

IONA, MULL & THE ISLE OF SKYE

Tour Code: 12EE/5R



Depart: Edinburgh

Finish: Edinburgh

Full Details & Itinerary

5 Days 4 Islands - Scotland At Its Best!! Enjoy the magic, ancient history and the undisturbed tranquility of the islands of Mull, Iona and Staffa and the romantic beauty of the Isle of Skye.

Day 1 takes you north passed Stirling castle, and then west to Scotland's first National Park around Loch Lomond, and the "bonny banks". You will travel through the impressive mountains of the West Highlands through the magnificent white-washed 18th Century town of Inveraray, home to the Campbell Clan and the Duke of Argyll. The afternoon will be spent in the heart of Argyll exploring the area close to the ancient Kingdom of Dalriada before arriving in bustling town of Oban, the gateway to the islands, for your 2 night stay.

Day 2 is an early start crossing on the ferry to Mull and enjoying an island adventure exploring her dramatic coastlines and wild beauty, before taking the small ferry to the peace and tranquility of Iona - birthplace of Celtic Christianity and ancient burial ground of Scottish Kings. Here you can visit the historic abbey with its intricate carved crosses in the churchyard or explore the rocky headlands and sandy coves of this island gem. There is also an opportunity to take a small boat out to the island of Staffa (except Saturday departures in September) and view the dramatic basalt columns immortalised by Mendelssohn in his Hebridean Overture "Fingal's Cave". You then return on the ferry to Oban for your second night.

Day 3 takes you north along the west coast around Appin, passing the impregnable Castle Stalker, and Glencoe, scene of the infamous massacre of the Clan Macdonald in 1692. You then pass through Fort William and up to the Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge with great views over Ben Nevis, Britain's highest mountain. Your tour now takes the "Road to the Isles" through the splendour of the Five Sisters of Kintail, the mountains guarding the pass on the way to the Isle of Skye. You stop to visit the famous stronghold Eilean Donan Castle, used in the film "Highlander", set at the junction of 3 lochs as protection against Viking raiders. Crossing over the sea to Skye, you travel up to the picturesque harbour town of Portree. You are then dropped off at your accommodation in the early evening, where you are free to go out and explore the town.

Day 4 is a very flexible day on Skye. There are many possibilities depending on the weather and we take passengers preferences into account. For example : Travel north to the stunning Quiraing mountain pass and enjoy a spectacular walk through some of Skye's extraordinary geological scenery, visit Kilt Rock, composed of basalt columns (reminiscent of the pleats in a kilt) with its waterfall cascading over the cliffs and down into the sea below. After lunch you can go over to Neist Point for a walk out to the lighthouse that is the furthest point west on Skye. Or go over to Dunvegan Castle, ancient ancestral seat of the Clan McLeod. Talisker Distillery is also here, as are the famous Cuillin Hills. We return you to your accommodation in Portree in the early evening for you to enjoy your second free night in Portree.

Day 5 You will be collected from your accommodation and travel south through the Cuillin Hills and back over to the mainland for stunning views over Loch Duich and the 5 Sisters of Kintail. Onto Loch Ness for lunch and the possibility of spotting "Nessie". There is a boat trip (Summer only) available here that will get you that bit closer! Heading south now through the Grampian mountains along Loch Laggan, made famous now as "Monarch of the Glen Country" before passing Dawhinnie, home to Scotland's highest whisky Distillery, and onwards into Perthshire where we stop for refreshments before heading back to Edinburgh past Perth and over the Forth Road Bridge. Arriving at 19.00 approx.