
EXECUTIVE TOUR SUMMARY

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Arrive Dublin Airport and Depart from Edinburgh Airport

Day 1 - Dublin City Day Tour (Dublin)

Touring Trinity College, St Patricks Cathedral, National Museum of Archaeology & History, National Gallery of Ireland, Kilmainham Gaol and Guinness Storehouse.

Day 2 - Touring Newgrange & Belfast (Dublin to Belfast)

Touring Newgrange, Titanic Experience & Belfast Political Tour.

Day 3 - Touring Antrim Causeway Coast (Belfast to Portstewart)

Touring Antrim Coast, Carrick a Rede rope bridge, Giants Causeway, Bushmills Distillery, Dunluce Castle & Game of Thrones Locations available for fans.

Day 4 - Touring Ayrshire Coast (Portstewart to Ayr)

Touring from Portstewart via Larne to Cairnryan Ferry along the Ayrshire Coastal Drive to Culzean Castle.

Day 5 - Touring Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park (Culzean Castle to Forth William)

Touring Ayrshire Coast, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park.

Day 6 - Touring Isle of Skye (Forth William to Isle of Skye)

Touring Talisker Distillery, Dunvegan Castle & Isle of Skye.

Day 7 - Touring Isle of Skye

Touring The Old Man of Storr, Staffin, Uig & Quiraing.

Day 8 - Touring Castles & Cruise (Skye to Fort Augustus)

Touring Eilean Donal Castle, Fort Augustus, Loch Ness Boat Cruise.

Day 9 - Touring Caledonian Canal & Inverness (Fort Augustus to Inverness)

Touring Caladonian Canal, Culloden Battle Field, Outlander locations (Clava Cairns) & Inverness Castle.

Day 10 - Touring Cairngorms National Park (Inverness to Pitlochry)

Touring Cairngorms National Park, Braemar Castle, Balloter & Balmoral Castle.

Day 11 - Touring Pitlochry

Touring Queens View, Killiecrankie Gorge, Loch Tay, Blair Castle, Blair Atholl Distillery, Edradour Distillery & House of Blair.

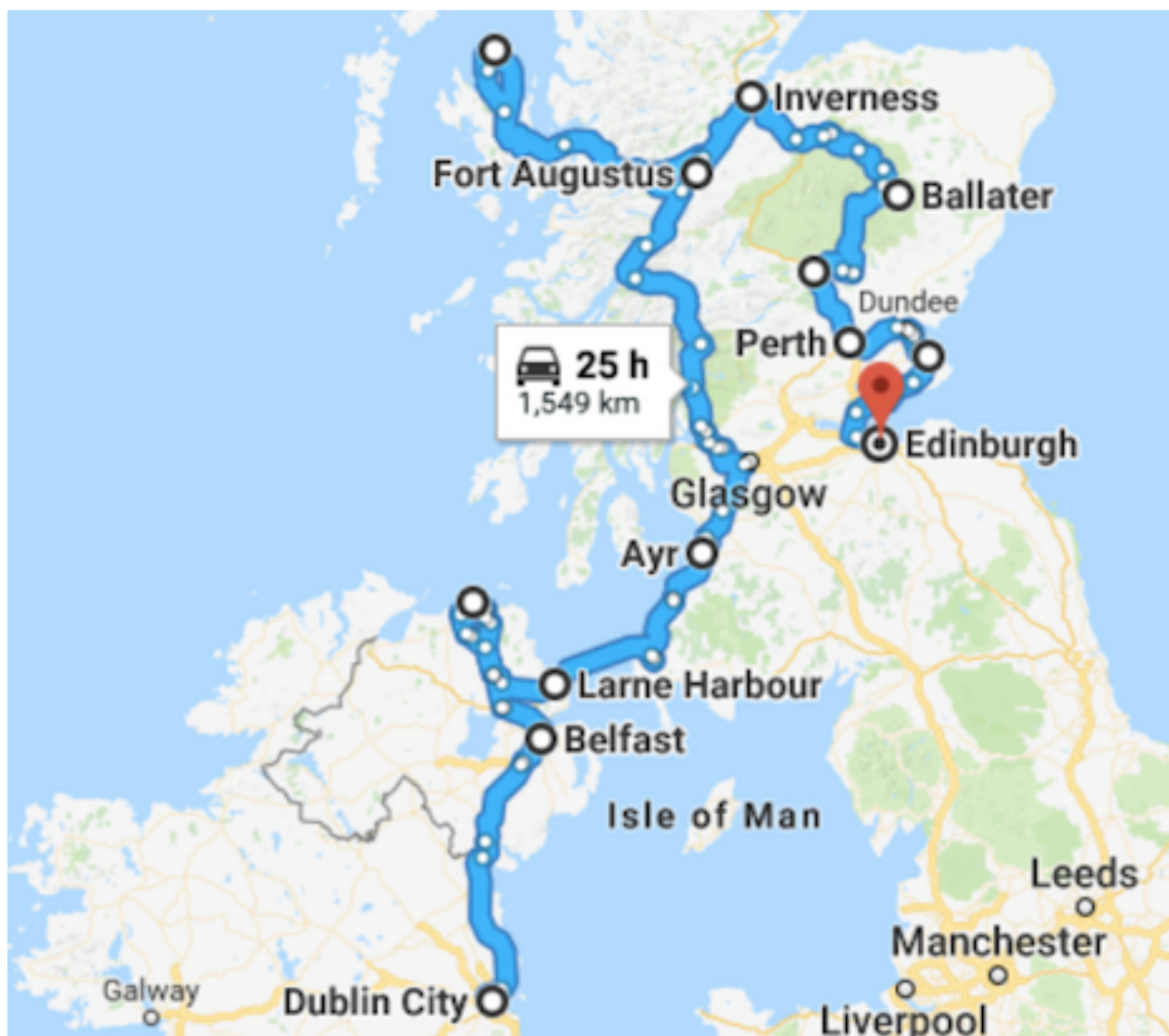
Day 12 - Touring East Coast (Pitlochry to Edinburgh)

Touring Perth, Firth of Tay, Golf Coastal Drive & Firth of Forth.

Day 13 - Touring Edinburgh

Touring Edinburgh City, Royal Mile, Royal Palace of Holyrood House, Edinburgh Castle, National Museum of Scotland & Royal Botanic Gardens.

