

THE WILD BEAUTY OF SCOTLAND

A Scenic & Cultural Journey
August 31—September 7, 2024

ONWARD TRAVEL ✈️
EST 2014



HOUSE FOR AN ART LOVER, GLASGOW

The Wild Beauty of Scotland just might be the adventure you've been waiting for. Pack light and get ready to traverse this gorgeous country: from the artistic city of Glasgow to the rugged Highland islands, Scotland will at many times surprise you and at others be exactly as you'd dreamed it would be.

Our small group will sleep in cities and villages and in the middle of nature, beside the sea or a loch or a grand train station. We will travel by minibus, by plane, by ferry, by foot, by boat (and maybe you will arrive in Glasgow by train). We'll try our best to understand the local vernacular, but the ready friendly smiles of the Scottish people will be easy to interpret.

This tour is perfect for people who are curious and want to learn about Scotland and the pace of the journey acknowledges that a little peaceful time to experience one's surroundings is just as important as days spent moving. At the end of summer join us to experience vast landscapes, spirited whisky, wonderful architecture, delightful dining and more on this invigorating tour of wild, beautiful Scotland.



IMAGINE YOURSELF...

Listening to live music with the locals at a cheery pub.

Looking back at Islay from the sea, wee dram in hand.

Taking a morning stroll by the loch or the beach in front of your bedroom.

Welcome to Scotland!

DAY 1: SATURDAY AUGUST 31

- Toast your travel group over a lovely modern Scottish dinner

Arrive in Glasgow today - you can fly into the airport, only a 20 minute drive from the city center, or arrive right in the middle of town on a train from Edinburgh or London. Our hotel, the classiest Motel One you've ever seen, is right next to the Central train station. Drop your bags there and then you may enjoy this day in the city as you please - visit the Glasgow Botanic Gardens, the twelfth century Glasgow Cathedral and its neighboring Necropolis, or one of the city's fine art museums. Our group will gather for a welcome drink at the hotel bar before we head out for dinner together at a great restaurant nearby.

Meals Dinner

From the City to the Island

DAY 2: SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 1

- Absorb the timelessly hip style of Charles Rennie Mackintosh
- Take a quick flight from Glasgow to an island that feels worlds away

After breakfast this morning we will set out to explore the legacy of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, a true son of Glasgow and one of the most influential designers of the modern era. Along with his wife, Margaret MacDonald, "CRM" pioneered a unique and lasting style which had a great effect on art nouveau and modern design ever since. This morning we'll visit Mackintosh at the Willow, his iconic tearoom, and then have lunch at the Art Lover's Cafe at House For An Art Lover, designed by him and built posthumously in Bellahouston Park.

From there, we're off to nearby Glasgow airport to catch our afternoon flight to the moody and beautiful island of Islay (pronounced "eye-luh"). If you're already a Scotch whisky drinker then Islay requires little introduction. Part of the Western Hebrides chain of islands, known in fact as "Queen of the Hebrides," Islay is renowned not only for its delicious, peaty whisky - there are nine distilleries on the island - but also for its sea and bird life, dramatic scenery and friendly local vibe.



It's an easy transfer from tiny Islay Airport to our home for the next two nights: Port Charlotte Hotel. A small, charming hotel perched on the beach overlooking Loch Indaal, it's the perfect homebase for our time on the island. Shortly after arrival we'll be met at the hotel by Rachel from Islay Whisky Academy. Rachel will welcome us to her beloved Islay and give us an overview of what makes the place, and its whisky, so special. She will guide us in tasting some fine local whiskies and help us get our palates and minds ready to explore this dynamic spirit here in its place of origin. Then it's time for a delicious dinner together in the hotel's charming restaurant and bar, hopefully there will be live music tonight too!

