

# ***A Bonny BREAKAWAYS Adventure***

## ***Scottish Highlands Discovery Tour***

***Sept 14 – 21, 2024***

***Arrive Sept 13, 2024***



### **HOLIDAY OVERVIEW**

Set against a stunning backdrop of Scottish Highland scenery, this tour combines a wealth of classic sightseeing opportunities with plenty of memorable moments. Admire the world-famous Glenfinnan Viaduct as we cruise across Loch Shiel, and keep your eyes peeled for rare wildlife including red deer and mighty white-tailed eagles. Watch traditional highland wool spinners at work with a visit to Ariundle Experience Centre and explore the impossibly pretty village of Plockton for wow-worthy views over Loch Carron. There's also a trip to the iconic castle-crowned tidal island of Eilean Donan and a chance to sample catch-of-the-day delights in Oban – gateway to the Hebridean Islands and Scotland's seafood capital.

# WELCOME TO *THE SCOTTISH* *HIGHLANDS*

## HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- A scenic cruise on Loch Shiel
- Spending time in the handsome fishing village of Oban
- Discovering the history of Glen Coe
- Visiting the castle-crowned tidal island of Eilean Donan
- Exploring Inveraray with its French-style castle and old jail
- Staying in our country house on the shores of Loch Leven

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided sightseeing with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from sites of interest
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

## TRIP SUITABILITY

### Trip suitability

Our Discovery holidays give you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture of the local area through **active sightseeing**.

On each Discovery day, you will be walking roughly 3-5 miles (5-8km) throughout the course of the day as you explore the venues and locations we visit. You'll also be hopping on and off the coach throughout - you should expect to spend the majority of the day on your feet. Most of this walking will be at attractions but some may be across country tracks or footpaths so be sure to **bring sturdy shoes**. There will also be stairs to climb in the majority of the venues you visit, though other more accessible options may be available. At some venues, there may also be uneven surfaces, such as cobbles or rocky paths.

**Note:** Admission fees are payable locally and aren't included in your holiday price. Admission fees across the entire week are approximately £25. **We have included this pricing in your total package.**

# ACCOMMODATION

## ALLTSHELLACH COUNTRY HOUSE

+44 (0) 1885 821357



For a combination of mountain views, olde-worlde charm, and somewhere comfortable to sleep, this stately Scottish house in North Ballachulish has an enviable setting right on the shores of Loch Leven. The walking opportunities here are as every bit rugged and romantic as you'd expect, especially around Glen Coe, the Mamores, Kinlochleven, Bidean nam Bian, and Ben Nevis – the 1,345-metre-high peak towering above glistening lochans and glacial valleys in the north-west Highlands. You can also spend time in Fort William and ride the Hogwarts-esque Jacobite steam train as it makes its way through beauty spots such as Loch Eil, Glenfinnan, and Arisaig to the fishing port of Mallaig.

### ROOMS

Designed with your comfort in mind, Alltschellach has 38 well-appointed guest rooms available in three categories: Classic, Premium, and Superior.

**Classic Rooms** are comfortable en-suite guest rooms, ideal for a peaceful night's sleep. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, and shower gel), and a TV.

**Premium Rooms are on Request only.** They are more spacious en-suite guest rooms. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers, and comfortable mattresses. *Additional cost of £20 per person per night for total of £140 per person for the week.*

**Superior Rooms are on Request only.** They are even more spacious en-suite guest rooms offering upgraded views of the surrounds. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers, and comfortable mattresses. *Additional cost of £25 per person per night for total of £175 per person for the week.*

### **Check in & check out**

You are welcome to check in from **4:00pm at the earliest**. On arrival, you'll enjoy a complimentary cream tea and get to meet your fellow guests, our HF Holidays Leaders, and the rest of the friendly team.

On the day of departure, we kindly ask all guests to check out by **10:00am**. You'll be asked to settle your bill prior to leaving. You may, of course, make a charitable donation to our HF Holidays Pathways Fund if you wish. Please note that we only accept card payments.

## **ABOUT YOUR STAY**

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We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

## **FOOD & DRINK**

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Led by experienced chefs, we serve a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients. We always aim to source the best produce available and use home-grown herbs and vegetables from our own gardens whenever possible. Additionally, we have a licensed bar with beers, soft drinks, and a superb selection of spirits.

