

# Beauty of the British Isles

Discover gardens, castles and coastlines  
at their peak this summer



**SAVE \$70** on featured UK Holidays departing **April - July**  
**SAVE 10%** when you pay in full at booking on **Aug – Dec 2026** departures

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## The British Isles in Bloom

As spring unfolds across the British Isles, gardens reach their peak, light lingers into the evening and landscapes take on a renewed vitality. It is a season that rewards those who travel at just the right time.

From the delicate blossoms at Highgrove to the windswept beauty of Scotland's northern islands, Brightwater Holidays are designed to reveal each landscape at its most expressive. With over three decades of experience and deep-rooted knowledge of the places we visit, we understand not only where to go, but when.

Our knowledgeable Tour Managers lead small groups with warmth and insight, sharing stories that bring each destination vividly to life. Every itinerary is carefully timed and thoughtfully paced, allowing you to immerse yourself fully, without hurry or distraction.

If you are considering your next UK holiday, this is the season to begin. With every detail expertly arranged, you can look forward to experiencing the British Isles exactly as it should be seen – at its brightest and most beautiful.

As the days grow longer, now is the perfect moment to look ahead to our summer departures. With every detail carefully taken care of, you can unwind and fully appreciate the gardens, coastlines and historic landscapes that define the beauty of the British Isles.

Warmest wishes,

*Alison Wilson*  
Managing Director



## Highlights of the Great British Isles

### Gardens in Bloom

Step into the seasonal splendour of Britain's finest gardens. From the intimate elegance of Highgrove to lesser-known private estates, each visit is carefully timed to coincide with peak bloom. Colours are richer, scents linger in the air and every border feels alive with possibility. With exclusive access woven into many departures, experience these spaces in a personal, unhurried way.

### Castles, Heritage & Archaeology

Trace the stories of Scotland's past, from the enigmatic Picts to iconic Highland strongholds. Explore castles shaped by centuries of history and landscapes that still echo with ancient lives. Our itineraries are thoughtfully designed to connect place with story, guided by those who know the terrain intimately.

### Coastal & Countryside Journeys

Discover the quiet beauty of Britain's coastlines and rolling countryside. Walk cliff-top paths, breathe in salt-tinged air and pause in villages where life moves at a gentler pace. Each journey allows space to look, listen and truly absorb the surroundings.

### City Culture & Special Access

From elegant architecture to hidden gardens tucked behind historic walls, Britain's cities reward closer exploration. With Brightwater Holidays, special visits and expert insight reveal layers of heritage often missed by the casual traveller.

### Step Into the Season

Every journey with Brightwater Holidays is designed to let you experience the UK at just the right pace. To linger in a blooming garden, feel the wind on a Highland cliff or uncover a hidden corner of history. With every detail thoughtfully arranged, all you need to do is step into the season and savour it.

This spring and summer, let us guide you to Britain's most captivating places, at the moments they are at their very best.

## The Brightwater Holidays difference



### Expert-led experiences

Our knowledgeable Tour Managers share their passion, insight and insider knowledge at every step.

### Exclusive access

From private gardens and special events to archaeological discoveries and top cultural highlights, Brightwater opens doors you wouldn't reach on your own.

### Well-planned itineraries

Every detail is carefully arranged – from travel connections to meals – so you can focus on enjoying each moment and making memories that last.

### Every journey is seamlessly supported

From your first enquiry to your return home, our team ensures your experience is smooth, comfortable and worry-free.

**NEW  
TOUR**



Sandringham house gardens

# RHS Sandringham & Gardens of Norfolk

5 DAYS from \$1,745 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: London, Brentwood, Chelmsford

Norfolk's gentle landscapes, rich gardening heritage and coastal charm provide the perfect backdrop for this summertime tour. Including the new RHS Sandringham Flower Show, one of the season's most anticipated events, we also visit a handpicked selection of the region's most beautiful gardens. From the hidden tranquillity of Norwich's Bishop's House Garden to the world-class rose displays at Peter Beales Roses, there's something to inspire everyone.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and begin our journey to East Anglia, heading first to **Fullers Mill Garden**, a seven-acre oasis set on the banks of the River Lark. We continue to the city of **Norwich**, where we enjoy an **exclusive, by-appointment visit** to the **Bishop's House Garden**, a true hidden gem tucked behind the cathedral. Later, we check into our hotel, where we enjoy dinner.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** Today is dedicated to one of the highlights of the horticultural calendar, the **RHS Sandringham Flower Show**. We explore the stunning show gardens, browse a wide variety of specialist plant stalls and enjoy lively talks and demonstrations from some of the UK's leading gardening experts. From exquisite floral displays to the latest in garden tools and techniques, there's inspiration at every turn.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** This morning, we visit **Peter Beales Roses** in Attleborough, a paradise for rose lovers and a name synonymous with world-class English roses. We begin with a **guided tour** of the award-winning gardens and our visit concludes with a **traditional cream tea**, the perfect accompaniment to a rose-scented morning. In the

afternoon, we continue to **Bressingham Gardens** near Diss, created by renowned plantsman Alan Bloom and later expanded by his son, Adrian. Set within 17 acres, the gardens are divided into themed areas, including the Dell Garden and Foggy Bottom, famed for its sweeping borders and imaginative plant combinations.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Afternoon Tea, Dinner

**Day 4** Today offers a wonderful contrast of wild beauty and creative garden design, beginning with a visit to **Fairhaven Woodland and Water Garden**. In the afternoon, we visit one of Norfolk's most remarkable private gardens, the **East Ruston Old Vicarage**. Created from scratch by Alan Gray and Graham Robeson since 1973, this extraordinary 32-acre garden is a masterclass in bold planting, garden rooms and imaginative design.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** After breakfast and check-out, we begin our journey home, but not before one final highlight. We make a stop at the exquisite **Helmingham Hall Gardens** in Suffolk, a moated Tudor manor that has been home to the Tollemache family for over 500 years. After time to explore, we continue our journey back to our original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Key Highlights

- Enjoy an exclusive visit to the Bishop's House Garden in Norwich
- Spend a day at the celebrated RHS Sandringham Flower Show
- Explore the richly planted borders and rose displays at Peter Beales Roses
- Discover the extraordinary design and exotic plantings of East Ruston Old Vicarage

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights at the four-star Holiday Inn Norwich with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Linda Robinson as expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

22 - 26 Jul ~~\$1,815~~ \$1,745

Single Supplement \$275



Bressingham Gardens



LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

RHS Bridgewater

# RHS Bridgewater & Gardens of the North West

4 DAYS from \$940 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: London, Luton, Northampton, Birmingham, Stoke-on-Trent

One of the largest gardening projects in Europe, RHS Garden Bridgewater has established itself as a world-class garden. Come along and discover its wonders alongside other horticultural gems on this delightful exploration. Highlights include Trentham Estate with its Italian Gardens, the great plantsman's garden of Dunham Massey and Tatton Park, whose gardens have developed over 200 years yet retain much of their Edwardian character.

**Day 1** We depart by coach from our pick-up points this morning and head for the north-west of England, where we begin with a visit to the gardens of **Trentham Estate** in Staffordshire, where the contemporary revival of the famous Italian Gardens was led by renowned designer and serial Chelsea gold-medal winner, Tom Stuart-Smith. Take the circular lakeside walk all the way round as it winds beside the River Trent, by the bird hide, through Capability Brown's cascading weir and along atmospheric woodland trails. Afterwards, we continue to our hotel in Cheshire.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast, we depart for our visit to the **RHS Garden Bridgewater** at Worsley, to the west of Manchester. This once-in-a-generation project saw the Royal Horticultural Society take inspiration from the heritage of the site and transform it into a world-class garden, while also delivering a programme of community outreach and education activities, volunteering and training. In the afternoon, we visit a nearby private garden, which, in contrast to Bridgewater is much smaller but no less intriguing. **The Secret Valley** was transformed by its owner from a former Coal Board dumping ground into an urban paradise, where swans and kingfishers nest on the floating islands of

the tranquil lake.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** Following breakfast, we visit the gardens at **Dunham Massey**. Previously, a garden of straight lines and regimented planting favoured by the 2nd Earl of Stamford and Warrington, the garden became the family's pleasure ground under the 5th Earl when sweeping lawns and meandering paths were introduced. The garden continues to evolve today – modern additions include the Rose Garden and the Winter Garden. Later, we visit **Tatton Park**, whose gardens have developed over 200 years yet retain much of their Edwardian character. Lewis William Wyatt and Joseph Paxton, architect of Crystal Palace, designed various elements, including the Conservatory, which is now open following a comprehensive restoration programme.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** After breakfast, we check out of the hotel and depart for a visit to **Arley Hall**. A pair of herbaceous borders was laid out here in 1846 and they survive to this day, beautifully maintained - one of the great garden sights of England. Following our final visit, we return to our original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Key Highlights

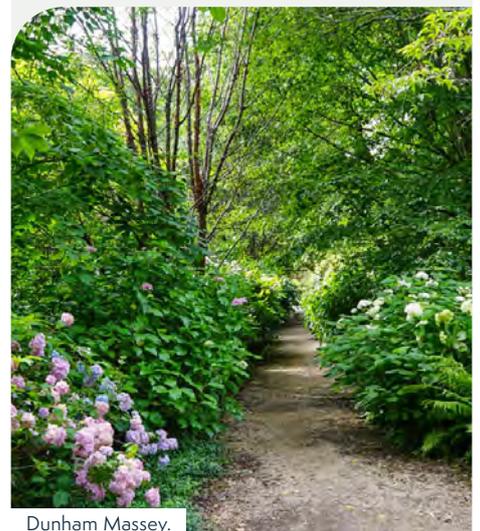
- Special visit to RHS Garden Bridgewater
- Italian style at Trentham Estate
- Special access to a privately-owned garden
- Dunham Massey and Tatton Park, two of the foremost gardens in Cheshire
- Arley Hall's famous double herbaceous borders

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at the four star Pinewood Hotel, Wilmslow with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert (*Horticulturalist Julia Corden in August*) tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

23 - 26 May	<del>\$1,045</del> \$975
15 - 18 Aug	<del>\$1,045</del> \$940
Single Supplement	\$170



Dunham Massey.



Oxburgh Hall

## Stately Homes & Seaside Castles of Norfolk

5 DAYS from \$2,165 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: London, Colchester

Our historical tour of Norfolk begins as we travel through verdant rolling countryside to the 500-year-old Oxburgh Hall, followed by a visit to one of Britain's largest and best-preserved keeps, Castle Rising. We also visit Jacobean Blickling Estate, beloved Sandringham, the Palladian-style Holkham Hall and the moated manor of Hindringham Hall, amongst other treasures, and also enjoy a trip on the North Norfolk Heritage Railway.

