



Alba Travel & Events

## Stay in a Scottish Castle

Edinburgh – Royal Deeside – Highlands – West Coast – Edinburgh

«This beautiful individual 8-day car tour provides visitors with a unique experience to remember for a long time to come».



Airth Castle, near Edinburgh



Kildrummy Castle, Kildrummy (Royal Deeside)



Tulloch Castle, Dingwall (Highlands)



Ballachulish Hotel, near Fort William (West Coast)

Day	Itinerary	Hotel	Location	Category
Day 1	Arrival Edinburgh	Airth Castle	near Edinburgh	4 star
Day 2	Edinburgh	Airth Castle		
Day 3	Royal Deeside	Kildrummy Castle	Kildrummy	4 star
Day 4	Highlands	Tulloch Castle	Dingwall	4 star
Day 5	Highlands	Tulloch Castle		
Day 6	West Coast	Ballachulish Hotel	near Fort William	3 star superior
Day 7	Edinburgh	Airth Castle	near Edinburgh	4 star
Day 8	Departure Edinburgh			

Package Price 2012	Twin or Double	Single
April	£660.00	£965.00
May & June	£710.00	£999.00
July & August	£806.00	£1,052.00
September	£745.00	£1,037.00
October	£660.00	£992.00

Child Policy – based on sharing with 2 adults

0-3 years – No charge; 4-12 years – £126; 13 years and above – Adult price

### Price includes

- 7 nights sharing twin/double room including Scottish breakfast.
- 7-day Historic Scotland Explorer Pass (valid over 14 days). Pass allows entrance to over 200 historic visitor attractions in Scotland including Edinburgh Castle, Urquhart Castle (Loch Ness/Highlands) and Stirling Castle.
- Mercat Ghost & Ghouls Walking Tour in Edinburgh (approx. 90 minutes).
- Entrance to the Scotch Whisky Experience in Edinburgh including guided tour and taste of blended whisky (approx. 1 hour).
- City Sightseeing Edinburgh Tour (approx. 1 hour, hop on/hop off, ticket valid for 24 hours).
- Welcome Pack.
- Service and VAT.

### Price does not include

- Car hire (can be booked separately through Alba Travel & Events).
- Lunches, dinners and drinks.
- Personal expenses.

### Route Highlights & Itinerary



#### City Sightseeing Edinburgh Tour

Tour starts at Waverley Bridge (opposite main railway station). Departs every 10 minutes from 09.05 hrs-17.15 hrs (19.55 hrs during summer). Tour lasts approximately 1 hour, but ticket is valid for 24hrs. Hop on and off the bus to visit Edinburgh's attractions. Tour with taped commentary in English, French, Spanish, Italian, German and Dutch.



#### Mercat Ghost & Ghouls Walking Tour, Edinburgh

This wonderful, dramatic tour combines the best story telling, the creepiest underground vaults and the most gruesome history to be found anywhere in Scotland! Spend a memorable evening in the company of Edinburgh's grisly past and entertaining hosts!



### Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre, Edinburgh

The mystery of whisky making revealed! Meet the resident ghost and take a barrel ride through whisky history. Complimentary dram of blended whisky and discount voucher for the gift shop for adults, and soft drink and balloon for children. There is a Whisky bar with over 200 different whiskies, and a Bistro serving traditional Scottish fayre. There is a gift and whisky shop for souvenirs and gifts.



### Edinburgh Castle

The Royal Mile is the backbone of the old quarter, running from the Palace of Holyrood House to Edinburgh Castle. You will visit the Castle, which dominates the city from its 400 foot rock, where you will see the Scottish crown jewels and the Stone of Destiny, now back in Scotland where it belongs. You can also visit the private apartments of Mary Stuart and St Margaret's Chapel, the oldest building in the city that dates back to the 11th century.

## Itinerary

### Day 1 Arrival

Arrive at Edinburgh/Glasgow Airport and pick up your self-drive car. Head to your hotel in the Edinburgh area, enjoy the grandeur of the hotel tonight or travel into Edinburgh.



### Day 2 Edinburgh

Use today for Exploring Edinburgh and the surrounding area. Though its streets are steeped in history, Edinburgh is a thriving modern capital – the Festival City, elegant, exciting and truly one of Europe's great cities.

Edinburgh Castle dominates the city skyline, is full of history and is a fantastic introduction to Scotland. Within its walls St Margaret's Chapel, the Stone of Destiny and the Scottish Crown Jewels await.