Day 14 - Depart Edinburgh Airport



ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation can be mixed and matched between 4 and 5 Star if need be.

4 STAR ACCOMMODATION

1 x Night @ O' Callaghan Hotels (Davenport, St. Stephens Green, Alexander or Mont Clare Hotels), Dublin. O'Callaghan Hotels are all in excellent locations for both leisure and business travellers. Each hotel is distinctive and distinguished by excellence. Flexibility is at the heart of what we do to ensure you get the very best service from our team. Years of experience allow for extraordinary service. Get the real Irish experience through staying in a family-owned business that has been running the hotel business in Dublin for 25 years.

1 x Night @ Malmaison Hotel, Belfast. The Malmaison Hotel combines the city's amazing history with the funkier contemporary style. Inspired by the proportions of the Titanic, Belfast's most famous ship, the hotel's comfy beds, freestanding bathtubs and hospitality is the biggest in Ireland.

1 x Night @ Me & Mrs Jones Hotel, Portstewart. Me and Mrs Jones is the North Coast's only authentic boutique, luxury, lifestyle hotel. The most unique and attractive in its area, the modern hotel decor has been carefully chosen and boasts a sense of space and opulence throughout.

1 x Night @ The Fairfield House Hotel, Ayr. The Fairfield House Hotel basks in a picturesque seafront location on the Ayrshire coast in the heart of Robert Burns country with spectacular views across the waters of the Firth of Clyde to the Isle of Arran. Sumptuously furnished and appointed, Fairfield House Hotel offers the luxurious yet comfortable hospitality of the traditional Scottish country house, combined with every possible modern facility.

1 x Night @ Myrtle Bank House, Forth William. Myrtle Bank Hotel known locally as The Myrtle, offers excellent accommodation, food and drink. From its fabulous location right on the shores of Gairloch, in the heart of the Scottish Highlands, The Myrtle is an ideal place from which to explore the unspoilt natural beauty of Wester Ross, famous for its spectacular sunsets rugged scenery and golden sandy beaches. The hotel, is in the centre of one of the top five recommended places to stay in the whole of the UK.

2 x Nights @ Skeabost Hotel, Isle of Skye. Lovingly restored and stunningly refurbished, this iconic hotel is an idyllic retreat in a jaw-dropping location on one of the world's favourite islands. Steeped in history, Skeabost is the third and latest in the small group of boutique hotels owned and run by Anne Gracie and Ken Gunn whose accolades include Scottish Hoteliers of the Year and a Gold Laurel as two of Scotland's 'most visionary entrepreneurs.' The current building began life as a hunting lodge in 1871 but there has been a home of some sort at Skeabost since Viking times when the name meant The Sheltered House.

1 x Night @ The Lovat Loch Ness Hotel, Fort Augustus. The Lovat is the only 4 star, 3 rosette hotel in Loch Ness. This award winning eco-conscious hotel is a beautiful Victorian building located in the loch-side village of Fort Augustus, in the heart of the Scottish Highlands. They offer excellent accommodation and unforgettable Loch Ness views.

1 x Night @ The Craigmonie Hotel, Inverness. Situated in a quiet leafy residential area, yet only a matter of minutes from the centre of Inverness, Scotland's newest and fastest growing city, the hotel dates back to 1880 with the ambience of a country house, the Craigmonie Hotel offers a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere in which to enjoy your stay. This fine independently run highland hotel boasts 40 well appointed en-suite bedrooms ranging from single rooms to superior doubles.

2 x Nights @ Craigtain House, Pitlochry. Beautiful 4 Star Property. Pitlochry is an excellent base for exploring Perthshire - Queen Victoria certainly thought so. She's said to have been one of the earliest holidaymakers to have discovered the beauty of this hillside town.

2 x Nights @ Apex Hotel, (City, Haymarket, Grassmarket & Waterloo Hotels) Edinburgh. Each of the four Apex Hotels in Edinburgh are centrally located and suitable for all types of stays. From private touring to couples' escapes, Apex Waterloo Place in the New Town and Apex City of Edinburgh in Edinburgh's Old Town are perfect. Family getaways are made at Apex Grassmarket with a swimming pool and views of Edinburgh Castle across the road. Whereas Apex Haymarket Hotel has all of the essentials for couples' breaks, or solo adventures done incredibly well, and it's just a 15-minute drive from Edinburgh Airport.

5 STAR ACCOMMODATION

1 x Night @ The Merrion Hotel, Dublin. The Merrion, located in the heart of Dublin city centre, is the capital's most luxurious five star hotel, and a proud member of The Leading Hotels of the World. The Merrion is home to the 2-star Michelin Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud, The Cellar Bar, The Garden Room and the intimate No. 23 Cocktail Bar and has the second largest art collection in Ireland outside of the National Gallery of Ireland.

1 x Night @ Fitzwilliam Hotel, Belfast. A five star, super-elegant masterpiece in the heart of Belfast, next door to the Grand Opera House on Great Victoria Street. Fabulous guestrooms, incredible food, a much-loved bar, state-of-the-art conference rooms and the best service you've ever experienced.

1 x Night @ Bushmills Inn Hotel, Portrush. Set against the backdrop of the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland, The Bushmills Inn is the perfect retreat for those who crave the unconventional, yet still expect exceptional service. Originally a Coaching Inn in the 1600s, this boutique Hotel and Restaurant is steeped in Irish history with a myriad of places to hide from the world from inglenook turf fires to hayloft snugs.

1 x Night @ Culzean Castle, Ayrshire. The 'castle in the air', a late-18th-century masterpiece of renowned architect Robert Adam perched high a sea cliff, is arguably the finest Georgian castle in Scotland. A suite of apartments on the top floor, gifted to General Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1945, has been transformed into an intimate six-bedroom hotel.

1 x Night @ Inverlochy Castle, Fort William. Inverlochy Castle Hotel is a beautiful 19th century castle surrounded by the luscious green of the evergreen trees and the sparkling blue from the nearby loch. Being in Scotland's finest Country Hotel, you will enjoy the holiday of a lifetime, where every detail for your comfort and enjoyment has been carefully considered and one which you are sure never to forget.

2 x Nights @ Cullin Hills, Isle of Skye. Stunning Location set within fifteen acres of mature private grounds with a fantastic view over Portree Bay towards the majestic Cuillin Mountain Range, Probably the best view you will get from any hotel in Scotland. Skye's greatest asset is the natural beauty and unspoilt landscape. At the Cuillin Hill Hotel these views capture all off the qualities of this fine hotel.