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Islay by Land, Islay by Sea

DAY 3: MONDAY SEPTEMBER 2

- Visit a trio of legendary Islay distilleries
- Feast on fresh seafood aboard a boat off the rugged coastline

We have an unforgettable day in store for you... A real Islay immersion, with the peat of the land in your nose and the salt of the sea on your tongue. After breakfast we make our way to Ardbeg Distillery. Established over two hundred years ago, one could argue that Ardbeg's famously smoky whiskies are as "Islay" as it gets. We'll enjoy a fun and detailed tour looking at the distillation process, including a peek at the steps that makes Ardbeg unique and along the way the tour will become hands (and nose) on as we taste at least three different drams of whisky.

Once we're finished at Ardbeg we have a dreamy experience in store: a cruise along the island's rugged coastline complete with a seafood feast for lunch. Our pair of boats will pick us up from the dock right at Ardbeg, and leaving the iconic and scenic distillery by sea will be a spectacular moment just in itself. And then we'll find a quiet cove and enjoy a generous spread of super-local seafood delights including lobster, brown crab and hand-dived scallops, expertly prepared and served with all the fixins - and a wee dram of course.

After lunch we'll kick back as the boat traverses the bays of the ruggedly beautiful island until we alight on the pier at Lagavulin Distillery, another icon of Islay whisky culture. A distillery has been here since the 1700's and the whiskies are absolutely top-notch and full of Islay flavor. We'll take the opportunity to try them directly from the cask on a special Warehouse Tour. After Lagavulin we've got one more stop to complete the "Three Distilleries" tour - the legendary Laphroaig. At Laphroaig we'll just visit the tasting room and by now you may wish to take your drams "to go," or not!

After a day spent in distilleries and on the sea, what could hit the spot more than a little pizza?! We'll stop for a fun and casual dinner on our way back to Port Charlotte where we'll surely sleep well.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Traversing the Highlands

DAY 4: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 3

- Sail across the Sound of Jura and West Loch Tarbert on a ferry
- Check in at a charming and historic hotel with a great restaurant

Spend the morning as you please: sleep in a little bit, take a scenic walk or visit the nearby Museum of Islay Life. Before lunch time we will meet our fun and knowledgeable Scottish driver-guide, Natalie, load up our vehicle, and bid farewell to lovely Islay. For the rest of our tour, as it turns into a road trip, we'll be accompanied by Natalie, whose narration and knowledge will bring Scotland and its scenic sights and history to life for us.

After a short drive we'll arrive at the ferry which will take us to Kennacraig on the mainland. The crossing takes a couple of hours and you can relax, take in the view, and enjoy the packed lunch we've brought along. Once we've reached the Kintyre Peninsula it's an hour's drive on to our stop for the night at Inveraray. Along the way, depending on the group's wishes, we'll make a pit stop at a scenic village or park to have a walk and stretch our legs.

When we get to Inveraray we'll check in for one night at The George Hotel, a historic, family-owned property with a restaurant and a bar. Dinner is on your own tonight, so stay put and dine on delicious, updated traditional Scottish cuisine at The George or set out for dinner at one of the other restaurants in town.

Meals Breakfast, Packed Lunch



The Scenic Route to Skye

DAY 5: WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 4

- Pick up some special handmade souvenirs to enjoy at home
- Arrive at a lodge established by the High Chief of Clan MacDonald

Get up early to enjoy a fresh and filling full Scottish breakfast because today we have a long day's journey ahead of us! We'll load up and head out on the early side to spend the day taking in unforgettable sights as we follow in the footsteps of fascinating Highland history. Along the way we'll have the opportunity to experience and purchase some lovely local handcrafted goods, too.

Our first stop is for a photo op at the moody 15th century ruins of Kilchurn Castle, perched on the banks of Loch Awe, the longest freshwater loch in Scotland. From there we continue on to Glencoe, the site of one of the most infamous violent episodes in local history. Glencoe is a beautiful little village with a small folk museum, an iconic memorial to the MacDonald massacre and a charming little art gallery with the most lovely prints, cards and original paintings for you to peruse... and spectacular scenic vistas at every turn.

From Glencoe we continue on the the Highland Soap Company where handmade soap and skincare products are produced from natural and organic ingredients including many wild-harvested botanicals with a real sense of place. We'll peek into their production facilities and learn a bit about the process before we sit down for lunch together at the on-site Larder Cafe. After lunch you might want to pick up some souvenirs from their soap line with varieties like Hebridean Seaweed, Honey & Whisky, Highland Lavender or Scottish Bog Myrtle it might be hard to choose!

