



## *Ultimate Scotland Tour Itinerary*

Firstly, your kilted Brack Tours/Stravaigin tour guide takes his cue from the world famous Scottish song and transports you to the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond. We'll be stopping off in the idyllic village of Luss for a stroll through the picturesque old village leading to the pier. From the pier you can take in the simply stunning views up and down the world-famous Loch, as Ben Lomond dominates the skyline high above on the opposite bank. The Loch is the largest lake (we prefer Loch here in Scotland – it just sounds cooler!) in Great Britain and the North road to the Highlands nestles against the banks of Loch Lomond for its full twenty-four miles.

Next, we move on to the historically famous Inveraray. Sitting on the banks of Loch Fyne, it's home to Inveraray Castle, the seat of the Clan Campbell and The Duke of Argyll. This spectacular piece of architecture was originally started in 1746 but wasn't completed until 1789! A fire sadly ravaged the castle in 1877 but it was rebuilt into the stunning design you will see on your visit.

Now to Kilmartin Glen. The Glen itself is positively littered with history with over eight hundred archaeological sites, some dating back 7000 years, including Nether Largie Cairn, the Temple Wood Stone Circles, and Ballymeanoch Stonehenge. The Glen is also home to some of the most impressive cup and ring decorated rock surfaces in Scotland.

We at Stravaigin pride ourselves in providing the very best in memorable and cosy so there's no contest for the location of our first overnight stay. For jaw dropping beauty, our next stop, the beautiful wee fishing town of Oban takes the prize. It's the main ferry port for the islands off the West coast of Scotland and is also famed for it's shops on the harbour front and it's outstanding seafood available in it's many restaurants and café's. The seafood here really 'hakes' some beating! (Sorry.)

After a peaceful sleep and a hearty Scottish breakfast, It's time to leave pretty wee Oban behind and pay a visit to Kilchurn Castle, an ancient 15<sup>th</sup> century Campbell stronghold which sits on a rocky peninsula at the Northeastern end of Loch Awe. Believe it or not, you can still venture to the top of the ramparts to breathe in the surrounding fern green mountains and cobalt blue waters of Loch Awe.

One word for our next visit – Wow! It's Glencoe. For sheer drama, Glencoe simply cannot be beaten. Both stunning and haunting, The Glen Of Weeping as it's also known, has a bloody and tragic air of history coursing through it's unique atmosphere. The Glencoe massacre of 1692, where the government sponsored Campbell Clan attacked and murdered many of the MacDonald Clan of the

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Glen, is a brutal chapter in Scotland's history. The word memorable doesn't do a Glencoe visit justice. Post Glencoe drama, we stop at a cosy inn for some lovely food, a dram or three and a blissful nights sleep.

Morning! And on we go to our next port of call – Skye. Look out for all manner of sea life and birds including Whales, dolphins, otters and Sea Eagles on the characterful ferry across to Skye. Utterly mesmerizing and steeped in history and mystery, there's so much to do here on this island that Stravaigin have chosen Skye as our two night designated stay. So much wildlife, so many attractions and numerous activities cannot be covered in a day, so after a cosy first night in enchanting Portree, the adventure continues into a second day.

Pictures taken, fresh air inhaled and stress melted away, we make our way back to the mainland next and it's time for Eilean Donan Castle and the Kyle Of Lochalsh, Recognised as one of the most recognisable and iconic images of Scotland, the Castle is situated on an island at the point where three great Lochs meet the sea. Surrounded by majestic and awe inspiring scenery, we recommend that you keep the cameras handy for this one.

What's that you cry? More mystery – Scottish style? Just what will you make of Loch Ness? You can choose a cruise on the Loch for a spot of Nessie hunting if you wish. Loch Ness at its deepest point is a staggering 755 ft and it contains more fresh water than all the lakes in Wales and England combined, so please don't fall in! Geology and Science more your thing? Then why not visit the Loch Ness Monster Exhibition? (No real monsters we promise.) For those of you who feel safer on dry land, you can wander freely around the resplendent and historic ruins of Urquhart Castle. Fort Augustus at the end of the Loch is perfect for a relaxing stroll around the Locks of the Caledonian Canal, a cruise or a spot of lunch.

Assuming we've all caught Nessie on camera, it's time for an overnight stop in delightful Inverness. Rich in culture, shopping and chock full of bustling pavement cafes and award-winning restaurants, it's an ideal rest point to catch your breath mid tour!

Following sweet dreams and a breakfast fit for a Scottish King or Queen, we move along to bonny Perthshire or 'Big Tree Country' as it's proudly known. Some of the tallest trees in the UK stand proudly in the lush green Perthshire landscape making for breath-taking views.

Post lunch we wind our way through luscious green scenery towards picturesque Pitlochry. Clear sparkling air, dazzling scenery, rich clan history, fine food and plenty of space with lots to see and do, Pitlochry has been a tourist destination for over 150 years counting Queen Victoria amongst its earliest visitors.

An absolute must see in this neck of the woods is the handsome Blair Castle. Dating back to 1269, the castle has been transformed through the ages from its cold medieval beginnings in a strategic position during political struggles to become a fine Georgian mansion and finally a Victorian castle in the Baronial style. These eclectic influences can still be seen today across 30 rooms on full display. Pitlochry is so pretty we hate to rush through it, so our last overnigher will fittingly be spent in one of Scotland's most charming places. Nobody leaves Pitlochry in a hurry...

We are now nearing the end of our 7 day tour so let's go out with a bang! There aren't many prettier and historically interesting places to stroll around than St Andrews, so let's go. Packed with great outdoor places to explore and enjoy and full of attractions, festivals and events, there's far more to St

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Andrews than golf. Wander at your leisure and discover all the nooks and crannies in this unique wee place.

As you may be aware, St Andrew's is also home to the world-famous university, where second in line to the British throne, Prince William, met his future bride Kate Middleton. Princes and Princesses? Told you Scotland was the most romantic country in the world didn't we! The University, the oldest in Scotland, with international renown for research and education, is situated in the picture postcard town.

Steeped in history, you'll learn as you explore that our patron Saint, St Andrew, was first recognised as patron Saint of Scotland in 1320. Andrew is also the patron saint of Greece, Romania, Russia and Barbados, but we don't have time to visit those places this time round. The presence of St Andrew's relics in Scotland – a tooth, a kneecap, an arm and finger bones! – meant that St Andrew's became a popular medieval pilgrimage site although they were destroyed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century during the Scottish Reformation.

Having worked up a healthy appetite, we follow a lovely lunch with a journey towards our final destination (No crying at the back please!). It can only be – Edinburgh!

A trip to Scotland really wouldn't be complete without a visit to our spectacular capital city, and a visit to Edinburgh HAS to take in a wee jaunt to Edinburgh Castle! Sitting atop an extinct volcano, this alluring icon of Scottish history dates back to the iron age and has been fought over many times during the wars of independence. The Castle has also been the home of several monarchs and it houses both the Scottish Crown Jewels and our iconic Stone Of Destiny.

There's plenty to do and see here. Take a stroll down the Royal Mile and immerse yourself in ancient Edinburgh. Also a vibrant, bustling Cosmopolitan city, Edinburgh has great shopping. From High Street stores to beautiful boutiques, Edinburgh has it covered. Eating out here too is a culinary delight, as Edinburgh boasts an array of award winning restaurants, cafes and bars.

**This tour is completely customisable so please don't hesitate to get in touch with us and let us create your perfect itinerary.**



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