**Day 1** We depart from our pick-up points and head to the first of our stately homes of Norfolk, **Oxburgh Hall**, a stunning moated country house built in 1482 at the peak of the War of the Roses by the Bedingfeld family, which today remains the ancestral family home. This afternoon, we head to **Castle Rising**, nestled in the village of the same name. Later, we then continue to our hotel in King's Lynn, where dinner will be served in the evening.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** We depart for the **Blickling Estate**, a jaw-dropping Jacobean mansion surrounded by magnificent gardens, historic parklands and delightful meadows. Early this afternoon, we take the short trip to **Sheringham**, where we find the **North Norfolk Railway** and embark on a nostalgic trip aboard the heritage railway that runs from the Victorian seaside town of **Sheringham** to the charming Georgian town of **Holt**. Later, we travel to **Sandringham**. On arrival, we have a delightful and quintessentially British afternoon tea accompanied by a lovely glass of sparkling wine. We also enjoy a **private evening guided tour**, before returning to the hotel for a light supper.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Afternoon Tea, Light Supper

**Day 3** This morning, we head to the grand Palladian-style mansion **Holkham Hall**, a delectable little moated manor house that looks as though it has been plucked straight from a storybook. Here we enjoy a private tour of the lovely gardens. We enjoy a tour of the house and also have the chance to visit the Holkham Stories Experience, which delves into more detail about the estate's 400-year history. This afternoon, we take the short journey to **Hindringham Hall**, before heading back to our hotel.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** We depart for **Hoveton Hall**, which has been in the Buxton family since 1946. We have a **tour of the house with the owner**, followed by some free time to explore the gardens. This afternoon, we head to **Wolterton Hall**, where we enjoy an in-depth tour of the house and the garden, followed by some light refreshments in the Saloon.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** This morning, we depart for **Mannington Hall**, a charming moated medieval manor house and home to the Walpole family, where we join **Lady Walpole** for a tour of her estate. After our tour, we enjoy a **light lunch** before we take to the road to return to our original joining points.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Light Lunch

### Key Highlights

- Afternoon Tea with sparkling wine and guided evening tour of Sandringham
- House and Gardens tour at Wolterton with refreshments in the Saloon
- Journey on the North Norfolk Railway
- Private afternoon access to the gardens & grounds at Hindringham Hall
- Tour with Lady Walpole at Mannington Hall with lunch
- House tour with the owner at Hoveton Hall with refreshments
- Visits to Oxburgh Hall, Holkham Hall, Castles Rising and Blickling Estate

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights at the Knights Hill Hotel, King's Lynn with breakfast
- ▶ Three dinners with tea and coffee and a glass of wine at the hotel
- ▶ One light supper at the hotel
- ▶ Sparkling wine with afternoon tea at Sandringham
- ▶ Lunch at Mannington Hall
- ▶ One-way journey aboard the North Norfolk Railway
- ▶ All entrance fees, visits, and tours as stated
- ▶ Comfortable coaching throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

8 - 12 Jun	<del>\$2,235</del> \$2,165
Single Supplement	\$340



Mannington Hall



Lullingstone Castle gardens

## Gardens of Kent & Sussex

4 DAYS from \$1,192 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: London, Gatwick

If there's one tour that epitomises the joy of strolling around a perfect English country garden, it is this one. Even if you have visited some of these properties before, such is their allure that you can return again. Highlights include Great Comp filled with rare and beautiful shrubs, Lullingstone Castle, Nymans Garden, offering outstanding plants in a theatrical setting, as well as an early bird visit to iconic Sissinghurst, renowned for its stunning garden rooms.

**Day 1** We depart from our pick-up points in London and Gatwick and head towards our first visit, **Great Comp Garden** – a beautiful seven-acre garden with many beautiful and rare shrubs, perennials and other hardy plants. This Kent Garden is a plantsman's haven. From here, we continue to **Lullingstone Castle**, with its unique World Garden of Plants.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** Today, we set off for **Sussex Prairie Garden** at Henfield. Surrounded by mature oak trees, this eight-acre garden consists of a series of interlocking arcs of large, planted borders in a naturalistic style, reminiscent of the work of the great Dutch garden designer Piet Oudolf. We continue to **Nymans Garden**, an outstanding plant collection in an inspirational setting. This theatrical garden design, created by the Messel family, is one of the finest gardens in Sussex.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** This morning, we are privileged to have an **'early bird visit'** to the magnificently manicured gardens of **Sissinghurst**. Few great gardens live up to their reputations so effortlessly as this. Sissinghurst is a large connoisseurs' garden consisting of a series of small romantic areas enclosed by the surviving parts of an Elizabethan mansion.

We continue to another classic English Country

Garden - **Great Dixter**. The distinguished garden writer Christopher Lloyd (*who died in January 2006 at the age of 84*) was the genius behind Great Dixter, with its timbered 15th-century house. Restored by Edwin Lutyens, who also planned the garden, Mr Lloyd has firmly put his lively stamp on it. A recent experiment involved installing a summer tropical garden rich in bold shapes and brilliant colours

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning, we will leave the hotel and head for **Scotney Castle**, which boasts a picturesque garden and a 14th-century moated castle. With a moat, quarry garden, woodland glade, heather-thatched icehouse, Victorian boathouse, and expansive views across the wider estate, the edges between tamed and wild nature are deliberately blurred. The separate one-acre octagonal-walled kitchen garden is filled with wall-trained and standard fruit trees, vegetable beds and flowers for cutting. We conclude the tour in the distinguished surroundings of RHS Garden Wisley, where the highest standards of horticulture are deployed. Wisley is the historic home of the RHS and houses one of the largest plant collections in the world. **Lunch and a guided tour** are included here, rounding our tour off in style.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

### Key Highlights

- Lullingstone Castle's innovative World Garden of Plants
- Outstanding plant collections at Nymans
- An exclusive early bird visit to the manicured gardens of Sissinghurst
- Lunch and guided tour of RHS Wisley
- Led by horticulturalists Julia Corden (June) and David Hurron (August)

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at the four-star Mercure Tunbridge Wells with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Service of horticulturalists Julia Corden in June and David Hurron in August

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

1 - 4 Jun	<del>\$1,325</del> \$1,255
9 - 12 Aug	<del>\$1,325</del> \$1,192
Single Supplement	\$210



Scotney Castle

**NEW TOUR**



Great Comp Garden

## Perch Hill with Sarah Raven & Gardens of the South East

4 DAYS from \$1,675 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: London

Enjoy an English country garden at the height of summer on this tour. Explore the perennials of Great Comp, the restored Walled Kitchen Garden at Titsey Place and the Edwardian Rock Garden of Riverhill Himalayan Garden plus enjoy a tasting at the renowned Hush Heath Estate. The highlight is Perch Hill, where Sarah Raven gives a special talk, followed by a guided tour and lunch.

**Day 1** We depart our pick-up point in London and continue to **Great Comp Garden**, a beautiful seven-acre garden with many beautiful and rare shrubs, perennials and other hardy plants. We enjoy a **guided tour**, before we continue to our hotel.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** We depart for a visit to Sarah Raven's own garden, **Perch Hill**. Once a rather ramshackle ex-dairy farm with a lot of concrete, corrugated iron and not much else, the land has been converted to an organic two acres of new seed and plant varieties.

**Exclusive event:** On arrival, we are welcomed by **Sarah Raven**, who will give us an hour-long talk on her experiences at Perch Hill. We then have a **guided tour** of the garden, followed by a sit down to a **two-course lunch** featuring fresh produce from the garden. The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure before dinner is served at our hotel in the evening.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Day 3** This morning, we visit **Riverhill Himalayan Gardens**, home to over 12 acres of historic gardens. In the afternoon, we head to **Titsey Place & Garden**, one of the largest historic estates in Surrey. After our visit, we are treated to a **guided tour** of the house, which dates back to 1775.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning, after breakfast, we travel to the **Hush Heath Estate**, home to the **Balfour Winery**. This 400-acre estate in the heart of Kent is home to a manicured vineyard, orchards, wildflower meadows and ancient woodland. Here we enjoy an **expert-led vineyard tour** and **wine tasting** experience in the winery, as well as some time to explore the wider estate grounds. Later, we return to our original pick-up point.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

- Exclusive visit to Perch Hill with Sarah Raven
- The historic Riverhill Himalayan Garden
- An expert-led vineyard tour and wine tasting at the Hush Heath Estate
- The plantsman's haven of Great Comp Garden

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at the four-star Donnington Manor Hotel with breakfast & dinner
- ▶ An exclusive visit to Perch Hill with a 1-hour talk with Sarah Raven, a guided tour and a 2-course lunch
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Trevor Edwards as tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

13 - 16 Jul	<del>\$1,745</del> \$1,675
<i>Single Supplement</i>	<i>\$275</i>



Perch Hill



Hestercombe

# In the Footsteps of Gertrude Jekyll

6 DAYS from \$2,865 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: London, Basingstoke

Few would doubt the influence Gertrude Jekyll had on garden design. This tour stretches across the south of England, visiting gardens associated with the plantswoman extraordinaire, painter and writer, such as Barrington Court and the private Upton Grey Manor House, to name but a few. We also include a private dining experience at Gravetye Manor, home to William Robinson, one of the greatest gardeners of all time.

**Day 1** We depart by coach from our pick-up points and head for our first visit, the gardens of **Barrington Court**. These enchanting, formal gardens, inspired by the designs of Gertrude Jekyll, are laid out in a series of walled rooms and include the White, Rose, Iris and Lily Gardens.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** This morning, we visit **Hestercombe**, one of Gertrude Jekyll and Sir Edwin Lutyens' greatest masterpieces. Here, we enjoy a tour with the head gardener, Claire Greenslade. Lastly, we proceed to **Knightsayes** a Grade I listed Victorian country house designed by William Burgess.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** Today we visit **East Lambrook**, near South Petherton in Somerset, recognised throughout the world as the 'Home of English Cottage Gardening', having been created in the 1940s, 50s and 60s by the late gardening icon, Margery Fish. Following a brief lunch stop (*not included*), we continue to **Heale House gardens**, perched beside the River Avon in Middle Woodford.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** Today, we visit the garden at **Upton Grey Manor House**, which is believed to be the most comprehensive and authentic Jekyll Garden in existence - a living museum of the Jekyll design.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** After breakfast, we visit **The Phillips Memorial**, where the Cloister, designed by Hugh Thackeray Turner, a local architect renowned as an exponent of the Arts and Crafts style, who also helped to found the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. The garden inside and around the Cloister was designed by Gertrude Jekyll.

Following this, we visit **Hatchlands**, which was designed by the architect Stiff Leadbetter and decorated by Robert Adams. This evening, we head to **Gravetye Manor**, which was home to William Robinson, one of the greatest gardeners of all time, who bought the manor in 1884, and it was his home until he died, well into his nineties, in 1935. After a look around the gardens we have an exquisite private dinner experience - a real highlight of the tour.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 6** Today, following breakfast, we will visit the garden at **Vann**, which incorporates Gertrude Jekyll's 1911 water garden. Later, we visit **Loseley Park**, a highlight of which is the Walled Garden, an extensive area divided into 'rooms', each with its own rare planting scheme and personality. The Flower Garden has a maze of pathways and secluded corners, whereas the White Garden boasts spectacular, showy blooms with subtle, silver and grey foliage. Following our visit, we return to our original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Key Highlights

- Hestercombe, one of Jekyll and Lutyens' greatest masterpieces
- Private dining experience at Gravetye Manor
- Visits to Barrington Court, East Lambrook Gardens, Vann Gardens and Loseley Park

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Two nights at the Lanes Hotel, Yeovil & three nights at the Frensham Pond Hotel, Farnham with breakfast
- ▶ Two dinners at the Lanes Hotel, two at the Frensham Pond Hotel & one at Gravetye Manor
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

