

Island Explorer Tour Code: 20EE/7HA



Group discounts for 4 or more apply

Depart: Edinburgh

Finish: Edinburgh

Day 1: Edinburgh To Carbisdale Castle

Heading north from Edinburgh, we pass through Perthshire - surrounded by mountains, forests and salmon packed rivers. First stop is at Dunkeld where you will hear tales of the Wolf of Badenoch at Dunkeld Cathedral. Lunch is in the small village of Kingussie, made famous by the 'Monarch of the Glen' TV show. Then it's off to lonely Culloden Battlefield, scene of the last major battle in Britain. Then it's on to world famous Loch Ness for a wee bit of monster spotting before heading for our lavish evening accommodation in a Haunted Highland Castle!*

Day 2: Carbisdale Castle To Orkney Islands via John O' Groats

We travel north through the sparsely populated wilderness of Sutherland and Caithness, via glens left deserted as a result of the Highland Clearances, and on to John O' Groats, Britain's most north easterly point. We then catch the ferry to the Orkney Islands, home to more archaeological ruins in one area than anywhere else in Europe!

Explore Skara Brae, dating from the late Neolithic period and inhabited between 3200BC and 2200BC. This incredible stone village is made up of eight dwellings (some still containing original furniture) linked together by a series of low alleyways and is a marvel of ancient building techniques. You can also experience the magnificent standing stones at the Ring of Brodgar.

We spend the night in the island's capital, Kirkwall. The Orkneys have only been a part of Scotland since 1490 and the islands still retain a very distinctive Scandinavian influence.

Day 3: To Ullapool

We say farewell to these unique islands and make the crossing by ferry back to the mainland, hopefully seeing some whales and dolphins on the way. Then follow the stunning North coast,

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passing sandy beaches and stopping for lunch in the lovely village of Tongue. We then journey along the wild North West coast to the charming fishing town of Ullapool, passing bleak landscapes and dramatic mountain scenery and unspoilt sandy beaches. Ullapool was once a Viking stopover and is now a bustling fishing port and gateway to the Western Isles. It's famous for its seafood and traditional music and is a great place to explore.

Day 4: Ullapool

Free day to explore Ullapool at your own pace. Hire a bike, explore the local hills or just chill out in a bookshop or at the beach.

Day 5: Ullapool to Lewis

We catch the ferry to Lewis, where we spend the night. Today we visit the stunning Callanish Standing Stones, Neolithic in age and dating back more than 5000 years. Much quieter than Stonehenge, these are said to be some of the most impressive and inspiring of any of the ancient stones in Britain. These Hebridean islands are predominantly Gaelic speaking and have an unbroken culture dating back thousands of years. Tonight is your chance to hear traditional music and haunting Gaelic tunes.

Day 6: Harris To Skye & Loch Ness

In the morning we explore the amazing beaches of Harris, famous for its clear blue waters, magnificent mountain backdrop and traditional crofting culture. These islands are home to the Clan MacLeod who lived here for over 1200 years. After exploring the wonders of Harris, we leave the MacLeod homeland and cross by Ferry to the 'winged island', the Isle of Skye. We explore the magical Isle of Skye before heading for Eilean Donan Castle and the mainland.

Day 7: Loch Ness To Edinburgh

From Loch Ness explore the Great Glen before passing Fort William and Ben Nevis - Britain's highest mountain. Discover 'The Weeping Glen', Glencoe, where we hear about the infamous massacre of the MacDonalds. Over the wilds of Rannoch Moor, we then pass Stirling with its famous Wallace Monument, where the true story of Braveheart is told, before returning to the capital City of Edinburgh!