

Day 1

Arrival - Perthshire

After arriving in Glasgow or Edinburgh, pick up your rental vehicle at the local rental office. Depart for the north of Scotland crossing the Forth Road Bridge if coming from Edinburgh and continue up the M90 to Perth.

Overnight in Perthshire area.

Day 2

Perthshire - Aberdeen

After your Full Scottish Breakfast you have the option to visit Scone Palace, the family home of the Earl of Mansfield and also the site of the famous coronation Stone of Scone, brought there in the 9th century by Kenneth MacAlpine, King of Scots. Continue your journey to Pitlochry, a small Highland town. Stop at the Salmon Ladder where you may be lucky enough to see salmon leaping! From Pitlochry, travel towards Braemar. You will take the very scenic & dramatic road over the Spittal of Glenshee one of the highest points in Scotland and also site of one of Scotland's ski resorts. Descend into Braemar which sits in the heart of Royal Deeside, the favoured holiday area for the Royal Family in Scotland. If time allows, visit Balmoral Castle (open May - July only), home of Royal Family. Continue to your accommodation in Aberdeen area.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 3

Aberdeen - Royal Deeside

Take a trip into Aberdeen, Old Aberdeen is lovely and is where the university is based. See Kings College, a chapel famous for its rich woodwork dates from the 16th century. Nearby is St Machar's Cathedral, mainly 15th century it is a granite structure of simple austere grandeur. Two notable features are the West Front with its twin castellated towers and the painted wooden Heraldic Ceiling in the nave, dated 1520.

Visit Duthie Park and Winter Gardens - a beautifully laid out 50-acre park with floral displays in all seasons including a "rose mountain". There are two boating ponds and many interesting sculptures and mountains. The Winter Gardens feature exotic plants, flowers, birds, fish and turtles. Outside Aberdeen, visit Crathes Castle which has royal historic associations dating from 1323 when the Land of Leys were granted to the Burnett family by Robert the Bruce. The castle features some remarkable late 16th century painted ceilings. There is a large walled garden and the great yew hedges date from 1702, fascinating examples of topiary. Return to your accommodation overnight.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 4

Aberdeen - Inverness

Travel north towards Inverness. In the morning follow the Whisky Trail & visit one of the many famous distilleries in the area. You can visit Glenfiddich, McCallan, Grants, Cardhu and many more. Each distillery provides an audio-visual show and then a guided tour of the distillery to learn of the processes and for many the highlight is a tasting at the end of the tour. The choice of what to see and do in the Speyside area is vast - visit a Scottish castle such as Brodie, Cawdor (made famous by the Shakespeare's Macbeth), and Ballindalloch. Visit Culloden Moor, site of the last land battle on British soil, wander around Inverness, capital of the Highlands, take the Strathspey Railway from Boat of Garten to Aviemore; or watch the Ospreys at Loch Garten. Accommodation in Inverness area.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 5

Inverness - Inverewe Gardens - Inverness

Enjoy a day visiting the West Coast of Scotland. Travel across to Ullapool, a quaint fishing village. Then travel down past the dramatic Corrieshalloch Gorge to the Inverewe Gardens, run by the National Trust. These magnificent gardens have a famous rhododendron collection and who would expect to find palm trees in Scotland. Return through the magnificent scenery of the Torridon area and past Loch Maree. Return to the Inverness area for overnight.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 6

Inverness - Loch Ness - Glencoe - Edinburgh

Today travel south again going via Loch Ness. Loch Ness forms part of the Caledonian Canal a feat of some great engineering by Thomas Telford linking East Scotland with West by using a series of lochs linked by a canal system. Stop at Urquhart Castle, a very scenic spot and also the place where the most sightings of "Nessie" have been. Continue towards Fort William, which nestles beneath the highest mountain in Great Britain - Ben Nevis. If time allows, why not take a ride up in a gondola at Aonach Mor which on a good day will offer stunning views over the west coast. From Fort William, start travelling south. Travel through the beautiful and mysterious Glencoe, which is great for walking and climbing and

full of nature. You then travel over Rannoch Moor and into the heart of the Trossachs, known as the "gateway to the Highlands". Stop at Stirling Castle, which has played such an important role in much of Scotland's vibrant history. The Great Hall has just been refurbished and the Visitor Centre has a very good audio-visual exhibition explaining much of the history. Return towards Edinburgh area where you will stay overnight.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 7

Edinburgh

Enjoy a full day in Edinburgh. In the morning, go up the Royal Mile to Edinburgh Castle, which dominates the Edinburgh skyline. The Castle is site of the oldest building in Edinburgh - St Margaret's Chapel and the Crown Jewels of Scotland. Continue down the Royal Mile - take time to explore the many "closes" which run off this street and which hold so many secrets. There are many restaurants, pubs & souvenir shops on the Royal Mile for a lunch stop. In the afternoon at the foot of the Royal Mile, visit Holyrood Palace, the official residence of the Queen whilst she is in Scotland. The Palace has a wonderful ballroom and staterooms to visit. To end the day, go into the New Town to admire the Georgian architecture and the well-laid out streets that are in complete contrast to those of the Old Town. Return to your accommodation overnight.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 8

Departure

Unfortunately, it is time to leave Scotland. Return to the airport.

Meal Plan Breakfast