

# ULTIMATE JOURNEY OF SCOTLAND

## ITINERARY

DAY  
1

### DAY 1: ARRIVAL IN EDINBURGH

Make your way into **Edinburgh** city centre where your hotel will be located. Many travellers opt to take a taxi or use public transport, but for a more direct and comfortable ride, we will be happy to organise a private airport transfer for you. For those arriving early in the day, we recommend spending the afternoon walking through the city, strolling along the **Royal Mile** and exploring the **Old Town** and **New Town**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There are also plenty of museums and landmarks to visit within the city centre, including the majestic **Edinburgh Castle**.

Spend the night in Edinburgh.

*Included: Entrance to Edinburgh Castle*

**Attractions:** Calton Hill, Edinburgh, Edinburgh Castle, Edinburgh New Town, Edinburgh Old Town, The Grassmarket, The Royal Mile & St Giles Cathedral

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### DAY 2: FISHING VILLAGES OF FIFE & ST ANDREWS

Start your epic road trip by driving across the Firth of Forth, taking in the magnificent UNESCO World Heritage **Forth Rail Bridge**. Follow the scenic coastal route around the East Neuk, along which you can visit the enchanting fishing villages of Anstruther, Elie and Pittenween. You can also choose the alternative route which passes through the delightful village of **Falkland** where you can visit its Renaissance palace. Continue east to reach the historic town of **St Andrews**. It is famous for being the home of golf and home to the oldest university in Scotland.

Spend the night in St Andrews or nearby.

*Included: Entrance to St Andrews Castle & St Andrews Cathedral*

*Driving distance: 105 km / 65 miles*

**Attractions:** Anstruther & the Secret Bunker, Falkland, Forth Railway Bridge, St Andrews

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### DAY 3: DUNDEE & DRAMATIC EAST COAST SCENERY

Travel north today via the city of **Dundee**, where you can find museums and attractions such as the ship RRS Discovery and the V&A museum. On your way up the east coast, you may wish to visit Glamis Castle, the childhood home of the late Queen Mother. You can then travel along the scenic road, passing by the **St. Cyrus National Nature Reserve** and the spectacular ruins of **Dunnottar Castle**. Spend the rest of the day exploring **Aberdeen**, referred to as the "Granite City." Pop into the Maritime Museum or marvel at the sparkling Marischal College.

Spend the night in the Aberdeen area.

*Driving distance: 130 km / 80 miles*

**Attractions:** Aberdeen, Dundee & Angus, Dunnottar Castle, Glamis Castle, St Cyrus National Nature Reserve, Stonehaven

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## DAY 4: CASTLES OF ABERDEENSHIRE

You have until early evening to explore Aberdeenshire, an area home to over 300 castles. Head into the majestic Scottish Highlands today via the “**Deeside Tourist Route**, an enchanting drive through the towering splendour of **Cairngorms National Park**. On the way, you can visit 13th-century Drum Castle, Or the 16th-century **Crathes Castle**. If time allows, you could also drive a bit further along to visit the Royal Lochnagar whisky distillery. You may also wish to visit **Balmoral Castle** (open April - July), the home of the Royal Family in the Highlands.

Tonight you will board the overnight ferry from Aberdeen to **Shetland**.

*Ferry crossing from Aberdeen to Lerwick: 12.5 hours. Please note this is an overnight ferry with cabin accommodation.*

*Driving distance: 160 km / 100 miles*

**Attractions:** Aberdeen, Balmoral Castle, Royal Deeside, Shetland Isles

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## DAY 5: ARRIVAL IN SHETLAND

This morning, disembark at the charming harbour town of **Lerwick**, capital of the Shetland Isles. To get to know the town, we recommend exploring Fort Charlotte and visiting the Shetland Museum & Archives where you can learn about the islands' history. Later, drive to Clickimin Broch, a stone-built round house found only in Scotland. Take a 10-minute ferry to the Isle of Bressay to explore its rich natural heritage and incredible wildlife. You could then visit the Shetland Textile Museum, or spend the day visiting one of the beautiful Northern **Isles of Yell & Unst**.

Spend the night on Shetland.

