atmospheric Paisley Abbey, one of Scotland's most important medieval religious sites
- Discover the striking contrast of ancient stone and bold street art at Kelburn Castle

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the 3-star South Beach Hotel, Troon
- ▶ Afternoon tea at Mount Stuart
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

28 Sep - 1 Oct ~~\$1,255~~ \$1,185

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Mount Stuart House



Falkland Palace

# Castles, Palaces and Abbeys of Eastern Scotland

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**

**4 DAYS** from \$1,255 | **ACTIVITY RATING:** 🌸 🌸 🌸

 **PICK-UP POINTS:** Glasgow, Edinburgh

The East of Scotland boasts a remarkable array of Royal Palaces and historic castles. We begin at Linlithgow Palace, the birthplace of Mary, Queen of Scots, which also served as a resting point between Edinburgh and Stirling Castle. Stirling Castle, steeped in history, is next on our journey. Heading north to Angus, we explore Glamis Castle, famed as the inspiration for Shakespeare's Macbeth and the birthplace of Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother.

In Perthshire, Scone Palace awaits us, renowned as the crowning site of Scottish Kings and the ancestral home of the Earls of Mansfield. Its red sandstone and Gothic Revival architecture make it a striking landmark. Our tour continues with Falkland Palace, a refuge for Mary, Queen of Scots, and Loch Leven Castle, where she was imprisoned. Finally, we marvel at Culross Palace, with its intricate passageways and painted ceilings, before concluding at Dunfermline Abbey and Palace, the burial site of Scottish royals, including Robert the Bruce.

**Day 1** We set off from our pick-up points, heading to **Linlithgow Palace**, birthplace of Mary, Queen of Scots. Exploring its ruins, we marvel at the Great Hall and courtyard fountain, with an option to climb to the roof for breathtaking views. Later, we visit **Stirling Castle**, stepping into Scotland's Renaissance era. Highlights include the Great Hall (1503), King James VI's Chapel, and Queen Anne Gardens. After our visit, we settle into our hotel. (D)

**Day 2** After breakfast, we journey to Angus to tour **Glamis Castle**, Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother's birthplace. Our **guided visit** unveils 1,000 years of history, tales of Mary, Queen of Scots, and even ghostly legends. In the afternoon, we explore **Scone Palace**, the crowning site of Scottish kings like Macbeth and Robert the Bruce. Inside, we admire its antiques, paintings, and artefacts. (B, D)

**Day 3** We begin at **Falkland Palace and Gardens**, Mary, Queen of Scots' retreat. Wandering through its Renaissance palace, gardens, and meadow, we see the Falkland Bed and Queen's Room, styled as Mary might have used it. Later, we visit **Loch Leven Castle**, where Mary was imprisoned in 1567. Crossing the loch, we explore serene surroundings, the Tower House, and Glassin Tower. (B, D)

**Day 4** Our day starts at **Culross Palace**, built by Sir George Bruce (1597-1611). We explore painted ceilings, passageways, and restored 17th-century gardens with views over the Firth of Forth. In the afternoon, we visit **Dunfermline Abbey and Palace**, featuring the Romanesque nave, St Margaret's shrine, and Bruce's tomb reconstruction before returning to our pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

-  Stirling Castle is set in an imposing position with breathtaking views over the surrounding countryside
-  Glamis Castle - the inspiration for William Shakespeare's Macbeth
-  Loch Leven Castle where Mary, Queen of Scots was imprisoned in 1567

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Salutation Hotel, Perth
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

12 - 15 Jun	<del>\$1,325</del> \$1,255
28 - 31 Aug	<del>\$1,395</del> \$1,325

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Culross

NEW  
TOUR



Balmoral Castle

## Castles of Aberdeenshire

LOW SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT

4 DAYS from \$1,255 | ACTIVITY RATING:

PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth

Join us on a four-day journey through Aberdeenshire's castles, weaving history, legend, and architectural beauty. From Dunnottar's clifftop ruins to Balmoral's royal elegance, explore tower houses, fortresses, and gardens, revealing Scotland's rich heritage amidst stunning northeast landscapes. A truly memorable escape awaits in this captivating journey.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points, heading to **Dunnottar Castle**. Its dramatic perch atop soaring sea cliffs, surrounded by the sea on three sides, creates an atmosphere steeped in mystique. Originally a Pictish fortress, Dunnottar has played a vital role throughout Scottish history. (D)

**Day 2** Our journey begins at **Castle Fraser**, a magnificent Scottish baronial tower house featuring a strikingly simple Great Hall. Next, we explore **Drum Castle and Gardens**, with its medieval square tower, stalwart battlements and centuries of history. The Garden of Historic Roses showcases rose cultivation from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, while an ancient oak forest lies nearby. (B, D)

**Day 3** We visit **Crathes Castle**, a quintessential Scottish tower house. Renowned for its 16th-century painted ceilings and antique

furnishings, the castle offers insights into the Burnett family's history. Later, we embark on a **scenic tour of Royal Deeside**, famed for its picturesque landscapes, sparkling rivers, and historic villages like Ballater, with its royal connections. (B, D)

**Day 4** Our final stop is **Balmoral**, the iconic royal residence built for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1854. The estate covers over 50,000 acres and includes woodlands, lochs and mountains, providing a breathtaking natural setting. Balmoral's interiors combine Victorian elegance with Scottish charm, featuring antique furniture, tartan décor, and artworks that reflect the royal family's history and preferences. After this, we return to our pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

