

Full Itinerary

HIGHLAND HERITAGE & SCOTTISH CASTLES



TALK TO OUR WELL
TRAVELLED TEAM OF
EXPERTS

Toll Free US and
Canada: 1 (855)
342-4127

Office open: Monday - Thursday
9:00am - 8:00pm, Friday 9:00am -
5:30pm (London time). Call
answered 24/7



JOURNEY SNAPSHOT

ACTIVITY LEVEL:

Level 2

DESTINATION:

Highland Heritage & Scottish Castles

DURATION:

12 days / 11 nights

FLIGHT INFORMATION:

Please arrange your flights into Glasgow Airport
[GLA] on Day 1 and to depart from there on Day
12

PICKUP LOCATION:

Glasgow Airport [GLA]

OVERVIEW

Sep 05 - 16, 2026

Discover Scotland over 12 unforgettable days — from Loch Lomond to Islay, Iona & the Highlands, where history, nature, and culture meet.

Scotland is a land of dramatic contrasts — from its rugged Highlands and serene island shores to grand castles, historic towns, and warm, character-filled villages. Mist-covered mountains, ancient lochs, sweeping coastlines, and rich folklore create a backdrop unlike anywhere else in the world.

Our journey begins just outside Glasgow, where we head north into landscapes steeped in legend. We'll cruise the shimmering waters of Loch Lomond, wander the stately halls of Inveraray Castle, and venture to the famed Isle of Islay — home to world-renowned whisky, windswept beaches, and deep Gaelic heritage.

Returning to the mainland, we continue through Scotland's heartlands to Oban, gateway to the Isles, before sailing to mystical Iona and the dramatic basalt cliffs of Staffa and Fingal's Cave. In the Highlands, we'll explore ancient battle sites, tour historic forts, and cruise the dark waters of Loch Ness — perhaps catching a glimpse of its elusive resident.

Along the way you'll savour local delicacies, hear tales of clan power and ancient kingdoms, and visit castles still home to Scotland's great families. From wool-weaving heritage to tartans of Hollywood fame, from private dining experiences to whisky tastings, this is a journey rich in story, culture, and unforgettable scenery.

Scotland's magic lies not just in the places you visit, but in the spirit you feel — woven through music, landscapes, and warm Highland hospitality. You'll experience all this... and so much more.

ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAY 1 - Welcome to Bonnie Scotland

DAY 2 - Songs of Loch Lomond & Castle Charm

DAY 3 - Hebridean Waters & Ancient Isles

DAY 4 - Golf, Crafts & Ancient Isles

DAY 5 - Isles of Saints & Giants

DAY 6 - Glencoe, The Nevis Range & Loch Ness

DAY 7 - Kilts, Culture & Highland Legends

DAY 8 - Castles, Glens & Culinary Delights

DAY 9 - Blair Atholl & Royal Heritage

DAY 10 - Stirling Battlefields & Highland Flavours

DAY 11 - The Isle of Bute & Farewell

DAY 12 - A Fond Farewell

FULL ITINERARY

DAY 1 - WELCOME TO BONNIE SCOTLAND

Welcome to Scotland!

You'll be warmly greeted on arrival — whether at Glasgow Airport or Glasgow Central Station.

*Transfers from Edinburgh Airport are available at an additional cost, should you prefer to arrive via the capital.

You will then be transferred to the tour hotel. Take some time to settle in and enjoy the peaceful surroundings — perhaps unwind in the spa or simply admire the panoramic views of the Clyde.

This evening, we come together for a Welcome Drinks Reception, followed by a Welcome Dinner — the perfect opportunity to meet your fellow travellers and begin your unforgettable Scottish adventure.

Included meals: Welcome Drinks & Dinner

Accommodation: Gleddoch Golf & Spa Resort

DAY 2 - SONGS OF LOCH LOMOND & CASTLE CHARM

After breakfast, we leave the Clyde and journey north into the Scottish Highlands, a land of dramatic mountains, shimmering lochs, and ancient legends.

As you settle on the coach, keep an eye out — a special surprise awaits! Along the way, you'll pass rivers, forests, and glimpses of Highland life, from sheep-dotted hills to quaint villages.

