

Edinburgh, Inverness & Isle of Skye - 5 day itinerary



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5 Days 

This itinerary provides a full taste of Scotland - including the capital city of Edinburgh with its international cuisine, world-class restaurants and outstanding attractions, and the East Highlands, the perfect place from which to explore the famous Speyside whisky region and the beautiful Isle of Skye.

Getting to/from Edinburgh and Inverness

Edinburgh has an international airport served by direct flights from the USA's East Coast, and regular flights from London and Manchester. Inverness is just 90 minutes from London's airports and there are daily flights from Gatwick and Heathrow.

Edinburgh is also on the East Coast mainline operated by Virgin Trains East Coast, and a journey to Edinburgh takes only 4 hours 25 minutes from London by train.

For short trips, individual rail tickets can be booked in advance through [the Trainline](#). For longer journeys, such as this one, one of the easiest and most relaxing ways to explore Britain is with a [BritRail](#) Pass, which allows unlimited journeys and the freedom to explore. The [BritRail Spirit of Scotland Pass](#) is the easiest way to travel around Scotland by rail.

Getting around

This itinerary can be enjoyed using public transport and organised tours.

Secret Food Tours or Eat Walk Edinburgh

This itinerary begins at the iconic Edinburgh Castle, starting at 9.30am. This historic fortress is the most iconic part of the Edinburgh skyline and is a must for every visitor to the Scottish capital. The tour of the castle includes seeing the Honours of Scotland, also known as the Scottish Crown Jewels - which are amongst the oldest in Europe - and the Stone of Destiny, the ancient coronation seat of Scotland's Kings.



What better way to work up an appetite than with a 3 hour Scottish gastronomy walking tour? Featuring the neighbourhood's classic culinary treasures, as well as modern Edinburgh eateries, the tour gives participants the opportunity to eat traditional Scottish food such as Haggis, sample tasty Scottish treats and desserts along with Scottish cheeses with a few samples of Edinburgh Gin or Scottish Whisky along the way!

Edinburgh food walking tours are organised by [Secret Food Tours](#) or [Eat Walk Edinburgh](#)

Tour details

Min - Max capacity:	1 - 10
Frequency:	Daily 12pm - 3.30pm
Private tours:	On request
FIT or Groups:	FIT or Groups.
Translation:	Will try to accommodate this for groups on request

[Website: Secret Food Tours](#)

Tour details

Min - Max capacity:	1 - 15
Frequency:	Old & New Town tour: Monday to Saturday 1pm - 4.30pm Monday to Thursday 5pm - 8.30pm Canongate Brunch Tour: Monday to Saturday 10am-1pm
Private tours:	On request
FIT or Groups:	FIT or groups.
Translation:	Italian, Spanish, German or French available for groups of 4+

Overnight in Edinburgh.

[Website: Eat Walk Edinburgh](#)

In the evening, it's just a short journey to Leith for dinner (taxi or 20 minute bus ride - the no. 16 and 22 buses run regularly from Princes Street).

Situated in the northern part of the city on the coast of the Firth of Forth, Leith is home to some of Edinburgh's finest restaurants, including two with Michelin stars: The Kitchin and Restaurant Martin Wishart. Fishers is another option for outstanding seafood.



Royal Yacht Britannia

The morning begins with a return to Leith to visit the [Royal Yacht Britannia](#). Sailing over a million miles around the world, the yacht was home to Her Majesty The Queen and the royal family for over 40 years. Some of the world's most influential people were welcomed onboard, including Sir Winston Churchill, Boris Yeltsin, Rajiv Gandhi and Nelson Mandela.

Almost all the pieces in the State Apartments are on loan from The Royal Collection, with kind permission of Her Majesty The Queen, and the tour gives a great chance to see the working side of the ship, from the once-sweating heat of the laundry to the crew's densely packed quarters.



Holyrood Palace

Next stop is another home of Royalty - [Holyrood Palace](#) - 25 minutes on the no. 35 bus from the Royal Yacht Britannia. The Palace of Holyroodhouse, the official Scottish residence of Her Majesty The Queen, stands at the end of Edinburgh's Royal Mile against the spectacular backdrop of Arthur's Seat.

Best known as the home of Mary, Queen of Scots, the property offers the chance to visit the rooms Mary used following her return from France in 1561, along with the State Apartments used today by The Queen and other members of the royal family for official ceremonies and entertaining. [Afternoon tea](#) is served daily at the Palace between 1pm and 4pm.



Pickering's Gin

To end the day, after a walk along the Royal Mile, it's just a short bus ride to visit the Summerhall Distillery (nearest bus stop Queens Hall), home of [Pickering's Gin](#), for a guided tour and tasting.