- The magnificent painted ceilings at Crathes Castle
- Castle Fraser, one of Scotland's grandest baronial tower houses
- 175 years of Royal history at Balmoral

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the 4-star Ardoe House Hotel, Aberdeen
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

8 - 11 Jun ~~\$1,325~~ \$1,255

Single Supplement \$210



Crathes Castle



Abbotsford House

## Historic Houses of the Scottish Borders

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

4 DAYS from \$1,465 | ACTIVITY RATING:

PICK-UP POINTS: Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh

The Scottish Borders offer rolling hills, misty valleys and the salmon-rich River Tweed. Visit historic houses and castles, including Paxton House, Traquair House, Mellerstain, Abbotsford and Floors Castle. Based at the Peebles Hydro, the tour blends tranquil landscapes with a rich slice of Scottish history, folklore and architectural heritage, revealing the understated beauty and remarkable past of this often-overlooked region.

**Day 1** We depart by coach and visit **Paxton House**, a Palladian masterpiece completed in 1763 by Patrick Home. Despite its grandeur, Patrick never lived there. The house features Chippendale furniture, Adam interiors, Georgian costumes, and paintings from Scotland's National Collection. Lunch facilities are available (*not included*). We then head to our three-star accommodation at the historic **Peebles Hydro**, rebuilt after a fire in 1905, offering excellent comfort. Dinner is served in the evening. *(D)*

**Day 2** After breakfast, we visit **Abbotsford House**, built by Sir Walter Scott, featuring his collection of armour, weapons, and rare books. Scott passed away in the dining room overlooking the Tweed in 1832. In the afternoon, we visit **Traquair House**, Scotland's oldest inhabited house, visited by monarchs including Mary Queen of Scots. The Bear Gates have remained closed since 1745, awaiting Stuart restoration. The house showcases portraits, maps, and a microbrewery producing Traquair Ale. Dinner awaits back at the hotel. *(B, D)*

**Day 3** We travel to **Mellerstain House**, a Georgian gem completed by Robert Adam. Highlights include original 18th-century ceilings, a stunning library and paintings by Van Dyck and Gainsborough. The house is set in 200 acres of parkland with terraced gardens. Next, we visit **Floors Castle**, a romantic fairytale castle remodelled by William Playfair, featuring turrets and pinnacles. The park includes a historic holly tree marking King James II's death in 1460. Dinner is served at the hotel. *(B, D)*

**Day 4** After breakfast, we check out and visit **Thirlstane Castle**, a 16th-century gem and home to the Duke of Lauderdale. The castle, dating back to the 12th century, showcases Maitland family history and stunning architecture. Lunch in the Victorian Kitchen offers a chance to reflect on the trip. We then return to our pick-up points. *(B)*

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

- Stirling Castle is set in an imposing position with breathtaking views over the surrounding countryside
- Glamis Castle - the inspiration for William Shakespeare's Macbeth
- Loch Leven Castle where Mary, Queen of Scots was imprisoned in 1567

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights' dinner, bed and full breakfast at the 4-star Peebles Hydro Hotel
- ▶ One lunch
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel
- ▶ Services of an expert Tour Manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2 - 5 Sep \$1,535 \$1,465

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Paxton House



NEW  
TOUR



Dunrobin Castle

## Grand Tour of the Gardens of Scotland

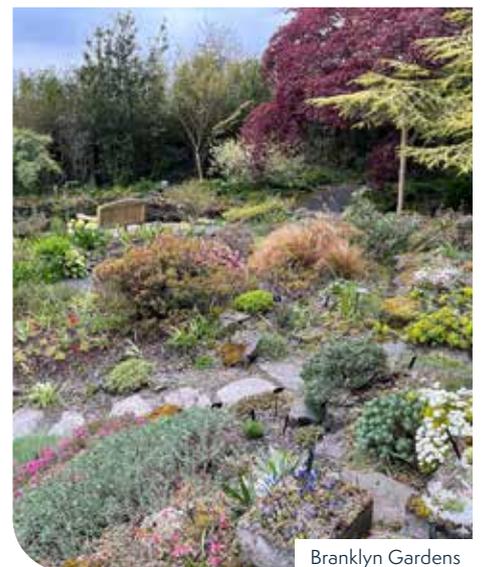
11 DAYS from \$4,125 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌸 🌸 🌸 🌸

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth

Our Grand Tour of Scotland's finest gardens takes us from the open spaces of the far north to the wilds of the west; from the splendours of the south to the elegance of the east. The range of gardens is equally diverse, from the peace and calm of Malleny Garden in Edinburgh to the windy hilltop and lavish planting of Glenwhan, from the sub-tropical exoticism of Logan Botanic Gardens to the homely and traditional Castle and former home of Her Majesty the late Queen Mother.

We begin at Branklyn and Cluny gardens in Perthshire before driving along the 'backbone' of Scotland to Inverness. From here we strike out north to castles Dunrobin and Mey and west to Dundonnell and Inverewe, undoubtedly one of the highlights of the tour. Travelling through the Great Glen we savour the peace and quiet of the West Highlands, where the mild, damp climate, influenced by the Gulf Stream, promotes luxuriant growth in tranquil gardens such as Ardchattan, Arduaine and An Cala.

