

Orkney & the North Coast

5 day tour

Escape to Scotland's extreme Northern Coast and Orkney on this magical tour from Edinburgh.

Places you'll explore

Orkney Isles - These beautiful islands are full of ancient history and wildlife.

Glencoe and Rannoch Moor - Be moved by the sheer beauty and tragic tales of one of Scotland's most famous landscapes.

Loch Ness - Take a chance to spot the famous Loch Ness Monster.

Skara Brae and Ring of Brodgar - Learn how people used to live in ancient times at these prehistoric monuments.

Cairngorms National Park - Gaze in awe at Scotland's most beautifully rounded peaks.

Prices per person in 2018, excluding accommodation

Please note these are the prices per person for the 5 day tour in a 16 seater+ coach.

April: £299 / £279 discounted

May: £329 / £309 discounted

June – September: £359 / £339 discounted

October: £329 / £309 discounted

Discounts

Students, seniors over 60, and children between 5 and 15
(unfortunately, we don't carry children under 5 years old)

Your journey

The archipelago of Orkney hides many treasures: and on our five day tour, your experienced guide will ensure you find the best of them. You'll unearth some of the most well-preserved prehistoric sites in Europe, examine a beautiful red sandstone coast, and discover the vibrant culture of remote island communities.

You'll also have a chance to find the Loch Ness Monster, see Scotland's beautiful north, and learn about the tragedy of Glencoe.

It's an experience you'll treasure for a lifetime.

Departs

08.30 - Gate J and Gate K, Edinburgh Bus Station, St Andrew Square, Edinburgh, EH1 3DQ

Returns

19.00

Discounts

Students, seniors over 60, and children between 5 and 15
(unfortunately, we don't carry children under 5 years old)

Important information

Pack your waterproof clothing and walking shoes

One 15 kilogram bag per person

Tour inclusions

Transport in a 16 seat Mercedes mini-coach

Air conditioning as standard

The stories and services of a driver-guide

Tour exclusions

Entry fees to visitor attractions

Tour accommodation

- Lap up the lovely Lochs as you venture north
- Gasp as you listen to the tragic tale of Glencoe

Day 1

Leave Edinburgh and head west past Stirling Castle and the Wallace Monument. You pass Doune Castle before stopping in the small town of Callander for a refreshment. After crossing the fault line into the magnificent Highlands, you take in the splendour of Loch Luibnaig, Loch Earn, Glen Ogle, and Glen Dochart.

Glencoe offers spectacular views before you continue north up the Great Glen to the mysterious beauty of Loch Ness.

The loch is 23 miles long and you have plenty of time to try and spot the monster.

You arrive at Inverness, where you're dropped off at your booked accommodation. The evening is free for you to explore the 'Capital of the Highlands'.

Day 2

- Arrive in the Capital of Orkney, Kirkwall
- Explore mainland Scotland's most northern scenery

It's an early start, leaving behind the 'Capital of the Highlands', crossing over the Black Isle, and past Andrew Carnegie's Skibo Castle.

From here, you drive through the northeast Highland coastline, travelling into some of Scotland's most dramatic scenery.

Onwards through Scotland's most northerly mainland village, John o' Groats, and then to Gills Bay, where you board the ferry, crossing the Pentland Firth into the Orkney Archipelago.

It's a short drive to the famous Italian Chapel where we stop for a visit before continuing to the Viking stronghold of Kirkwall, Capital of Orkney. Here you can visit Kirkwall's magnificent Viking Cathedral and its historic winding streets.

Day 3

- Go to a site as ancient as the pyramids, Skara Brae
- See the wild ocean clash with redstone cliffs

[Today](#) is your chance to explore this archipelago's fertile green pastures fringed by shores of golden sands washed by waters of the North Sea and Atlantic ocean.

You visit the 5,000 year old village of Skara Brae, the mystical prehistoric stone circle at Brodgar and the Druidic standing stones of Stenness.

You stop in Stromness, and then travel onto Maeshowe, where in the 12th century the Vikings left one of the largest collections of Norse runic inscriptions. Then it's back to Kirkwall for your second night after what is sure to be a memorable day.

Day 4

- Stroll around the beautiful harbour town of Ullapool
- Take a look at the stunningly located ruins of Ardvreck Castle

After a relaxed start, you leave Orkney and sail the Viking waters back to the mainland. From here, you travel the old road right across the very top of Scotland, driving past the stunning Ben Loyal and Ben Hope mountains following the rocky cliffs and stunning golden sand beaches.