Visitors will be able to learn how hand-crafted small-batch gin is made and see the botanicals room, still and bottling line before enjoying a Pickering's & tonic from the gin tap at The Royal Dick bar.



Tour details

Min - Max capacity:	1 - 16
Frequency:	Monday 4pm Wednesday 2pm, 4pm, 6pm Thursday 2pm, 4pm, 6pm Friday 12pm, 2pm, 4pm Saturday 12pm, 2pm, 4pm
Private tours:	On request
FIT or Groups:	FIT or groups.
Translation:	Not available


Overnight in Edinburgh.

[Website: Pickering's Gin](#)



In the morning, we recommend catching an early train (8.30am) from Edinburgh Waverley railway station to Inverness (3 hrs 25 mins), the northernmost city in Britain, for the next stage of the adventure. The Highlands capital is friendly, welcoming, full of history and compact enough for wandering around on foot, with many lovely riverside restaurants and bustling pavement cafés.


A great way to explore is with a circular walk from Inverness Castle, currently used as a courthouse, past St Andrew's Cathedral, which dominates the River Ness, and through the Ness Islands, where anglers cast long lines to catch leaping Atlantic salmon.

For the more adventurous, why not join [Jacobite Cruises](#)  for a Temptation Tour? After being picked up at Inverness Bus Station at 2pm the excursion begins with a relaxing guided coach tour which explores the history, myths and legends of the area. This is followed by a one-hour cruise on the world famous waters of Loch Ness, home of Nessie, before exploring the fascinating ruins and turbulent history of Urquhart Castle.

Overnight in Inverness.



Rabbie's Cairngorms National Park & Speyside Whisky Day Tour

No trip to Scotland would be complete without a visit to Scotland's whisky heartland - Speyside - where there are more distilleries per square mile than anywhere else in the world, and the [Cairngorms National Park & Speyside Whisky day tour](#)  is the perfect way to experience them.

Starting in the Cairngorms, the largest national park in the UK, the tour will show some of the incredible scenery in the park around Loch Morlich and Glenmore. Home to five of Scotland's six highest mountains and wonderful wildlife, the Cairngorms contains huge forests of ancient native trees and cascading waterfalls.

The tour then travels to the Glenfiddich Distillery, where there will be an insight into the secrets behind distillation and the chance to taste one of the finest drams at the place it's casked.


The day ends with a short drive back to Inverness and time to enjoy a lively evening in the city.



Tour details

Min - Max capacity:	1 - 16
Frequency:	Friday 9.30am - 6.30pm
Private tours:	On request
FIT or Groups:	FIT or groups.
Translation:	Not available

Overnight in Inverness.

[Website: Rabbie's Cairngorms National Park & Speyside Whisky Day Tour](#) 

Rabbie's Skye & Eilean Donan Castle Day Tour

Dramatic geological formations, crumbling coastlines and wind-swept valleys await on a [full-day tour](#) of the Isle of Skye.

Departing Inverness at 8am, the tour begins in the spectacular mountains of Wester Ross, an area of outstanding natural beauty - untouched by the ways of the modern world. It then travels onwards to the iconic Eilean Donan Castle. With its rich history and secrets, the castle has appeared in several films including *Highlander* and *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*.

Travelling over the bridge to the Isle of Skye the next stop is for lunch in the pretty, bustling harbour town of Portree - fish and chips perhaps, or some local delicacies? Portree is the capital of the Isle of Skye and is surrounded by lush tumbling hills.

In the afternoon, the tour continues around all of the spectacular spots the Isle has to offer including The Old Man of Storr, Kilt Rock and Quiraing. With high rugged cliffs, hidden plateaus and pinnacles of rock, this intense scenery provides the setting for some truly spectacular photographs.

In the evening, it heads back to the mainland through the majestic Glen Shiel, and along the shores of Loch Clunie, surrounded by vivid green hills, mountains that reach as high as the eye can see, and clear blue water that reflect the tall thin trees and cloudless blue skies.

The final approach back into Inverness weaves along the banks of the historic and mighty Loch Ness. The tour ends back in Inverness at approximately 8pm.



Tour details

Min - Max capacity:	1 - 16
Frequency:	Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday 8am - 8pm
Private tours:	On request
FIT or Groups:	FIT or groups.
Translation:	Not available

Overnight in Inverness.

[Website: 1 Day Skye and Eilean Donan Castle Rabbies Trail Burners](#)

Britrail

For those exploring Britain by train, a BritRail Pass is the easiest and most cost-effective way to travel. For a single fixed price, pass holders can make unlimited train journeys around the whole country or a region of their choice. BritRail tickets are exclusive to overseas visitors so they will need to buy their ticket before they arrive in the UK.

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