Moving south and west into Dumfries and Galloway we see more lush planting, with exotic plants from around the world flourishing in this mild climate. Then we move on into the softer, more rounded landscapes of the Border country to see two marvellous gardens before we come full circle back to Edinburgh and conclude in the distinguished surroundings of the Royal Botanic Gardens. From spectacular, show-stopping sites to the hidden gems found within private grounds, this unmissable tour showcases the variety of Scotland's best gardens.



Branklyn Gardens

**Day 1** We travel north to **Branklyn Gardens**, a serene garden with rhododendrons, blue poppies, magnolias and woodland plants. Paths wind through the land, showcasing beautifully grown plants. Next, we visit **Cluny House Gardens**, a Himalayan woodland paradise with exotic plants, including Britain's widest conifer, a giant Wellingtonia. Later, we head to our hotel. (D)



Arduaine

**Day 1** We travel north to **Branklyn Gardens**, a serene garden with rhododendrons, blue poppies, magnolias and woodland plants. Paths wind through the land, showcasing beautifully grown plants. Next, we visit **Cluny House Gardens**, a Himalayan woodland paradise with exotic plants, including Britain's widest conifer, a giant Wellingtonia. Later, we head to our hotel. (D)

**Day 2** We take a morning visit to **Dunrobin Castle**, a fantasy chateau-style castle with formal gardens descending to the sea. Afterwards, we continue to **John O'Groats** and visit the private gardens of the **Castle of Mey**, the former home of Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother. (B, D)

**Day 3** We visit **Dundonnell House Garden**, featuring borders, a 300-year-old yew tree, riverside walks and a restored Victorian glasshouse. Later, we explore **Inverewe Gardens**, an undoubtable highlight of the tour and a lush garden with exotic trees and shrubs, vibrant with Gulf Stream growth. We return to the hotel via **Loch Maree** and **Achnasheen**. (B, D)

**Day 4** After breakfast, we visit **Abriachan Gardens**, then travel along scenic Loch Ness to Fort William and onwards to **Ardchattan Priory**, a historic garden with herbaceous borders, Philadelphus scents and orchids in a wildflower meadow. (B, D)

**Day 5** This morning, we visit **Arduaine**, a garden started in 1897 with magnificent plants and panoramic views of Loch Melfort. In the afternoon, we visit **An Cala**, a quaint garden with stunning sea views. (B, D)

**Day 6** Sit back and admire the views as we meander through scenic landscapes to **Ardkinglas**, home to Britain's tallest conifers and

rhododendrons. Next, we visit **Glenarn**, a restored woodland garden filled with rhododendrons and plants from Tibet and China. We continue to our accommodation near Glasgow. (B, D)

**Day 7** Today we pay a visit to **Dumfries House**, featuring renowned Chippendale furniture and the **Queen Elizabeth Walled Garden**. Highlights include a yew hedge maze and Japanese pagoda. (B, D)

**Day 8** In the morning, we visit **Glenwhan Gardens**, a hilltop garden with pools, streams and unique plants. In the afternoon, we explore **Logan Botanic Gardens**, known for its mild climate and diverse plant habitats. (B, D)

**Day 9** Today we visit **Broughton House**, an 18<sup>th</sup>-century house with a Japanese-inspired garden, followed by **Ellenbank** nursery with cottage garden perennials. Lastly, we explore **Threave Estate**, featuring woodland, shrub roses, mixed borders and glasshouses. (B, D)

**Day 10** We visit **Dawyck Botanic Gardens**, a world-famous arboretum, and **Kailzie Gardens**, home to a walled garden, laburnum arches and a historic glasshouse. Later, we travel to our hotel near Edinburgh. (B, D)

**Day 11** We visit **Malleny Garden**, a peaceful haven with heritage roses and ancient yew trees. We conclude in the regal surroundings of the **Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh**, one of the finest botanic gardens in the world. The world-famous Rock Garden is a particular highlight, where there are approximately 5,000 species planted at any one time. After exploring this gem and reflecting on our grand horticultural journey, we return to our original departure points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

-  Exotic planting at Inverewe, Arduaine and Logan Botanic Gardens
-  The late Queen Mother's homely and much-loved rose garden at the Castle of Mey
-  Peaceful, loch-side gardens in Argyll
-  The great woodland gardens of Ardkinglas and Glenarn
-  The stately surroundings of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Ten nights dinner, bed & breakfast: three nights in the Inverness area; two nights in the Oban area; one night near Glasgow; two nights near Stranraer; one night in Dumfries; one night in the Edinburgh area
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

2 - 12 Jun	<del>\$4,195</del> \$4,125
Single Supplement	\$1,255



Logan Botanic Garden

## Gardens of Dumfries and Galloway

4 DAYS from \$1,065 | ACTIVITY RATING: ING:

PICK-UP POINTS: Stonehaven, Forfar, Aberdeen, Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow

Nestled in the south-western corner of Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway are home to some of the country's most attractive gardens and artists. The artistic highlight of our tour is undoubtedly Dumfries House in Ayrshire, whose future has been secured with the support of King Charles. One of the Adam brothers' finest achievements, the stunning interiors showcase a unique collection of Chippendale furniture, while the walled garden is one of the most exciting in Scotland.