Full-board comes as standard and includes a cream tea on arrival and a hearty breakfast on departure day. Most dietary requirements can be catered for, so please inform us of any food intolerances or allergies at the time of booking.

## **YOUR EVENINGS**

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While evening entertainment varies from house to house, the HF Holidays Big Pub Quiz held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays Leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

# *Scottish Highlands*

## ITINERARY

### **SEPTEMBER 13, 2024 - PRE-TOUR HOTEL IN GLASGOW FOR THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 13TH.**

3:00pm - Check-in voco Grand Central Glasgow Hotel, 99 Gordon St. Glasgow

[https://www.ihg.com/voco/hotels/gb/en/glasgow/glags/hoteldetail?cm\\_mmc=GoogleMaps- -VX- -GB- -GLAGS](https://www.ihg.com/voco/hotels/gb/en/glasgow/glags/hoteldetail?cm_mmc=GoogleMaps- -VX- -GB- -GLAGS)

4:30pm - Welcome reception to meet and connect with your fellow travelers.

### **DAY 1: HIGHLANDS ARRIVAL DAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2024**

12:00pm - Bus transfer from the voco Grand Central Glasgow is included to the Alltshellach Country House in North Ballachulish (Glencoe). Approximately 2.5 hour journey

4:00pm - Welcome to Alltshellach. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea on arrival. Unpack and settle in.

### **DAY 2: STRATHSPEY RAILWAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2024**

Today, we head across the beautiful central Highlands to the Strathspey railway, for a round trip from Aviemore to Broomhill.

This was once part of the Highland main line to Inverness but was bypassed and closed. At 10 miles, it's the longest heritage railway in Scotland and has some beautifully restored stations and beautiful views of the Cairngorms.

### **DAY 3: EILEAN DONAN & PLOCKTON, SEPTEMBER 16, 2024**

Today, our trip takes north to Spean Bridge before continuing on to Glengarry and then to the iconic Eilean Donan castle, set at the intersection of three great sea lochs. Both Eilean Donan and our next stop, Plockton, are stars of the silver screen, with the latter being our final stop of the day before returning to the country house for a well-deserved dinner.



## DAY 4: FREE DAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2024

We have booked an exciting rail day on the Jacobite Railway for our Free Day!

Described as the greatest railway journey in the world, this 84 mile round trip takes you past a list of impressive extremes. Starting near the highest mountain in Britain, Ben Nevis, it visits Britain's most westerly mainland railway station, Arisaig; passes close by the deepest freshwater loch in Britain, Loch Morar and the shortest river in Britain, River Morar, finally arriving next to the deepest seawater loch in Europe, Loch Nevis!

9:15am. Our coach will take us from Alltshellach to Fort William to board our train  
10:15am All aboard as we take the Jacobite express

### GLENFINNAN

We cross the 21-arched Glenfinnan viaduct (a location made famous in the Harry Potter films) which overlooks Loch Shiel and the Jacobite monument. The train may pause on the viaduct, time permitting, to allow you to take in the magnificent view. Subject to time permitting, we will stop at Glenfinnan station. Once stopped in Glenfinnan there will be time to stretch your legs and, if you wish, visit the West Highland Railway Museum located in the restored station building. The Jacobite may also stop at Arisaig by request to the guard.

12:26pm Arrive in Mallaig

### MALLAIG

The end of the line, Mallaig was founded during the 1840s when the owner of the North Morar Estate, Lord Lovat, divided up the farm on the coast here into a series of parcels of land and encouraged his tenants living around Loch Morar and Loch Nevis to resettle in what became Mallaig and establish a fishing village. Today Mallaig is a busy fishing port and ferry terminal with services to Skye, the Small Isles and to the Knoydart Peninsula to visit Inverie and the most remote pub on mainland Britain, The Old Forge. In addition, you can board MV Western Isles for a scenic Wildlife Cruise. Arriving in Mallaig we have over an hour and a half to enjoy a walk round and take in the atmosphere: there are shops, bars, restaurants and plenty of fish and chips to be enjoyed during the lunchtime stopover.

2:10pm Depart Mallaig for the return journey  
4:03pm. Arrive Fort William and transfer back to Alltshellach  
4:30pm 'ish' Arrive back in Alltshellach

## DAY 5: ARDGOUR & GLENFINNAN, SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

Today we take the Corran ferry to Ardgour and walk in the ancient Ariundle oakwoods, stopping for coffee at the Ariundle Centre. In early afternoon we travel to the village of Acharacle from where we cruise the length of Loch Shiel with a chance to see both Golden and White-tailed eagles. Disembarking at Glenfinnan, where in 1745 Bonnie Prince Charlie raised the standard, we take a short journey to Neptune's Staircase on the Caledonian Canal, our final destination of the day.

