

The Ultimate Island Hopper

Tour Code: 36SWE/9W



Pick up: Stirling Wallace Monument
Finish: Edinburgh

The ultimate tour of Scotland!

In just over a week you will see more of Scotland than most Scots ever do. A vast variety of terrain and culture all within so few miles.

We have been touring Lewis & Harris and Orkney for years and to bring them together in one tour is a dream come true!

Day 1 - Unicorn Travel arranges pick ups at Stirling Wallace Monument and will provide you with maps and information on how to get there (the tour originally starts from Edinburgh). Travellers will enjoy a superb day meandering on our way into the Highlands. Hear all about William Wallace, Robert the Bruce and Rob Roy MacGregor with walks for fantastic views. After a picnic lunch, it's into magnificent Glencoe (the massacre of Clan MacDonald) where they'll be plenty of time to explore the dramatic beauty of arguably Scotland's most famous glen. Tonight we spend in the Great Glen at a lochside hostel with views of Ben Nevis. It's the perfect introduction to our superb country!

Day 2 - This morning we'll have a short stop at Eilean Donan Castle (where Highlander was filmed) - you'll hear all the history and legends - before enjoying a morning seafood & seal cruise with local fisherman Neil. The rest of today will be spent exploring the Isle of Skye, with lots of walks and time to take in the magic. You'll see the Cuillin Mountains, the Old Man of Storr (an incredible Jurassic pillar) and hear some of the tales and legends surrounding the MacDonalds and MacLeods, the two main Clans of the island. We'll visit the fascinating Kilt

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Rock, and take in absolutely awe-inspiring panoramas in the Quirang. Tonight we'll stay on the magical Isle of Skye.

Day 3 - The morning we will head for Uig to catch the ferry over the sea to the Isle of Harris where we will spend the afternoon checking out Rodel Church, home to the tomb of Alisdair Crotach MacLeod and going for great coastal walks along some of the best beaches (yes, we have beaches!) in the world! Then we make our way up into Lewis and over to the west coast where an amazing original Blackhouse (renovated for comfort!) is our home for the next 2 nights.

Day 4 - A great day on Lewis with time spent at a recently discovered Iron Age village at Bosta, the amazing 4,000 year old Callanish Standing Stones (second only to Stonehenge), exploring the ancient Broch (fortified dwelling house) of Dun Carloway and witnessing the traditional making of Harris tweed! Then if we have enough energy left late afternoon (of course we will!) there is a superb coastal walk to Dalmore bay, next to the Blackhouse.

Day 5 - Stornoway, the capital of Lewis, is our destination this morning and there's time to wander the streets, see the harbour and wander the castle grounds before taking the ferry back to the mainland at Ullapool. Then, with a stop at Corrieschalloch Gorge to stretch the legs, it is off to Lewiston by the banks of Loch Ness. With pubs playing live music and Loch Ness within 5 mins, plus an outdoor BBQ (for those sunny evenings Scotland is so famous for!) it's the perfect place to party the night away!

Day 6 - Today we wind our way along the North East Coast, taking in Dunrobin Castle, home of the Duke of Sutherland, discover the ghostly clearance villages perched on the cliff tops and the harbours where they tried to make a living. There'll be time for a great walk to try and spot a puffin or two (May - July) as we take in the sea stacks of Duncansby Head before a wee stop in John O'Groats. It's then time to catch the ferry through the Scapa Flow to St Margaret's Hope where we'll stay for the next two nights.

Day 7 - From our base in the fishing village of St Margaret's Hope we spend a full and energetic day today exploring the islands - it will be packed with Viking ancestry and world-renowned archaeological treasures such as Skara Brae and the Ring of Brogar. Plus a chance to gaze in wonder at the island's Italian Chapel, search for the coastal Puffins (May-July) and also walk to one of the neighbouring islands. Loads of time will be spent off the bus and much time spent walking especially along some of the fantastic beaches " a day to remember (another one!)

Day 8 - Today it's back to the Scottish mainland as we wind our way along the far North Western coast a chance to explore the famous Smoo caves and explore some of the most remote and rugged landscapes Europe has to offer. Deserted beaches, towering mountains, sparkling lochs and the wide open skies really set the tone today before we arrive at Carbisdale Castle, our home for the evening.

Day 9 - Our last day takes us past the banks of Loch Ness for a second chance to spot Nessie before an emotional stop at tragic Culloden battlefield. Then we cheer ourselves up with beautiful forest walks at the Hermitage before making our way over the Firth of Forth back to Edinburgh " happy honorary Scots!

We're certain that this will be a really special trip, and one you'll remember for a long time to come. We look forward to seeing you.