1 x Night @ Glengarry Castle Hotel, Fort Augustus. Glengarry Castle Hotel is a comfortable country house hotel with a jewel of a setting on the shores of Loch Oich, which lies between Loch Ness and Loch Lochy at the heart of the Great Glen in the Highlands of Scotland. The hotel enjoys a deserved reputation for Highland hospitality. The ruin of Invergarry Castle lies within the hotel grounds near our main entrance.

1 x Night @ Rocpool, Reserve Hotel, Inverness. Rocpool Reserve will redefine the experience forever. It's about elegance, not exhibitionism. Glow, not glitter. Quality, not quantity. Our discreet boutique hotel, bar and restaurant offers 5 star luxury in the heart of Inverness - an invitation to come and indulge. Located in the capital of the Highlands, Inverness, this beautifully renovated Georgian mansion house has stunning views over the River Ness and is only a few minutes walk from Inverness Castle and city centre.

2 x Nights @ Craigatin House, Pitlochry. Beautiful 4 Star Property in Pitlochry. We are always very proud to be acknowledged by our customers, organizations and publications for our endeavors and labors in running and maintaining Craigatin House and Courtyard Pitlochry.

2 x Nights @ Principal Hotel, Edinburgh. The Principal Edinburgh on George Street has been welcoming hotel guests since 1881. At its heart are five listed Georgian townhouses, built in 1775 as homes for Edinburgh's most prosperous citizens. Winner of Scottish Hotel of the Year at the 2017 Scottish Hotel Awards, The Principal is an ideal base from which to explore the city. A nod to Edinburgh's rich literary heritage, The Printing Press Bar & Kitchen was once home to acclaimed novelist Susan Ferrier, whilst Burr & Co. is a lovely coffee shop with a devoted local following. The hotel also boasts the magnificently grand King's Hall.

TRANSPORT

13 x Days Chauffeured Guided Tour & Transfers in Deluxe Mercedes Vehicle with leather trim, wifi and air con. Fuel, Tolls, Ferry crossings and driver/guide expenses all included. Your knowledgeable chauffeur will guide you to the best restaurants and local bars as well as informing you on all the historical facts and fables.

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 - Dublin City Day Tour

Arrive at Dublin Airport on morning flight arrival to be greeted by your chauffeured tour guide at arrivals in Airport. After a quick freshening up embark on a tour of Dublin City including Trinity College, St Patricks Cathedral, National Museum of Archaeological & History, National Gallery of Ireland, Kilmainham Jail and Guinness Storehouse.



Tour of **Trinity College** which is widely considered to be the most prestigious University in Ireland and amongst the most elite in Europe. It houses The Library and the Book of Kells. Trinity College boasts the most extensive Library in Ireland which is a legal deposit Library for Ireland and The United Kingdom containing over 6.2 million printed volumes and significant quantities of manuscripts. The Book of Kells is the centrepiece of an exhibition which attracts over 500,000 visitors to Trinity College in Dublin City each year. It is Ireland's greatest cultural treasure and the world's most famous medieval manuscript. Written around the year 800 AD, the Book of Kells contains a richly decorated copy of the four gospels in a Latin text.



Tour of the **National Museum of Ireland-Natural History**, on Merrion Street in Dublin, has galleries of animals from Ireland and overseas, as well as geological exhibits from a total collection of about two million scientific specimens. Just two years before Charles Darwin published his famous work, 'The Origin of Species', the Natural History Museum in Merrion Street was opened to the public for the first time in 1857. Now, as then, it educates and inspires, leaving us feeling small and humbled amidst the vast and wondrous diversity of life on display. Tour of the **National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology**, on Kildare Street in Dublin, which first opened its doors in 1890 and since then it has been filling in the blanks for us through its extensive archaeological collections. Take time at The Treasury which features outstanding examples of Celtic and Medieval art, such as the famous Ardagh Chalice, the Tara Brooch and the Derrynaflan Hoard. Gaze in wonder at the finest collection of prehistoric gold artefacts in Europe, which is to be found in Or, Ireland's Gold. Ramble through prehistoric Ireland and experience life at the same time of the Vikings in Viking Age Ireland. Medieval Ireland 1150-1550, documents life in Ireland in the age of cathedrals, monasteries and castles.



Tour of **Saint Patrick's Cathedral** which has been part of Ireland's history for over 800 years and today is one of the most popular visitor attractions in Dublin. Built in honour of Ireland's patron saint between 1220 and 1260 Saint Patrick's Cathedral offers visitors a rich and compelling cultural experience and is one of the few buildings left from medieval Dublin. It is the National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland and is the largest Cathedral in the country. Guided tours of the Cathedral happen regularly throughout the day or a free App can be used for self-guide purpose.

Tour of the **National Gallery of Ireland** in Dublin boasts some 2,500 paintings and approximately 10,000 other works in different media including water-colours, drawings, prints and sculpture. Every major European school of painting is extensively represented. It also houses a renowned collection of Irish paintings, the majority of which are on permanent display. The gallery was established by an Act of Parliament in 1854 and first opened its doors to the public in January 1864.



Tour of **Kilmainham Gaol**, which is the Irish word for Jail. Before it's closure in 1924, Dublin's Kilmainham Gaol held some of the most famous political and military leaders in Irish history such as Robert Emmet, Charles Stewart Parnell, the 1916 Rising leaders and Eamon de Valera. Leaders of the rebellions of 1798, 1803, 1848, 1867 and 1916 were detained here. The visit includes a guided tour and exhibition, it gives the visitor a dramatic and realistic insight into what it was like to have been confined in one of these forbidding bastions of punishment and correction between 1796 when it opened and 1924 when it closed.

Tour of the **Guinness Storehouse** located in the heart of the St James's Gate Brewery, which has been home to the world famous stout since 1759. Ireland's number one International Visitor Attraction, the Guinness Storehouse is the Home of Guinness, where you will discover what goes into the making of each and every pint, and learn about the incredible brand history stretching over 250 years. The highlight for many visitors is the Gravity Bar, symbolically the 'Head of the Pint', where visitors can enjoy unparalleled panoramic views of Dublin city – views that are all the better with a complimentary pint in hand.



