



Itinerary

Scotland: Isles of Lore & Legend

June 24, 2023 - July 5, 2023

For departures beyond Spring of 2022, please call to hold your space at standard 2021 prices*

Pre Night: Hilton Glasgow



Would you like to begin your vacation with an additional Hotel in Inveraray?

Day 1: Overnight Flight



Rolling landscapes of green hills and rocky coastlines. Lively cities of friendly locals and the renowned "water of life." Remote isles built upon mystical lore and stirring history. This is Scotland - where legends live long and storybook pages come to life.

Day 2: Glasgow, Scotland - Tour Begins



Start your tour in Glasgow, a cultural trove for art, music, and history. Experience the culture at the National Piping Centre, where experts wield classic bagpipes. After a demonstration and lesson with a renowned piper, feel like a local when you try the instrument yourself. Toast to the start of your journey at a lively welcome dinner at the Centre's farm-to-table restaurant.

Hotel

Hilton Glasgow
Glasgow

Culinary

Dinner

Weather

High 47°
Low 36°
Rain 2"

Day 3: Glasgow - Inveraray - Auchindrain - Ferry to Islay



Leave the city behind, traveling along sloping fields and rolling clouds. Enter into a land where clan legacy runs deep – a point of pride and ancestry for the locals. Stop in Inveraray, home to the Clan Campbell and current Duke of Argyll. Enjoy some free time to explore, perhaps visiting the castle and its gardens. In nearby Auchindrain, discover Scotland's rural history during a guided tour of this well-preserved farm township and see how Scottish ancestors lived and worked. Ferry to the lands of the mystical Gaelic Kingdom of Dál Riata, shrouded in legend and serving as the inspiration of Celtic tales rivaling those of King Arthur. Stop at the Isle of Islay, the world capital of whisky, and enjoy dinner at your hotel along the waterfront.

Hotel

Machrie Hotel

Culinary

Breakfast & Dinner

Day 4: Islay



Peek into Islay's tempestuous whisky history on a coastal walking tour linking three well-known distilleries. Stop for a guided visit of Lagavulin Distillery and taste the peaty "water of life." Later, it's your choice! Meet the locals at the Columba Gaelic Centre and enjoy light snacks as you learn about the Gaelic language and listen to live folk music - OR- delve further into Islay's whisky culture and visit a second distillery.

Hotel

Machrie Hotel
Islay

Culinary

Breakfast

Day 5: Islay - Loch Finlaggan - Ferry to Oban - Loch Melfort



Visit a local mill that weaves traditional tartan and tweed, including costumes featured in Braveheart, Forrest Gump, and Rob Roy. Make your way to Finlaggan, the cradle of Clan Donald, and hike to the loch. Visit the ruins of the medieval chapel and burial grounds, stepping into another time where neighboring clans created pivotal alliances. Later, depart Islay via ferry to Oban, watching the sunshine dance along the waves as you travel past the mountainous Isle of Jura. Continue to Loch Melfort and settle into your hotel for the next three nights. Take in a stunning view of the ocean from your room before wandering the grounds, home to friendly Highland cows and neighboring the National Trust's Arduaine Gardens.

Hotel

Loch Melfort Hotel
Loch Melfort

Culinary

Breakfast & Dinner

Day 6: Loch Melfort - Isle of Iona - Isle of Staffa - Loch Melfort



Embark on a seafaring adventure* and be whisked away on an exciting RIB boat (covered, rigid-hull Zodiac). Your first destination of the day is Iona, an island that serves as one of the area's oldest Christian religious centers. Ascend to the abbey on foot and enjoy free time to explore on your own. Hop back in your RIB boat and head to the nearby Isle of Staffa, home to the ethereal Fingal's Cave. Serving as the inspiration for Wordsworth, Keats, Mendelssohn and countless others, the cave features hexagonal columns that seem beyond nature's power. Peer into the cave from your boat before returning to Loch Melfort. Watch the clouds roll by as the sun fades into the horizon - the night is yours.

Hotel

Loch Melfort Hotel
Loch Melfort

Culinary

Breakfast & Dinner

Day 7: Loch Melfort - Kilmartin Glen - Loch Melfort



Begin your day with a walk in Kilmartin Glen, passing by mysterious standing stones, henges and cairns that dot the countryside. Perhaps you will make the most of free time in the afternoon with an optional exhilarating boat ride: this excursion takes you to the area of the powerful Corryvreckan Whirlpool** via RIB boat, giving you an intimate look at the local wildlife as you search for eagles, seals, and other marine life with an expert local guide.

Hotel

Loch Melfort Hotel
Loch Melfort

Culinary

Breakfast & Dinner

Day 8: Loch Melfort - Loch Lomond - Luss - Pitlochry



Journey to Loch Lomond, the largest lake in Great Britain. Meet your personal kilted guide and hop into an off-road vehicle for an adventure through the land of Clan McGregor. Ascend the hill and hear the rustling of the wind, admiring an unparalleled vantage point of Loch Lomond and its numerous islands. For those feeling a little adventurous, take the wheel yourself and drive under the guidance of an expert instructor. After a picnic lunch, visit Luss, a quaint village of stone cottages and bright flowers. Journey further into the Highlands, pausing at Queen's View - the landscape beloved by Queen Victoria - for your first impression of the Cairngorms Mountains. Your night ends in Pitlochry, a small town from the 18th century.

Hotel

Atholl Palace Hotel
Pitlochry

Culinary

Breakfast & Lunch

Weather

High 38°
Low 31°

Day 9: Pitlochry - Balmoral Castle - Pitlochry



Take the rare opportunity to visit Balmoral Castle*** - the most elusive among the Royal residences. Roam the gardens, the stable area, and the largest room in the castle: the ballroom. Pass through Crathie Kirk, a small countryside church where the Royal Family occasionally attends service. This afternoon, it's your choice! Take to the Highland landscape on a scenic hike along the stunning Queen's Drive and River Clunie -OR- explore the

picturesque village of Braemar at your own pace, perhaps visiting their Highland Games Center and Museum to find out more about caber (log) tossing and hammer throwing.

Hotel

Atholl Palace Hotel
Pitlochry

Culinary

Breakfast

Weather

High 38°
Low 31°

Day 10: Pitlochry - St. Andrews - Edinburgh



Behold the iconic rolling hills of St. Andrews, the world-capital of golf. On a guided tour of the Old Course's**** hallowed grounds, learn more about the origins of the clubs and caddies in the hometown of golf. Explore more of St. Andrews on your own before continuing to Edinburgh, Scotland's historic capital.

Hotel

Voco Edinburgh
Edinburgh

Culinary

Breakfast

Weather

High 51°
Low 38°
Rain 1"

Day 11: Edinburgh



Start the morning with an impact moment and get a local's perspective with a guide from Invisible Cities - a social enterprise that trains people affected by homelessness to become tour guides of their own city. After your tour, visit the Palace at Holyroodhouse****, the Queen's official residence in Edinburgh and former home of Mary, Queen of Scots. The rest of the day is yours. Perhaps you'll take a stroll among the Georgian architecture of the New Town or journey to Leith for a visit to the Royal Yacht Britannia. Gather in the evening for a farewell dinner and toast to your Scottish explorations.

Hotel

Voco Edinburgh
Edinburgh

Culinary

Breakfast & Dinner

Weather

High 51°
Low 38°
Rain 1"

Day 12: Edinburgh - Tour Ends



Wish Scotland a fond farewell as you depart for home.

Post Night: VOCO Edinburgh

Would you like to end your vacation with an additional Hotel in Edinburgh?