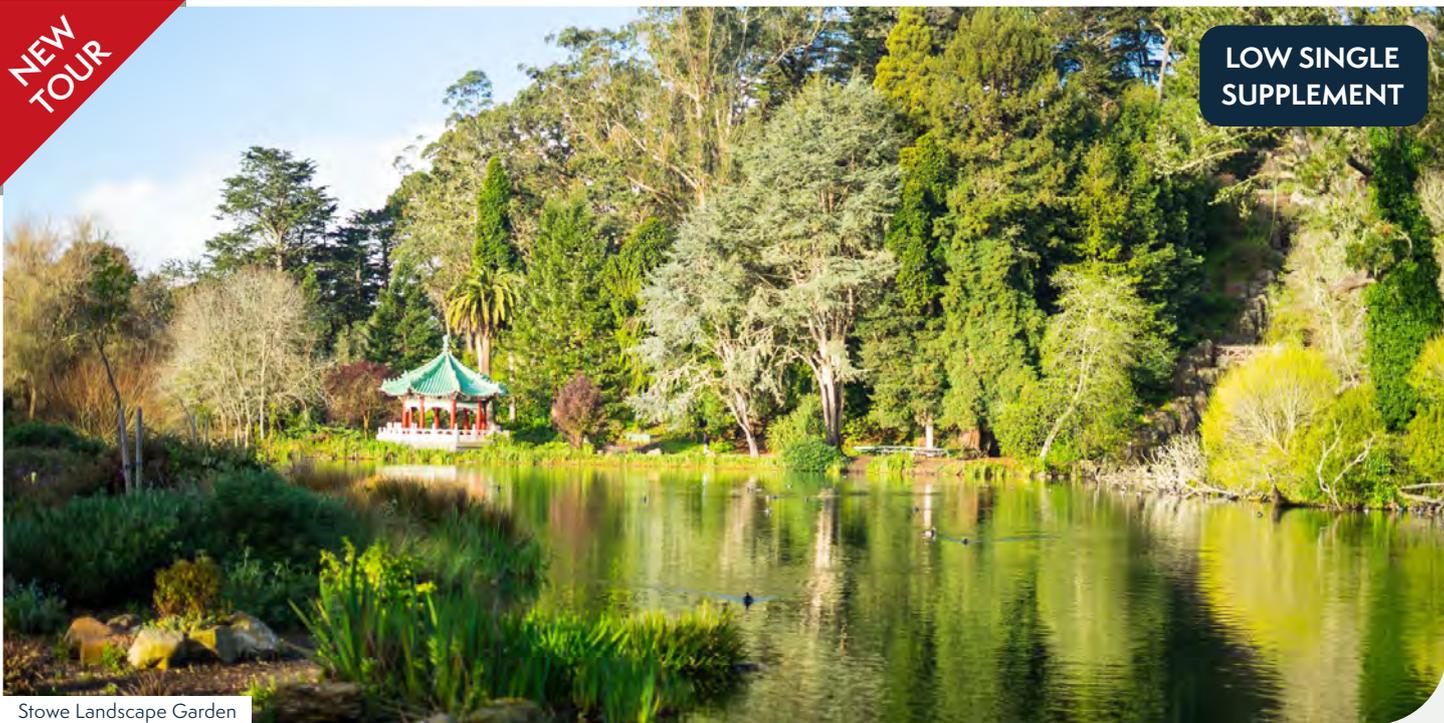
17 - 22 Jun	<del>\$2,935</del> \$2,865
<i>Single Supplement</i>	<i>\$695</i>



Loseley Park

**NEW TOUR**

**LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Stowe Landscape Garden

# “Rothschildshire” - The Vales of Aylesbury with Nicholas Merchant

4 DAYS from \$1,255 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: London

Join us on this exclusive journey through architectural marvels and treasures associated with the Rothschild family. We explore locations such as Stowe House, the Natural History Museum in Tring and Waddesdon Manor, learning more about the legacy of one of the world’s most renowned families. With expert guidance from Nicholas Merchant, this tour combines historical narratives, Capability Brown landscapes and curated visits to exquisite collections.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up point and head for our first visit to the **Natural History Museum, Tring**. The Rothschild family gave the Museum and its contents to the nation in 1937. The museum’s Zebra Cafe hints at Lord Rothschild’s love of zebras and has photographs of his trained zebras harnessed to open carriages and he was frequently seen locally riding a zebra-drawn carriage. We gather before dinner, where our expert guide **Nicholas Merchant** gives a short talk on the ties the Rothschilds have with the local area.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast, we depart for **Stowe House**, which is Grade I listed. We enjoy a **guided tour** of the house before having some free time for lunch (*not included*). This afternoon, we explore the **Stowe Landscape Garden**, where Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown joined Lord Cobham’s gardening staff as Head Gardener in 1741.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** This morning, we visit the **Rothschild Foundation at Windmill Hill**, which continues the grand tradition of Rothschild architectural patronage in the Vale of Aylesbury. We later depart for **Ascott House**, a Jacobean farmhouse remodelled and enlarged between 1876 and 1884 for Leopold de Rothschild by George

Devey. The extensive gardens are an attractive mix of the formal and natural with specimen trees, shrubs and beautiful herbaceous borders. Ascott House was donated to the National Trust in 1949 by Anthony de Rothschild, together with the Ascott Collection. The interiors feature a Victorian cornice incorporating a series of proverbs in the Common Room. It was redecorated more recently by the Italian designer Renzo Mongiardino.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** We depart for **Waddesdon Manor**. Assembled by three generations, the Rothschild Collections at Waddesdon include world-class objects carefully chosen for their beauty, craftsmanship and historical interest. With more than 15,000 works of art and objects, the collection ranges widely in date, materials and techniques, and places of production. Waddesdon is especially renowned for the quality and depth of its French 18th-century collections, particularly furniture, porcelain and textiles. We enjoy a **guided tour** of the ground-floor rooms before some free time to explore the upper rooms. After our **included lunch**, we enjoy a **talk on the furniture collection with Mia Jackson, Curator of Decorative Arts at Waddesdon**. The remainder of the afternoon is free to explore the gardens before we depart for our original pick-up point.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## Key Highlights

- A guided tour of Stowe House
- A talk on the furniture at Waddesdon Manor with Mia Jackson, Curator of Decorative Arts
- A visit to the Natural History Museum in Tring
- Led by Nicholas Merchant, a lecturer on Decorative and Fine Arts and accredited lecturer of the Arts Society

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at the Holiday Inn, Aylesbury with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ One lunch
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of expert lecturer Nicholas Merchant as tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

3 - 6 Aug	<del>\$1,395</del> \$1,255
Single Supplement	\$170



Waddesdon Manor



Highgrove

# Highgrove & the Cotswolds

4 DAYS from \$1,255 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: London, Reading, Swindon, Bristol

Our tour of the Cotswolds features an exclusive visit and lunch at Highgrove House, the country home of The King. This is a rare opportunity to see these fascinating gardens cultivated using organic methods alongside fine gardens nestled in the rolling hills of Gloucestershire. Discover the 'outdoor rooms' of Rodmarton Manor, marvel at the colour of Hidcote Manor, breathe in the fresh air at Westonbirt and enjoy the plant collection at Kiftsgate Court.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head for our first visit, the house and gardens of **Rodmarton Manor**, between Tetbury and Cirencester. The eight-acre Cotswold garden was originally designed as a series of outdoor rooms and is still the same today, with each part of the garden having different characters ranging from alpines in troughs, bigger plants in the rockery, lawns, a large kitchen garden and white borders, to the magnificent herbaceous borders which are constantly being re-planted and improved.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** This morning, we visit the gardens of **Hidcote Manor**, near Chipping Campden. Although among the best-known gardens in Britain, Hidcote Manor still has the power to startle. It was begun before World War I by an American, Major Lawrence Johnston, who devised a type of garden that many think of as quintessentially English. This afternoon, we continue to **Kiftsgate Court**, which offers an admirable selection of plants and flowers, not least of which is the well-known rambling rose *R. filipes* 'Kiftsgate'.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** After breakfast, we head to **Highgrove**, the country residence of HRH the Prince of Wales. This visit offers a rare chance to explore the captivating gardens, cultivated entirely through organic methods. Since acquiring the property in 1980, His Royal Highness sought guidance from Lady Salisbury, an experienced organic gardener renowned for her work at Cranbourne and Hatfield House in Hertfordshire. In the afternoon, we visit **Painswick Rococo Garden**, a pleasure ground created during the decadent and fun-loving early 18th century. Follies are nestled within a hidden valley, surrounded by stunning views of the Cotswolds. Its key features include rococo buildings, woodland walks and carefully planned vistas.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** After checking out of the hotel, we make our way to **Westonbirt**, the **National Arboretum**, which is perhaps the most important and widely known arboretum in the United Kingdom. Following our visit, we return to our original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Key Highlights

- Weaving through the magical meadows of Highgrove lunch in the Orchard room overlooking the Orchard Terrace
- Discovering the secret gardens at Hidcote
- The woodland walks and well-planned vistas at Painswick Rococo Garden
- World renowned gardens of Kiftsgate Court

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at a comfortable hotel in the Cotswolds with breakfast & dinner
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of a professional tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

26 - 29 Jun	<del>\$1,395</del> \$1,325
13 - 16 Aug	<del>\$1,395</del> \$1,255
Single Supplement	\$275



Painswick Rococo Garden



Iford Manor

## Somerset's Secret Gardens

4 DAYS from \$1,185 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: London, Reading, Swindon, Bristol

The picturesque pastures, orchards and villages of Somerset provide a wonderful backdrop to a varied collection of private gardens at a time when they will be looking their best. Look forward to discovering the idyllic garden of Watcombe, the contrasting riot of colour and oasis of calm at Batcombe House, the breathtaking views at Stoberry and the Grade I garden of Iford Manor, amongst other gems.

**Day 1** We depart from our London, Reading, Swindon and Bristol pick-up points this morning and head for our first visit, the privately-owned **Watcombe garden**. This  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre garden was created between 1937 and 1975, in an Edwardian style of formal layout and informal planting. There are many unusual trees and shrubs, separated by a strong framework, giving scope for exploring around unexpected corners.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** This morning, we visit the privately-owned garden at **Batcombe House** near Shepton Mallet, considered to be one of the best in the county. We then continue into the beautiful Cathedral City of **Wells** – the smallest city in the country, where there will be time to look around at leisure and have lunch (*not included*). We finish the day at **Stoberry Garden**, which, like the previous visit, offers breathtaking views over Wells and the Vale of Avalon. The six-acre family garden is planted sympathetically within its landscape, providing a stunning combination of vistas accented with wildlife ponds, water features and sculpture. There is also a large walled garden, a sunken garden, a gazebo, a potager and a lime walk.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** We begin with a visit to **Bradon Farm** near Taunton, a classic formal garden demonstrating the effective use of structure. Features include a parterre, a knot garden, a pleached lime walk, a formal pond, herbaceous borders, an orchard and wildflower planting. We continue to **Iford Manor**, near Bradford on Avon. This romantic, award-winning Italian garden, designed by Harold Peto, contains a formal garden on old terraces embellished with his collection of classical statuary and architectural fragments, which we will discover during our visit. Steep flights of steps link the terraces with pools, fountains, loggias, colonnades, urns and figures.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** Following breakfast, we check out of the hotel and enjoy a scenic drive through the heaths and woodlands of the **Quantock Hills**, which were designated as England's first Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1956. Our final visit is to the **Walled Gardens of Cannington**. Classic and contemporary features include a hot herbaceous border, a blue garden, a sub-tropical walk and a Victorian-style fernery. Following this, we continue our homeward journey back to our original departure points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

- Eclectic mix of topiary and hedging at Watcombe
- Breathtaking views of Wells and the Vale of Avalon at Stoberry
- Grade I registered garden of Iford Manor
- The hidden gem of Cannington Walled Garden
- Scenic drive through the Quantock Hills

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at the Walnut Tree Hotel, North Petherton with breakfast & dinner
- ▶ Comfortable travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Alex Goodyear as tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

4 - 7 Jul	<del>\$1,255</del> \$1,185
Single Supplement	\$275



Quantock Hills

NEW TOUR

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT



Hestercombe

## Delightful Summer Gardens of Devon

5 DAYS from \$1,381 | ACTIVITY RATING 

 PICK-UP POINTS: London, Reading, Swindon, Bristol

Join us for a jaunt to the English Riviera! We explore **Mothecombe Gardens**, an RHS partner garden perched on a clifftop, **Wildside Garden** with its ecological niches and the **Garden House**, where the walled garden's herbaceous borders steal the show. The award-winning **Marwood Hill Gardens** rounds off a superb collection.