Our first stop is Loch Lomond, Scotland's largest freshwater loch. We embark on a 90-minute scenic boat tour, gliding past wooded islands, while our guide shares stories of clan battles, local folklore, and the loch's rich wildlife, from otters to eagles.

After returning to the charming village of Luss, enjoy leisure time to explore the cobbled streets or craft shops.

In the afternoon, we visit Inveraray Castle, ancestral home of the Duke of Argyll. Dating back to the 18th century, the castle boasts grand interiors, priceless art, and centuries of history intertwined with the powerful Campbell clan. Discover the tales of battles, intrigues, and the lives of the Scottish aristocracy as you tour the stately rooms.

Later, we continue through the winding roads of Argyll to Stonefield Castle, our accommodation for the night. This historic property offers an authentic castle experience, with stone walls, antique furnishings, and a three-course dinner in its elegant dining room.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Stonefield Castle

DAY 3 - HEBRIDEAN WATERS & ANCIENT ISLES

After breakfast, we travel to Kennacraig and cross by ferry to the legendary Isle of Islay, famed for its peaty whiskies and rich Gaelic heritage.

On arrival, we visit the Gaelic Centre, learning about Islay's language, traditions, and history passed down through generations. Wander the charming village of Bowmore, with its whitewashed cottages and historic distilleries, and enjoy lunch at leisure.

In the afternoon, we explore Islay's natural beauty, including Machir Bay, a sweeping beach with stunning Atlantic views. We then visit a local distillery for whisky and gin tastings, where expert guides explain the art of distilling and the unique flavors of Islay spirits.

We retire to The Machrie Hotel, situated beside one of Scotland's most spectacular links golf courses, and gather for dinner together, reflecting on a day of culture, scenery, and taste.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: The Machrie Hotel

DAY 4 - GOLF, CRAFTS & ANCIENT ISLES

Golf enthusiasts can seize the morning to play the famous Machrie Links, a world-renowned course with rolling dunes and sweeping ocean views (advanced signup required; additional cost).

Meanwhile, the rest of the group visits a traditional woolen mill, where master weavers craft tartans featured in Hollywood films, including Braveheart.

A set lunch at a celebrated local oyster house provides the perfect opportunity to taste Islay's famous oysters, freshly harvested from the Atlantic.

This afternoon, we journey to Finlaggan, a mystical island on a tranquil loch that served as the power seat of Clan Donald, the legendary "Lords of the Isles." Walk among the ruins, absorb the atmosphere, and imagine the chiefs who once ruled here.

We regroup with golfers and board the ferry back to the mainland, enjoying breathtaking views of the Inner Hebrides. Our day ends with a visit to Dunadd Fort, where ancient kings of Dal Riata were crowned — regarded as the birthplace of early Scotland.

We continue to Oban, our base for the next two nights, with dinner at the hotel.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Oban Bay Hotel

Optional extras: Optional golf is available on this day, please contact us for more information.

DAY 5 - ISLES OF SAINTS & GIANTS

After breakfast, we take the ferry to Mull and continue to the Isle of Iona. Long before St. Columba founded the 6th-century abbey, Iona was part of the ancient Gaelic kingdom of Dál Riata and later became the burial place of early Scottish, Irish, and Norse kings. Explore the island's peaceful shores, historic ruins, and charming village. Lunch is at leisure.

In the afternoon, we sail to the volcanic island of Staffa to visit the famed Fingal's Cave. Its spectacular hexagonal basalt columns — formed by ancient lava flows and shaped by the Atlantic — create a dramatic landscape linked to Ireland's Giant's Causeway.

Return to Oban for a three-course dinner at the hotel.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Oban Bay Hotel

DAY 6 - GLENCOE, THE NEVIS RANGE & LOCH NESS

Today we travel north through Glencoe, a valley both beautiful and haunting, notorious for the 1692 Massacre of the MacDonalds. A local heritage museum reveals the history and legends surrounding the area's turbulent past.

Next, ascend via gondola to a Nevis Range restaurant, one of Scotland's highest dining spots, to enjoy a scenic group lunch with panoramic views over the Highlands.

