

Highlands and Edinburgh Tour

Sunday, 6th August to Saturday, 12th August

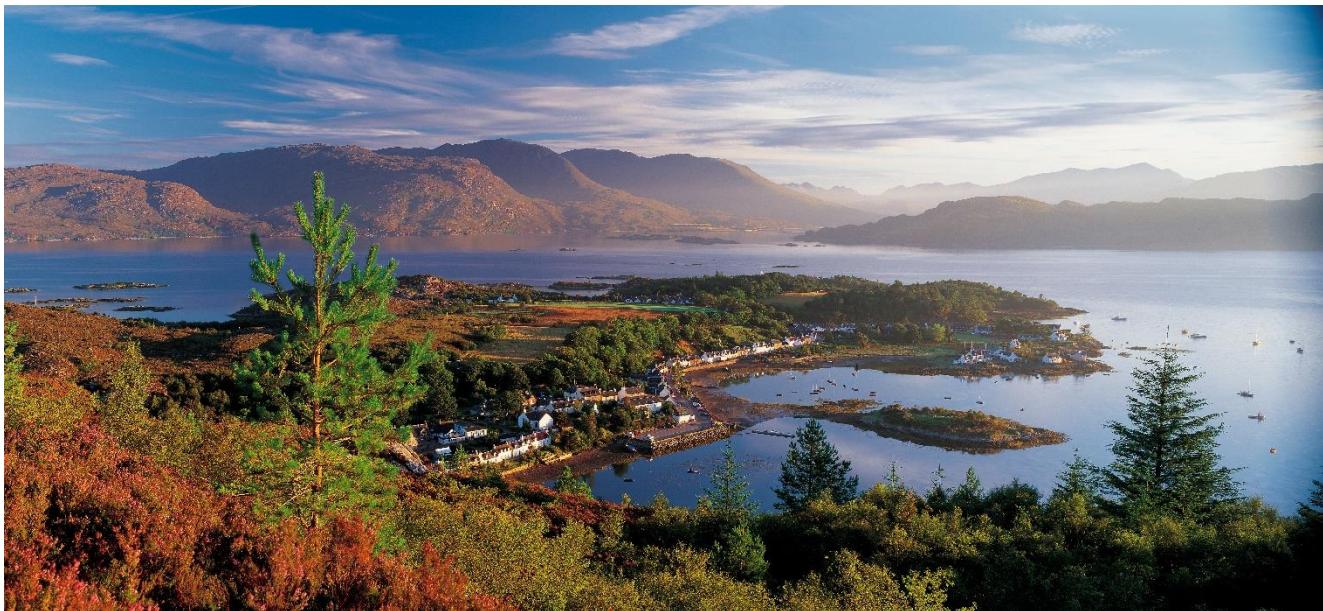
£1,745 per person based on a minimum number of 15.
Should uptake be greater the individual cost will reduce accordingly.

Single room supplement - £470.00 per person.

PRICES INCLUDE

- Accommodation of 6 nights at 3 and 4 star hotels, all rooms with private bath or shower.
- Food & Beverage
 - Breakfast at the hotel each day, days 2-7 inclusive
 - Lunch at a local pub/restaurant on days 1 and 4 (2 courses with tea/coffee)
 - Dinner and entertainment on day 6 (3 courses with tea/coffee)
- Modern motor-coach with driver x 6 full days, on days 1-6 (09.00-17.30 daily, except on long days 3 from 08.00-19.30 and 4 from 09.00-19.00)
- Modern motor-coach with driver x 2 evening return transfer on day 5, and 6
- Modern motor-coach with driver x 1 airport transfer on day 7
- English-speaking guide x 7 full days, on days 1-7 (0900-1730 daily, except on long days 3 from 0800-1930 and 4 from 0900-1900)
- Visits:
 - Culloden Battlefield
 - Beauly Priory
 - Armadale Castle
 - The Kelpies
 - Palace of Holyroodhouse
 - Fort George
 - Eilean Donan Castle
 - Stirling Castle
 - Edinburgh Castle
 - Scone Palace
- Experiences:
 - Loch Ness Cruise on day 2
 - Jacobite Steam Train ride on day 3

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME



DAY 1: Sunday 6th August 2023 - Aberdeenshire to Inverness

Meet with your English-speaking guide and driver and journey through Cairngorms National Park to Inverness area.

Visit Culloden Battlefield

Scene of the 1746 Battle of Culloden between the Jacobite and the British armies. As the last battle being fought on British soil, Culloden marks the beginning of the dismantlement of the structures of Highland society. In the aftermath of the battle, kilts and tartans were banned. It was here that the Jacobite army fought for a Stuart king in order to reclaim the throne of Britain from the Hanoverians. Today, 250 years on, Culloden is still a site that connects us intimately with Britain's past. Find out why this battle lasted only one hour but still changed the course of Scotland's history. Listen to accounts from genuine characters who were involved in the Battle, experience the battle in a 360 degrees theatre, get a bird's eye view of the forces and tactics at play.

