

SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS & WEST COAST AT LEISURE 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 heading out and exploring the historic city, strolling through the **Old Town** and **New Town**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There are plenty of restaurants and bars to enjoy some warm Scottish hospitality, not to mention a taste of the local whisky.

Spend the night in Edinburgh.

Included: Entrance to Edinburgh Castle

HIGHLIGHTS: Edinburgh - Edinburgh New Town - Edinburgh Old Town

DAY

2

DAY 2: THE SCOTTISH CAPITAL EDINBURGH

Today is free for you to explore Edinburgh at your leisure. The background and history of the city is fascinating and rich, so there is no shortage of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, museums and landmarks to visit, including the majestic **Edinburgh Castle** and **Holyrood Palace**, the official Scottish residence of Queen Elizabeth II. You can easily travel around the city centre on foot, so we recommend strolling along the historic **Royal Mile** or walking to Castle Hill for a spectacular view of the city.

Spend another night in Edinburgh.

Included: Entrance to Edinburgh Castle

HIGHLIGHTS: Calton Hill - Edinburgh Castle - The Royal Mile & St Giles Cathedral

DAY

3

DAY 3: SCOTLAND'S DRAMATIC EAST COAST

Today, start your road trip driving up to Fife. Your first stop will be the quaint village of **Falkland**, where you can explore its Renaissance palace. From there, drive east to the town of **St Andrews**, famous for being the home of golf and of the oldest university in Scotland. As you continue north, pass by **Dundee**, a UNESCO City of Design. You can then take the direct route to **Aberdeen**, or take the coastal scenic route, which will take you past the **St. Cyrus National Nature Reserve** and the spectacular **Dunnottar Castle**, near Stonehaven.

Spend the night in the Aberdeen area.

Included: Entrance to St Andrews Castle & St Andrews Cathedral

Driving distance: 235 km / 145 miles

HIGHLIGHTS: Aberdeen - Dundee & Angus - Dunnottar Castle - Falkland - St Andrews - St Cyrus National Nature Reserve

DAY

4

DAY 4: ROYAL DEESIDE, CASTLES & WHISKY

Today will take you into the Scottish Highlands. First drive along the “**Deeside Tourist Route**”, an enchanting route through the **Cairngorms National Park**. On the way, there is a plethora of castles you could visit, including 16th-century **Crathes Castle**, and of course, the Scottish residence of the Royal Family, **Balmoral Castle**, which you can visit from April to July. You will then continue to **Speyside**, which is famous for its whiskies. You may want to visit one of the many distilleries (there are over 40 to choose from!), such as Glenfiddich or Aberlour.

Spend the night in the **Inverness** area.

Driving distance: 240 km / 150 miles

HIGHLIGHTS: Balmoral Castle - Cairngorms National Park - Inverness - Royal Deeside - Speyside & Whisky

DAY

5

DAY 5: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NORTHWEST HIGHLANDS

Today you get the choice between spending the day exploring Inverness surroundings or getting a taste of the **North Coast 500**, one of Scotland’s most scenic driving routes. Around Inverness, you can visit the famous **Battlefield of Culloden Moor** and roam the Bronze-age cemetery **Clava Cairns**. You can also visit Cawdor Castle or take a walk at one of the golden sand beaches.

If you journey to the North Coast, we recommend visiting the breathtaking **Corrieshalloch Gorge** and the Falls of Measach. Explore the **Inverewe Garden**, a botanical garden which boasts over 2500 exotic plants and flowers. You can also drive through the imperious landscape of the **Torridon Hills** before returning to Inverness.

Spend another night in the Inverness area.

Driving distance along the west coast: 255 km / 160 miles

Driving distance around Inverness: 105 km / 65 miles

HIGHLIGHTS: Black Isle & Moray Firth - Clava Cairns - Corrieshalloch Gorge - Culloden Battlefield & Visitor Centre - Torridon Hills

DAY

6

DAY 6: THE BEAUTY OF LOCH NESS

Spend some time exploring the surroundings of Inverness, “The Capital of the Highlands”, before getting on the road. You could visit the Black Isle Peninsula and Moray Firth, where dolphins can sometimes be spotted at low tide, before driving south along the shores of the mysterious **Loch Ness**. There you can stop to visit the Loch Ness Centre and Exhibition or to try to spot the notorious monster, Nessie. You can also explore the nearby **Urquhart Castle** ruins. You could also opt to take a detour to visit the picturesque Glen Affric. Continue south to **Fort William**, passing by Scotland’s highest mountain, **Ben Nevis**.

Spend the night in the Fort William area.

