

THE TRAVEL CLUB

Edinburgh & the Castles of Scotland

10 DAYS: Thursday, September 26-Saturday, October 5, 2019

\$3,679 per person double occupancy; \$4,359 for single reservations

Includes round-trip airfare, fuel surcharge and all air taxes and fees. Fuel surcharge, air taxes and fees subject to change. Passport required. Per person deposit is \$450.

Get to know the land of lochs, glens, and legends. From its ancient castles to its rolling landscapes and blaring bagpipes, Scotland is undeniably intriguing. With plenty of time to explore, you'll get your dose of well-known Scottish icons. Then, head a little off the beaten path, moving farther into the untamed Highlands and over craggy hills laden with lochs and Gaelic-speaking villages.



Your tour package includes

- 8 nights in handpicked hotels, 8 breakfasts, 3 dinners with beer or wine
- 5 guided sightseeing tours, Expert Tour Director & local guides, Private deluxe motor coach
- Hotel accommodations (or similar)
- Glasgow: Novotel Glasgow City Centre 2n
- The Highlands: Alexandra Hotel 3n
- Edinburgh: Holiday Inn Express City Centre 3n

Included highlights

- Glasgow Cathedral, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Inveraray Castle, Loch Ness,
- Urquhart Castle, Blair Castle, Scotch whisky distillery, Edinburgh Castle,

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for about 1 hour daily across moderately uneven terrain, including cobblestone streets and unpaved trails, with some steep hills and stairs.

Overnight Flight

Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Glasgow today.

Glasgow

Day 2: Arrival in Glasgow

Included meals: Dinner

Welcome to Scotland! Meet your fellow travelers at tonight's welcome dinner.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Glasgow

Included meals: Breakfast

Set out to explore Scotland's "second city" today with a local as your guide.

- Drive past the Burrell Collection Museum and admire the city's university
- Visit the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, which features everything from medieval suits of armor to a collection of work by Scottish artists
- Discover local highlights, including George Square and the River Clyde
- Stop outside the city's medieval cathedral for photos

Spend a free afternoon in Glasgow or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion **Historic Scotland & Stirling Castle** \$109/pp

Visit Stirling, a town steeped in the history of the Wars of Scottish Independence. For generations, Stirling Castle held off British advances and served as a rallying point for rebellious Scots. It was within Stirling Castle that the infant Mary Stewart was crowned Mary, Queen of Scots. You'll learn more about the castle's extensive history as you follow along with an audio guide. In addition to the castle, you'll visit the town of Falkirk. While here, stop to see The Kelpies. These two 98-foot-high steel sculptures pay homage to the role horses played in Scotland's agricultural development. Then, visit the ruins of Antonine Wall, a UNESCO World Heritage site built in 142 A.D., just 20 years after the completion of Hadrian's Wall. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$119)

Scottish Highlands

Day 4: Transfer to the Scottish Highlands

Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Continue on to the Scottish Highlands, admiring incredible sights as you go.

- Pass Loch Lomond as you drive through scenic Trossachs National Park
- Stop to explore Inveraray Castle and its gardens
- Take in stunning scenery as you travel through the Scottish Highlands

This evening, sit down to an included dinner with your group.

Day 5: Urquhart Castle, Loch Ness & Inverness

Included meals: Breakfast

Surrounded by legend and lore, Loch Ness is one of Scotland's most mysterious sites. Today, get to know the country's largest loch as you explore the area.

- Pay a visit to the medieval ruins of Urquhart Castle

- Cruise along the legendary Loch Ness, a deep, freshwater lake, and dock in Clansman Harbour
 - Stop in Inverness and enjoy free time to explore the city
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Day 6: Free day in the Scottish Highlands

Included meals: Breakfast

Spend the day exploring the Highlands on your own or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Isle of Skye & Eilean Donan Castle \$109/pp

Cross the Skye Bridge over Loch Alsh to the Isle of Skye, famous for its association with Bonnie Prince Charlie. Then, set off for a guided sightseeing tour of the isle, exploring the town of Portree and stopping to view the rock pinnacle known as the Old Man of Storr. Next, admire breathtaking view of Kilt Rock before taking a scenic drive through the Scottish Highlands to visit Eilean Donan Castle. Explore the iconic site, arguably the world's most photographed castle, with a local guide. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$119)

Edinburgh

Day 7: Transfer to Edinburgh

Included meals: Breakfast

En route to Edinburgh, stop in Perthshire, the gateway to the Scottish Highlands.

- Visit medieval Blair Castle, the former home of the Dukes and Earls of Atholl

(Please note: Entrance to Blair Castle is seasonal and runs from April to late October only. When entrance is out of season, it will be replaced with a visit to Black Watch Castle & Museum.)

- Explore Edradour distillery with a guide and enjoy a whisky tasting

Enjoy a free evening in Edinburgh or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Scottish Bagpipe Lesson & Dinner \$129/pp

Head to a private room at a local restaurant in Edinburgh and meet with a professional bagpipe player. You'll learn about the history of the bagpipe, which is Scotland's national instrument and is synonymous with the country's culture, and listen to the musician play a few songs. Then, pick up your own bagpipe and follow along as they teach the group breathing techniques and tips on how to play. After your lesson, enjoy a three-course dinner with drinks. Must book 20 days before departure

Day 8: Sightseeing tour of Edinburgh

Included meals: Breakfast

Get to know Edinburgh in all its medieval beauty on a tour led by a local expert.

- View the elegant Georgian New Town and the Royal Mile, two UNESCO World Heritage sites
- Pass the King George statue, Bute House, and Sir Walter Scott monument
- Enter Edinburgh Castle to view the Scottish crown jewels and Stone of Scone

Spend a free afternoon in Edinburgh or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Abbotsford House & Melrose Abbey \$95/pp

Travel through the Scottish Borders region to Abbotsford, where you'll enjoy an included lunch. Continue on to Abbotsford House, the 19th-century estate of Sir Walter Scott. The poet designed his home in the Romantic style to imitate the elaborate baronial estates of British aristocrats. Today it serves as a museum for the Scottish memorabilia and artifacts that Scott collected throughout his lifetime. Later, visit the ruins of Melrose Abbey, one of the most impressive of the four Borders abbeys. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$105)

Day 9: Free day in Edinburgh**Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

Enjoy a full free day in Edinburgh or add an excursion.

Tonight, experience an authentic *cèilidh*, an age-old Scottish celebration. Enjoy a farewell dinner of local specialties as dancers perform and you're serenaded by a band playing Scottish folk tunes.

Optional Excursion St Andrews \$89/pp

St Andrews may be most well known as the home of golf, but it's also the site of Scotland's oldest university. On this excursion, you'll pass by the 16th-century grounds of St Andrews University, the alma mater of Prince William, who met Kate Middleton here. You'll also join a local guide to enter the ruins of the town's medieval cathedral and 13th-century castle which overlooks the North Sea. After, enjoy free time in town for lunch or to visit the British Golf Museum. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$99)

Day 10: Departure**Included meals: Breakfast (excluding early morning departures)**

Transfer to the airport for your flight home, or extend your stay to continue exploring Edinburgh.