We see something rather different at Broughton House – an artist's garden at the restored former home of 'Glasgow Boy', EA Hornel. The garden, which runs down to the estuary of the Dee, also shows the influence of his time in Japan and is always full of colour. Further highlights include Drumlanrig Castle, with its extensive gardens and world-class collection of fine art and furniture, which was one of the first and most important Renaissance buildings built in Scotland.

**Day 1** We depart from your local pick-up point and head for the gardens at **Drumlanrig Castle**. Surrounded by the 120,000-acre Queensberry Estate, Country Park and grand Victorian gardens, Drumlanrig Castle was completed in 1691 by William Douglas, 1st Duke of Queensberry, and is one of the first and most important Renaissance buildings in Scotland. Drumlanrig hit the headlines in 2003 following the audacious theft of the Leonardo da Vinci painting Madonna with the Yarnwinder and as a consequence, formal guided tours of the castle were introduced. *[B]*

**Day 2** Today we visit **Glenwhan Gardens**, spread out over a windy hilltop with marvellous views of Luce Bay and the Mull of Galloway. Since 1979, a very large, interesting and individual garden has been created, filled with a range of plants. At its heart is an extensive pool, divided by a grassy causeway and fed by a tumbling stream. The slopes above are lavishly planted with trees and shrubs – almost any gardener will find something unfamiliar



Drumlanrig Castle

here. This afternoon, we continue to our next destination, the world-famous **Logan Botanic Gardens** at Port Logan, lying in the Mull of Galloway. The garden was started by the McDougall family, who lived here for 800 years, and since 1969 it has been in the care of the Royal Botanic Garden at Edinburgh. Logan Botanic Garden is beautifully laid out, particularly in the walled garden with its fine terraces and well-planned borders under an avenue of cabbage palms. The climate here is exceptionally mild and several different habitats provide conditions for a huge variety of plants. (B, D)

**Day 3** This morning, we visit **Broughton House**, a fascinating 18th-century house and garden which was home to EA Hornel from 1901 until his death in 1933. During his lifetime, he had twice lived in Japan and his experience there influenced many of his paintings. The garden, which runs down to the estuary of the Dee, also shows the influence of his time in Japan and is always full of colour. After our visit to Broughton, we spend some more time in Kirkcudbright, a haven for artists shown by its abundance of art galleries. We visit one such gallery and browse the work of local artists before stopping for lunch (*not included*). Following this, we visit the wonderful plantsman's nursery of **Ellenbank**, full of cottage garden perennials such as violas, clematis and penstemons. Our last visit of the day is to the

gardens of the **Threave Estate**. The gardens have been largely created by students at the School of Horticulture, which started here in 1960. Mature woodland of beech, conifers and oaks form the background to a large collection of shrub roses, sweeping mixed borders, dwarf heathers, peat and rock gardens, a walled kitchen garden and superbly maintained glasshouses. (B, D)

**Day 4** This morning we check out our hotel and visit **Dumfries House**, near Cumnock in Ayrshire. Its stunning interiors are home to a world-class collection of furniture by Thomas Chippendale and many late 18th-century cabinet makers, which recently featured on BBC's Antiques Roadshow. We are able to make the most of those interiors on our grand tour of the house, followed by tea and shortbread. Afterwards, we also visit the **Queen Elizabeth Walled Garden**, which is one of the best examples of its kind in Scotland and in many ways the flagship of the restoration project. You may also wish to venture into the intriguing yew hedge maze and see if you can reach the Japanese pagoda at its centre – and then find your way out again! Following our final visit, we return to our original departure points.

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

-  Stunning interiors and a wonderful walled garden at Dumfries House
-  Plants from around the world in the lush surroundings of Logan Botanic Gardens
-  The tranquil pond at the heart of Glenwhan Gardens
-  The treasure trove of fine art that is Drumlanrig Castle

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the 3-star Holiday Inn Dumfries (*or similar*)
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of a horticulturalist expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

31 May - 3 Jun	<del>\$1,185</del> \$1,065
19 - 22 Jul	<del>\$1,255</del> \$1,185
13 - 16 Sep	<del>\$1,255</del> \$1,185
Single Supplement	\$275



Attadale

## Gardens of Wester Ross

5 DAYS from \$1,142 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌸 🌸 🌸

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth

Join us on our tour which strings together some of the best gardens in one of the most beautiful and scenic parts of the country. An undoubted highlight of our tour will be our visit to Attadale Gardens, a true gem of a garden which was voted RHS Partner Garden of the Year for Scotland in 2023. Here we will have an exclusive private visit and will enjoy a light lunch in the dining room of the main house, which is not normally open to the public. Other visits include a three acre private garden on the outskirts of Inverness, a trip to Skye where we enjoy the award-winning formal garden of Dunvegan Castle and Inverewe, unquestionably one of the most outstanding gardens in the country – this tour is a real treasure trove of treats for anyone who enjoys beautiful gardens and wonderful scenery.