And then once again we're on our way... our next stop is at Glenfinnan to get a glimpse of the viaduct built there at the turn of the 20th century. It's a stunning sight to behold and especially exciting for Harry Potter fans as the location features prominently in those films as a track for the Hogwarts Express. Finally we'll reach Mallaig where we will make a quick ferry crossing over the Sound of Sleat to the Isle of Skye.

The Isle of Skye is a place of legend, the largest of the Inner Hebridean Islands, it has been a source of creative inspiration for generations, the scenery so stunning and otherworldly that visitors feel they've entered a fairytale. We are going to spend two nights here at Kinloch Lodge, which will feel like your Scottish Highlands dreams come true. You'll enjoy the well-appointed and decorated rooms with plenty of burning fireplaces, views across the dramatic surrounding landscape, and a delightful dinner served each night. And then, how about a wee dram in the drawing room before bed time. In the morning, maybe you'll enjoy a stroll by the loch.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Please note, drinks are not included with dinner at Kinloch Lodge

A Day on Skye

DAY 6: THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 5

- Experience the wonders of nature while touring the Isle of Skye
- Search out local seafood or a nice pint during free time in Portree

Mid-morning we'll set out with Natalie to explore the stunning geography of the Isle of Skye. She will show us some of her favorite places and base her itinerary on our group's interests. Midday we'll visit the island's capital, Portree, for some free time for lunch and exploring on your own. The beautiful beaches, eye-popping rock formations and historical settlements of Skye will make for a memorable day!

In the afternoon, return to Kinloch Lodge to relax and enjoy another lovely dinner of fresh, local Scottish cuisine.

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Please note, drinks are not included with dinner at Kinloch Lodge



PORTREE! CAPITAL OF THE ISLE OF SKYE

Scottish Road Trip

DAY 7: FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 6

- Drive back to the mainland over the scenic Skye Bridge
- Toast your companions over a fun dinner at a posh steakhouse

After breakfast we bid Skye goodbye and set out for a day's journey back across Scotland, eventually ending up just outside of Edinburgh.

Our journey begins with a scenic crossing of the Skye Bridge and then we traverse the Highlands one last time, stopping for a photo op at the beautiful and very famous Eilean Donan Castle - probably the most photographed in all of Scotland for good reason. This fully restored and majestic structure stands on a tiny island at the intersection of three tidal lochs.

We leave the manmade wonders behind and continue on to see some incredible scenery at Glen Shiel and the Ben Nevis viewpoint, narrated by Natalie all the way. We will make a few more interesting stops, including in a village where you'll be on your own for lunch and a nice meander, and maybe we'll even pop into another distillery if the group is up for it.

By the end of the day we'll arrive at our destination: The Dakota Hotel in Queensferry. Near Edinburgh Airport and just north of the city, this sleek and stylish hotel will be the perfect place to rest after our week of traveling. Tonight we'll swap tales and toasts over an indulgent dinner at the hotel's excellent destination steakhouse restaurant.

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Farewell...

DAY 8: SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 7

- Return home with great memories

Transfers will be arranged for guests headed to the airport this morning. If you'd like to stay on in Edinburgh, the center of the city is about a 20-30 minute drive from The Dakota so you could stay put and travel in for sightseeing, or decide to move to a different hotel downtown.

Safe travels!