*Driving distance: 180 km / 110 miles*

**Attractions:** Isles of Yell & Unst, Lerwick

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## DAY 6: REMARKABLE HERITAGE SITES OF SHETLAND

Today you visit the South Mainland of Shetland, home to some of Shetland's most jaw-dropping scenery and best archaeological sites, including the Isle of **Mousa**. At the ancient settlement of **Jarlshof** you can explore 4,000 years of human history, by seeing the remains of an Iron Age broch, Pictish wheelhouses, Norse dwellings, and a medieval farmstead. Only a short distance away is **Sumburgh Head** Nature Reserve with its Royal Society for the Protection of Birds exhibition and its famous lighthouse overlooking the cliffs. For an incredible view and photo opportunity don't miss St. Ninians beach near Bigton!

Spend another night on Shetland.

*Included: Entrance to Jarlshof*

*Driving distance: 85 km / 55 miles*

**Attractions:** Jarlshof, Mousa Broch, Sumburgh Head

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## DAY 7: JOURNEY TO ORKNEY

Travel to the wild and glorious peninsula of Northmavine, joined to the rest of the Shetland Mainland at Mavis Grind where the relentless Atlantic Ocean has nearly cut through to the North Sea. There, you could travel to the spectacular Eshaness Cliffs with their imposing lighthouse, or hike up to the top of Ronas Hill, Shetland's highest peak. Topped by a prehistoric chambered burial cairn, the summit offers a breathtaking panorama across this ice-carved landscape. Later, catch a ferry from Lerwick to **Orkney**, a beautiful 6-hour journey across a wild part of the North Sea.

Spend the night in the Kirkwall area.

*Ferry from Lerwick to Kirkwall: 6 hours*

*Driving distance: 130 km / 80 miles*

**Attractions:** Orkney

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## DAY 8: THE WONDERS OF ORKNEY

You have the whole day to explore the gems of Orkney, admire its stunning scenery and ruins dating back millennia to the Stone Ages. The highlight of Orkney's wonders is the "Heart of Neolithic Orkney", a UNESCO World Heritage Site area that comprises a group of Neolithic monuments. This includes the 5,000 year-old prehistoric village of **Skara Brae**, the mysterious **Ring of Brodgar** stone circle, the huge megaliths at the **Standing Stones of Stenness** and the chambered cairn of **Maeshowe**, where 12th-century Vikings left one of the largest collections of Norse runic inscriptions.

Spend another night in the Kirkwall area.

*Included: Entrances to Skara Brae & Maeshowe*

*Driving distance: 56 km / 35 miles*

**Attractions:** Maeshowe, Ring of Brodgar, Skara Brae, Standing Stones of Stenness

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## DAY 9: DAY AT LEISURE ON ORKNEY

Spend another leisurely day exploring Orkney. Take some time in the main settlement **Kirkwall**, a former Viking stronghold. Here you can explore the city centre and the magnificent 12th-century St Magnus Cathedral. South of Kirkwall, visit the **Italian Chapel**, a beautiful Roman Catholic chapel in Lamb Holm which was constructed by Italian POWs during the Second World War. You can also drive to the southernmost tip of Orkney to the **Tomb of the Eagles**, a Bronze Age chambered tomb.

Spend another night in the Kirkwall area.

*Driving distance: 70 km / 45 miles*

**Attractions:** Italian Chapel, Kirkwall

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## DAY 10: THE NORTH COAST 500 ROUTE

Today you journey back to the mainland by ferry before taking on part of the famous **North Coast 500** route. Scotland's version of Route 66 stretches around the northern coast of Scotland, and is known for its incredible vistas of rocky cliffs, mountains, and gold sand beaches. We recommend stopping along the way to visit the beautiful **Smoo Cave**, the largest and most dramatic sea cave in Britain, the pristine beaches and turquoise waters of **Durness**, and the 15th-century ruins of **Ardvreck Castle** before arriving at the charming and whitewashed village of **Ullapool**.

Spend the night in the Ullapool area.