As well as the Castle, there is the Old Town and Georgian New Town, offering their contrasting Architecture, excellent Museums and Art Galleries, the Royal Yacht Britannia, Holyrood Palace and much more.

If you want to escape the city then explore the delightful surrounding countryside, where you can play golf, visit Rosslyn Chapel, Linlithgow Palace or go for a walk along one of the beautiful beaches.

Overnight Edinburgh area.

### Day 3 Edinburgh – Highlands



After your Full Scottish Breakfast depart Edinburgh heading north crossing the Forth Road Bridge with its dramatic views of the Forth Railway Bridge (a Victorian feat of engineering). Continuing north to visit Perth and Scone Palace the family home of the Earl of Mansfield and also the site of the famous coronation Stone of Scone, brought there in the 9<sup>th</sup> century by Kenneth MacAlpine, King of Scots. Onward to Pitlochry, a small Highland town.

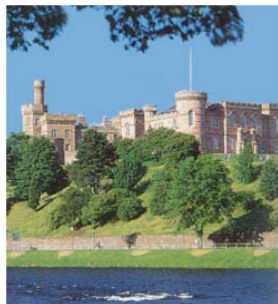
Stop at the Salmon Ladder where you may be lucky enough to see salmon leaping! From Pitlochry, travel towards Inverness, taking the very scenic & dramatic road over the Drummochter Pass, one of the highest roads in Scotland. Descend into Speyside, an area famous for its whisky producing tradition. Stay overnight at Kildrummy Castle.

#### Day 4 Inverness

Travel northwards towards Inverness. In the morning follow the Whisky Trail and visit one of the many famous distilleries in the area. You can visit Glenfiddich, McCallan, Grants, Cardhu and many more. Each gives an audio-visual show and then a guided tour of the distillery to learn of the processes and for many the highlight is a tasting at the end of the tour. The choice of what to see and do in the Speyside area is huge – there are castles – Brodie, Cawdor (made famous by the Shakespeare's Macbeth), and Ballindalloch. Visit Culloden Moor, site of the last land battle on British soil, wander around Inverness, capital of the Highlands, take the Strathspey Railway from Boat of Garten to Aviemore, watch the Ospreys at Loch Garten. Overnight accommodation in Dingwall.



#### Day 5 Highlands (Sutherland)



This morning begins with a visit to the capital of the Highlands, Inverness, before heading for a day trip into the northern highlands. Head for the Kessock Bridge and the Black Isle, in reality a peninsula decked out in a thousand shades of green. A maze of quiet country roads and forest tracks, the area is a delight to explore. It is a naturalist paradise, with attractions such as the bird reserves and Munlochy and Udale Bay and the famous dolphins that can be best viewed on cruises from Cromarty. Continue north visiting Dunrobin Castle and Gardens, bringing to life the lives through the centuries of the Earls of Sutherland. Here you can enjoy a display of the ancient sport of falconry in the gardens of the castle. Return to Dingwall to stay overnight.

#### Day 6 Highlands – West Coast

Today, travel south via Loch Ness. Loch Ness forms part of the Caledonian Canal, a feat of some great engineering by Thomas Telford, and links East Scotland with West by using a series of lochs linked by a canal system. Make a stop at Urquhart Castle, a very scenic spot and also the place where the most sightings of "Nessie" have been. Continue towards Fort William, which nestles beneath the highest mountain in Great Britain – Ben Nevis. If time allows, why not take a ride up in a gondola at Aonach Mor, which, on a good day, will offer stunning views over the west coast. From Fort William, continue south to Ballachulish.



#### Day 7 West Coast – Edinburgh

You will drive through Glen Coe, the dramatic and historic glen (valley), and scene of the 1692 massacre of part of the MacDonalld clan by soldiers of King William. Its steep-sided mountains offer superb walking and climbing. Red deer, wildcat, golden eagle and rare arctic plants can be seen among the breathtaking peaks and spectacular waterfalls.

Rates valid from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012



Travel onto Stirling and visit Stirling Castle, magnificent both in its situation on a commanding rocky outcrop and in its architecture. Of outstanding interest are the Great Hall and the Gatehouse of James IV, the marvelous palace of James V; the Chapel Royal remodelled by James VI, and the artillery fortifications of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The castle was a favourite royal residence and the birthplace of James II in 1430. From Stirling continue to Edinburgh.

## **Day 8** **Departure**

Sadly, it's time to leave Scotland. Make your way to the airport to join your flight home.

**Haste ye back!**