You then visit the far northwest Highlands and the wilderness of the mountains of Assynt before stopping to view the 15th century ruins of Ardvreck Castle.

From here, you travel to Ullapool, situated at the mouth of Loch Broom, a beautiful whitewashed fishing village where you spend your last night's stay on tour

Day 5

- See the ancient standing stones made famous by Outlander, Clava Cairns

- Learn about one of the most brutal events in British history at Culloden

Leaving Ullapool behind, you take in the drama of the River Droma as it plunges 60m down into Corrieshalloch Gorge. You then take in the beautiful Loch Glascarnoch, on the way past the 'Capital of the Highlands', Inverness.

You can visit Culloden Moor, the site of The Battle of Culloden in 1746, one of the bloodiest events in our history and the last battle to have been fought on the British mainland. Next, you take a short drive to the ancient standing stones at Clava Cairns, made famous by Diana Gabaldon in the 'Outlander' books.

From here, you travel through the ancient Caledonian Pine Forest, hugging the Cairngorm mountain range. Lunch will be spent in these beautiful surroundings before travelling through big tree country of Perthshire, the Kingdom of Fife, and back to Edinburgh.

Where does this tour stay overnight?

You stay two nights in Kirkwall, Orkney with a night in Inverness and Ullapool before and after.

How does the accommodation work?

Your tour excludes accommodation; but when you book, you can ask us to reserve local accommodation for you, or you can choose to reserve your own accommodation in the overnight locations.

I want you to book my accommodation, what happens now?

Once you've booked your tour, we'll reserve all your accommodation, and your driver will drop you off with your hosts. You'll pay your accommodation hosts directly. Most accommodation hosts don't accept credit cards, so be prepared to pay cash.

Due to availability, we may not be able to reserve your first choice of accommodation. When this happens we'll book your second choice, and if there are any further issues we'll contact you.

What if I want to change my accommodation booking with you?

Changes to accommodation cannot be guaranteed and are subject to availability. A minimum amendment charge of £5.00 will apply, increasing to a maximum of £25.00 depending on the length of your tour.

I booked my own accommodation is there anything I need to do?

You'll need to contact us with your accommodation details. Please only reserve accommodation within the overnight towns that your tour stops in. And if you're unsure, please check with us first.

Your driver will drop you off at your chosen accommodation as long as it's relatively central.

What if I cancel my tour at short notice?

If you cancel less than three days before departure, you may be liable for the cost of your first nights' accommodation. And occasionally you may be liable for all your accommodation costs.

What are the accommodation types and what do they cost?

We try to reserve accommodation that's no more than a 20-minute walk from the town centre. But during busy periods there can be a walk of up to 30 minutes.

We regularly check our accommodation suppliers to ensure they reach a certain standard. The prices below are for guidance only.

B&B (Bed and Breakfast) Standard

The toilet and showering facilities are shared with at least one other rooms in the house, and the price includes breakfast. The cost is between £30.00 - £35.00 per person per night. A single standard is between £35.00 - £60.00 per night.

B&B En/suite

The showering and toilet facilities are private, and breakfast is included in the price. The expected cost for a room, based on two people sharing, will be between £40.00 – £50.00 per person per night.

The expected cost for a single room will be between *£55.00 - £65.00 per night. If you travel during a busy period, you can expect to pay up to *£75 - £80 per night. Rooms with a view are limited and may be more expensive.

Hotels

Hotels have a bar or restaurant and provide evening meals. Breakfast is included in the price. The expected cost of Hotel 3* is between £65.00 - £85.00 per person per night. Hotel 4* is approximately £75.00 - £120.00 per person per night. Please be advised that 4* hotels aren't available in some smaller rural areas of the Scottish Highlands and islands.

Hostels

A hostel consists of dormitory rooms with 4 to 16 bunk beds. Towels aren't provided, but you can hire towels there. The bathroom facilities are a short distance from the dorm room. Kitchen facilities are equipped so you can make your own meals. The cost is between £15.00- £25.00 per person per night. Please note that SYHA hostels only offer same gender dorms. Some independent hostels will offer mixed rooms (males and females together). If you have a preference, please let us know at the time of booking.