Accommodation: O' Callaghan Hotels (Davenport, St Stephans Green, Alexander or Mont Clare Hotels), / Merrion Hotel

Day 2 - Touring Newgrange Titanic Experience & Political Tour

Touring Newgrange, Titanic Experience & Political Tour.



Travel to the Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre in Donore, County Meath, is an information hub for the thousands of visitors eager to explore Ireland's mysterious Neolithic monuments, **Newgrange**, Knowth and Dowth. An extensive exhibition includes a full scale replica of the chamber at Newgrange (a World Heritage site), as well as a model of one of the smaller tombs at Knowth. Located on the south side of the River Boyne, the Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre is the only access point to Newgrange and Knowth, which lie north of the river. All tours of Newgrange start at the centre, before visitors cross the river via a footbridge and are brought by shuttle bus to the monuments.

Travel to onwards to Belfast. The **Titanic Experience** is a 'must see' on any trip to Belfast and has become the most popular tourist attraction in Northern Ireland and one of the top attractions in Ireland. Housed in an iconic, six-floor building, Titanic Belfast is located in the heart of Belfast, right beside the historic site of this world-famous ship's construction. The Titanic experience takes you through nine galleries, telling the story of RMS Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, through her construction and launch, to her famous maiden voyage and tragic end. The galleries are innovative and interactive with many features including diving to the depth of the ocean to explore where RMS Titanic now rests. The Titanic story is told at Titanic Belfast in a fresh and insightful way. Visitors can now also experience three new galleries, which capture the excitement of launch day, as well as The Maiden Voyage gallery, which transports visitors from four embarkation ports, Belfast, Southampton, Cherbourg and Queenstown (now known as Cobh) to Titanic's deck promenade. Guests can not only see and hear the ocean and feel the ships engines rumbling on board at the Palm Court Café but can also meet Fredrick Dent Ray, a dining room steward and survivor, utilising technology used in Disneyland's Haunted Mansion and Universal Studios Florida's Hogwarts Express attraction. The Maiden Voyage gallery also includes an original first class luncheon menu dated April 14, 1912, as well as the last letter ever to be written on board the Titanic.



On a special Black Taxi **Political Tour** you will visit the Falls Road and Shankill Road where you will learn of the history of conflict between the two communities and witness the Peaceline wall which divides the two.



Described by the Independent Newspaper as 'the world's greatest open air art gallery' where they use the political wall murals to relate events from a historical perspective and where you can add your message to the peace wall. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable guides will explain the many murals which are to be seen on the tours as well as many sites which have played important roles in the political history of Belfast. The guides are happy to cater the tour to your specification and will answer any question you may have for them.

Accommodation: Malmaison Hotel / Fitzwilliam Hotel, Belfast.

Day 3 - Antrim Causeway Coast Tour (Belfast to Portstewart)

Touring Antrim Coast, Carrick a Rede Rope Bridge, Giant's Causeway, Bushmills Distillery, Dunluce Castle & Game of Thrones Locations available for fans.



Travel up to the scenic **Antrim Causeway Coast** to **Carrick a Rede Rope Bridge**. Connected to the cliffs by a rope bridge across the Atlantic Ocean, Carrick-a-Rede Island (home to a single building - a fisherman's cottage) is the final destination. Suspended almost 100 ft (30 m) above sea level, the rope bridge was first erected by salmon fisherman 350 years ago.

The **Giant's Causeway**, Northern Ireland's first UNESCO Heritage Site, is a geological wonder and home to a wealth of history and legend. The 40,000 basalt stone columns left by volcanic eruptions 60 million years ago intrigue and inspire visitors. State of the art interpretation within the award winning Visitor Centre unlocks the mystery and stories of this amazing place and offers a unique glimpse into the wonder that is the Giant's Causeway. Visitors can explore way-marked trails and enjoy spectacular coastal scenery.





Bushmills Irish Whiskey is made at Ireland's oldest working distillery in County Antrim, on the beautiful North Coast. The original grant to distil was signed in 1608 by King James 1st and there has been distillation on this site since then, using the unique water from our own stream and Irish barley. The Bushmills Brand Experience encompasses guided tours around a working distillery with all the associated sights and smells, tutored whiskey tastings, a specialist whiskey shop and a well stocked gift shop with exclusive Bushmills merchandise. At the conclusion of your tour you will be offered a whiskey or a soft drink in our 1608 Bar.

The iconic ruin of **Dunluce Castle** bears witness to a long and tumultuous history. First built on the dramatic coastal cliffs of north County Antrim by the MacQuillan family around 1500, the earliest written record of the castle was in 1513. It was seized by the ambitious MacDonnell clan in the 1550's, who set about stamping their mark on the castle under the leadership of the famous warrior chieftain Sorely Boy MacDonnell during an era of violence, intrigue and rebellion. In the 17th century Dunluce was the seat of the earls of County Antrim and saw the establishment of a small town in 1608. Visitors can explore the findings of archaeological digs within the cobbled streets and stone merchants' houses of the long-abandoned Dunluce Town. The dramatic history of Dunluce is matched by tales of a banshee and how the castle kitchens fell into the sea one stormy night in 1639.



Accommodation: Me & Mrs Jones Hotel, Portstewart / Bushmills Inn, Portstewart

Day 4 - Ayrshire Coastal Drive (Portstewart to Ayr)



Depart Portstewart and travel to Larne to get the ferry across to Scotland's Cairnryan. Travel along the A77 north following the beautiful Ayrshire coast via the magnificent Culzean Castle and Country Park. Upon arrival in Ayr explore the area with a walk.

Accommodation: Fairfield House Hotel / Culzean Castle, Ayr

Day 5 - Touring Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park (Culzean Castle to Forth William)

Touring Ayrshire Coast, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park.



Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park falls into four distinct parts: Loch Lomond, the Trossachs, Breadalbane and Argyll Forest. The largest freshwater expanse in mainland Britain, mountains loom to the north of Loch Lomond, while a scattering of islands can be found at its south. Pretty villages such as Luss line the loch's western shores. Drop into the National Park Centre at Balmaha where you can enjoy an exhibition on Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, learn about geology and explore the Highland Boundary Fault. Admire views of the pretty island of Inchcailloch, walk through the Millennium Forest Path, go canoeing and take a ferry or water bus. Loch Lomond with its 'immensity of loch and

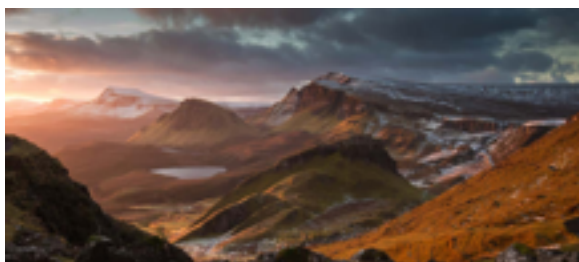
landscape' is a great place to look for wildlife. As well as the loch itself, there are over 20 islands, many of them wooded. The loch, which famously features in the song 'The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond', extends north for 24 miles from Balloch, which is a popular access point to the Highlands. The Trossachs to the east of the National Park is a transition from the settled pastoral Lowlands to the rugged Highlands. It is a landscape of beautiful lochs and woodlands with a wealth of wildlife to discover. With 720 square miles to explore, it can be difficult to know where to find the best views. The uniquely designed viewpoints are conveniently located along the main roads that loop through the National Park and make ideal stopping points to take in the landscape and snap the perfect picture. These stunning artworks offer you some breathing space to break up your journey through the National Park. Each viewpoint was designed by young architects as part of the first round of Scottish Scenic Routes competitions and offer their own unique rewards to those who visit them.

Accommodation: Myrtle Bank House / Inverlochy Castle, Fort William

Day 6 - Touring Isle of Skye (Fort Augustus to Isle of Skye)

Touring Isle of Skye, Talisker Distillery & Dunvegan Castle.

Skye, or the **Isle of Skye**, is the largest and northernmost of the major islands in the Inner Hebrides of Scotland. The island's peninsulas radiate from a mountainous centre dominated by the Cuillins, the rocky slopes of which provide some of the most dramatic mountain scenery in the country. Although it has been suggested that the Gaelic Sgitheanach describes a winged shape there is no definitive agreement as to the name's origins. The island has been occupied since the Mesolithic period, and its history includes a time of



Norse rule and a long period of domination by Clan MacLeod and Clan Donald. The 18th century Jacobite risings led to the breaking up of the clan system and subsequent Clearances that replaced entire communities with sheep farms, some of which also involved forced emigrations to distant lands. Resident numbers declined from over 20,000 in the early 19th century to just under 9,000 by the closing decade of the 20th century.

Travel over the Kyle of Lochalsh via the Skye Bridge and onto **Talisker**

Distillery. The original distillery on the Isle of Skye, set on the shores of Loch Harport with dramatic views of the Cuillins. This alluring, sweet, full-bodied single malt whisky is so easy to enjoy, and like Skye itself, so hard to leave. Enjoy a tour of this distillery which is the only single malt whiskey distilled on the Isle of Skye.



Any visit to the Isle of Skye is incomplete without savouring the wealth of history and clan legend on offer at **Dunvegan Castle & Gardens**. Built on a rock in an idyllic loch side setting, Dunvegan is the oldest continuously inhabited castle in Scotland and has been the ancestral home of the Chiefs of Clan MacLeod for 800 years. On display are many fine oil paintings and clan treasures, the most famous of which is the Fairy Flag. Legend has it that this sacred banner has miraculous powers and when unfurled in battle, the clan MacLeod would invariably defeat their enemies. Another of the castle's great treasures is the Dunvegan

Cup, a unique 'mazer' dating back to the Middle Ages. It was gifted by the O'Neils of Ulster as a token of thanks to one of our most celebrated Chiefs, Sir Rory Mor, for his support of their cause against the marauding forces of Queen Elizabeth I of England in 1595. We also have a small collection of Bonnie Prince Charlie related items on display including: One of the Prince's waistcoats, a Jacobite amen glass, a lock of the Prince's hair etc.

Accommodation: Skeabost Hotel / Cullin Hills Hotel, Isle of Skye.

Day 7 - Touring Touring Isle of Skye

Touring The Old Man of Storr, Staffin, Uig & Quiraing.



The Trotternish peninsula, famous for the tagline “Theatre of Geology” lies to the north of Portree. As you travel north the Geology does indeed assert itself in a landscape formed from landslides and erosion. The Old man of Storr dominates the skyline as he stands silhouetted before sloping buttresses of the Trotternish escarpment. This is properly the most famous walk on the Island of Skye and definitely the busiest. The ‘**Old Man of Storr**’ is a large pinnacle of rock that stands high and can be seen for miles around. As part of the Trotternish ridge the Storr was created by a massive ancient landslide, leaving one of the most photographed landscapes in the world. Explore The Storr by walking up the hiking path which starts & returns at the same point. Travel onwards to visit the picturesque village of **Staffin**. This is a liberal sprinkling of white houses over the rich green fields of a successful and prolific township.

Uig is a charming port with ferry links to Uist and Harris. The Trotternish ridge provides an obvious focus for walkers but there are other shorter walks suitable for all abilities; the Fairy Glen is a beautiful whimsical walk through a valley produced by many small landslides. The standing stones at Eyre where legend had Fingall make a campfire to cook a whole deer or a short walk to see Captain Frasers Folly in Uig. Captain Fraser was an infamous land owner who doubled the rents in 1877 and provoked rebellion among the crofters. He later wheedled for favour with gifts of tea and sugar but the crofters complaints were better answered when parliament passed the Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act 1886. Travel onwards to visit the **Quiraing**. As part of the Trotternish ridge it has been formed by a massive landslip on the eastern face of Meall na Suiramach, the northernmost summit which has created high cliffs, hidden plateaus and pinnacles of rock. This is an essential walk for any photographer as it passes through some of the most spectacular landscapes in Scotland.



Accommodation: Skeabost Hotel / Cullin Hills Hotel, Isle of Skye.

Day 8 - Touring Castles & Loch Ness (Skye to Fort Augustus)

Touring Eilean Donan Castle, Loch Ness, Urquhart Castle & Fort Augustus.