**Day 1** We leave our pick-up points and head north, stopping for lunch in Pitlochry (*not included*). Next, we visit the private garden of the **Oldtown of Leys** near Inverness. Established in 2003, this three-acre garden offers year-round interest with seasonal highlights like spring rhododendrons, summer plantings, autumn trees and winter evergreens. (D)

**Day 2** This morning, we head south through Torridon's stunning scenery, crossing the elegant Kyle of Lochalsh bridge to the **Isle of Skye**. At **Dunvegan Castle**, we explore its award-winning formal gardens. In the afternoon, we take the ferry from Sconser to Raasay to visit the **Raasay Walled Garden**. This revitalised community project features a productive fruit and vegetable garden, rose garden and herbaceous borders. We return to Skye, cross back to the mainland and reach the hotel in time for dinner after a fulfilling day. (B, D)

**Day 3** After breakfast, we travel south to **Attadale Gardens** on the shores of Loch Carron, where the Gulf Stream-influenced micro-climate nurtures 20 acres of outstanding water gardens, old rhododendrons, unusual trees and a fern collection in a geodesic dome. We enjoy an **exclusive private visit**, guided by a member of the family and the gardening staff, followed by a **light lunch** served in the dining room of the main house, which

is not normally open to the public. We return to Gairloch, where there will be an opportunity to visit the **Gairloch Museum**. (B, L, D)

**Day 4** Today, we explore northern Scotland, visiting **Dundonnell House Garden**, completed in 1769 by the Mackenzies of Dundonnell. The current owner has added vibrant borders around a 300-year-old yew tree. The garden features distinct sections, riverside walks through an arboretum and a restored Victorian glasshouse. Next, we visit **Inverewe Gardens**, renowned for its lush exotic trees and shrubs thriving in the mild Gulf Stream Drift Climate, with winding paths revealing glimpses of shimmering water. (B, D)

**Day 5** We leave our hotel for Inverness, stopping in Munloch to visit **Old Allangrange**. This site features a 17th-century house surrounded by an ornamental garden and a three-acre productive garden with Keder greenhouses, designed with agroforestry, permaculture and no-dig techniques. Next, we stop at **Simpsons Garden Centre** near Inverness, where lunch is available. We then return to our pick-up points, arriving in the evening. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

-  The desolate beauty of the Highland landscape
-  Inverewe, widely regarded as one of Scotland's greatest gardens
-  Exclusive private visit to Attadale Gardens, RHS Partner Garden of the Year in Scotland 2023, including lunch in the main house, not normally open to the public

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights dinner, bed & full breakfast at the Gairloch Hotel
- ▶ Lunch at Attadale
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

19 - 23 May	<del>\$1,605</del> \$1,142
Single Supplement	\$415



Dunvegan Castle

NEW  
TOUR



Gordon Castle - Garden Cottage - © Ed Bollom

# Gordon Castle & Gardens of the East Highlands

LOW SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT

4 DAYS from \$1,185 | ACTIVITY RAT- ING:

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth

The spectacular gardens and landscapes of the East Highlands await on this special break. Highlights include the UK's most northerly botanic gardens at Inverness, the beautiful lawns, wildflower meadows and walled garden of the fairytale Aldourie Castle Gardens on the banks of Loch Ness, and of course, the wonderful Gordon Castle Gardens. RHS Regional Partner Garden of the Year 2024 and one of Britain's largest kitchen gardens, this historic treasure has been restored to its Victorian and Edwardian heyday and offers the perfect spot for our included afternoon tea.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head for our first visit, **Branklyn Garden**, a haven of peace and colour on the outskirts of Perth. Begun in 1922, on a south-facing slope with acid soil, the garden represents a wonderful collection of woodland plants along the winding paths. Afterwards, we continue northwards to our hotel on the north side of the stunning **Cairngorms National Park**, the largest National Park in Britain. (D)

**Day 2** This morning we visit **Aldourie Castle Gardens**, nestled in a private 500-acre estate in a picturesque lochside setting and a lovely blend of formal and informal landscaping. Highlights include a peaceful walled garden, pretty wildflower meadows, vegetable-filled glasshouses and beautiful lawns surrounded by a wide variety of ancient trees, with views out to Loch Ness.

In the afternoon, we discover the enchanting **Inverness Botanic Gardens**, a hidden treasure in the heart of the city. Wander through the tropical house and cactus house, soak in the serene ambience and admire the formal gardens and wildflower meadows that create a beautiful range of colours. (B, D)

**Day 3** Today we make our way to the charming **Ruthven Cottage Hardy Plant Nursery**, home to a stunning array of herbaceous borders,

along with a peaceful pond, greenhouse and free-roaming chickens! Emphasising a naturalistic style of planting, many of the hardy perennials, shrubs and climbers we see are sold at the nursery here.

