

## LOCH LOMOND NATIONAL PARK & STIRLING CASTLE

Tour Code: 4SCSR/1R



**Pick up: Stirling Castle**

**Drop off: Stirling Riverhouse Restaurant**

**Departures: Every day**

**From: £29**

### Full Details & Itinerary

Unicorn Travel arranges pick ups from Stirling Castle at around 11.30am and drop offs at 5pm at Stirling Riverhouse Restaurant and will provide you with maps and information on how to get there.

For passengers travelling from Edinburgh, the departure is at 09.15 and travel northwest through the historic area of Linlithgowshire, close to the historic palace. The tragic Mary Queen of Scots was born at Linlithgow palace, and became Queen when she was only 6 days old. According to legend her father James V died of a broken heart when he discovered his wife had given birth to a daughter and not the son he was hoping for! Your route along the Forth Valley is one which has been used for thousands of years by invading armies, it was the northernmost frontier of the Roman empire and was later used by the English King Edward I as he marched proudly towards Stirling (only to be sent homewards to think again!). Nowadays it's at the centre of one of Scotland's most important industries with huge oil refineries dominating the area.

As you approach Stirling the magnificent castle dominates your view and you make your way up towards the high volcanic rock where it imposes itself upon the surrounding land. Known as the 'Key to Scotland', for centuries this was the most important castle in Scotland and the views from the top make it easy to see why.

To the north is the 220ft high tower of the National Wallace Monument commemorating Scotland's great hero William Wallace, played by Mel Gibson in the Oscar-winning movie Braveheart. From the castle you can look down over the scene of Wallace's greatest triumph, the battle of Stirling Bridge, where he defeated the English army in 1297. To the south is Bannockburn where, in 1314, the great Scottish warrior-king Robert the Bruce defeated the English army of Edward II. The battle was fought for possession of Stirling Castle but eventually led to a far greater prize for Scotland – the restoration of independence. It's an area alive with history and you stop at the castle to give you time to soak up the history and heritage of this great site.

From Stirling you head into the Highlands and an area known as the Trossachs. Known as 'The Highlands in Miniature', it marks the point where the Lowlands meet the Highlands and entering this beautifully picturesque area feels like going into a different country. With its shimmering lochs, rugged mountain tops and forest-filled glens it's easy to forget that this was once thought of as a dangerous frontier fought over by the fiercely territorial Highland clans. You stop here for lunch in the village of Aberfoyle, made popular in Victorian times due to its great location.

After lunch you 'take the high road' or back-road to Loch Lomond, Scotland's largest lochs at over 22 miles long, passing Lochs Ard, Chon and Arklet along the way as you travel through the protected lands of Scotland's first National Park. The route you take was described by the famous Scots comedian Billy Connolly as his favourite road in Scotland, and you can discover why – it's stunning!!

You stop at Inversnaid on the secluded north-east of the loch, making it the perfect place to enjoy a walk along the 'bonny banks', up to a viewpoint for a fantastic view of the loch and the mountain it's named after, Ben Lomond. This tranquil setting was once the home of Scotland's famous highland folk hero, Rob Roy MacGregor. Made popular by many books and films Rob Roy lived an incredible life as a soldier, businessman, cattle-rustler and outlaw. By spending time on the trails by the loch you will undoubtedly be walking in the footsteps of one of Scotland's great legends. There is also an alternative option to take a boat cruise around the north of the loch (Summer only) or merely enjoy a drink at the local hotel and sample the views. Leaving Loch Lomond you return to Edinburgh passing Scotland's only lake – the Lake of Mentieth (although we have around 3000 freshwater lochs!). The legend states that after William Wallace was betrayed by his great friend the Earl of Mentieth and executed in London the name was changed from the Loch of Mentieth to the Lake of Mentieth so that nobody would ever forget the traitorous part the Earl played in his death.

**LOCH LOMOND NATIONAL PARK & STIRLING CASTLE**

Tour Code: 4SCSR/1R

**Pick up: Stirling Castle****Drop off: Glasgow****Departures: every day****From £26****Full Details & Itinerary**

Unicorn Travel arranges pick ups from Stirling Castle at around 11.30am, drop offs are in Glasgow and we will provide you with maps and information on how to get there.

According to legend Mary Queen of Scots' father, James V, died of a broken heart when he discovered his wife had given birth to a daughter and not the son he was hoping for! Your route north to Stirling is one which has been used for thousands of years by invading armies. It was the northernmost frontier of the Roman empire, and was later used by the English King Edward I, as he marched proudly towards Stirling (only to be sent homewards to think again!).

As you approach Stirling the magnificent castle dominates your view and you make your way up towards the high volcanic rock where it imposes itself upon the surrounding land. Known as the 'Key to Scotland', for centuries this was the most important castle in Scotland and the views from the top make it easy to see why.

To the north is the 220ft high tower of the National Wallace Monument commemorating Scotland's great hero William Wallace, played by Mel Gibson in the Oscar-winning movie Braveheart. From the castle you can look down over the scene of Wallace's greatest triumph, the battle of Stirling Bridge, where he defeated the English army in 1297.

To the South is Bannockburn where, in 1314, the great Scottish warrior-king Robert the Bruce defeated the English army of Edward II. The battle was fought for possession of Stirling Castle but eventually led to a far greater prize for Scotland – the restoration of independence. It's an area alive with history and you stop at the castle to visit and give you time to soak up the history and heritage of this great site.

From Stirling you travel into the Highlands to an area known as the Trossachs National Park. Often referred to as 'The Highlands in Miniature' it marks the point where the Lowlands meet the Highlands and entering this beautifully picturesque area feels like going into a different country. With its shimmering lochs, rugged mountain tops and forest-filled glens it's easy to forget that this was once thought of as a dangerous frontier fought over by the fiercely territorial Highland clans. You stop here for lunch in the heart of the National Park forest outside Aberfoyle, where you can enjoy the magnificent nature all around you.

After lunch you 'take the high road' or back-road to Loch Lomond, at over 22 miles long, 5 miles wide at its widest point, and with 79 islands, it is Scotland's largest loch, it takes its name from the mountain Ben Lomond on the eastern shore.

Following a walk out along the west highland way you travel onto the picturesque Distillery of Glengoyne, one of the leading 'Malt Whiskies' in Scotland, where you have the option to tour the Distillery or enjoy the refreshments that are on offer at their 'Slainte Mhath Shop'. Then it's just a short drive back to Glasgow at approx 18.00