Eilean Donan Castle is one of the most recognised castles in Scotland, and probably appears on more shortbread tins and calendars than any other. It is, without doubt, a Scottish icon and certainly one of the most popular visitor attractions in the Highlands. Strategically located on its own little island, overlooking the Isle of



Skye, at the point where three great sea-lochs meet, and surrounded by the majestic splendour of the forested mountains of Kintail, Eilean Donan's setting is truly breathtaking. Crossing the bridge to today's castle, the fourth version, you can clearly understand why Bishop Donan chose the tranquil spot back in 634AD to settle on it and create a monastic cell. The first castle was later established in the 13th century by Alexander II in an effort to help protect the area from Viking incursions. At this stage in history the original castle encompassed the entire island and is believed to have been constructed with seven towers connected by a massive curtain wall. In 1719 when it was

involved in one of the lesser known Jacobite uprisings and when the British Government learned that the castle was occupied by Jacobite leaders along with a garrison of Spanish soldiers, three Royal Navy frigates were sent to deal with the uprising. On the 10th of May 1719, the three heavily armed warships moored a short distance off the castle and bombarded it with cannons. With walls of up to 5 metres thick, these cannons had little impact, but eventually the castle was overwhelmed by force. Discovering 343 barrels of gunpowder inside, the Commanding officer gave orders to blow the castle up; following which Eilean Donan lay in silent ruin for the best part of two hundred years. The castle that visitors enjoy so much today was reconstructed as a family home between 1912 and 1932 by Lt Col John MacRae-Gilstrap, and incorporated much of the ruins from the 1719 destruction.

The most famous Loch on the Caledonian Canal is **Loch Ness**. Explore the mysteries and discover the history of the world famous Loch at the Loch Ness Centre and Exhibition Experience. Discover the history of Loch Ness from the ice age to the third millennium in a seven room, themed, automated walk through. Explore the history of the loch and the many mysteries and explorations that have surrounded its past. Learn about the rumours, the hoaxes and the truths and discover what may really live in Loch Ness. Using a highly effective mixture of animations, lasers and special effects, visitors can experience the history of the monster by exploring Scotland's geological past and folklore. Find out what has been discovered and what research has been done and view some of the actual equipment used to explore and navigate the Loch.



Urquhart Castle offers a taste of the Highlands at their most dramatic. Discover 1,000 years of drama, experience a glimpse of medieval life and enjoy stunning views over Loch Ness from the ruins of the greatest castle in the Highlands. Climb the Grant Tower that watches over the iconic loch, peer into a miserable prison cell, said to have held the legendary Gaelic bard Domhnall Donn, and imagine the splendid banquets staged in



the great hall. Urquhart's stories are also told through a remarkable collection of artefacts left by its residents, historic replicas, including a full-sized, working trebuchet siege engine, and a short film. The castle has a distinctly Highland heritage and the site has witnessed some of the most dramatic chapters in Scotland's history. This is where St Columba is said to have worked miracles in the 6th century, where acts of chivalry and defiance provided inspiration during the Wars of Independence and where the MacDonald Lords of the Isles struggled with the Crown for power.

Accommodation: The Lovat Hotel / Glengarry Castle Hotel, Fort Augustus.

Day 9 - Touring Caledonian Canal & Inverness (Fort Augustus to Inverness)

Touring Caledonian Canal, Culloden Battle Field, Outlander locations (Clava Cairns) & Inverness Castle.

The **Caledonian Canal** stretches 60 miles along the Great Glen from Fort William to Inverness. This stunning Highlands waterway runs from Fort William to Inverness on the west coast. It passes through a range of



pretty towns and villages, lochs and countryside, providing a beautiful scenic setting to visitors. The Caledonian Canal was opened in 1822 and engineered by Scottish civil engineer Thomas Telford. Formed as part of the Great Glen, Lochs Dochfour, Ness, Oich and Lochy all feed into this canal. A grand total of 29 locks dot the length of the canal. You can take a glimpse of these at certain viewpoints along the waterway, including the Beaulieu Forth, Muirtown, Banavie, Dochgarroch and Corpach.

Travel onwards to Inverness. Visit the powerfully moving **Culloden Battlefield** site of the final Jacobite Rising – the last and most harrowing pitched battle to be fought on British soil. Explore the interactive visitor centre, view fascinating artefacts from both sides of the confrontation, and experience the battle in our immersive surround cinema. On



16 April 1746, the final Jacobite Rising came to a brutal head. Jacobite supporters, seeking to restore the Stuart monarchy to the British thrones, gathered to fight the Duke of Cumberland's government troops. It was the last pitched battle on British soil and, in less than an hour, around 1,500 men were slain – more than 1,000 of them Jacobites. The richly researched, stimulating and sensitive Culloden Visitor Centre, which stands beside the battlefield, features artefacts from both sides of the battle and interactive displays that reveal the background to the conflict. It stands as a monument and a guide to a pivotal day in history. Discover how a bloody fight that lasted only an hour changed life in the Highlands forever.



The **Clava Cairns** are a well-preserved Bronze Age cemetery complex of passage graves; ring cairns, kerb cairns and standing stones in a beautiful setting. Clava Cairns or the Prehistoric Burial Cairns of Bulnuaran of Clava are a group of three Bronze Age cairns located near Inverness. A hugely significant and exceptionally well preserved prehistoric site, Clava Cairns is a fantastic example of the distant history of Highland Scotland, dating back about 4,000 years. The famous time travel scene from Outlander TV Series was shot here.

Inverness Castle sits on a cliff overlooking the River Ness, in Inverness, Scotland. The red sandstone structure evident today was built in 1836 by architect William Burn. It is built on the site of an 11th-century defensive structure. Today, it houses Inverness Sheriff Court. There has been a castle at this site for many centuries. The castle itself is not currently open to the public, however in April 2017 the north tower of the castle was opened to the public as a view point. At present, only the castle grounds and the north tower are open to the public.



Accommodation: Craigmonie Hotel / Rocpool Reserve Hotel, Inverness.

Day 10 - Touring Cairngorms National Park (Inverness to Pitlochry)

Touring Cairngorms National Park, Braemar Castle, Ballater & Balmoral Castle.

Travel to **Cairngorms National Park**. The Cairngorms National Park is a living, working landscape with wild land at its heart. Larger than the Lake District and twice the size of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, the park contains some of the best wildlife habitats in the UK and its ancient pine forests, arctic mountain tops, lochs, rivers and moorlands are home to a quarter of the nation's threatened species. There's a good chance of seeing red deer, golden eagles, red and black grouse, red squirrels and mountain hares. Discover a landscape steeped in history and folklore. Learn about land management and the diversity of flora and fauna and be stunned by breathtaking views. View **Braemar Castle**, an iconic landmark in the heart of the Cairngorms



National Park, with castellated turrets, a star shaped curtain wall and a bottle necked dungeon. Home to the chiefs of Clan Farquharson, it is furnished with the furniture, memorabilia and personal belongings of the Farquharson family. Now the castle's future rests with the small community of Braemar. A grand dining room, gracious drawing room, Victorian bathrooms and delightful morning room and with 12 rooms on show there is plenty to see and discover in this compact castle. An L shaped tower house, it has an unusual right winding spiral stone staircase leading to 3 floors of furnished rooms.