*Ferry from Orkney to Scrabster: 1.5 hours*

*Driving distance: 250 km / 150 miles*

**Attractions:** Ardvreck Castle, Durness Beach, North Coast 500, Smoo Cave, Ullapool

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## DAY 11: GAELIC CULTURE & NEOLITHIC MEGALITHS OF LEWIS

This morning catch the ferry from Ullapool to **Stornoway** on the **Isle of Lewis**, where the Gaelic culture and language still thrives. In Stornoway, you could visit the Stornoway Museum located within Lews Castle, which houses exhibits about the island including six of the famous Lewis Chessmen. You will want to make the detour toward the west side of the island to see the spectacular **Callanish Standing Stones**, an impressive collection of Neolithic stone circles and megaliths. We also recommend visiting the **Black Arnol Museum** to learn about the history of the island life.

Spend the night on Lewis or Harris.

*Ferry from Ullapool to Stornoway: 2.5 hours*

*Driving distance: 165 km / 100 miles*

**Attractions:** Arnol Blackhouse Museum, Butt of Lewis, Lewis and Harris, Stornoway, The Callanish Standing Stones

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## DAY 12: HARRIS & THE GOLDEN ROAD

Today enjoy the beauty of the **Isle of Harris**. You can explore the small village of **Tarbert** and then take in the striking scenery on a drive along "**The Golden Road**" towards Rodel. We recommend exploring the beautiful medieval **St Clement's Church** and going for a walk on **Luskentyre Beach**, one of the most spectacular in Scotland, boasting miles of white sands and dazzling turquoise waters. You can also visit the Harris Tweed outlets for a genuine souvenir, as this tweed is still woven by hand in the Outer Hebrides.

Spend another night on Lewis or Harris.

*Driving distance: 70 km / 45 miles*

**Attractions:** Luskentyre Beach, St Clement's Church, Tarbert, The Golden Road

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## DAY 13: ISLAND HOPPING TO SKYE

Today you'll catch the ferry from Tarbert to Uig on the **Isle of Skye**. Upon your arrival on Skye, we recommend a drive around the northern part of the island via the breathtaking **Trotternish Peninsula**. There you can enjoy a walk up to "**The Old Man of Storr**" rock pinnacle and see the beautiful **Kilt Rock Waterfall**. Other highlights include the **Quiraing**, the **An Corran Beach** at Staffin, where you may spot ancient dinosaur footprints, and the mystical Fairy Glen.

Spend the night on the Isle of Skye or nearby.

*Ferry from Tarbert to Uig: 1 hour and 40 min*

*Driving distance: 80 km / 50 miles*

**Attractions:** Fairy Glen, Isle of Skye, Kilt Rock & Mealt Falls, Old Man of Storr, Quiraing, Staffin & An Corran Beach

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## DAY 14: DUNVEGAN CASTLE & CORAL BEACH

Spend a full day taking in the magic of Skye, a paradise for nature lovers and history enthusiasts. Wander around the scenic village of **Portree**, with its colourful buildings and local shops selling handicrafts and souvenirs. Drive to the western of the island to visit the romantic **Dunvegan Castle**, home to the Chief of Clan MacLeod. We also recommend going for a walk along **Claigan Coral Beach**, one of the most beautiful beaches of Skye. You can also visit **Neist Point**, the most westerly point on Skye that offers stunning sea views.

Spend another night on the Isle of Skye or nearby.

*Driving distance: 130 km / 80 miles*

**Attractions:** Claigan Coral Beach, Dunvegan Castle, Neist Point, Portree

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## DAY 15: THE MAGIC OF SKYE

Enjoy another full day at your leisure in the mesmerizing surroundings of Skye. The island is perfect for those who love hiking as there are great areas and mountains all over, including to the mystical **Fairy Pools** and taking in the beauty of the **Cuillin Mountains**. You could also take part in a sailing tour to get a different perspective. For the whisky enthusiasts, or for those who want to taste the true flavor of Scotland, visit the **Talisker Distillery** to sample some genuine single malt Scotch whisky.

Spend another night on the Isle of Skye or nearby.

*Driving distance: 160 km / 100 miles*

**Attractions:** Cuillin Mountains, Fairy Pools, Talisker Distillery

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## DAY 16: THE BEAUTY OF LOCH NESS

Today's journey will bring you back to the Scottish mainland. Make sure to stop at the picturesque **Eilean Donan Castle**, a sight you will surely recognise from many photographs, films and TV shows. Drive all the way to the shores of the mysterious **Loch Ness**, where you can visit the Loch Ness Centre and Exhibition. You might also wish to take a boat tour on Loch Ness in search of its notorious and elusive monster, or go explore the nearby **Urquhart Castle** ruins on the shores of the loch.