Next, have a lunch at a local pub/restaurant.

Visit Fort George

Fort George is quite simply the finest example of 18th-century military engineering you'll find anywhere in the British Isles. This vast garrison fortress was built in the aftermath of the Battle of Culloden (1746), which crushed the final Jacobite Rising, and took over 20 years to complete. Fort George remains virtually unaltered today, and still serves as an important military base. Its garrison buildings, artillery defences bristling with cannons, and a superb collection of arms - including bayoneted muskets, pikes, swords and ammunition pouches - provide a fascinating insight into 18th century military life. Fort George is the only ancient monument in Scotland still functioning as intended - a working army barracks - but still welcoming visitors.

Overnight, bed and breakfast at your hotel in Inverness or area

DAY 2: Monday 7th August 2023 - Inverness Area

This morning enjoy a **cruise of Loch Ness**

Loch Ness is a freshwater loch (lake) which is most famously known for its fabled Loch Ness Monster. Aside from its monstrous connection, there are many interesting facts about this area of stunning beauty. Although it isn't the biggest or deepest loch in Scotland, it holds more water than Wales' and Englands' lakes combined! The very dark colour of the water is due to the peat washed into the loch from the surrounding hills. As well as exploring Loch Ness from above by cruise, you can explore under the water via Google Earth. A safe and dry way to find Nessie!

After, visit **Beauly Priory**

Beauly Priory was founded around 1230 by monks of the Valliscaulian order. They came from their mother house in Burgundy, in France, and settled beside the Beauly River, at the place where it enters the Beauly Firth. Beauly, meaning 'beautiful place', must have seemed to the founding monks a wonderful place to devote themselves to the worship and service of God. Only the abbey church now survives. It takes the form of a Latin cross, with a three-bay choir to the east, and a seven-bay nave to the west, and at their junction two flanking transepts to north and south.

OPTIONAL: Visit Glen Ord Distillery

A visit to Glen Ord, the nearest distillery to Inverness & Loch Ness in the Highlands of Scotland, is a delight to both the eye and the palate. Join us on a tour of the distillery and watch distillers at work creating a magical malt whisky which is sweet, malty and dry on the palate. Glen Ord distillery was founded in 1838, making it one of the oldest in Scotland and continues to malt its own barley and to use the long fermentation and slow distillation methods followed there for generations.

***A supplement of £10.00 per person applies for this option**

Overnight, bed and breakfast at your hotel in **Inverness** or area

DAY 3: Tuesday 8th August 2023 -Inverness to Fort William

This morning depart Inverness and journey to Fort William via Isle of Skye.

En-route, visit **Eilean Donan Castle**

Eilean Donan Castle is one of the most recognised castles in Scotland and without a doubt, a Scottish icon. 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 breath-taking. 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 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 previous destructions. At this point the bridge was added; a structure that is as much a part of the classic image as the very castle itself.

Cross over to the Isle of Skye via roadbridge.

Visit **Armadale Castle**

Located in Armadale, just a short walk from the ferry terminal, Clan Donald Skye is a 20,000-acre highland estate on the Sleat peninsula in south Skye. Once part of the traditional lands of Clan Donald, the Estate's principal focal points are the restored historic gardens, and the beautiful walking trails threading through the 40 acres of woodland around Armadale Castle. In the Museum of the Isles, you will discover the history of the Highlands and Islands through the story of Clan Donald, its most powerful clan, at the award-winning museum. Six interconnecting galleries taking you through 1500 years of the history and culture of the area once known as the Kingdom of the Isles. The MacDonalds - or Clan Donald - were the Lords of the Isles and sat at the heart of the history of Gaeldom. The museum follows their story and that of the Highlands.

After, travel from Isle of Skye back to the mainland at Mallaig by ferry.

Take the **Jacobite Steam Train** from Mallaig to Fort William.

Please note that this is an extremely popular activity with limited availability and is difficult to secure - also the train company now only sell return tickets, so you have to pay for a return journey even if the group only travel one-way on the train.

Overnight, bed and breakfast at your hotel in Fort William or area.

DAY 4: Wednesday 9th August 2023 - Fort William to Edinburgh

This morning depart Fort William and journey to Edinburgh via Stirling.

Enjoy short break in Luss.

Enroute have lunch at a local pub/restaurant.