**Day 1** We depart our designated pick-up point and head for **Hestercombe**, one of Gertrude Jekyll and Sir Edwin Lutyens' greatest masterpieces. We later continue to our hotel in Torquay.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** Today we visit **Mothecombe Gardens**, an RHS partner garden which is situated above Mothecombe beach, at the mouth of the Erme estuary. They are tucked under one side of a valley running down to the beach, so they are several degrees warmer than the village of Holbeton and they are sheltered from the prevailing south-westerly salt-laden winds, allowing tender plants to flourish. This afternoon, we return to **Torquay**, where the afternoon is free to spend at your leisure.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** Our first stop today is **Wildside Garden**, an innovative garden on the fringes of stunning Dartmoor, which allows plants to thrive as they would in the wild. This afternoon we visit **The Garden House**, a glorious garden set in a quiet valley on the fringes of Dartmoor National Park. Built around decaying 16th-century ruins, Lionel Fortescue created a romantic garden, built on precipitous terraces with lovely views over the garden and surrounding countryside. Clematis and

roses scale the old walls that surround the garden and there is a wonderful richness of plants here.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning we head north from Torquay to **Marwood Hill Gardens**. This private valley garden spans across an impressive 20 acres and is home to four National Plant Heritage Collections and several Champion trees. This award-winning garden is most well known for its incredible Astilbe collection, but is also home to stunning lakes and sculpture, as well as rare trees and shrubs. Later, we visit **Castle Hill Gardens** which are nestled amongst the beautiful North Devon landscape. We spend the afternoon exploring the 50 acres of enchanting grounds set against the backdrop of the stunning 18th-century Palladian mansion.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** We depart after breakfast for home, stopping off en route at the gardens of **Kilver Court**, Shepton Mallet. The Gardens feature a millpond and boating lake as well as rolling lawns, parterre and herbaceous borders, set against an unusual and highly impressive backdrop – a vast Grade II listed viaduct built for the Somerset and Dorset railway.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

-  Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens' collaboration at Hestercombe
-  Four National Plant Heritage Collections at Marwood Hill
-  The innovative Wildside Garden

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights at the Headland Hotel Torquay with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Trevor Edwards as tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

17 - 21 Aug ~~\$1,535~~ \$1,381

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Marwood Hill Gardens

**NEW  
TOUR**

**LOW SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT**



Bowness-on-Windermere

# Summer Gardens of the Lake District

4 DAYS from \$1,325 | ACTIVITY RATING

DEPARTURE POINT: London Kings Cross, Lancaster

The Lake District boasts some of England’s most breathtaking scenery. Our tour includes some of the area’s most celebrated gardens including Holker Hall, home to the Cavendish family, Holehird, a garden run by the Lakeland Horticultural Society, **Gresgarth Hall**, home of esteemed garden designer Arabella Lennox-Boyd, as well as the topiary gardens of Levens Hall, which were created in the 17th-century by Monsieur Guillaume Beaumont.

**Day 1** We depart from London Euston by rail to Lancaster. *(Please note connecting rail travel to Lancaster from other stations is available on request, or there is a discount of \$100pp for those making their own way to Lancaster.)* On arrival at Lancaster Station, we join our coach and depart for our first visit, **Gresgarth Hall** near Caton and home of esteemed garden designer Arabella Lennox-Boyd.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast this morning, we visit **Rydal Hall Gardens**. Designed and built by renowned landscape architect **Thomas Mawson**, the formal gardens are a fine example of Arts and Crafts design in a wonderful setting. The estate is part of the Red Squirrel Conservation Project and is home to a diverse range of plants and wildlife. We then continue to **Holehird**, a garden owned by the Holehird Trust and run by the Lakeland Horticultural Society, probably the only garden in Britain run entirely by volunteer gardeners and open every day of the year.

*(Please note there is a walk uphill from the car park).*

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** This morning, we head to **Bowness-on-Windermere** and embark on a scenic lake cruise in the very heart of the Lake District. Our spectacular voyage to Lakeside affords magnificent views of mountain scenery, secluded bays and the many wooded islands. Later, we visit **Holker Hall**, home to the Cavendish family, which has never been bought or sold but has been passed by inheritance through three families, the Prestons, Lowthers and Cavendishes. Throughout each generation, alterations have been made to the estate either by landscaping or extending, refacing, or embellishing the house itself. We have plenty of time to enjoy the 23 acres of gardens, which have evolved over hundreds of years, under the guidance of the Cavendish family.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning, we will visit the gardens at **Levens Hall**. The topiary gardens are world-famous and were created in 1694 by Monsieur Guillaume Beaumont, who had been trained under Le Nôtre at Versailles, and who laid out the gardens at Hampton Court. We then return to Lancaster for our afternoon train journey back to London Euston *(or other onward connections)*.

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Key Highlights

- Gresgarth Hall, home of esteemed garden designer Arabella Lennox-Boyd
- Rydal Hall Gardens, designed and built by renowned landscape architect, Thomas Mawson
- A scenic cruise on Lake Windermere

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights at a comfortable three-star hotel in the Newcastle area with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Return standard class rail travel from London Kings Cross to Newcastle *(first class up-grades & regional connections available on request – there is a discount of \$100pp for those making their own way to/from Newcastle)*
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel in Northumberland
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

29 Jun - 2 Jul	<del>\$1,395</del> \$1,325
Single Supplement	\$125



Holehird



Bamburgh Castle

# Highlights of Northumberland

5 DAYS from \$1,570 | ACTIVITY RATING

DEPARTURE POINT: London Kings Cross

Explore the highlights of Northumberland, including the holy island of Lindisfarne, the imposing Bamburgh Castles, the 'Windsor of the North' Alnwick Castle, as well as some of the most significant Roman ruins to be found in Great Britain.

**Day 1** We depart from London King's Cross by train to Newcastle (*please note: connecting rail travel to Newcastle from other stations is available on request, or there is a discount of \$100pp*). On arrival at Newcastle Station, we join our coach and depart for our first visit, the house and gardens of **Belsay Hall**, a classical brown stone mansion, built in the 19th Century in Greek revival style to the design of its owner, Sir Charles Monck. After our visit, we continue by coach to our comfortable hotel in the Newcastle area.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast, we head north along the scenic Northumberland coast to **Bamburgh Castle**, a vast fortress with over 1400 years of history. Covering nine acres, it is among the largest inhabited castles in the UK. Nearby is the Holy Island of **Lindisfarne**, accessible via a tidal causeway. Here, the 16th-century **Lindisfarne Castle**, originally a Tudor fort, was transformed into a private house in 1903 by Edwin Lutyens, featuring intimate rooms and a Gertrude Jekyll-designed walled garden. We also visit **Lindisfarne Priory**, a late 11th-century Benedictine Priory, a key site for early Christianity in Anglo-Saxon England.

*(Please note that there is a three-quarter-mile walk from the coach park to the castle, although minibus transfers are available at a fare to be paid on board. There are no toilets in Lindisfarne Castle, nor a café, but full catering facilities are available in the village).*

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** After breakfast, we visit **Alnwick Castle**, home to the Duke of Northumberland and the second largest inhabited castle in England. Owned by the Percy family since 1309, it features a remarkable art collection, including Italian paintings. Lunch (*not included*) is available at **Alnwick Garden**, a notable garden inspired by the Duchess of Northumberland.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** Today is spent discovering the Roman heritage of the area. We begin at **Hadrian's Wall** built as a fortification across northern Britain some 2,000 years ago, before heading to **Chester's Fort**, the most complete Roman cavalry fort in Britain, where you can wander through the well-preserved baths, steam rooms and officers' quarters.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner.

**Day 5** After breakfast, we check out of the hotel and travel into the Northumbrian countryside for the last time as we visit **Wallington House**, which dates back to 1688 and was home to many generations of the Blckett and Trevelyan families, all of whom have left their legacy behind. We then return to Newcastle for our afternoon train journey back to London Kings Cross (*or other onward connections*).

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Key Highlights

- Unique experience at Belsay Hall – visit the house then the garden built in the quarry that provided the stone for the house
- Bamburgh Castle, one of the most impressive fortresses in the land
- In the footsteps of Harry Potter at Alnwick Castle
- Remarkable innovations at Cragside
- The magnificent grounds of Wallington House

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights at a comfortable three-star hotel in the Newcastle area with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Return standard class rail travel from London Kings Cross to Newcastle (*first class up-grades & regional connections available on request – there is a discount of \$100pp for those making their own way to/from Newcastle*)
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel in Northumberland
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of a local expert Alan Appleton as tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

27 Jun - 1 Jul	<del>\$1,745</del>	\$1,675
13 - 17 Sep	<del>\$1,745</del>	\$1,570
Single Supplement		\$275



Alnwick Castle



St Mary's Island

# The Isles of Scilly

6 DAYS from \$3,397 | ACTIVITY RATING

DEPARTURE POINTS: Land's End Airport

The Isles of Scilly, a true sub-tropical paradise, has remained unspoiled and unchanged for decades, where spring arrives early, autumn lingers and winter is nearly absent. The highlight is Tresco's stunning Abbey Garden, home to thousands of plant species and an abundance of colour. There truly is no other garden like this in the world, and there's plenty more to enjoy on this tour, too.

**Day 1** Travel independently to Penzance (*overnight accommodation and rail travel from mainline stations can be arranged at a supplement on request; please contact us for assistance*). We meet at Land's End airport in time for your flight to the Scillies. On arrival, we are transferred to the St Mary's Hall Hotel. Dinner is served in the evening, after which we have a **special talk from our tour manager, Mike Nelhams, Curator of the Abbey Gardens**. This is followed by a Q&A session with Mike, an opportunity to find out about growing tender sub-tropical plants such as those found in the Abbey Gardens.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** Today we enjoy a **private tour of St Mary's Island**. We make our way around the island with the chance to stop at a selection of viewpoints on route with light-hearted commentary on island life along the way. We enjoy **lunch** at Juliet's Garden, a family-run restaurant with views across St Mary's, with the remainder of the afternoon at leisure to explore.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Day 3** After breakfast today, we head out for a **Pelagic boat excursion** to the **Western Rocks** and **Bishop Rock Lighthouse**. We are joined by **bird expert Will Wagstaff** as we explore this mecca for birdwatchers in search of Manx shearwaters, puffins, razorbills, kittiwakes and storm petrels. We stop in St Agnes for some free time for lunch (*not included*) before we return to St Mary's.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning, we depart for **St Martins**. On arrival, we make our way to **Scilly Flowers Farm** for a **guided tour**. After our tour, **we have lunch at the Karma Hotel** before having some free time to explore at leisure. At an agreed time, we meet and return by boat to St Mary's.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Day 5** After breakfast, we take a boat over to the island of **Tresco** and have a **guided tour of the Abbey Gardens**. This afternoon, we are free to explore Tresco at leisure - the ancient castles, beautiful beaches and headland walks. At an agreed time, we reassemble and take the boat back to St Mary's and return to our hotel.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 6** Today, we transfer to the airport for our return flight to Land's End Airport. Our tour will conclude here (*overnight accommodation in Penzance, extended stay and rail travel to mainline stations can be arranged at a supplement on request - please contact us for assistance*).

**Meals:** Breakfast

*(Please note - walking fitness: Due to the limited public transport, we believe it is fair to remind passengers that a degree of mobility is required to get the most out of our visit to the Scillies, as most of the tour will be on foot.)*

## Key Highlights

- Guided tour of Abbey Gardens on Tresco with Mike Nelhams
- Pelagic Boat tour with local birding expert
- Guided tour of a local flower farm
- Lunch at Juliet's Garden with views across St Mary's
- Led by Mike Nelhams, the Curator of Tresco's Abbey Gardens

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Five nights at the St Mary's Hall Hotel, St Mary's in a standard room (*upgrades available on request at a supplement*) with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Two lunches
- ▶ Return Skybus flight from Land's End to St Mary's (*Exeter or Newquay flights available at a supplement*)
- ▶ Boat transfers between islands
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Mike Nelhams as expert tour manager
- ▶ Presentation & Q&A session with Mike Nelhams on Abbey Gardens

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

22 - 27 Aug	<del>\$3,775</del> \$3,397
Single Supplement	\$735



Abbey Gardens



Cliffs of Moher

## Gardens & Wildflowers of the Burren

5 DAYS from \$1,605 | ACTIVITY RATING 

 DEPARTURE POINTS: London

Join our resident Irish expert and much-loved tour manager, Trevor Edwards, to discover Ireland's scenic and rugged west coast. Home to a diverse range of colourful wildflowers and impressive geological features, this tour promises to be an experience to remember. Along the way, we discover the Burren, private gardens at Knockpatrick and Caher Bridge, Inis Oírr, Cliffs of Moher plus Bunratty Castle and Folk Park.