Included: Entrance to Urquhart Castle

Driving distance: 155 km / 95 miles

HIGHLIGHTS: Fort Augustus - Fort William - Loch Ness - Urquhart Castle

DAY

7

DAY 7: EXPLORE FORT WILLIAM AT YOUR LEISURE

You have today to explore the surroundings of Fort William, or you have the option of taking a day trip to the **Isle of Skye**. For Skye we recommend an early start. Before arriving at the island, you can stop by the picturesque **Eilean Donan Castle**. On Skye, you can visit the village of **Portree** and hike to the mystical **Fairy**

Pools, from where you can take in the beauty of the **Cuillin Mountains**.

For a more leisurely day, we recommend staying around Fort William. You could board the “Harry Potter train”, the Jacobite Steam Train, which passes by the **Glenfinnan Viaduct** and is considered one of the most beautiful railway journeys in the world. Hikers will love the area and could discover the beautiful Glen Nevis where you can view the Steall Falls, Scotland's second highest waterfall.

Spend another night in the Fort William area.

Driving distance to Skye and back: 380 km / 235 miles

Driving distance around Fort William: 85 km / 55 miles

HIGHLIGHTS: Ben Nevis - Eilean Donan Castle - Fairy Pools - Fort William - Glenfinnan - Portree

DAY
8

DAY 8: 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 on to the charming village of Tobermory, the largest settlement of the island.

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

Ferry from Oban to Craignure: 45 minutes

Driving distance: 180 km / 115 miles

HIGHLIGHTS: Isle of Mull - Oban

DAY
9

DAY 9: 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 in the Oban area.

Included: Entrance to Iona Abbey

Driving distance: 180 km / 115 miles

HIGHLIGHTS: Isle of Iona & Iona Abbey - Isle of Staffa & Fingals Cave

DAY
10

DAY 10: KILMARTIN GLEN, INVERARAY & KILCHURN CASTLE

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. You can also visit 15th-century **Kilchurn Castle**, one of the most picturesque castles in Scotland located at Loch Awe.

Spend the night in the **Trossachs National Park** area.

Ferry from Craignure to Oban: 45 minutes

HIGHLIGHTS: Inveraray & Inveraray Castle - Kilchurn Castle - Kilmartin Glen

DAY

11

DAY 11: DAY AT LEISURE IN THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK

Enjoy the day at your leisure in the magnificent Trossachs National Park, an area of immense natural beauty. We recommend a walk in the ancient village of **Luss**, with its characteristic stone cottages overlooking **Loch Lomond**. You may also wish to do some light hiking in the national park to spot wildlife, or perhaps enjoy a boat tour on either Loch Lomond or Loch Katrine. Other great options in the area include touring a local whisky distillery and visiting **Doone Castle**, which stands as “Castle Leoch” in the popular TV series *Outlander*.

Spend another night in the Trossachs National Park area.

Included: Entrance to Doone Castle

Driving distance: 130 km / 80 miles

HIGHLIGHTS: Doone Castle - Loch Katrine - Loch Lomond - Luss - Trossachs National Park

DAY

12

DAY 12: TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK TO GLASGOW

Today's drive will take you to Scotland's largest city, **Glasgow**. On your way, you may wish to spend some time in the historic city of Stirling, visiting such popular attractions as **Stirling Castle** and the monument of William Wallace (Braveheart). You could also stop at the Kelpies, two giant horse-head sculptures that make for a great photo opportunity, or make a short detour to **Linlithgow Palace**, best known as the birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots. Enjoy the rest of the day at your leisure in Glasgow.

Spend the night in Glasgow.

Included: Entrance to Stirling Castle and Linlithgow Palace

Driving distance: 115 km / 70 miles

HIGHLIGHTS: Linlithgow Palace - Stirling & Stirling Castle - The Kelpies

DAY

13

DAY 13: THE GREAT CITY OF GLASGOW

Today you have a full day to explore **Glasgow**, Scotland's largest city, which boasts a wealth of art galleries, museums and fabulous architecture. This includes the beautiful **George Square**, the **Gallery of Modern Art**, as well as the **Lighthouse** and the **House for an Art Lover**, where you can learn more about Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The city also offers some of the best shopping in Scotland, making it the ideal place to combine culture and pleasure. The West End is especially beautiful, being the location of one of Scotland's oldest universities, and of the **Kelvingrove Art Gallery**.

Spend another night in Glasgow

HIGHLIGHTS: George Square - Glasgow - House for an Art Lover - Kelvingrove Art Gallery - The Lighthouse

DAY

14

DAY 14: DEPARTURE FROM SCOTLAND

On your day of departure, make your way 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 the many 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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