We continue to the real highlight of our break, **Gordon Castle Gardens**, Historic House's Garden of the Year 2021, the RHS Regional Partner Garden of the Year 2024 and one of Scotland's best-kept secrets. The eight-acre restored walled garden is now one of Britain's oldest and largest kitchen gardens, brought back to life by world-famous designer Arne Maynard. Enclosed within the ancient walls is a range of herbs, cut flowers, fruit and vegetables, creating beautiful colours and a sense of tranquillity all year round. It's a charming spot for our included **afternoon tea**. (B, AT, D)

**Day 4** After breakfast, we check out of our hotel and make our way to the splendid formal gardens of **Drummond Castle**. The gardens we see today were replanted during the 1950s, preserving features such as the ancient yew hedges and the copper beech trees planted by Queen Victoria to commemorate her visit in 1842. The garden was principally the work of Lewis Kennedy of Vineyard Nursery in Hammersmith, who supplied plants to many of Britain's finest gardens. Later, we continue back to our original pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, AT: Afternoon Tea, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

-  Stroll amongst the unique variety of plants and vibrant flowers at Branklyn Garden
-  Enjoy exploring the impressive Gordon Castle Gardens, complete with afternoon tea
-  Discover the colour of Aldourie Castle Gardens, set on the banks of Loch Ness
-  Admire Inverness Botanic Gardens, an oasis of calm in the capital of the Highlands

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the 4-star Carrbridge Hotel, Carrbridge
- ▶ Afternoon tea at Gordon Castle
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Sue Pomeroy as tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

14 - 17 Sep	<del>\$1,255</del> \$1,185
Single Supplement	\$210



Drummond Castle

NEW  
TOUR



The Quoy of Houton

## Orkney's Garden Trail

6 DAYS from \$2,585 | ACTIVITY RATING:

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth

The far north of Scotland and the Orkney Isles may be known for wild moorlands, dramatic cliffs and booming surf. Yet, they also nurture remarkable gardens created by determined gardeners over generations. Long summer days – the famed ‘simmer dim’ – provide an ideal backdrop for these green havens. We begin in Caithness and Sutherland with a visit to the Castle of Mey before crossing the Pentland Firth to Orkney. There, we follow Orkney's Garden Trail, enjoying special access to selected private gardens and exploring archaeological treasures such as the standing stones of Stenness and Brodgar.

**Day 1** Our first stop is Old Allangrange, a charming property with ornamental and productive gardens, including greenhouses. We then travel via the coastal road to our hotel. (D)

**Day 2** After breakfast, we visit Duncansby Head for sea-stack views and photos at John O'Groats. Next is Castle of Mey, the Queen Mother's former summer home, restored with beautiful gardens. We take the evening ferry from Scrabster to Stromness, dining onboard. (B, D)

**Day 3** After breakfast, we visit Greens Garden, stop at the Churchill Barriers and continue to Westlea Garden, a plant-packed space, and Laura's Wood, featuring diverse trees and bulbs. We also explore Marengo Community Garden. On the way back, we visit the Italian Chapel, built by WWII prisoners, with paintings by Domenico Chiochetti. (B, D)

**Day 4** We visit The Community Garden in Finstown and explore Skara Brae. In the afternoon, we visit Kierfold, a Victorian garden with geraniums, grasses and rare plants. (B, D)

**Day 5** We start at Waulkmill, a garden overlooking Waulkmill Bay, then continue to The Quoy of Houton, a restored walled garden with coastal planting and features like a water rill. We also visit the Standing Stones of Stenness and Ring of Brodgar, ancient monuments. Back in Kirkwall, enjoy free time to explore shops and St Magnus Cathedral. (B, D)

**Day 6** After breakfast, we take the ferry back to Scrabster and head south, stopping at Dunrobin Castle, a château-style fantasy castle. We continue south, stopping for refreshments (not included), arriving at our pick-up points in the evening. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

-  The delightful gardens at the Castle of Mey
-  Special access to private gardens in Orkney and on the mainland
-  Explore the heart of Neolithic Orkney

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Five nights dinner, bed & breakfast: one night at the Park Hotel, Thurso and four nights at the Kirkwall Hotel, Orkney (one dinner is taken on the ferry)
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary. Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Return ferry travel
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Sue Pomeroy as tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

17 - 22 Jul	<del>\$2,655</del> \$2,585
Single Supplement	\$415



Kierfold House

# Autumn Tints of Arran

4 DAYS from \$1,325 | ACTIVITY RAT-  ING:

 **PICK-UP POINTS:** Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow

Arran, often called “Scotland in Miniature”, blends Highland peaks and glens with southern farmland. From Troon’s ferry, Goat Fell’s silhouette rises from the Firth of Clyde, hinting at the island’s charm. Circling 56 miles of coastline, we’ll visit villages like Brodick, Corrie, and Lochranza, plus Brodick Castle amid vibrant autumnal hues.



Brodick Castle

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head for Troon in time to catch the afternoon ferry to **Brodick**. On arrival we transfer to our hotel in **Blackwaterfoot**. (D)

**Day 2** Today following breakfast we have a **tour of the island of Arran**. From Blackwaterfoot we will visit **Whiting Bay, Lamlash, Brodick** – the capital of Arran; **Corrie** and **Sannox** under the shadow of Goat Fell and other mountains, and then down the west coast to **Catacol** and **Pirnmill** with its ‘12 Apostles’. (B, D)

**Day 3** This morning we have included a visit to the gardens of **Brodick Castle** which occupies a splendid position, well protected from westerly winds and looking east across the Firth of Clyde. The present garden dates from 1932 when the

Duchess of Montrose started an ambitious woodland garden with a collection of rhododendrons. From the castle, paths wind downhill towards the seashore, and in a shady place there is a fernery and a delightful Bavarian summer house embellished with rustic work and lovely inlaid panels of pinecones. A walled garden, dating from 1710, has been restored and mixed borders on three sides retain the gardener’s interest throughout the year. (B, D)

**Day 4** We will travel to the ferry port in time for the crossing to **Troon**, where we expect to arrive early afternoon. Thereafter we will return to our original pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