**Day 1** We depart from London on a flight to Shannon Airport where on arrival we are met by our coach and tour manager and transfer to **Knockpatrick**, a garden of nearly three acres overlooking the Shannon estuary.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** Following breakfast, we drive to Doolin, where we take a ferry to **Inis Oírr**, the smallest of the Aran Islands. After exploring the island and an opportunity for lunch (*not included*), we depart on a 50-minute cruise beneath the **Cliffs of Moher**, perhaps Ireland's most dramatically impressive natural attraction, especially when viewed from the water. On arrival back at Doolin, we return to our hotel.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** After breakfast, we head into the valley of the River Caher and the beautifully diverse limestone garden, **Caher Bridge Garden**. Next, we visit **Doreen Drennan's Garden** near the Cliffs of Moher. As an award-winning gardener with two previous gardens behind her, this third garden was to be Doreen's most challenging to date and it is still evolving. We also visit her studio/gallery, an opportunity perhaps to buy a unique souvenir of our holiday. On our way back to the hotel, we

briefly visit the **Poulnabrone Dolmen**.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning, after breakfast, we will explore the **Burren** with a local expert. In the course of our full-day excursion, we can expect to see a good selection of plants typical of the area, with 'textbook' examples of pavement, flower-rich grasslands and associated limestone features such as disappearing lakes. **Please note we will be walking for around five hours, so a good degree of mobility is required, along with good walking boots and waterproofs.**

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** After breakfast, we check out of the hotel and depart for a visit to **Bunratty Castle, Gardens and Folk Park**. The site on which Bunratty Castle stands was, in origin, a Viking trading camp in 970. Here we also find a beautiful walled garden from the Regency era, a surviving part of the demesne which was originally formed around Bunratty Castle. In the afternoon, we transfer back to Shannon Airport in time for our return flight to London.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

-  Privately-owned gardens giving an insight into gardening in this corner of Ireland
-  Masses of wildflowers of great variety
-  Unique landscapes of The Burren
-  Dramatic vistas from the Atlantic of the Cliffs of Moher
-  Poulnabrone Dolmen, an impressive megalith

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights at the Treacy's West County Hotel with diner & breakfast
- ▶ Return flights from London to Shannon. **Other airports may also be available on request**
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of horticulturist Trevor Edwards as expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

1 - 5 Jun	<del>\$1,745</del> \$1,605
Single Supplement	\$275



Burren



Dunrobin Castle

### 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

- ▶ Three nights at a hotel in the Inverness area, two nights in the Oban area, one night near Glasgow, two nights near Stranraer, one night in the Dumfries area & one night in the Edinburgh area with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

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

## A Grand Tour of the Gardens of Scotland

11 DAYS from \$4,125 | ACTIVITY RATING 🌿 🌿 🌿 🌿

 PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh

Our Grand Tour of Scotland's finest gardens spans every corner of the country, from the open spaces of the far north to the wilds of the west, the splendours of the south and the elegance of the east. We begin at Branklyn and Cluny House before continuing to Inverness for visits to Dunrobin Castle, Castle of Mey, Dundonnell and the outstanding Inverewe. Travelling through the Great Glen, we enjoy tranquil West Highland gardens such as Ardchattan, Arduaine and An Cala. Turning south into Dumfries and Galloway and the Borders, we discover further lush planting before concluding in Edinburgh at the distinguished Royal Botanic Garden.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and travel north to **Branklyn Gardens** and **Cluny House Gardens**. After our visits, we continue to the hotel.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** This morning, we visit **Dunrobin Castle** - the chateau-style ancestral home of the Dukes of Sutherland. Later, we continue to **John O'Groats** before having an afternoon visit to **Castle of Mey**.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** After breakfast, we visit **Dundonnell House Garden** and later, **Inverewe Gardens**, before returning to Inverness via **Loch Maree** and **Achnasheen**.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning, we head to **Abriachan Gardens**. Passing Loch Ness and the Great Glen, we arrive at Fort William near Ben Nevis, Britain's tallest mountain. A coastal drive through Argyll offers views of Loch Etive and Ben Cruachan, ending at **Ardchattan Priory** gardens.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** This morning, we visit the National Trust for Scotland's garden at **Arduaine**, started in 1897 by James Arthur Campbell, a tea planter and friend of Osgood MacKenzie of Inverewe. In the afternoon, we explore the private garden of **An Cala**, before returning for dinner.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 6** After breakfast, we leave the hotel and drive through the Pass of Brander, Loch Awe with views of Kilchurn Castle and Loch Fyne to the woodland garden of **Ardkinglas**. Next, we visit **Glenarn**, one of Scotland's top woodland gardens, before heading to our overnight stay near Glasgow.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 7** Today, we head south to Ayrshire to visit **Dumfries House**. Enjoy a grand tour of the house interiors, followed by tea and shortbread. We also explore the **Queen Elizabeth Walled Garden**, a standout example in Scotland and a key part of the restoration project. Then, we proceed to our hotel.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 8** After breakfast, we visit **Glenwhan Gardens** and explore **Logan Botanic Gardens** at Port Logan, located in the Mull of



Glenwhan Gardens

Galloway, the southern tip of Scotland. Established by the McDougall family, it has been managed by the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh since 1969.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 9** In the morning, we visit **Broughton House**, the plantsman's nursery at **Ellenbank** and the gardens of the **Threave Estate**, created by students at the School of Horticulture since 1960.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 10** This morning, we check out of our hotel and head for the rolling hills of the Scottish Borders, where we visit **Dawyck Botanic Gardens**. We continue with a visit to **Kailzie Gardens**, near Peebles. Following this, we travel to our hotel in the Edinburgh area.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 11** Our final day begins with a visit to **Malleny Garden**. Renowned for its peaceful atmosphere, Malleny is the place to come for quiet contemplation in beautiful surroundings. We end at the **Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh**, among the world's finest botanic gardens. After our visit, we return to our original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast



Drumlanrig Castle

## Gardens of Dumfries & Galloway

4 DAYS from \$1,115 | ACTIVITY RATING 

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

Some of Scotland's most attractive gardens and artistic treasures await. Dumfries House in Ayrshire, saved with the support of King Charles, shines with superb Adam interiors, a unique Chippendale collection and an outstanding walled garden. At Broughton House, we enjoy EA Hornel's Japanese-influenced artist's garden, while Drumlanrig Castle impresses with its extensive grounds, fine art and Renaissance grandeur.

**Day 1** We depart from your local pick-up point and head for the gardens at **Drumlanrig Castle**, one of the first and most important Renaissance buildings in Scotland.

**Meals:** Dinner

**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. This afternoon, we continue to our next destination, the world-famous **Logan Botanic Gardens** at Port Logan, lying in the Mull of Galloway.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** This morning, we visit **Broughton House**, a fascinating 18th-century house and garden.

Next, we spend some more time in **Kirkcudbright**, 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**.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** We check out of our hotel and visit **Dumfries House**, near Cumnock in Ayrshire. We are able to make the most of those interiors on our grand tour of the house, followed by tea and shortbread. Afterwards, we 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. Following our visit, we return to our original departure points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### 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 at the three-star Holiday Inn Dumfries with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ Services of horticulturalists Richard Baines in May, Brian Cunningham in July and Brian Sinclair in Sept

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

31 May - 3 Jun	<del>\$1,185</del>	\$1,115
19 - 22 Jul	<del>\$1,255</del>	\$1,185
13 - 16 Sep	<del>\$1,255</del>	\$1,129
Single Supplement		\$275



Dumfries House

NO SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT

Glamis Castle

## Best of Angus Gardens

4 DAYS from \$1,115 | ACTIVITY RATING

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

The rich, fertile soil of Angus creates ideal conditions for gardening and this historic corner of North-East Scotland is home to a wealth of beautiful gardens. The House of Pitmuies, with its lavishly planted herbaceous borders, is a clear highlight. We also visit two grand gardens: Edzell Castle, with its charming formal layout and Glamis Castle, famed for its royal connections and attractive grounds. Further delights include the traditional mixed borders of Dunninald and the gardens of Langley Park near Montrose, where four separate walled gardens, woodland and wildflowers combine to create a wonderfully varied horticultural experience.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-ups this morning and head for our first visit, **Glamis Castle** which has been the ancestral home of the Earls of Strathmore for over 600 years and was the childhood home of the late Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. There are superb displays of rhododendrons and azaleas in early summer and a delightful Italian garden filled with the scent of flowers. Lunch is available here (*not included*).

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** Today we visit the garden at **Pitmuies House**, near Forfar. Behind the house, the old walled garden features lavish borders designed for long-lasting flowering. Beyond the walled gardens, a riverside walk passes a castellated dovecote and old woodland with beeches, oaks and ornamental shrubs, including the stunning Acer griseum. Next is **Dunninald**, a family home from 1824, surrounded by policies developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** After breakfast, we visit **Hospitalfield House**. In 2021, the walled garden was transformed by renowned designer **Nigel Dunnnett**, showcasing 800 years of horticultural history, from monastic origins to Victorian fern enthusiasm. The 19th-century Arts and Crafts-style house, redesigned by Elizabeth Allan-Fraser and artist Patrick Allan-Fraser, overlooks the garden. Following this, we visit **Edzell Castle**, which was once home to the Earls of Crawford.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning, we visit **Langley Park Gardens**. Set overlooking Montrose Basin, Langley Park Gardens include four walled gardens, three filled with herbaceous borders, fruit trees and vegetable plots, while the fourth is a small arboretum. Later, we visit the **House of Dun, Garden and Estate**, a grand 18th-century home with striking architecture and stunning vistas across the stunning Montrose Basin. Following this, we continue our homeward journey.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

- Historic castles and their fine gardens
- Sweeping views of Montrose Basin, a haven for birds
- Travel into the Angus Glens
- The richly planted borders of the House of Pitmuies

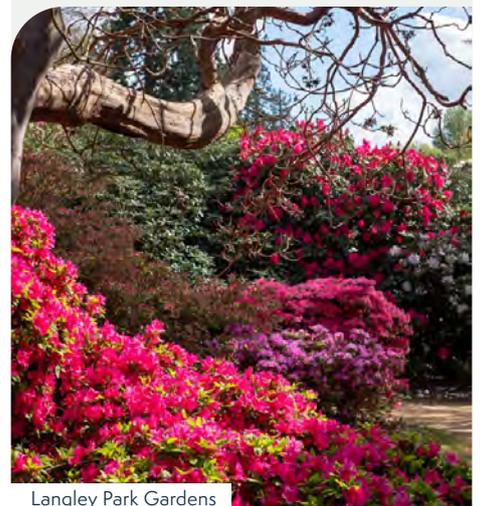
### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at the Links Hotel, Montrose with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Comfortable coaching throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of horticulturalist Brian Sinclair as tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

1 - 4 Jul ~~\$1,185~~ \$1,115

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Langley Park Gardens

NEW  
TOUR

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum

## Charles Rennie Mackintosh & Gardens of the Clyde

4 DAYS from \$1,185 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dunfermlin, 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.

**Meals:** Dinner

**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.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**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.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**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.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Afternoon tea

### 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 at a comfortable hotel in the Glasgow area with breakfast & dinner
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Afternoon tea at the Willow Tea Rooms
- ▶ Services of Clive Warsop tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

26 - 29 Jun	<del>\$1,255</del> \$1,185
Single Supplement	\$210



Geilston



Brodick Castle and Gardens

## Arran, Scotland in Miniature

5 DAYS from \$1,822 | ACTIVITY RATING

**PICK-UP POINTS:** Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Fofar, 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 **Tron** 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**.