Visit Stirling Castle

One of Scotland's grandest castles due to its imposing position and impressive architecture, Stirling Castle commands the countryside for many miles around. It towers over some of the most important battlefields of Scotland's past including Stirling Bridge, the site of William Wallace's victory over the English in 1297, and Bannockburn where Robert the Bruce defeated the same foe in the summer of 1314. Situated on a volcanic outcrop guarding the lowest crossing point of the River Forth, Stirling Castle is a great symbol of Scottish Independence and a source of enduring national pride. The castle's long, turbulent history is associated with great figures from Scotland's past, such as William Wallace, Robert the Bruce and Mary Queen of Scots. It has seen many royal dramas and witnessed the lives and deaths of almost every Scottish monarch up to the Union of the Crowns in 1603.

Photo-stop at The Kelpies

A pair beautiful 40 metre high sculptures depicting shape shifting water spirits known as kelpies. The sculptures pay homage to the heavy presences of horses in Scotland's industrial past, as well as symbolising the strength and endurance of Scotland's waterways.

Overnight, bed and breakfast at your hotel in Edinburgh (decentral) or area.

DAY 5: Thursday 10th August 2023 - Edinburgh

This morning visit Edinburgh Castle

Edinburgh's castle rock has been a stronghold for over 3000 years. In its dominating position overlooking the capital city, the grandeur and historical significance of Edinburgh Castle has made it a globally famous icon of Scotland and part of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site. Sited on top of an extinct volcano, gaining stunning views across the City of Edinburgh, the castle has witnessed many of the defining events of Scottish history and has dominated its surroundings with majesty for centuries. Captivating visitors with its ancient buildings and marvellous views, it continues to spellbound with its wonderful story.

Enjoy a short walking tour of Old Town Edinburgh

Edinburgh will impress you mainly with its cultural diversity and unique history. The medieval streets meander through the Old Town and tell their own story of traditions and myths more than 1000 years old.

Also visit Palace of Holyroodhouse

Founded as a monastery in 1128, the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh is The Queen's official residence in Scotland and is closely associated with Scotland's turbulent past. Mary, Queen of Scots lived here between 1561 and 1567. Successive kings and queens have made the Palace of Holyroodhouse the premier royal residence in Scotland. At the end of Edinburgh's Royal Mile and against the spectacular backdrop of Arthur's Seat, the Palace of Holyroodhouse visitors can explore the 14 historic State

Apartments and the ruins of Holyrood Abbey. The Queen's Gallery at the Palace of Holyroodhouse hosts a programme of changing exhibitions from the Royal Collection.

After, visit **Scottish Parliament** (under own arrangements)

This evening, attend the Royal Military Tattoo.

Please note that this is not currently included in pricing

Return to your hotel by evening transfer.

Overnight, bed and breakfast at your hotel in Edinburgh (decentral) or area.

DAY 6: Friday 11th August 2023 - Scone Palace & St Andrews from Edinburgh

This morning, travel to Perthshire.

Visit Scone Palace

Once the crowning place of the Kings of Scots, Scone Palace occupies a unique position in the history of Scotland. A breathtakingly beautiful seat of power and mystery and the rightful home of the celebrated Stone of Scone - also known as the Stone of Destiny. Scone Palace is regarded as a national treasure and is revered as the historic jewel in the crown of Scotland. Today, Scone Palace is the home of the Earls of Mansfield. There is so much to see and enjoy at Scone Palace, the history, an outstanding collection of antiques, paintings and rare art-facts. Even its grounds, as splendid as the Palace itself, are renowned throughout the world. Right above the River Tay, Scone Palace overlooks the routes north to the Highlands and east through Strathmore to the coast. The Grampian Mountains form a distant backdrop, and across the river stands the city of Perth.

After, travel to St Andrews.

Enjoy a walk in St Andrews.

Discover St Andrews with a walking tour, a charming and historic town that attracts visitors from all over the world. Known worldwide as The Home of Golf, the town also boasts Scotland's oldest university. One of the top universities in Britain, St Andrews is often compared to Oxford and Cambridge for its defining presence and the collegiate feel it gives to the town. St Andrews has also two great beaches, one being the magnificent West Sands, where the famous opening sequence of Chariots of Fire was shot.

Spend some free time at leisure in St Andrews or

OPTIONAL: Enjoy Afternoon Tea at a local eatery or the iconic Old Course Hotel (subject to availability)

****A supplement of £35.00 per person applies for this option***

Return to Edinburgh.

This evening, enjoy dinner and entertainment at a traditional Scottish show.

Return to your hotel by evening transfer.

Overnight, bed and breakfast at your hotel in Edinburgh (decentral) or area.

DAY 7: Saturday 12th August 2023 - Farewell

Transfer to Edinburgh Airport today for your journey home, with assistance at the airport from your guide.