Meals Breakfast

TOUR DETAILS The Wild Beauty of Scotland

Trip Essentials

BEGINS	Central Glasgow at 5pm on Saturday, August 31, 2024
ENDS	Edinburgh Airport Hotel on Saturday, September 7, 2024 Transfer provided from The Dakota Hotel to EDI Airport No activities are scheduled on this day.
SUITABILITY & MOBILITY	<u>This tour includes walking for 15-30 minutes at a time, plus stairs, cobblestones and natural terrain.</u> Travelers may always opt out of activities they deem too physically challenging but refunds will not be provided.
TOUR DATES & PRICE	August 31—September 7, 2024 Double Occupancy \$4450 per traveler Single Supplement \$1250 additional <i>limited availability</i> Contact Onward if you are interested in a room upgrade. <i>Note that air travel is not included and a current passport is required for travel to the United Kingdom. You are welcome to pay by credit card, please add a 3% surcharge.</i>
LODGING	Motel One, Glasgow 1 Night A design-focused four star hotel right next to the Central Train Station Port Charlotte Hotel, Islay 2 Nights Small, family-run hotel with seaview rooms and a fantastic pub & restaurant The George Hotel, Inverary 1 Night A historic hotel with charming finishes in the heart of a Highlands village Kinloch Lodge, Skye 2 Nights This lochside retreat is quintessential Scottish luxury through and through The Dakota Edinburgh, Queensferry 1 Nights Modern, stylish hotel with a posh destination steakhouse restaurant

Air Travel

The tour begins in Glasgow (GLA) and ends in Edinburgh (EDI). We recommend a multi-city itinerary or that you fly round trip to Edinburgh and travel on to Glasgow by train.

Both cities are also accessible by train from London (LON).

Contact Onward Travel if you'd like assistance booking flights.

Early Arrival

Arriving early in Scotland is a great idea!

Edinburgh is not included in our itinerary and is serviced by more flights than Glasgow, so you may want to fly into Edinburgh to explore that city for a couple of days before *The Wild Beauty of Scotland* tour begins. It's less than an hour by train from Edinburgh to Glasgow.

If you'd like to spend the night of August 30th in Glasgow, we can add an early arrival night at Motel One for £156.00.

Trip price includes the following:

- Ground transportation to/from all scheduled activities, flight from Glasgow to Islay, and departure airport transfer.
- Seven nights accommodations at special lodging choices with a true sense of place.
- Most meals: daily breakfasts, four lunches, and six dinners. We have fantastic gourmet experiences planned, with wine and other drinks included unless noted otherwise.
- Local guide interpretation throughout the tour to truly understand Scotland and its rich culture and history.
- An Onward Travel Tour Director at your service.
- Activities, tastings, and tours as detailed in the itinerary.

Register now!

Visit onwardtravel.co to complete the registration form and submit payment.

Space is limited to only 14 travelers.

\$1,500 deposit due upon booking, balance due by May 15, 2024.



**The Onward
Travel Tour
Director
for this
trip is
Kat**

Katerina Clauhs Dhand founded Onward Travel along with her sister, Molly, and has been hosting our tours for about a decade (hard to believe!).

Kat has lived on three continents and traveled extensively throughout the world. She especially loves to explore architecture, art, nature and wine & spirits on her tours. Kat lives in Philadelphia with her husband, they have two young children and a dog.

TRAVELER INFORMATION The Wild Beauty of Scotland

Please take note of the following useful information, and view more at www.onwardtravel.co/letsgo



Once Onward Travel receives your registration form, we will send you an **invoice** with instructions to pay the **deposit**.



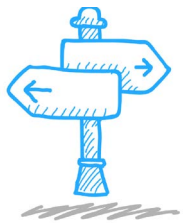
If you'd like to purchase **trip insurance**, we suggest Travelex. For more info, call them at 800-228-9792 or visit www.travelex.com and refer to location number 32-0704.



Four to six weeks before the tour **we will mail you a packet** with a packing list, traveler directory and other useful info.



Make sure you know where your **passport** is now! And double check when it expires. For travel to the UK it need not be valid past your return date.



Onward Travel's cancellation policy in a nutshell:

- \$250 of your initial deposit is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 90 days and the full deposit is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 60 days and 50% of total trip fee is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 30 days and the full trip fee is nonrefundable

See the full *Terms & Conditions* at www.onwardtravel.co/terms

Get in Touch!

Contact Onward Travel with questions or special requests:
letsgo@onwardtravel.co
845-293-2729



SCOTTISH SEAFOOD PLATTERS ARE A SIGHT TO BEHOLD!