**Meals:** Dinner

**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 visit **Whiting Bay, Lamlash, Brodick** - the capital of Arran; **Corrie** and **Sannox** under the shadow of **Goat Fell** and other mountain and then down the west coast to **Catacol** and **Pirnmill** with its ‘12 Apostles’. Also included is a visit to the **Isle of Arran Brewery**, where we enjoy a tour and learn about the brewing and conditioning process and the ingredients that go into the beer. We also have the opportunity to taste some of the beers on offer.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** Today is free to relax at the hotel or explore nearby. Alternatively, join an optional excursion to the Hebridean island of **Gigha** (not included). After breakfast, we take a ferry from Arran Lochranza to Claonaig, cross the Kintyre peninsula to Tayinloan and ferry to Gigha. On the island,

enjoy lunch at a local café and visit **Achamore Gardens**, created by Sir James Horlick in 1944, known for its blooms due to the mild, rainy climate.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Please note:** 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 visit **Brodick Castle and Gardens**. The present garden dates from 1932, when the Duchess of Montrose started an ambitious woodland garden with a collection of rhododendrons. 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**.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** This morning, following breakfast, we travel to the ferry port in time for the crossing to Tron, where we expect to arrive early afternoon. Thereafter, we return to our original pick up points to arrive late afternoon/early evening.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### 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
- Optional excursion to Achamore Gardens and the tranquil Isle of Gigha
- The comfortable Kinloch Hotel, located on the ‘sunset side’ of the island

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights at the Kinloch Hotel, Blackwaterfoot with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ All coaching and ferry transfers
- ▶ Guided tour of Arran
- ▶ Visit to the Isle of Arran Brewery, including tour and tasting
- ▶ Visit to Brodick Castle and Gardens
- ▶ Services of a Brightwater Holidays tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

18 - 22 May	<del>\$1,955</del> \$1,885
7 - 11 Jun	<del>\$2,025</del> \$1,955
10 - 14 Aug	<del>\$2,095</del> \$1,885
21 - 25 Sep	<del>\$2,025</del> \$1,822
Single Supplement	\$455
Optional excursion Gigha	\$120



Blackwaterfoot



Dunnotter Castle

## Castles of Aberdeenshire

4 DAYS from \$1,255 | ACTIVITY RATING 

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

Discover a rich tapestry of history, legend and architectural splendour on this journey through Aberdeenshire's castles. From the dramatic clifftop ruins of **Dunnotter** to the royal grandeur of **Balmoral**, each site reveals a chapter of Scotland's turbulent past. Explore romantic tower houses, ancient fortresses and elegant gardens, all set within the spectacular landscapes of the north east on a four-day tour celebrating Scotland's noble heritage.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head to **Dunnotter Castle**, one of the most striking ruined castles to be found in Scotland. The dramatic location perched on the top of soaring sea cliffs and surrounded by the sea on three sides only adds to the mystical atmosphere. It has played a crucial role throughout Scottish history, but is originally known as a Pictish fortress.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** We start at **Castle Fraser**, one of the grandest of the Scottish baronial tower houses, with a strikingly simple Great Hall. We then continue to **Drum Castle and Gardens**. The beautiful Garden of Historic Roses is divided into quadrants that show how roses have been cultivated from the 17th to the 20th century and an ancient oak forest adjoins the castle.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** This morning, we visit **Crathes Castle**, set against a backdrop of rolling hills and within its glorious gardens. Crathes is every inch the classic

Scottish tower house, with a labyrinth of cultural and family history. Afterwards, we enjoy a **scenic tour of Royal Deeside**. This picturesque region is celebrated for its rolling landscapes, sparkling rivers and historic villages. We explore charming towns such as Ballater, famous for its royal connections, and admire breathtaking views along the River Dee.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** We begin our day at **Balmoral**, a renowned royal residence that requires little introduction. Constructed around 1854 for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, it is relatively modern yet clearly styled as a Scottish castle. The estate covers over 50,000 acres and includes woodlands, lochs and mountains, providing a breathtaking natural setting. The castle itself stands as a symbol of the royal family's deep-rooted connection to Scotland and its traditions. After our visit, we reboard the coach and return to our original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### 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
-  A scenic tour of Royal Deeside, famed for its picturesque landscapes, sparkling rivers and historic villages like Ballater

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

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

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

8 - 11 Jun	<del>\$1,325</del> \$1,255
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Single Supplement	\$210



Castle Fraser

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Scone Palace

# Castles, Palaces & Abbeys of Eastern Scotland

4 DAYS from \$1,255 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh

Explore the East of Scotland's royal palaces and historic castles. Highlights include Linlithgow Palace, Stirling Castle, Glamis Castle – birthplace of the Queen Mother and setting for Macbeth – Scone Palace, Falkland Palace and Loch Leven Castle. We also visit Culross Palace, with its maze of passageways and painted ceilings and Dunfermline Abbey, the resting place of Scottish royals including Robert the Bruce, celebrating Scotland's rich royal heritage.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and travel to our first visit - **Linlithgow Palace**. Situated on the shore of Linlithgow Loch, the Palace was once one of the principal residences of the monarchs of Scotland during the 15th and 16th centuries. Later, we head to the heart of the city of **Stirling**, where we find **Stirling Castle**. Following our visit, we continue to our comfortable hotel.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast, we visit **Glamis Castle**, the birthplace of Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, to tour the castle and explore its 1,000-year history, including famous visitors like Mary, Queen of Scots. Glamis Castle is also known for its ghosts. In the afternoon, we head to **Scone Palace**, overlooking the River Tay in Perthshire, to discover its antiques, paintings and unique artefacts.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** This morning, we visit **Falkland Palace & Gardens**, a refuge for Mary, Queen of Scots during 16th-century upheavals. We explore

the Renaissance Palace, its gardens, and wildflower meadow. Highlights include the Falkland Bed, royal apartments and the Queen's Room, arranged as Mary may have used it. This afternoon, we make our way to **Loch Leven Castle**. We cross the loch to the ruins of the Castle, where Mary, Queen of Scots, was imprisoned in 1567. We spend some time surrounded by beautiful scenery, soaking up the tranquillity of the Castle's setting before exploring the Tower House rooms and Glassin Tower.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** Today, we visit **Culross Palace**, which was constructed between 1597 and 1611 by Sir George Bruce, Laird of Carnock. We spend the morning exploring the tiny Palace rooms, connecting passageways and painted ceilings. We then head outside to the restored gardens, which incorporate many features which would have been found in the 17th century. In the early afternoon, we make our way to **Dunfermline Abbey and Palace**, before we return to our original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Key Highlights

- Stirling Castle 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 at the three-star Salutation Hotel, Perth with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ 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> \$1,255

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Linlithgow Palace

NEW  
TOURNO SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT

Culzean Castle

## Castles & Abbeys of Western Scotland

4 DAYS from \$1,325 | ACTIVITY RATING 

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

Western Scotland's castles and abbeys reveal a landscape shaped by power, faith and imagination. This tour explores grand estates, ancient fortresses and sacred medieval sites amid dramatic coastal scenery. Highlights include Culzean Castle, high above the Firth of Clyde, a private tour and afternoon tea at Mount Stuart on Bute and the artistic Kelburn Castle, along with visits to evocative Paisley Abbey and the birthplace of Robert Burns.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated pick-up points and begin our journey into the historic heart of western Scotland, travelling first to the ancient town of Paisley, home to one of the country's most important ecclesiastical buildings. **Paisley Abbey**, originally founded in 1163 by Walter FitzAlan, the High Steward of Scotland, has long been a centre of spiritual and cultural life. Following our visit, we continue to the seaside town of **Troon** and check in to the South Beach Hotel, located just steps from the shore.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** Today, we visit the dramatic **Culzean Castle**, perched on a cliff top overlooking the Firth of Clyde, with stunning views of Arran. Designed by Robert Adam in the late 18th century, this romantic-style castle features turrets, battlements and sweeping views reminiscent of a fairytale fortress. In the afternoon, we explore Scotland's poetic heritage at the **Robert Burns Birthplace Museum** in Alloway. We return to Troon for dinner and a relaxing evening.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** This morning, we travel to the Isle of Bute to visit one of Scotland's most extraordinary stately homes, the magnificent **Mount Stuart**. Our

**private guided tour** takes us through opulent rooms adorned with stained glass, marble and gilded ceilings, each infused with symbolism and Victorian grandeur. After our tour, we are treated to a traditional **afternoon tea** and a chance to relax and soak up the atmosphere of this truly unique estate.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Afternoon Tea, Dinner

**Day 4** Today, we explore two fascinating and very different castles along Scotland's west coast. We begin at **Kelburn Castle**, one of Scotland's oldest continuously inhabited castles and home to the Boyle family since the 12th century. While its core dates back to the 1200s, Kelburn is perhaps best known today for its vividly painted exterior, a bold, modern mural created by Brazilian street artists in 2007. This striking contrast between medieval stonework and contemporary art makes Kelburn utterly distinctive.

In the afternoon, we continue to **Hunterston Castle**, a far more traditional and atmospheric stronghold. Ancestral home of Clan Hunter, the castle dates to the 13th century and retains a sense of quiet dignity and historical weight. A **guided tour** reveals stories of feudal loyalty, maritime history and clan legacy, a powerful glimpse into Scotland's medieval past. Afterwards, we return to our original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

-  Admire the romantic splendour of Culzean Castle
-  Explore the richly decorated interiors of Mount Stuart, followed by a traditional afternoon tea
-  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

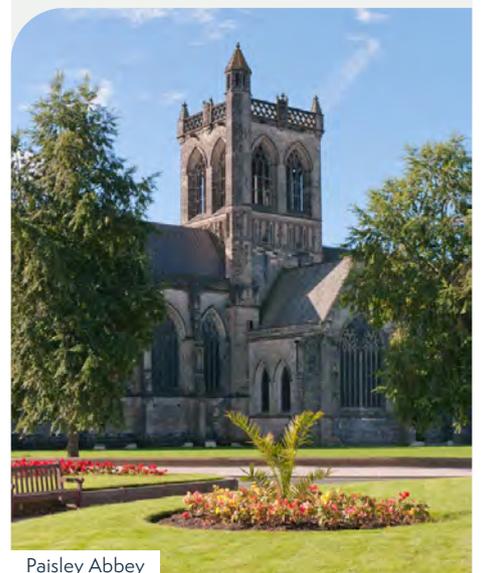
### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at the South Beach Hotel, Troon with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ 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 \$1,325

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Paisley Abbey

NO/LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT



Jacobite Steam Train

## A Classic Scottish Steam Break

4 DAYS from \$1,003 | ACTIVITY RATING

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

Scotland's steam journeys combine engineering feats with stunning scenery. Enjoy the Jacobite Steam Train from Fort William to Mallaig past Ben Nevis, Loch Morar, River Morar and across the Glenfinnan Viaduct. Discover the beauty of Loch Lomond followed by Inveraray Castle, cruise Loch Katrine on the steam-powered Sir Walter Scott and experience the rotating Falkirk Wheel, linking the Union and Forth & Clyde canals.

**Day 1** This morning, we travel by coach to the **Falkirk Wheel**, the world's first rotating boat lift. Upon arrival, you can have lunch (*not included*) and explore the visitor centre before starting our water journey at New Port Downie, sailing into the Falkirk Wheel. Afterwards, we head to our accommodation for a champagne reception and dinner.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After an early breakfast, we head to Fort William to board the **Jacobite Steam Train**, renowned for one of the world's most stunning railway journeys. The Fort William to Mallaig line offers breathtaking views of Scotland's wild beauty, from Ben Nevis to rugged mountains, lochs and the Atlantic shores at Mallaig. The route crosses the iconic Glenfinnan viaduct overlooking Loch Sheil, linked to Bonnie Prince Charlie's 1745 uprising. In Mallaig, enjoy free time for lunch (*not included*) before returning to Fort William. We then head back to our hotel for dinner.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** **June departure:** After breakfast, we sail 'Doon ra Watter' on **PS Waverley**, the last ocean-going paddle steamer, built in 1946 to replace the 1899 Waverley sunk at Dunkirk. Its 2,100-horsepower steam engine is

impressive. Onboard facilities include a restaurant, café, bar, and souvenir shop. After leaving the ship, our coach returns us to the hotel via the scenic '**Rest and be Thankful**' viewpoint. Dinner is at the hotel tonight.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

### May & October departures:

Following breakfast, we head for Tarbet on the banks of **Loch Lomond**, Britain's largest inland body of water, and depart on a 60-minute 'Northern Highlights Cruise' with full commentary. Afterwards, we cross the mountain pass known as the '**Rest and Be Thankful**' and descend to the shores of Loch Fyne, a long fjord-like sea loch. This afternoon, we visit **Inveraray Castle**, seat of the Duke of Argyll, chief of Clan Campbell, since the 17th century. We return to our hotel for dinner in the evening.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** After breakfast, we check out and head to **Callander** for free time. In the afternoon, we take a scenic cruise on Loch Katrine aboard the steamship **Sir Walter Scott**, enjoying the beauty of The Trossachs with its lochs, hills and woods. After the cruise, we return to our pick-up points by coach.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

- Enjoy a journey on the Falkirk Wheel boat lift
- Stunning views from the Jacobite Steam Train
- Cruise on Loch Lomond and visit to Inveraray Castle (*May & Oct only*)
- A captivating sailing on Loch Katrine on the steamship Sir Walter Scott

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at the Arrochar Hotel with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ 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

7 - 10 May	<del>\$1,185</del>	\$1,115
25 - 28 Jun	<del>\$1,325</del>	\$1,255
8 - 11 Oct	<del>\$1,115</del>	\$1,003
Single Supplement		\$130

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IN MAY**



Paddle Steamer Waverley



Highland Wildlife Park

## Highland Wildlife Safari

4 DAYS from \$1,325 | ACTIVITY RATING 

 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. 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.