Travel onwards through the picturesque road between the villages of Tomintoul, Cock Bridge and **Ballater**. This road passes over four summits, at Dava Moor 1053 ft (321m), west of Bridge of Brown 1436 ft (438m), at the Lecht Ski Centre 2090 ft (637m) and at the Gairnshiel Summit 1836 ft (550m). The road is regularly the first road in Great Britain closed due to snowfall between Cock Bridge and Tomintoul.



Balmoral Castle has been the Scottish home of the Royal Family since it was purchased for Queen Victoria by Prince Albert in 1852, having been first leased in 1848. The Castle is an example of Scots Baronial architecture and is classified by Historic Scotland as a category A listed building. The new castle was completed in 1856 and the old castle demolished shortly thereafter. The Balmoral Estate has been added to by successive members of the royal family, and now covers an area of approximately 50,000 acres (20,000 ha).

Accommodation: Craigatin House, Pitlochry

Day 11 - Touring Pitlochry

Touring Queens View, Killiecrankie Gorge, Loch Tay, Blair Castle, Blair Atholl Distillery, Edradour Distillery & House of Blair.

The **Queen's View** in Highland Perthshire overlooks Loch Tummel and is said to have been named after Queen Victoria, following her visit to the area in 1866. The Queen's View Visitor Centre lies at the eastern edge of **Loch Tay** and is surrounded by part of the Tay Forest Park. As well as a stunning viewpoint overlooking the loch and beyond to the iconic Schiehallion, the area offers a range of woodland walks suitable for all abilities. One of the most photographed areas in Scotland, Queen Victoria is said to have remarked that the spectacular view was named after her, when she visited the area in 1866. However, it has also been suggested that the view was in fact named after King Robert the Bruce's wife, Queen Isabella of Scotland, over 550 years earlier.



Killiecrankie is a famous wooded gorge, where the Battle of Killiecrankie took place in 1689. At the visitor centre you can find out about the events in 1689, where the first of three major Jacobite uprisings took place. See where an English soldier is said to have escaped from Highland rebels by making a death-defying leap across the gorge at Soldier's Leap. Government troops were routed by Jacobite forces led by John Graham of Claverhouse, 'Bonnie Dundee'. Both sides suffered heavy losses and Dundee himself was killed. The Highlanders were unable to capitalise on their success, following the loss of their leader, and were decisively defeated at Dunkeld three weeks later.



Blair Castle, the ancient seat of the Dukes and Earls of Atholl and home to Europe's last remaining private army, the Atholl Highlanders. Blair Castle is nestled in the landscape of Highland Perthshire and has been home to 19 generations of Stewarts and Murrays of Atholl. Unique amongst Scottish castles, the story told here will take you from a visit by Mary Queen of Scots to the Civil War and from the Jacobite cause to the disaster of Culloden following Bonnie Prince Charlie's own stay in the castle. You'll hear how the lucky inheritance of a smuggler-infested island helped turn the castle into a comfortable home and how a visit from Queen Victoria led to the creation of Europe's only surviving private regiment, the Atholl Highlanders. More than 30 rooms are on display, full of Scottish cultural history, architectural design, period furnishings, family portraits, landscape paintings and a colourful military past. Highlights include the Victorian Ballroom which is decorated with 175 pairs of antlers, the Entrance Hall which features



weapons used at the Battle of Culloden, the classic Georgian styling of the Picture Staircase and the grandeur of the Drawing Room and State Dining Room.

Blair Athol Distillery is one of the oldest working distilleries in Scotland. Blair Athol Distillery stands at the gateway to the Scottish Highlands in the picturesque town of Pitlochry. The Distillery produces a 12 Year Old Single Malt Whisky, with a mellow deep-toned aroma, a strong fruity flavour and a smooth finish. Blair Athol wins hearts through its contribution to the Bell's Blend, the most popular blended whisky in the U.K. and a leading brand in South Africa and Scandinavia. The first documented evidence of a distillery on the present site dates from 1798 when John Stewart and Robert Robertson founded a distillery which they named "Aldour" - after the Allt Dour - the "burn of the otter" - which flows through the grounds from the slopes of Ben y vrackie. After enjoying a leisurely conducted tour, you can mull over the distinctive character of the finished article as you sip your dram of Blair Athol 12 Year Old.



Edradour Distillery is world renowned as the smallest traditional distillery in Scotland and arguably the most unique. Dating back to 1825, Edradour, stands alone as the last stronghold of handmade single malt whisky from a farm distillery still in production today. Hidden in the very heart of Perthshire, this picturesque 'little Model Village' of Edradour is steeped in a history of intrigue to inspire the imagination. And, with matchless commitment to retaining authentic small scale production, Edradour uniquely boasts over 25 distinctive expressions of Highland Single Malt Scotch Whisky with their wonderful characters and flavours.

The **House of Bruar** is widely acknowledged as Scotland's most prestigious independent store, and its regal stature at the gateway to the Highlands makes it clear to see why. The House of Bruar offers an extensive range of high quality products in both the Men's and Ladies clothing halls. There is also a taste of luxury from gourmet produce, artisan treats and a fine selection of whisky and spirits in the Food Hall – which also homes the award winning in-store butchery and delicatessen. Housing the largest collection of Cashmere in the UK, you will be spoilt for choice in the Knitwear hall – which carries a large variety of high quality natural fibres. The use of natural fibres extends further into their ample offerings of Tweed garments and accessories, reflecting the Scottish heritage within the brand.



Accommodation: Craigtain House, Pitlochry

Day 12 - Touring East Coast (Pitlochry to Edinburgh)

Touring Perth Scone Palace, Firth of Tay, Golf Coastal Drive & Firth of Forth.