-  Sailing across the Firth of Clyde and watching the mountains of Arran draw ever nearer
-  Highly scenic circular tour of the island
-  Brodick Castle, with its incomparable setting and autumn colours in the garden
-  The comfortable Kinloch Hotel, located on the ‘sunset side’ of the island

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Kinloch Hotel, Blackwaterfoot
- ▶ Comfortable coach and all ferry crossings
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

14 - 17 Oct	<del>\$1,395</del> \$1,325
Single Supplement	\$350

# Autumn Tints of Dumfries and Galloway

4 DAYS from \$1,185 | ACTIVITY RAT-    ING:

 **PICK-UP POINTS:** Stonehaven, Forfar, Aberdeen, Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow

As summer wanes, autumn bursts into vibrant colours in south-west Scotland. Amid fiery reds and golden yellows, we explore enchanting gardens: Dumfries House’s Queen Elizabeth Walled Garden, Glenwhan Gardens, Logan Botanic, and Dalswinton Mill—Brightwater tour manager Colin Crosbie’s own creation.



Drumlanrig Castle

**Day 1** We begin our journey from designated pick-up points and travel to **Dumfries House**. Here, we enjoy a grand tour of the interiors, followed by tea and shortbread. We then explore the **Queen Elizabeth Walled Garden**, a standout example in Scotland. Later, we visit **Burnside**, a dynamic 6 ½ acre garden with diverse plants offering year-round colour and variety. (D)

**Day 2** Our day starts at **Glenwhan Gardens**, perched on a windy hilltop with views of Luce Bay and the Mull of Galloway. Next, we visit the renowned **Logan Botanic Garden**, famed for its walled garden, terraces and borders lined with cabbage palms. The mild climate here supports an extraordinary range of plants across various habitats. (B, D)

**Day 3** After breakfast, we visit the private garden at **Millhall** before heading to the **Threave Estate**, shaped by horticulture students since 1960. Our day concludes at **Corsock House**, featuring acid-loving trees and shrubs enhancing glades leading to an ornamental water garden. (B, D)

**Day 4** We are honoured to visit Colin Crosbie’s garden, **Dalswinton Mill**, a plantsman’s haven set around an 18th-century watermill. Finally, we explore the gardens of **Drumlanrig Castle** before returning to our departure points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

## Key Highlights

-  A visit to the Queen Elizabeth Walled Garden, which is one of the best examples of its kind in Scotland
-  The private garden at Millhall
-  Stunning interiors and a wonderful walled garden at Dumfries House
-  Colin Crosbie’s own garden, Dalswinton Mill

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the 3-star Holiday Inn Dumfries
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Colin Crosbie as tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

25 - 28 Oct	<del>\$1,255</del> \$1,185
<b>NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT</b>	

# Glasgow's Art Treasures featuring the Burrell Collection

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

4 DAYS from \$905 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌸

 PICK-UP POINTS: Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, Kinross, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow

Reopened in March 2022 after refurbishment, Glasgow's Burrell Collection offers access to all three floors, showcasing treasures like ancient Chinese porcelain, French paintings, and medieval artefacts. We'll also explore the Kelvingrove Art Gallery, Hunterian, Gallery of Modern Art, Holmwood House, and House for an Art Lover.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points to visit the **Gallery of Modern Art** housed in an impressive neo-classical building in Royal Exchange Square. Outside is one of Glasgow's iconic landmarks, the cheekily crowned equestrian statue of the **Duke of Wellington**. (D)

**Day 2** Today we explore the **Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum** and the **Hunterian Museum**, part of the University of Glasgow, which was founded in 1807, making it Scotland's oldest public museum. You may be interested in viewing the **Mackintosh Collection** here. (B, D)

**Day 3** We start our day at the **Burrell Collection** which, following an ambitious and far-reaching refurbishment programme, in 2024



Kelvingrove

received the Andrew Doolan **Best Building in Scotland Award**. This afternoon we head to **Holmwood House**, the finest and most elaborate residential villa designed by Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. (B, D)

**Day 4** Today we visit the **House for an Art Lover**, whose origins lie in drawings prepared by Charles Rennie Mackintosh in 1901 as his entry to a competition. We later return to our original pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

-  Explore the newly refurbished Burrell Collection
-  Visit Scotland's oldest public museum
-  Discover one delight after another at Kelvingrove
-  See world class art (and a Glasgow icon) at the Gallery of Modern Art
-  Charles Rennie Mackintosh's design brought to life at the House for an Art Lover

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Best Western Garfield House Hotel, Glasgow
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

30 Oct - 2 Nov **\$975** \$905

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

# The Architecture of Glasgow and Edinburgh

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

4 DAYS from \$1,185 | ACTIVITY RATING: 🌸🌸

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh

Scotland's two largest cities, just 45 miles apart, enjoy a friendly rivalry. We explore their architecture, contrasting Glasgow's grand Victorian edifices with Edinburgh's Georgian elegance in Old and New Towns.