**Meals:** Dinner

**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 hope to see some of the bottlenose dolphins at close quarters, plus common seals, grey seals and porpoise. 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.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**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. 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.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** After breakfast, we check out of the hotel and travel south to visit the **Abernethy National Nature Reserve** at Loch Garten. 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.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

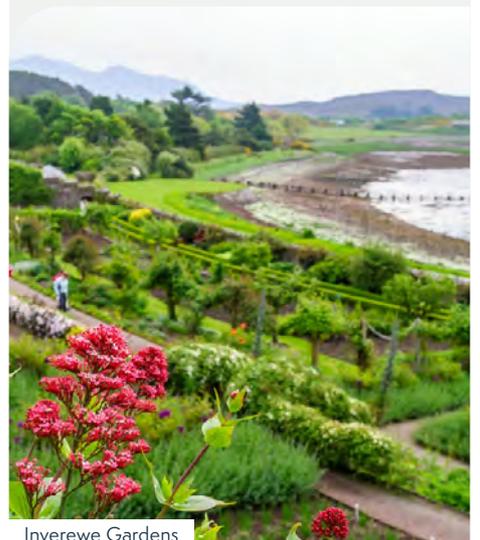
-  Ospreys on the nest at Loch Garten and Loch of the Lowes
-  The chance to see the famous Moray Firth dolphins
-  A walk on the wild side at Ben Eighe Spectacular plant life at Inverewe
-  Beavers and wildcats at the House of Aigas

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Three nights at the Carrbridge Hotel with breakfast
- ▶ 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**



Dunrobin Castle Garden

## 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** We depart from our designated pick-up points and head north, to our first garden just over the Kessock Bridge, **Old Allangrange**. Here we have some time to explore the ornamental garden surrounding the house and a three-acre productive garden with two Keder greenhouses. Following our visit, we will continue north by the scenic coastal road to our comfortable hotel.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast, we head out to **Duncansby Head** to see the huge sea-stacks and pose for photographs at John O'Groats before visiting the **Castle of Mey**, the former holiday home of the late Queen Mother. We take the evening sailing from Scrabster to Stromness, where dinner is taken on the ferry.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** After an early breakfast, we visit **Greens Garden**, a young, small private garden located in Orkney's East Mainland. Next, we visit the **Churchill Barriers**, which were built after the sinking of the HMS Royal Oak in October 1939, before continuing to **Westlea Garden**, followed by **Laura's Wood**, where 1,500 varied species were planted into a half-acre of rough ground in 2010. We also visit **Marengo Community Garden**, a special garden tucked out of sight in the village of St Margaret's Hope. On the way back to Kirkwall, we stop at the beautiful **Italian Chapel**, built on the site of a former prisoner of war camp.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning, we visit Finstown's **Community Garden**, featuring miniature shrubs, primula-lined valleys, and perennial flower borders. Next, we head north to **Skara Brae**, exploring its visitor centre and enjoying the café facilities for lunch (*not included*). In the afternoon, we visit the Victorian garden at **Kierfold in Sandwick**. Its layout has stayed mostly unchanged for 100 years, though planting reflects each owner's taste.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** We start at **Waulkmill**, a three-acre garden overlooking Waulkmill Bay. Next, we visit **The Quoy of Houton**, a restored historic walled garden near the sea. Then, we explore the **Standing Stones of Stenness** and the **Ring of Brodgar**, believed to date back to 2500-2000 BC. We return to Kirkwall for some free time to explore at our leisure. There are many craft and woollen shops, and of course, the magnificent **St Magnus Cathedral** is well worth a visit.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 6** After breakfast, we transfer to Stromness for the morning ferry to Scrabster. Heading south, we visit **Dunrobin Castle**, the ancestral home of the Dukes of Sutherland. This early 19th-century chateau-style castle features formal gardens descending to the sea. Continuing south, we stop for refreshments (*not included*) as needed, returning to our pick-up points by evening.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### 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

- ▶ One night at the Park Hotel, Thurso & four nights at the Kirkwall Hotel, Orkney with breakfast & dinner (*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



Ring of Brodgar

NO SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT

Old Man of Hoy

## Undiscovered Orkney

5 DAYS from \$2,137 | ACTIVITY RATING

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 in time to catch the Northlink ferry to Stromness. Dinner is served in the restaurant on board. On arrival in **Orkney**, we will transfer the short distance to Kirkwall and our accommodation.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast, we explore mainland Orkney's archaeological sites, starting with **Maeshowe**, a renowned chambered tomb. We visit **Skara Brae** and its visitor centre, the **Standing Stones of Stenness** and the charming **Italian Chapel**. Later, we tour the **Pier Arts Centre** and the **Highland Park Distillery**, known for its traditional methods.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** After breakfast, we head to **Hoy**, Orkney's second-largest island, with mountains in the north and fertile plains in the south. A 45-minute ferry ride takes us across Scapa Flow to Lyness. We visit the stunning **Dwarfie Stone**, where silence feels profound, and then **Rackwick Bay**, a beach with boulders, cliffs and a dynamic seascape. Returning south, we explore the **Scapa Flow Museum** at the former Lyness Naval Base, showcasing the Royal Navy's role in Orkney during both World Wars. After lunch (*not included*), we visit the stone-built **Martello Tower** at Hackness. Later, we ferry back to Houton and drive to Kirkwall for dinner at the hotel.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning, we depart for the island of **Westray**, the 'Queen of the Orkney Isles', which is reached by ferry from the pier directly opposite the hotel, sailing along the old Viking sea route to the north, past the islands of Egilsay and Eday. On Westray, we visit the **Scaun Natural Arch**, spotting sea birds like Shag, Black Guillemot, and Fulmar. Next is the unique **Quoygrew** 10th-century Norse site, followed by the **Kirk of St Mary** in Pierowall Village. After lunch (*not included*), we explore **Castle O'Burrian**, the **Westray Heritage Centre** and finish at **Noltland Castle**, an unusual castle reflecting Scotland's troubled history. We return to Kirkwall by ferry and enjoy dinner at the hotel.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** We check out of the hotel and transfer to Stromness to catch the ferry back to Scrabster. On arrival in Scrabster, we continue our homeward journey, stopping en-route at the **Timespan Museum and Arts Centre** in Helmsdale, which is described as a meeting place between past, present and future. Following our visit we return to our original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### 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 Scapa Distillery

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights at the Kirkwall or Shore Hotel with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ 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> \$2,137

**NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**



Puffins



St Ninian's Isle

## Shetland & its Outer Isles

5 DAYS from \$1,948 | ACTIVITY RATING ✿ ✿ ✿

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

Shetland's rugged islands offer raw beauty, unique culture and abundant wildlife. We visit four islands, including Mousa with its Iron Age broch, the Shetland Croft House Museum and Jarlshof, a 3,000-year archaeological treasure. We explore the northern islands of Yell and Unst, sail by boat as islanders have for centuries and take in dramatic seascapes, fresh air and the distinctive character of this remote archipelago.

**Day 1** We depart from our designated departure points and travel to Aberdeen, where we join the Serco Northlink ferry for the overnight sailing to Lerwick. Accommodation is provided in comfortable 2-berth cabins with en-suite facilities and dinner is served on board in the evening.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** Arriving early in Lerwick, we enjoy a Scottish breakfast on board before a full-day tour. Starting at the South Mainland, we visit the **Shetland Croft House Museum**, a restored 19th-century thatched croft house with traditional materials, low doorways, uneven floors and a peat fire. Next, we explore the **Prehistoric and Norse Settlement of Jarlshof**, featuring 3,000 years of history with Bronze Age houses, iron age broch and wheel houses, Viking longhouses and medieval farmhouses. This afternoon, we cross as foot passengers to the fascinating little island of **Mousa**. Here we visit the 2,000-year-old **broch**, the best-preserved example in the world.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** After a leisurely breakfast, we depart for a full-day tour to the northern isles of **Yell** and **Unst**. We travel north through **Tingwall** and **Girlsta**

and past the oil terminal at Sullom Voe, which has transformed life in Shetland over the last 25 years, before arriving at Toft. After a 15-minute crossing, we travel across Yell to Gutcher, then take a short ferry to Unst. We visit Munes Castle, drive to Baltasound, and after lunch (*not included*), head further north to enjoy views from **Saxa Vord Hill**. We return via East Yell and Burravoe.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** This morning we leave the hotel and head south, visiting **St Ninian's Isle** and its 6th-century church. Next, we stop at **Scalloway**, Shetland's former capital, to see the ruined castle built in 1600 by Earl Patrick Stewart. After lunch in Scalloway (*not included*), we pass through **Tingwall Valley**, the site of the old Norse parliament, before returning to **Lerwick for free time**. Later, we board the Northlink ferry for an overnight trip to Aberdeen. Dinner is served onboard.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** After breakfast on board, we disembark in Aberdeen and return to the original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

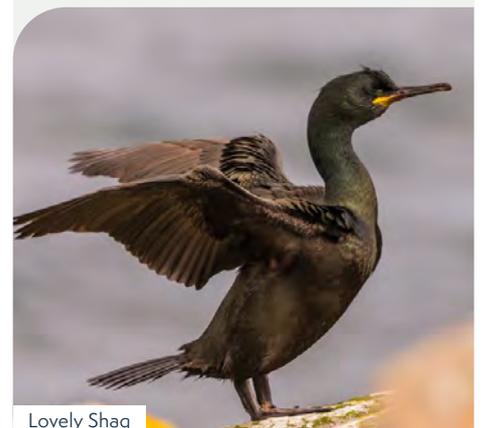
-  Rich wildlife on the Island of Mousa
-  3,000 years of archaeological history at Jarlshof
-  Munes Castle, the most northerly castle in the British Isles
-  The stunning sea cliffs of Noss
-  Bobby's bus shelter in Baltasound – surely the most famous in the world!

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Two nights at the the Busta House Hotel, Shetland with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Two nights in 2-berth cabins on Serco Northlink Ferries MV Hrossey/Hjaltland with dinner and full breakfast
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ 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> \$1,948
Single Supplement	\$555
Outside Cabin Supplement	\$60



Lovely Shag



Jarlshof

## Orkney & Shetland by Air

5 DAYS from \$2,767 | 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 discover 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 fly from Aberdeen or Edinburgh to Sumburgh this morning. Upon arrival, we visit **Sumburgh Head**, where the North Sea meets the Atlantic, featuring dramatic cliffs and an RSPB reserve. Next, we explore the remarkable Prehistoric and Norse Settlement of **Jarlshof**, spanning 3000 years from the Stone Age. In the afternoon, we head to **Scalloway**, Shetland's former capital, to see the ruined castle built in 1600 by Earl Patrick Stewart. Finally, we travel north to the stunning **cliffs of Eshaness**, passing the 'Otters Crossing' sign at Mavis Grind.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast, we head to the island's capital town of **Lerwick**, where we enjoy some free time. Later, we travel through small local communities until we reach Sandwick, where we cross as foot passengers on the ferry over to the little island of **Mousa**, to visit the 2000-year-old Iron Age **broch**.

**Meal:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** Today we depart from Sumburgh Airport to **Kirkwall**. On arrival, we 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.

