Scotland: Highlands and Islands

“My heart’s in the Highlands,” said the poet Robert Burns – as will you, as we travel from city to country and mainland to island on this sweet journey. From loch to loch and glen to glen, we encounter stunning natural beauty and welcoming clans, while city life serves up the colorful past – and cosmopolitan present.

Itinerary

Created on Sep 29, 2026

Scotland: Highlands and Islands
Day-by-Day Itinerary

DAY 1: Depart U.S. for Edinburgh, Scotland

DAY 2: Arrive Edinburgh/Glasgow

We arrive today in Edinburgh and transfer by coach to Glasgow, where we check in at our hotel. As guests' arrival times may vary greatly, we have no group activities planned during the day. Late this afternoon we gather with our Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director for a briefing on the journey ahead. Then we enjoy a welcome dinner at either the acclaimed National Piping Centre or the well-appointed Corinthian Club.

Meals: Dinner

DAY 3: Glasgow

This morning's tour highlights "Glasgow Style," the city's distinct architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Though Glasgow has a rich medieval history, very few structures from that time survive; it is the Victorian-era buildings of red or blond sandstone with long lines that define the city's historic built environment. Among the standout buildings we see: Glasgow Central Station, the Royal Exchange, and Glasgow City Chambers. We also visit The Burrell Collection, Glasgow's world-class collection of art featuring medieval artifacts, Chinese art, priceless tapestries, and paintings by Manet, Cézanne, and Degas. After lunch at a local restaurant, we tour Sir John W. Simpson's immensely popular Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, housing an excellent collection of arms and armaments, and European artwork, including Salvador Dali's *Christ of St. John of the Cross*.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4: Glasgow/Loch Lomond/Glencoe/Fort William

We leave Glasgow this morning by motorcoach, bound for the scenic Highlands, Scotland's sparsely populated historic northern region. We stop by the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond, Great Britain's largest lake and part of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. We tour the island-dotted loch by coach before continuing on to Glencoe, one of Scotland's most beautiful spots with deep valleys flanked by steep-sided mountains, rushing rivers, and dramatic waterfalls. Then we travel on to Fort William, the Highlands' second largest settlement, arriving late this afternoon.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5: Fort William/Isle of Skye

We embark on a full-day excursion to the Isle of Skye, the largest of Scotland's Inner Hebrides, known for its vivid history, strong Gaelic influence, and stunning scenery. En route, we make a photo stop at Glenfinnan Monument, honoring "Bonnie Prince Charlie" for his leadership in the Jacobite Rising of 1745. Then we board a ferry for Armadale on the southern tip of Isle of Skye. Our touring begins with a visit to Armadale Castle and Gardens, ancestral home of the ancient Clan Donald. Next: a scenic drive through Skye, with views of the imposing Cuillin Hills (or "Black Cuillin"). Returning to the mainland via the Skye Bridge, we stop to visit iconic Eilean Donan Castle then dine tonight at our hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6: Fort William/Loch Ness/Inverness

We depart today for the Northern Highlands, stopping en route at fabled Loch Ness. We enjoy a boat ride on the 23-mile-long lake best known for the unearthly creature alleged to live in its deep waters. We also visit the ruins of lakeside Urquhart Castle, one of Scotland's most popular attractions. Dating to at least the 13th century, the castle sits surrounded by water on three sides, giving it a once-formidable advantage in battle. Then we travel on to the historic Culloden Moor battle site. After time on our own to tour the museum here, we tour the hallowed grounds, site of the last battle of the Jacobite Rising in 1746. Early this evening we arrive in Inverness on Scotland's northeast coast and cultural capital of the Highlands. We dine tonight at our hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7: Inverness/Highlands

Our exploration of the Highlands continues on today's excursion through the land of the Picts, the late Iron Age/early Medieval Celtic people who once lived here. We visit striking Dunrobin Castle & Gardens, where we see a falconry demonstration then embark on a tour and tasting at a small local distillery that has been producing hand-crafted single malt whisky for generations. We continue our drive along the scenic coastal road flanked by small farms with sheep, cows, and Shetland ponies before returning to our hotel, where we enjoy dinner together tonight.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8: Inverness/Kincraig/Pitlochry/St Andrews

Today's first stop is Kincraig, where we watch a sheepdog demonstration with working border collies, known for their herding abilities. We travel on to the holiday town of Pitlochry in the heart of Scotland, where we enjoy some free time before continuing on to legendary St Andrews late this afternoon. Tonight we have dinner together at our hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 9: St Andrews/Edinburgh

Home of Scotland's oldest university (St Andrews) and renowned as the home of golf, where the game has been played for some 600 years, delightful – and compact – St Andrews measures just one mile across. This morning we embark on a walking tour of the medieval seaside town, followed by free time to explore with lunch on our own. Later this afternoon we continue on our way to Edinburgh. Dinner tonight is on our own in the Scottish capital, which boasts a robust culinary scene.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10: Edinburgh

Our morning tour of this stately city built on seven hills features both the 18th-century Georgian "New Town" and the medieval "Old Town" – together, the districts form a UNESCO site. In the Old Town, we pay an inside visit to Edinburgh Castle, symbolic heart of the country. We also travel the Royal Mile, the warren of medieval streets that form the thoroughfare stretching from the castle to Holyrood Palace, official residence of the Royal Family when in Scotland. This afternoon is at leisure to discover Edinburgh as we wish; museums, galleries, and shops abound. Guests on select July and August departures will enjoy an evening performance of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 11: Edinburgh

This morning we again encounter the Royal Mile, with its mix of attractions, shops, and restaurants. We tour Holyrood, as it is called, and see where British royalty schemed and slept as we tour the State Apartments. The remainder of the day is free for independent exploration. Tonight we celebrate our Scotland sojourn over a farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 12: Depart for U.S.

We transfer this morning to the Edinburgh airport for our return flights to the U.S.

Meals: Breakfast

This tour itinerary was generated for Scotland: Highlands and Islands on Sep 29, 2026. Please visit the Scotland: Highlands and Islands page at https://www.odysseys-unlimited.com/tours/europe/scotland-highlands-islands/ for the latest and most accurate information.