**Day 1** We begin our journey from Glasgow and Edinburgh, heading to central **Edinburgh** for a tour of the Old Town. Strolling along the Royal Mile, we visit **Gladstone's Land**, a historic building with 500 years of history, including war, fire, and disease. Continuing down the High Street, we explore **St Giles' Cathedral**, site of His Majesty The King's 'Scottish Coronation'. We then proceed to our hotel. (D)

**Day 2** After breakfast, we visit the **Scottish Parliament**. Next, we tour the **Palace of Holyroodhouse**, exploring its historic apartments, Holyrood Abbey ruins, and gardens. After lunch (not included), we delve into the New Town's elegant terraces and **Charlotte Square**, visiting **The Georgian House**, restored to reflect 18th-century life. Our day concludes at the **National Gallery of Scotland**, showcasing masterpieces by Rubens, Titian, and Van Gogh. (B, D)



Edinburgh

**Day 3** Heading to Glasgow, we explore the **Merchant City**, tracing its 18th-century mercantile roots. A **private tour** of the ornate **Glasgow City Chambers** highlights its Beaux Arts style. After a city tour, we enjoy **afternoon tea at Mackintosh at the Willow**. We finish at **The Tenement House**, a preserved 20th-century time capsule. (B, AT, D)

**Day 4** Our final day in Glasgow includes **Templeton on the Green**, a Venetian-inspired former carpet factory, and the striking **Riverside Museum**, showcasing vehicles and recreated historic streets. Later, we return to our pick-up points. (B)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, AT: Afternoon Tea, D: Dinner

## Key Highlights

-  Guided tour of the Scottish Parliament building
-  Contrast and compare Edinburgh's Georgian House with Glasgow's Tenement House
-  Private tour of the marble staircases and cavernous rooms at Glasgow City Chambers
-  Afternoon Tea at Mackintosh at the Willow

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed and full breakfast at 4-star hotel in the Glasgow area
- ▶ One afternoon tea
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

6 - 9 Nov **\$1,255** \$1,185

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

NEW  
TOUR



Geilston

## Charles Rennie Mackintosh & Gardens of the Clyde

4 DAYS from \$1,185 | ACTIVITY RATING: 

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth

Charles Rennie Mackintosh is arguably Scotland's most famous architect and designer, and his works were influential in various European design movements. Living most of his life in Glasgow, there are many buildings around the city that are to Mackintosh's architectural design, including the Glasgow School of Art, Queens Cross Church and the Daily Record Building. No Mackintosh tour would be complete without a visit to the Willow Tea Rooms, where we enjoy afternoon tea and a visit his finest domestic creation at Hill House. Other highlights include the Burrell Collection, the Walled Garden at Geilston, Glenarn Garden and Mount Stuart.

**Day 1** We depart by coach for a tour of Mackintosh's architectural works, including **Queens Cross Church, the Daily Record Building,** and the **Glasgow School of Art.** In the afternoon, we visit the **Burrell Collection,** gifted by Sir William Burrell and Lady Constance, showcasing over 9,000 works of art from medieval to modern times, including pieces by Degas and Cézanne. Later, we arrive at our hotel for dinner. (D)

**Day 2** After breakfast, we visit **Hill House,** Mackintosh's finest domestic creation, commissioned in 1902 by Walter Blackie. Mackintosh designed the house, gardens, furniture and interiors, with contributions from his wife, Margaret Macdonald. Nearby, we explore **Glenarn,** a restored woodland garden filled with rhododendrons and rare plants collected from Tibet and China. Our final stop is the **Walled Garden** at Geilston, featuring a herbaceous border, a Victorian

glasshouse and a prairie border bursting with summer colours. (B, D)

**Day 3** After breakfast, we take the ferry to Rothesay on the Isle of Bute. We visit **Mount Stuart,** a High Victorian Gothic house surrounded by 300 acres of exotic gardens influenced by the Gulf Stream. Next, we explore **Ascog Hall Fernery** and return to the mainland in the afternoon. (B, D)

**Day 4** We visit **Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum,** featuring 22 galleries with over 8,000 objects of international significance, including natural history, arms and art. Later, we enjoy **afternoon tea** at the **Willow Tea Room.** We then return to our departure points. (B, AT)

**Inc. meals:** B: Breakfast, AT: Afternoon Tea, D: Dinner

### Key Highlights

-  A visit to Hill House, Charles Rennie Mackintosh's finest domestic creation
-  The spectacular house and gardens of Mount Stuart on the Isle of Bute
-  The impressive herbaceous border at the Walled Garden at Geilston
-  Afternoon Tea at the Willow Tea Room, a Charles Rennie Mackintosh masterpiece

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights dinner, bed and full breakfast at a comfortable hotel in the Glasgow area
- ▶ Afternoon tea at the Willow Tea Rooms
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

26 - 29 Jun	<del>\$1,255</del> \$1,185
Single Supplement	\$150

# Up Helly Aa 2027

Shetland's Festival of Fire



Strolling through Lerwick in January, you may find yourself face-to-face with towering, bearded Vikings clad in chain mail and winged helmets. Later, they parade through the town in a blaze of torchlight, voices raised in song, as a hand-crafted longship is carried aloft and spectacularly set aflame. Fireworks burst overhead, brass bands strike up and the night sky glows against the winter dark. This is Up Helly Aa, Shetland's extraordinary fire festival, marking the lengthening days and the turning of the year. Entirely run by locals yet welcoming to visitors, it's a celebration of heritage, community spirit and Shetland's wild winter beauty.

**BOOK EARLY for January 2027**

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