## DAY 6: INVERARAY CASTLE & LOCH AWE, SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

We travel through historic Glencoe and over Rannoch Moor to Bridge of Orchy for a short easy walk along the banks of Abhainn Shira. Our afternoon sees us visiting scenic Inveraray with free time to explore the castle, old jailhouse or shops.

Our return journey takes us by Loch Awe, atmospheric Kilchurn castle, with a stop at St Conan's Kirk for coffee.

## DAY 7: OBAN AND WEST COAST ISLANDS, SEPTEMBER 20, 2024

We travel south and cross the Clachan Bridge to the Isle of Seil where a short boat trip takes us to the old slate isle of Easedale. We've time to explore and visit the community owned folk museum, home to a wonderful and eclectic collection of objects from Island life over the years. If you're not keen on boat trips, take time out of the itinerary and visit the glorious 1930's An-Cala gardens on Seil. Later in the afternoon, the pretty harbour town of Oban welcomes us and we have free time to explore. There's plenty to see, with two cathedrals, a Distillery, and many charming shops to choose from. Or take time out and climb to McCaig's Folly for fantastic views.

## DAY 8: DEPARTURE DAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2024

9:30am – Depart Alltshellach via coach transfer to the voco Grand Central. Approximate arrival 12:30pm

3:00pm – Check-in to the hotel if you have pre-arranged a room for the night.

Bon voyage wherever your travels take you from here. It was a pleasure having you with us!

## TOURING SAFETY

*Itineraries may be changed for safety reasons and are subject to a maximum and minimum number of guests. Leaders always consider the safety of the group and may need to alter the tour if the conditions dictate.*

In the event of a problem all leaders carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, group shelter, spare maps and a compass.

**Please note:** If you choose to leave the group your leader is no longer responsible for you.

If you have a specific health condition or disability please put this on your guest registration form. This information will be confidential to your leaders and the house manager, but leaders do need to take account of any issues when planning tours.

**Insurance: Insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so, and advise us of the insurance company and policy number.**

# WHAT TO WEAR & BRING

The UK has a famously unpredictable climate so it's best to be prepared for weather that's sunny one minute and raining the next. To make it easier, here's a list of items you should consider packing. The following are geared more to walking tours, however we will be walking to/from attractions and likely be out in the elements so we have kept most of the items on the list.

## Essentials

- Suitable footwear such as waterproof walking boots that provide ankle support and good grip (always a good idea on uneven paths and cobblestone streets)
- Waterproof and windproof jacket
- Waterproof pants - *optional*
- Comfortable clothing (jeans get cold easily and don't dry well when wet)
- Gloves and a warm hat, sunhat
- Small Backpack to carry personal items and lunch etc.
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity)
- A small flashlight or headlamp with batteries
- Sunscreen
- Mobile phone and portable charger, adapters for Great Britain
- Watch
- UV sunglasses

## Recommended

- Several base layers (long-sleeve or short-sleeve).
- Cushioned walking socks to avoid blisters
- First aid kit, including plasters (Band-Aids) and insect repellent
- Waterproof pouch for valuables - optional
- Wallet/purse

# HOLIDAY TIPS

**Passport Requirements:** Have a least 6 months left on your passport

**Language:** English

**Currency:** British Pound GBP

**Changing money:** There is an ATM machine in Glencoe or you can also withdraw money at Glasgow Airport

**Electricity:** 230 Volt AC with 3-pin plugs in the UK. Please bring a UK adapter with you for electronic equipment. Or a portable battery charger is very handy too!



## **Telephone code:**

*To call Canada/US from United Kingdom:*

Calling to a land line phone: dial: 00 - 1 - Area Code - Land Phone Number  
Calling to a Mobile Number: 00 - 1 - 10 Digit Mobile Number

*To dial a number in the UK*

- Step 1 - Dial the Exit Code (011) Enter the exit code, 011 (or the '+' key if you're on a cellphone)
- Step 2 - Dial the Country Code (44) After dialing the exit code, enter in 44.
- Step 3-Dial the Mobile Code (7) ...
- Step 4-Dial the Phone Number.