



Scotland Hiking Adventure

8 Days



Day 1 | Eilean Donan Castle

Skippers and Serpents

Mid-morning, we meet our Wild Women guide in Inverness. We head south to the fabled Loch Ness for a high-speed Zodiac boat ride. Our skipper will stop at notable places of interest to share secret tidbits and tall tales along the way (about the one that got away, no doubt!).

After the thrill of the boat trip and goosebumpy accounts of the submarine serpent, we have an authentic lunch at a local cafe before making our way to the tiny coastal village of Plockton (population: 468!). En route, we stop at the iconic and instantly recognizable Eilean Donan Castle, one of Scotland's most treasured attractions. Situated on an island where three great sea lochs (lakes) converge, four different versions of the castle have been built and rebuilt since the 13th century.

Included Meals

Lunch and dinner

Accommodations

The Plockton Inn



Day 2 | Loch Carron

Cattle and Castles

The twee fishing village of Plockton sits on the shores of Loch Carron. The painted cottages, pines and palms make for a curious mix. Yachties love this sheltered bay. Highland cattle, blooming heather and painters transfixed by the scene are a predictable sight.

We hike inland to two freshwater lochs. If the group is game, we can incorporate a summit of Cam a Bhealaich Mhoir, which looms at 1,125 feet (343 m) above sea level, to marvel at the stunning views across Loch Carron.

On our return loop, we pass the enormous 80-room Duncraig Castle, which was built in the 1860s. During WWII it served as a naval hospital and later as a science college and B&B.

Our remarkable day will draw to a close as we hike along the coastline and snap pics of Plockton's harbor as local boats purr into the Old Pier with fresh fish and prawns.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

The Plockton Inn

The Hike

Flexible distance of 6–9 miles (9–14 km), which takes about 3.5 to 5 hours, with a 1,427 foot (435 m) ascent. The paths are easy to navigate though they can be muddy and rough in places.



Day 3 | Cauldron of Waters

Wee Hills and Wool Socks

We travel by boat from Elgol into the hidden Loch Coruisk, whose haunting Gaelic name (Coire Uisg) means “Cauldron of Waters.” This narrow freshwater loch lies at the foot of the Black Cuillin in the Isle of Skye. It’s only accessible by boat or by an 8-mile (13 km) hike. It’s common to see porpoises, seals, minke whales and basking sharks in this area. This lake is also the home of a “kelpie” or water horse—a shapeshifting creature that can assume human form. Most bodies of water in Scotland have something mystical lurking below.

We land at Loch Coruisk and follow the shoreline, hugged by the Cuillin Mountains, and hike around the loch or up a “wee hill,” as the Scots say. In the late afternoon, we settle into our accommodations at Loch Eyre House, enjoying a hot shower and a change of wool socks!

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

Loch Eyre House

The Hike

Flexible distance up to 4.5 miles (7 km), which takes about 3–4 hours, with a 400 foot (122 m) ascent. Expect a boggy and rough path with rocky slopes; depending on the route, there may also be a river crossing over stepping stones. Our guide will decide which hiking route is best for the group depending on our pace, fitness level and comfort on the boggy terrain.



Day 4 | Skye High

Pinnacles and Pubs

Trotternish is a dramatic rugged peninsula located on the northern tip of the Isle of Skye, renowned for its alluring coastal landscapes and unique rock formations. One of the most notable geological landmarks is the Quiraing. Created millions of years ago by landslides and geological upheavals, the towering cliffs and peculiar pinnacles remain as evolutionary evidence. This is the area we explore today as our guide leads us on The Quiraing, one of Skye's classic routes. This trail offers views of what appears to be the fortress walls of a prison, but the rock structure is 100% natural. Dare we say...it's jailhouse rock? The Prison, turf steps, island views and hidden plateaus (that were once used to hide sheep and cattle from invaders) make for a super scenic hike.

Late afternoon, we return to our hotel to refresh and change out of our hiking gear. We may have some free time to wander the harbor and squeeze in a pint in the former fishing village of Portree, the largest town and capital of the Island of Skye before returning to our hotel for dinner. For those who wish to just relax at the hotel, that's okay too.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

Loch Eyre House

The Hike

4.5 miles (7.25 km), which takes about 3–5 hours, with a 1,115 foot (340 m) ascent. Note: The Quirang hike has challenging sections of slippery rock and steep and narrow pathways.