Travel to **Scone Palace** in Perth which was the crowning place of Scottish kings where Macbeth, Robert the Bruce and Charles II were once crowned. Scone breathes history like nowhere else in Scotland. It is the family home of the Earls of Mansfield and the ancient crowning place of Scottish kings on the stone of Scone. See where the Stone of Scone, known as the Stone of Destiny, once stood. It now resides in Edinburgh Castle. You can wander down the Long Galley where King Charles II strode to his coronation in 1661. During the



Jacobite rebellions, the 'Old Pretender' spent three weeks at Scone while his son, Bonnie Prince Charlie, visited in 1745. Admire the needlework skills of Mary Queen of Scots bedhangings that she worked on while in prison on Loch Leven. Discover the desk at which Frances' tragic young Queen, Marie Antionette, wrote her letters prior to the days when the guillotine beckoned. You can also see the State Rooms where Queen Victoria was entertained on her way to the Highlands in 1842, and the bedroom in which she slept. If you are a lover of fine things, Scone is a treasury of furniture and paintings, porcelain and other objets d'art.

Travel onwards via the **Firth of Tay**. The Firth of Tay is a firth in Scotland between the council areas of Fife, Perth and Kinross, the City of Dundee and Angus, into which Scotland's largest river in terms of flow, the River Tay empties. Two bridges span the firth, the Tay Road Bridge and the Tay Rail Bridge.

Travel onwards along the **Golf Coastal Drive** and travel through the famous village of St. Andrews. Golf has been associated with St. Andrews for hundreds of years. The first written record of golf in St. Andrews dates from 1552. Today St. Andrews is recognised across the world as the "Home of Golf". Golfing in St. Andrews at the spiritual heartland of the sport is the ultimate ambition of many golfers. The oldest and most iconic golf course in the world, where golf was first played 600 years ago. The Swilcan Bridge and Hell Bunker are recognised across the globe as a host of multiple British Opens, yet the greatest feature of the Old Course is that despite its grand status it remains a public golf course.



The **Firth of Forth** is just north of Edinburgh and is an estuary (firth) of several Scottish estuaries including the river Forth. The Forth Bridge is a cantilever railway bridge across the Firth of Forth in the east of Scotland is



considered an iconic structure and a symbol of Scotland (having been voted Scotland's greatest man-made wonder in 2016), and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It was designed by the English engineers Sir John Fowler and Sir Benjamin Baker. It is sometimes referred to as the Forth Rail Bridge to distinguish it from the Forth Road Bridge, though this has never been its official name.

Construction of the bridge began in 1882 and it was opened on 4 March 1890 by the Duke of Rothesay, the future Edward VII. The bridge spans the Forth between the villages of South Queensferry and North Queensferry and has a total length of 8,094 feet (2,467 m). When it opened it had the longest single cantilever bridge span in the world and today is the second longest in the world. Travel onwards into Edinburgh.

Accommodation: Apex Hotels / Principal Hotel, Edinburgh

Day 12 - Touring Edinburgh City (Edinburgh)

Touring Edinburgh City, Royal Mile, Royal Palace of Holyrood House, Edinburgh Castle, National Museum of Scotland & Royal Botanic Gardens.



The historic city of Edinburgh is a World Heritage Site with magnificent historic Victorian Architecture. Edinburgh is divided into the Old and New Towns. The **Royal Mile** is the name given to a succession of streets forming the main thoroughfare of the Old Town of the city of Edinburgh in Scotland. The name was first used in W M Gilbert's Edinburgh in the Nineteenth Century (1901), and was further popularised as the title of a guidebook, published in 1920. The thoroughfare is, as the name suggests, approximately one Scots mile long and runs downhill between two significant locations in the history of Scotland, namely Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Palace.

Tread the route of royals, past and present – and let your expert guide unlock the history of this ancient seat of power. The glorious **Royal Palace of Holyrood house** – which you'll explore in your own time. The palace was the setting for many dramatic episodes in the short reign of Mary, Queen of Scots and is now Her Majesty The Queen's official residence in Scotland. Your chance to walk in the footsteps of the distinguished Royal Family and explore a Royal Palace fit for a King and Queen.



Edinburgh Castle is a world famous icon of Scotland and part of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh's World Heritage Site. This most famous of Scottish castles has a complex building history. The oldest part, St Margaret's Chapel, dates from the 12th century; the Great Hall was erected by James IV around 1510; the Half Moon Battery by the Regent Morton in the late 16th century; and the Scottish National War Memorial after the First World War. The castle houses the Honours (Crown Jewels) of Scotland, the Stone of Destiny, the famous 15th century gun Mons Meg, the One O' Clock Gun and the National War Museum of Scotland.

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The **National Museum of Scotland** is one of the Top 10 UK visitor attractions, and in the Top 20 of the most visited museums and galleries in the world. Fresh from a £47 million redevelopment, the museum houses a spectacular array of over 20,000 fascinating artefacts. The magnificently diverse collections will take you on an inspirational journey through the history of Scotland, the wonders of nature, world cultures and the excitement of science and discovery – all under one roof.



The **Royal Botanic Garden** offers visitors peace and tranquillity amongst 72 acres of stunning scenery and is one of the finest botanic gardens in the world. A pleasure for all the family, the Garden offers fantastic views of the capital's skyline, featuring Edinburgh Castle, and is located just a mile from the city centre. Visitors can discover its fascinating history, which dates back 300 years, learn about its plantings and walk around 70 acres of beautiful landscape. The Glasshouse visit is a particular highlight, starting at the Victorian Temperate Palm House dating back to 1858 and one of the tallest traditional palm houses ever built. The Garden's 10 magnificent Glasshouses each has a different climatic zone, from steamy tropics to arid desert, and are home to 3,000 exotic plants from around the world including a 200-year-old palm tree. Visitors can enjoy the serenity of the Chinese Hillside, explore the world-famous Rock Garden or stroll amongst the awe-inspiring Giant Redwood trees in the Woodland Garden. Plus, there are fine artworks to view in the Garden's contemporary art gallery Inverleith House.



Accommodation: Apex Hotels / Principal Hotel, Edinburgh

Day 13 - Depart Edinburgh Airport

Depart Edinburgh Airport

Terms & Conditions

Costs may fluctuate upon the time of year and availability cannot be guaranteed on all accommodations.

25% Deposit required to secure the booking of Accommodation and Transport. Non refundable upon payment.

Full payment of tour required 1 month in advance of the tour date. Non refundable upon payment.

Please note Accommodation includes Bed & Breakfast only.

All lunch and evening meals are not included, but the finalised itinerary will have suggested local restaurants.

Activity costs are not included unless requested.

It is advised to take out travel insurance to cover every eventuality.

Tips are not included but encouraged.