In the afternoon, we reach Fort Augustus, gateway to Loch Ness, and board a cruise in search of the legendary Nessie. Learn about the loch's formation, surrounding mountains, and centuries of folklore.

We continue to Tulloch Castle in Dingwall, our home for the next three nights. Dinner is at leisure.

Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch

Accommodation: Tulloch Castle Hotel

DAY 7 - KILTS, CULTURE & HIGHLAND LEGENDS

After breakfast, we visit a kiltmaking museum to learn about the skilled craft of tartan and its place in Scottish culture. Explore how clan patterns became powerful symbols of identity, pride, and heritage.

We continue to Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, where you'll have free time to explore and enjoy lunch at leisure.

This afternoon, we tour Fort George, an impressive 18th-century fortress built after the Jacobite uprisings to secure government control in the Highlands. Nearby, the Highlanders' Museum provides a fascinating look into regimental life, Scottish military history, and Highland traditions.

Return to Tulloch Castle for a three-course dinner and an atmospheric whisky tasting to round off the evening.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Tulloch Castle Hotel

DAY 8 - CASTLES, GLENS & CULINARY DELIGHTS

After breakfast, we visit Dunrobin Castle, seat of the Duke of Sutherland, inspired by French châteaux and home to grand art collections and gardens.

We continue to Dornoch, a charming town with a beautiful cathedral. Explore independently and enjoy lunch at leisure, followed by a guided walking tour highlighting the town's architecture, history, and scenic charm.

In the evening, we enjoy a private dining experience prepared by a chef specialising in "hill-to-plate" cuisine, featuring local venison and seasonal Highland produce.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Tulloch Castle Hotel

Optional extras: Optional golf is available on this day, please contact us for more information.

DAY 9 - BLAIR ATHOLL & ROYAL HERITAGE

Today we journey south, stopping at Ruthven Barracks, an 18th-century garrison built after the Jacobite uprising. Learn how these fortifications symbolised government authority in the Highlands.

Next, we visit the House of Bruar, a celebrated Scottish shopping destination offering fine local goods, crafts, and souvenirs. Lunch is at leisure.

This afternoon, tour Blair Atholl Castle, home of the Duke of Atholl, the only private citizen in Europe permitted to maintain a private army. Explore the castle's grand interiors, gardens, and historic artefacts.

We then arrive at Dunkeld House Hotel, set amid tranquil wooded riverbanks, a serene spot to relax and reflect on the day.

Included meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Dunkeld House Hotel

DAY 10 - STIRLING BATTLEFIELDS & HIGHLAND FLAVOURS

After breakfast, we begin the day in the historic town of Dunkeld, where the magnificent Dunkeld Cathedral rises along the River Tay. Dating back to the 7th century, this cathedral has witnessed centuries of religious and political history, surviving wars, fires, and the Scottish Reformation. Wander through the medieval stonework and admire the intricate stained-glass windows as you learn about the cathedral's role in Scotland's ecclesiastical heritage.

Next, we head to a secret countryside location for a private lunch experience. Here, a local chef welcomes us into a rustic kitchen, sharing stories of Scotland's traditional produce, from Highland venison and salmon to artisan cheeses and fresh vegetables. Guests have the opportunity to see culinary techniques up close and gain insight into Scotland's rich food culture.

After this immersive experience, we continue to Stirling, one of Scotland's most historic cities. We explore the site of the Battle of Bannockburn, where in 1314 Robert the Bruce led Scottish forces to a decisive victory over the English, securing Scotland's independence. Walk the battlefield with our guide and imagine the tactics, bravery, and determination of the Scottish warriors. Learn about the surrounding Stirling Castle, the nearby River Forth, and the strategic importance of this region in Scottish history.

We then make our way to Gleddoch House Hotel, our home for the next two nights. Settle in and enjoy the hotel's elegant surroundings, with time to relax before dinner at your leisure.

Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch

Accommodation: Gleddoch House Hotel

DAY 11 - THE ISLE OF BUTE & FAREWELL

Our final full day begins with a ferry crossing to the Isle of Bute, a small island steeped in history and natural beauty. Our first stop is Mount Stuart, the extraordinary neo-Gothic mansion of the Marquis of Bute. Renowned for its extravagant architecture, magnificent gardens, and opulent interiors, Mount Stuart is one of the finest stately homes in Scotland. Learn about the family's fascinating history and the architectural innovations that make this house unique, from its grand staircase to the extraordinary library.

After exploring the estate, enjoy lunch at leisure on the island, perhaps wandering through the gardens or along the scenic shores.

On our return to the mainland, we visit Kelburn Castle, famous for its historic origins dating back to the 13th century and its vibrant, modern art-painted façade. The juxtaposition of medieval architecture and contemporary art makes Kelburn a striking example of Scotland's living heritage. Take time to explore the grounds, enjoy the views of the surrounding countryside, and snap some final photos of your Highland adventure.

This evening, we gather for a Farewell Dinner, a chance to share memories, highlights, and laughter with your fellow travellers. Toast to an unforgettable journey through Scotland's landscapes, castles, islands, and cultural treasures.

Included meals: Breakfast & Farewell Dinner

Accommodation: Gleddoch Golf & Spa Resort

DAY 12 - A FOND FAREWELL

Today we say a fond farewell to Scotland. Scheduled transfers to Glasgow Airport have been arranged—please let us know if you would like to make use of this service.

If you'd like to extend your stay for some extra golf, or simply to linger a little longer in this beautiful country, contact us for more details.

Included meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: none

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Meet & Greet at the airport on arrival
- Transfers included (subject to arriving/departing at the designated airport and staying at the tour hotel on the official tour dates)
*Transfers from Edinburgh Airport are available at an additional cost, should you prefer to arrive via the capital.
- Accommodation as detailed in the itinerary
- All meals detailed as detailed in the itinerary
- Excursions as detailed in the itinerary
- Transport in an air-conditioned deluxe vehicle
- Tour Director from The Big Journey Company as well as the local English speaking Tour Guide (subject to minimum group size being reached.)

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Return flights into Glasgow Airport or Edinburgh Airport on Day 1 and departing from on Day 12
- Food and beverage unless otherwise stated
- Entrance fees to non-stipulated attractions
- Visas, personal travel or medical insurance
- Any personal items and anything not mentioned above
- Any optional activities offered
- Gratuities
- Any COVID tests or related entry & exit requirements

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **Flights:** International flights to/from your chosen destination are not included in this package. The Big Journey Company will be happy to provide a quotation for your flights—please contact us for further details.
- **Vaccinations & Health:** Vaccinations may be recommended depending on your destination. Please consult your doctor or travel clinic for the most up-to-date medical advice.
- **Visas & Entry Requirements:** Entry requirements vary by destination, and a visa may be required. Please refer to the travel tips section for full details. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the necessary travel documentation prior to departure.
- **Medical Needs:** Please inform The Big Journey Company prior to travel of any medical conditions or medications you take that we should be aware of to help ensure a safe and enjoyable experience.
- **Accommodation Check-in/Out:** Unless otherwise stated in your itinerary, check-in is after 2–3pm and check-out is before 10am. Please note that hotels may be subject to change to the same or similar standard due to availability.
- **Cancellation Policy:** Cancellations made within 90 days of departure are subject to a 100% cancellation fee. Deposits are non-refundable, and balance payments are due 14 weeks prior to departure. It is your responsibility to ensure adequate travel insurance is in place to protect against the need to cancel your holiday.
- **Minimum Numbers:** The Big Journey Company host will accompany the tour should minimum guest numbers be met. We will confirm this closer to the departure date.
- **Terms & Conditions:** Further terms and conditions apply and will be provided upon request or at the time of booking. The Big Journey Company reserves the right to withdraw any offer prior to accepting a reservation. This does not affect your statutory rights. All offers are subject to availability and space is limited.

BOOK YOUR JOURNEY

Choose from the list of dates below

Call to Book

Toll Free US and Canada: 1 (855) 342-4127

Office open: Monday - Thursday 9:00am - 8:00pm, Friday 9:00am - 5:30pm (London time). Call answered 24/7