Day 5 | Black Cuillin

Hiking up an Appetite

This morning we hike in one of the secluded glens to the north of the legendary Black Cuillin Mountains, known as the United Kingdom's most challenging range. We stick to the lower paths

with a backdrop of craggy mountain peaks and sweet views of the Small Isles and Outer Hebrides.

Late afternoon, we leave the island's magical grip and journey to Fort William, the “outdoor capital of Scotland” and the gateway to Ben Nevis. The town is also loved by film directors, distillers and sunsetters who gather to celebrate the burning of the day with sundowners over the Isles of Frum, Eigg, Muck, Canna and Skye.

Our guest house is close to the town center of Fort William. Tonight's dinner is independent and there are several tempting options to choose from: Thai, Indian, vegan, traditional grub and community pubs serving heaps of comfort food.

Included Meals

Breakfast and lunch

Accommodations

Guisachan Guest House or Lime Tree An Ealdhain in Fort William

The Hike

Option 1 - Glen Sligachan Hike: Flexible distance up to 10 miles (16 km), around 6 hours, with a 984 foot (300 m) ascent. The trail is easy to cover through the glen but it can be rough and boggy in places.

Option 2 - Boreraig and Suisnish: 10.25 miles (16.5 km), around 5–6 hours, with a 1,148 foot (350 m) ascent. The trail is mostly clear paths, tracks and minor roads. It can be boggy and wet underfoot in some places.



Day 6 | Hiking Ben or Glen Nevis

The Peak Moment

Today, we have two guides and two hike options—we may choose to boldly trek to the summit or take the slow and steady low road. Those with a bounce in their step can choose to ascend Scotland's highest and most famous peaks, Ben Nevis. Starting from almost sea level and rising to 4,409 feet (1,344 m), this hike is not for the faint-hearted or flat-footed.

The alternative hike follows the lower level route (but equally scenically impressive) of Glen Nevis and Steall Falls. The rugged beauty of this glen has been captured in many films including the *Harry Potter* series and *Braveheart*, so this majestic trek will not disappoint.

Our guide will lead us through a whiskey tasting back at our guesthouse, introducing us to the subtle smoky notes and fiery history of Scotch whisky. This evening, we make our way to a lively local pub to celebrate our efforts in the mountains and moors.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

Guisachan Guest House or Lime Tree An Ealdhain in Fort William

The Hike

Option 1 - Ben Nevis Hike: 11 miles (18 km), which takes about 7–9 hours, with a 4,435 foot (1,352 m) ascent. It is a steep path throughout, rough and rocky near the top and often snow-covered on the higher areas with some powder patches remaining in summer months. Note: The Ben Nevis hike will only be possible if weather permits. An alternative will be offered if the high level hike isn't recommended by the guide.

Option 2 - Glen Nevis Hike: 2.25 miles (3.5 km), which takes about 1.5–2 hours, with a 721 foot (220 m) ascent. It's a clear path but very rough and rocky with steep drops in some places. Expect some rock and roll!



Day 7 | The Sound of Arisaig

Paddling into Peace

We can air our punky hiking boots for the day! In the morning we have a guided sea kayaking experience in the serene Sound of Arisaig. There are intimate coves, rock skerries and remote beaches to discover and a resident colony of curious seals that we will float past.

After an alfresco lunch, we can poke along the white sand beaches of the Morar coastline searching for fascinating rock formations and tidal seaside creatures for one hour and then spend some free time in Fort William. The town center has several traditional Scottish stores selling crafts, clothing and outdoor gear.

Tonight we gather for a celebratory farewell dinner in Fort William before returning to our guest house.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

Guisachan Guest House or Lime Tree An Ealdhain in Fort William

The Hike

Beach Hike: 1.25 miles (2 km) which takes about one hour along dune paths and sandy beach.



Day 8 | Inverness

Departure

Today brings our Highlands hiking journey to a close. But what a high it was! After one last leisurely breakfast together, we transfer back to our starting point in Inverness and for a drop-off at the Inverness Railway Station (in the city center) around 12:30 p.m. The train to Inverness Airport is 10 minutes. Please do not book flights before 3:30 p.m. from Inverness Airport to allow for any potential travel delays. If you are departing from Edinburgh, please take into consideration the additional train travel international flight check-in times.

Included Meals

Breakfast



Trip Details

Know Before You Go

For all of the logistical details you'll need to know prior to departure—including the packing list, arrival and departure details and suggested tipping information, click [HERE](#).

Itinerary version as of May 10, 2024.