**Meal:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** After breakfast, we embark on an all-day excursion to Orkney's west mainland, exploring the **Heart of Neolithic Orkney – World Heritage Sites**. Highlights include **Maeshowe**, a chambered tomb built before 2700 BC, featuring Viking runic inscriptions, the **Standing Stones of Stenness**, the nearby Neolithic village of **Barnhouse**, **Skara Brae** with its visitor centre, and **Skail House**, an architectural gem beside Skara Brae.

**Meal:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** After breakfast, we transfer to Kirkwall Airport, where we take a flight back to Aberdeen or Edinburgh.

**Meal:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

-  Mousa Broch – the best preserved Iron Age tower in existence
-  Spectacular sea cliffs at Eshaness
-  Multitudes of seabirds at Sumburgh Head
-  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 at the Busta House Hotel, Shetland & two nights at the Kirkwall or Shore Hotel, Orkney with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Flights from Aberdeen to Sumburgh, Sumburgh to Kirkwall & 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

11 - 15 Aug	<del>\$3,075</del> \$2,767
Single Supplement	\$415



Lerwick



Tobermory

## Mull, Staffa & Iona

4 DAYS from \$2,011 | ACTIVITY RATING

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

The Isle of Mull, with high peaks and dramatic coastal views, is a place of serene beauty. From our base at the Isle of Mull Hotel & Spa, explore colourful Tobermory, sail to the seabird-filled Treshnish Isles and Staffa's basalt cathedral, visit Duart Castle with sweeping views to Ben Cruachan and discover the peaceful Abbey on Iona – a perfect blend of wildlife, history and tranquillity.

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

**Meals:** Dinner

**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.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** Today we head to **Tobermory**, the island's 'capital', for our wildlife cruise to the **Treshnish Isles** and **Staffa**. On the Isle of Lunga,

the largest of the Treshnish Isles, we'll see wildflowers, stunning scenery, and (*June departure only*) a puffin colony nesting on the grassy hillside. Then, we cross to Staffa, a geological wonder formed by volcanic eruptions over 50 million years ago, to explore the island and **Fingal's Cave**.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Packed Lunch, Dinner

**Day 4** Today we visit **Duart Castle**, the 13th-century home of the Chief of Clan MacLean. We 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.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### Key Highlights

- Sailing out of Oban Bay as the holiday begins
- Wildlife cruise 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 at a comfortable hotel on the Isle of Mull with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ 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>	\$2,011
Single Supplement		\$590



Duart Castle



**NO SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT**

Jarlshof

## An Archaeologist's View of Orkney and Shetland

6 DAYS from \$2,515 | ACTIVITY RATING

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

Orkney and Shetland are rich in archaeological treasures, from 5,000-year-old settlements to Norse and medieval sites. Visit Mousa with its 2,000-year-old broch, Jarlshof, St Ninian's Isle, Scalloway Castle, the Italian Chapel, Maeshowe, Skara Brae and Skail House. En route to Aberdeen, pause for photos at the dramatic Dunnottar Castle, offering a remarkable insight into ancient life and the people who shaped these islands.

**Day 1** We leave our pick-up point and head north, stopping for lunch (*not included*). En route, we pause for photos at **Dunnottar Castle**, a dramatic clifftop fortress with origins in a 3rd-century Pictish stronghold and former home of the powerful Earls Marischal. In Aberdeen, we board the **Northlink Ferry** for an overnight sail to Lerwick, with dinner served onboard.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast, we leave the ship to tour Shetland, passing through Gulberwick and Cunningsburgh. At Sandwick, we take a ferry to the island of **Mousa**\* to visit the 2,000-year-old Iron Age **broch**, which impressively remains at its original height of 13m. After returning to the mainland, we will stop at Hoswick Visitor Centre for lunch (*not included*). Lastly, we visit the remarkable **Prehistoric and Norse Settlement of Jarlshof** and then head to the cliffs at **Sumburgh Head**, where the North Sea meets the Atlantic Ocean.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

\***Please note:** the trail on Mousa is uneven, steep and boggy in places. It may not be suitable for those visitors requiring extra mobility assistance or

are not sure-footed. Walking boots and waterproof clothing are recommended. There are no toilets, seating or shelter on the island. If, for any reason, the excursion is cancelled (weather or boat problems – sadly it can happen), we will visit Scatness Broch on Mainland Shetland.

**Day 3** This morning, we head south to visit **St Ninian's Isle** and its 6th-century church, marking Christianity's arrival in Shetland. Next, we explore **Scalloway**, Shetland's former capital, and its ruined **castle** from 1600, built by Earl Patrick Stewart. After lunch (*not included*), we pass through **Tingwall Valley**, site of the old Norse parliament, before returning to Lerwick to explore the historic town. Later, we board our ship for Orkney, enjoy dinner onboard, and transfer to our accommodation in Kirkwall upon arrival.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** After breakfast, we tour southern mainland Orkney, crossing the **Churchill Barriers**, built after the HMS Royal Oak sank in October 1939. These causeways, made of massive concrete blocks, connect Burray and South Ronaldsay to the Orkney mainland. We visit the beautiful **Italian Chapel**, built on a former prisoner of war camp site. Then, we

### Key Highlights

- Mousa Broch – the best preserved Iron Age tower in existence
- The multi-period settlement of Jarlshof
- Neolithic Orkney – a UNESCO World Heritage Centre
- Handling 5,000-year-old artefacts at the Tomb of the Eagles
- The Churchill Barriers and Italian Chapel, poignant reminders of more recent history

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ One night's dinner, bed and full breakfast at the Scalloway Hotel, Shetland and three nights' bed and breakfast (*plus two dinners*) at the Albert Hotel/Kirkwall Hotel\*.
- ▶ All ferry crossings, including one night's accommodation in 2-berth cabins on Serco Northlink Ferries MV Hrossey/Hjalaland 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 archaeological experts Carol Knott in April and Peter Yeoman in August

\***Please note:** April at the Kirkwall Hotel & August at the Albert Hotel

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

11 - 16 Apr	<del>\$2,655</del>	\$2,585
24 - 29 Aug	<del>\$2,795</del>	\$2,515
Single Supplement		\$695
<b>NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IN APRIL</b>		
Outside Cabin Supplement		\$60



St. Magnus Cathedral

return to Kirkwall, Orkney's capital, for free time to explore. Highlights include **St. Magnus Cathedral**, a stunning 861-year-old sandstone masterpiece; the **Earl's Palace**, **Bishop's Palace**, and the **Orkney Museum**. Dinner is at our hotel tonight.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 5** After breakfast, we explore the west mainland of Orkney, visiting the Heart of Neolithic Orkney. We start at **Skara Brae**, with its visitor centre showcasing the history of this iconic site and Skail House nearby. Next, we visit the **Ness of Brodgar** excavation site. In the afternoon, we visit the **Standing Stones of Stenness** and Brodgar, with the adjacent Neolithic village of Barnhouse, before continuing to **Maeshowe**, the finest chambered tomb in Western Europe. Built before 2700 B.C. Maeshowe was raided by Vikings in the 12th Century. Dinner is served in our hotel this evening.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 6** After breakfast, we transfer to **Stromness** to board the mid-morning Northlink ferry to **Scrabster**. Upon arrival, we commence our journey back to the original pick-up points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

LOW SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT

Aberlemno Pictish stone

## In the Footsteps of the Picts

4 DAYS from \$1,129 | ACTIVITY RATING

PICK-UP POINTS: Glasgow, Edinburgh

Beyond Rome's northern frontier, the Picts were fierce Celtic tribes who left few homes but remarkable carved stones and jewellery before disappearing around 900 AD. Explore their heartland in Perthshire and Angus, visit a newly excavated Pictish fortress and see their artistry and symbols of power in museum collections in Edinburgh and Perth, with unique access to recent discoveries revealing their extraordinary culture.

**Day 1** We depart from Glasgow and Edinburgh, heading to the **National Museum of Scotland** in Edinburgh. Highlights include the Pictish jewellery and sculpture collection, featuring the **St Ninian's Isle Treasure**, a unique Scottish hoard of fine metalwork discovered in Shetland in 1958.

**Meals:** Dinner

**Day 2** After breakfast, we visit **Aberlemno** to see its four stunning Pictish stones. Along the roadside are two pre-Christian pillar stones with mysterious symbols, a cross-slab depicting a hunting scene and angels, and in the churchyard, a cross-slab showing a battle, possibly the Pictish victory over the Anglo-Saxons at Nechtanesmere in 685 AD. Next, we meet **David McGovern** for an exclusive Pictish Stone carving demonstration. Next, we visit **St Vigean's Museum of Pictish Sculpture**, home to 26 significant early medieval sculptures from the 8th-10th centuries, including cross slabs, gravestones, a 'hogback' stone and rare

architectural fragments. Nearby, the old parish church, once a royal Pictish monastery, reveals stone fragments embedded in its medieval walls.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 3** Today begins with a visit to the symbol-inscribed cross-slab depicting angels and a striding cloaked figure at Eassie. From here, we continue to **Perth Museum** with its fine display of Pictish sculpture and Dundee's **McManus Museum** to meet a digital reconstruction of a Pictish woman.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Day 4** After breakfast, we leave the hotel and drive to **St Andrews** to see the stone sarcophagus of a Pictish king, showcasing biblical royal imagery and European artistic influences. Lastly, we visit the **East Lomond Hillfort** for a tour led by the leader of ongoing archaeological investigations. We then return to our departure points.

**Meals:** Breakfast

### 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 at the Links Hotel, Montrose with dinner & breakfast
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout
- ▶ All visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Services of an archaeological expert as a tour manager

### DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

7 - 10 Aug	<del>\$1,255</del> \$1,129
Single Supplement	\$130



McManus Museum

# Ancient Stones of the Outer Hebrides

5 DAYS from \$2,011 | ACTIVITY RATING   

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



Dun Carloway Broch

Around 1800 BC, a vigorous civilisation left its mark on the Outer Hebrides. The Standing Stones at Callanish align with the midsummer full moon, while later settlers created cairns, Iron Age houses, Norse mills and Blackhouses. With a local guide, explore Lewis and Harris's moors, beaches and mountains and enjoy four nights in Stornoway, where Gaelic culture thrives, music plays and history lives on.

## Key Highlights

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

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Four nights at the Royal Hotel, Stornoway with breakfast
- ▶ Visits as outlined in the itinerary
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel throughout & all ferry crossings
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

14 - 18 Aug	<del>\$2,235</del> \$2,011
Single Supplement	\$315



Callanish standing stones

# A Grand Tour of the Outer Hebrides

6 DAYS from \$2,200 | ACTIVITY RATING   

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



Isle of Lewis

This best-selling tour of the Outer Hebrides promises to live long in the memory. Our odyssey begins as we travel north via the Highlands, 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\* (if Calanais I has not reopened), the tranquil Norse Mill and the distinctive Black Houses at Gearannan. From here we take the ferry to North Uist and cross the causeway to the Isle of Benbecula before visiting the islands of Eriskay, Vatersay and Barra.

\*Please note: 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.

## Key Highlights

-  5,000-year-old standing stones
-  The Black Houses at Gearannan, typical of the crofting settlements
-  St Columba's Ui Church, one of the most important archaeological sites on the Isle of Lewis

## YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- ▶ Two nights at the Dark Isle Hotel, Benbecula & three nights at the Cabarfeidh Hotel, Stornoway with dinner & breakfast (breakfast on board the ferry on day 6)
- ▶ Comfortable coach travel & all ferry crossings
- ▶ Visits include: Barra, St Clement's Church and Black Houses at Gearannan
- ▶ Services of an expert tour manager

**Please note:** on 2 August departure we stay three nights at the Dark Isle Hotel, Benbecula and two nights at the Cabarfeidh Hotel. Instead of visiting St Columba's Ui Church, we visit South Uist and Kildonan Museum.

## DEPARTURES & PRICES PER PERSON

10 - 15 May	<del>\$2,375</del> \$2,305
2 - 7 Aug	<del>\$2,445</del> \$2,200
Single Supplement	\$350



Luskentyre

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