Spend the night in the **Fort William** area.

*Included: Entrance to Urquhart Castle*

*Driving distance: 260 km / 160 miles*

**Attractions:** Eilean Donan Castle, Fort Augustus, Fort William, Loch Ness, Urquhart Castle

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## DAY 17: FORT WILLIAM TO THE ISLE OF MULL

Start your day with a scenic ferry ride over to Craignure on the **Isle of Mull**, a place characterised by white sandy beaches, rugged mountains and thriving wildlife. Your first stop will be Duart Castle, standing proudly by the sea cliffs of the island. We then recommend taking the scenic route along the west coast, past the highest peak Ben More. Stop on the way at one of the most beautiful beaches in Scotland, Calgary Bay. Continue to the charming village of Tobermory, the largest settlement of the island.

Spend the night on the Isle of Mull or Oban area.

*Ferry from Oban to Craignure: 45 minutes*

*Driving distance: 180 km / 115 miles*

**Attractions:** Isle of Mull, Oban

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## DAY 18: BEAUTIFUL ISLES OF IONA & STAFFA

Today you have a full day at your leisure on Mull. You have the option to head to the west coast of the island, from where you can take a ferry ride from Fionnphort over to the **Isle of Iona**, home of dazzling beaches and sacred sites such as **Iona Abbey**. From Iona you can join a boat trip to the uninhabited **Isle of Staffa**, where you can admire Fingal's Cave, a natural arched sea cave with impressive basalt columns. While on the boat tour, you might come across dolphins, porpoises and minke whales.

Spend another night on the Isle of Mull or Oban area.

*Included: Entrance to Iona Abbey*

*Driving distance: 180 km / 115 miles*

**Attractions:** Isle of Iona & Iona Abbey, Isle of Mull, Isle of Staffa & Fingals Cave

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## DAY 19: KILMARTIN GLEN, LUSS & LOCH LOMOND

Today, take the ferry back to the mainland and continue your drive along the scenic route to the historical valley of **Kilmartin Glen**. This area is considered to have one of the most important concentrations of Neolithic and Bronze Age remains in Scotland, including standing stones and circles as well as forts and castles. On the way we recommend a stop at Inveraray on the shores of Loch Fyne, where you could visit **Inveraray** Castle. Continue to the shores of the beautiful **Loch Lomond** and visit the charming conservation village of **Luss**.

Spend the night in the Trossachs National Park area.

*Ferry from Craignure to Oban: 45 minutes*

*Driving distance: 245 km / 150 miles*

**Attractions:** Inveraray & Inveraray Castle, Kilmartin Glen, Loch Lomond, Luss

DAY

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## DAY 20: TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK TO EDINBURGH

Today's drive will bring you back to Edinburgh (you can choose to end your trip in Glasgow in the optional activities below). Drive through the Loch Lomond and **Trossachs National Park**, where you could stop to take a walk in nature, enjoy an optional steamship tour on **Loch Katrine**, or visit a local whisky distillery. For a fun photo opportunity, don't miss **Doone Castle**, featured in Monty Python & the Holy Grail and Outlander. If time allows, you could also stop by **Stirling Castle**, one of Scotland's top attractions, or at the **Kelpies**, two impressive horse-head sculptures.

Spend the night in Edinburgh.

*Included: Entrances to Doone Castle and Stirling Castle*

*Driving distance: 130 km / 80 miles*

**Attractions:** Doone Castle, Stirling & Stirling Castle, The Kelpies, Trossachs National Park

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## DAY 21: DEPARTURE FROM SCOTLAND

On your day of departure, we recommend taking the Airlink bus or a taxi directly from your hotel to reach the airport. If you would like to add any additional nights to your trip or to arrange a private transfer, you can do so during the booking process. If your flight is in the afternoon, you may have time for some last-minute shopping, to visit one of Edinburgh's museums, or take one last stroll through the charming city centre.

*Whatever your needs, we are here to help. If you have any questions about our packages or services, please do not hesitate to contact us.*

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