

Iona, Mull, Skye & Orkney

9 day tour

Explore the "photographer's dream" of Skye, Orkney, Iona, and Mull on this tour from Edinburgh.

Places you'll explore

Loch Lomond National Park - One of Scotland's largest lochs. Admire the views and take postcard-perfect photos to share with your friends and family.

Oban - This Victorian harbour town offers excellent seafood and a charming intimacy.

Iona - Visit the tiny Island of Iona inhabited with around 120 people.

Fingal's Cave - The cave is compiled of natural hexagonal pillars and has inspired many musicians and writers.

Isle of Skye - Traverse one of the world's most stunning islands, with beautiful views around every corner.

Eilean Donan Castle - An iconic and gorgeous 13th century castle that once warded off Viking invasions.

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 - This loch holds more fresh water than all of the lakes in England and Wales combined. But does it also hold the Loch Ness Monster?

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

Adult 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: £628

May: £658

June – September: £718

October: £658

Discounts

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

Your journey

Experience Scotland's iconic landmarks and offbeat charms on this nine day tour.

You'll see the famed beauty of Skye, you'll hear about the infamous tragedy of Glencoe, and you'll get to know the legends of Loch Ness and Loch Lomond.

And there's more. Because you'll also venture far from the well-trodden paths to the northern wilds of Orkney, and the peaceful shores of Iona and Mull.

It's a tour that's perfect if you want an unforgettable experience of both Scotland's local secrets and world class highlights.

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09.00 - 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

Day 1

We take 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 two night stay.

Day 2

[Today](#) 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 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 nestling in the shadow of Ben Nevis which at 1344 meters is the highest mountain in the British Isles. We continue through the Great Glen a natural fault in the earth's crust that runs through Scotland and on through Ireland. From here you travel north to the picturesque fishing village of Plockton. You are then dropped off at your accommodation in the early evening.

Day 4

Is a very flexible day on Skye. There are many possibilities depending on the weather and your driver/guide will use his/her local knowledge to decide on the best day out for the group. For example: heading west towards the 13th century home of the Clan Macleod - Dunvegan Castle, the emerald green valley of Glendale or the dramatic sea-cliffs and lonely lighthouse at Neist Point. In the afternoon the tour may concentrate on the south of the island. Spend time heading down to Elgol for seascapes and views of the Cuillin, or Talisker and its beautiful bay or indeed Glenbrittle and its famed waterfalls. We return you to your accommodation in Plockton in the late afternoon for you to enjoy a free evening in the village

Day 5

You will be collected from your accommodation for the short drive to the famous stronghold of Eilean Donan Castle, used in the film "Highlander", set at the junction of 3 lochs as protection against Viking raiders. Then you travel east taking in the stunning views over Loch Duich and the 5 Sisters of Kintail. Continue on to Loch Ness for lunch and the possibility of spotting "Nessie".

Half an hour south of Loch Ness you will stop in the village of Spean Bridge and join a new bus for the continuation of your tour to Orkney. Your guides will help you transfer your luggage and introduce you to your new travelling companions.

With your new crew you will continue north following the Great Glen travelling the entire 23 miles of the famous Loch passing by

Urquhart castle. You can expect to arrive in Inverness, the Highland capital, and the place of our overnight stay at approx 18.30 where you will be dropped off at your pre booked accommodation.

Day 6

Is 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, and enjoy amazing views of some of Europe's oldest landscapes and the chance to see wildlife such as Golden Eagles and red deer. 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. From here it is 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 where you shall stay for 2 nights. Here you can visit Kirkwall's magnificent Viking Cathedral and its historic winding streets.

Day 7

Is your chance to explore this fantastic, ancient island; a land of contrasts where fertile green pastures are fringed by shores of golden sands washed by waters of the North Sea and Atlantic ocean. You will visit the 5000 year old village of Skara Brae (older than the Pyramids of Egypt!), the mystical prehistoric stone circle at Brodgar and the Druidic standing stones of Stenness. We stop in Stromness - one of Scotland's most picturesque seaboard villages 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 our second night after what is sure to be a memorable day.

Day 8

Is a relaxed start to the day, as 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 of our northern coastline. We then visit the far northwest highlands and the grandeur, expanse and wilderness of the mountains of Assynt before stopping to view the 15th century ruins of Ardvreck Castle. From here we travel to Ullapool, situated at the mouth of Loch Broom, a beautiful whitewashed fishing village where we spent our last night's stay on tour.

Day 9

Leaving Ullapool behind you, you take in the drama of the River Droma as it plunges 60m down into Corrieshalloch Gorge, before taking in the beautiful Loch Glascarnoch, on the way past the 'Capital of the Highlands' Inverness. You can then 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, before taking a short drive to the ancient standing stones at Clava Cairns, made famous by Diana Gabaldon in the "Outlander" books. This prehistoric and stunning Bronze Age burial ground is one of the oldest in Scotland. 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, through the Kingdom of Fife, and back to Edinburgh.

Where does this tour stay overnight?

You stay two nights in Oban, two nights in Plockton, one night in Inverness, two nights in Orkney, and one night in Ullapool.

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.