

Island Hopping in the Outer Hebrides



Your Detailed Itinerary

Island Hopping in the Outer Hebrides

Day 1

Spend the day exploring Glasgow, mixing shopping with culture and including major arts venues such as the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, The Burrell Collection or the city's Gallery of Modern Art. In the Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery, you can, for example, discover the work of the group of artists 'the Glasgow Boys', of whom the painters Cadell and Peploe in particular captured the special light quality of the Hebridean islands of the west.

Day 2

Take the main route north for Inverness, via Stirling and the A9. On the way, there are plenty of places to break the journey. These include Tullibardine Distillery at Blackford, south of Perth, or House of Bruar beyond Pitlochry.

Day 3

From Inverness, continue north-west by A9/A835 for Ullapool and the ferry connection for Stornoway in

the Outer Hebrides. At sea, there are excellent views of mainland mountains such as Stac Polly, northwards, and An Teallach to the south.

Day 4

Explore Stornoway, the islands' main town, taking in the cultural centre of **An Lanntair** as well as the fascinating **Lewis Loom Centre** and the Museum nan Eilean which tells the story of Stornoway and the islands with fishing and maritime history, domestic life, agriculture and archaeology themes. One excursion beyond the town which offers a foretaste of the scale and beauty of the islands' beaches is to go northeast along the coast, on the B895, by way of crofting settlements to Tolsta. Traigh Mhor – literally, the big beach – has a real wilderness air and, sometimes, spectacular surf.

Day 5

Take the A857 from Stornoway to discover the west side of Lewis,

turning south on A858 for **The Black House** at Arnol, to see an old-style island dwelling. **The Gearranan Blackhouse Village** further south has also been restored and even provides self-catering accommodation. Nearby, Dun Carloway is a well preserved broch, built around 2000 years ago. The Doune Broch Centre nearby portrays life as a broch-dweller. Continue south to the most spectacular archaeological site on the islands: the Standing Stones at **Calanais**.

Day 6

Explore South Harris from Tarbert with an option of taking B887 through rugged country west to Huishinish and the offshore island of Scarp, scene of an experiment to deliver mail by rocket! Or from Tarbert go south by A859 to discover the beaches of South Harris, notably the famous Traigh Luskentyre. The main road leads on to Rodel and **St Clement's Church**. On the way, take in the main visitor centre for Harris, **Seallam!**, with its changing exhibition programme on the story and environment of the island.

Day 7

Cross from Leverburgh by ferry to Berneray, joined by causeway to North Uist. (It is also possible to reach the remote archipelago of **St Kilda** from Leverburgh). Loop westward to see the varied and unspoilt habitats at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds' reserve at **Balranald**. Then continue south to Benbecula, joined by a causeway to North and South Uist.

Day 8

Continue south to South Uist, crossing another causeway. Like Benbecula, the eastern portion is moorland, strewn with numerous lochs, and a deeply indented coastline. To the west there are the main areas of settlement, and cultivated ground by the machair, as well as endless sandy beaches. Continue to the south end of the island and the causeway which joins South Uist to Eriskay. This is perhaps the most beautiful of the Outer Hebrides, with its dazzling beaches, links to Bonnie Prince Charlie and

real-life setting for the story of 'Whisky Galore'.

Day 9

A ferry links Eriskay to Barra. Spend a day here exploring the island, famous for its airport which uses the beach as a runway. Barra is also noted for **Kisimul Castle**, one of the oldest castles in Europe, and one which has never fallen to an enemy.

Day 10

From Barra, take the ferry to Oban on the mainland, and hence the main road to Glasgow via Crianlarich and Loch Lomond.

The information contained in this publication is as supplied to VisitScotland and to the best of VisitScotland's knowledge is correct at the time of going to press. VisitScotland can accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions. April 2015. VisitScotland is committed to ensuring that our natural environment and built heritage, upon which tourism is so dependent, is safeguarded for future generations to enjoy. Cover: Traigh Iar beach, North Uist © Paul Tomkins, VisitScotland/Scottish Viewpoint. Additional photography: Allan Milligan/Scottish Viewpoint, RSPB

To search over 7,000 quality assured accommodations, from bed and breakfasts to castles go to: www.visitscotland.com

For information, inspiration and more itineraries online check out: www.visitscotland.com



EUROPE & SCOTLAND
European Regional Development Fund
Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future

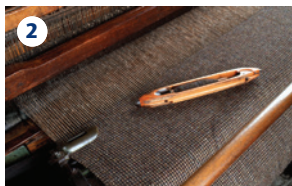


Island Hopping in the Outer Hebrides

Stronghold of Gaelic culture, these islands on the edge of Europe are a very romantic destination. Tune in to the gentle pace of life, and appreciate the sense of community as well as the unspoilt environment. Dazzling beaches, the wild-flowers of the shell-sand pasture (the machair), big skies and spectacular sunsets – these will be your memories of this special place.



1 AN LANNTAIR ARTS CENTRE – A one-stop venue for entertainment and the arts in a stunning new building. Sample Gaelic culture with facilities that include a 250 seat auditorium, gallery space, restaurant, café and shop.



2 LEWIS LOOM CENTRE – Find out about the history of Harris Tweed production. Exhibition of looms, craft and gift shop.



3 THE BLACK HOUSE – A traditional, fully furnished, Lewis thatched house providing a unique insight into island life. Explore the barn, byre and stackyard as well as a furnished 1920s croft house. Visitor centre and interpretive display.



4 GEARRANNAN BLACKHOUSE VILLAGE A restored blackhouse village of formerly derelict properties and croft land now recreated into an authentic settlement.



5 CALANAIS STANDING STONES A cross-shaped setting of standing stones, unique in Scotland, and outstanding in Great Britain. The site dates from around 3000 BC. There is also a visitor centre, including shop and tearoom.



6 SEALLAM! VISITOR CENTRE Centre dealing with the history and natural environment of the Hebrides. Seallam! is also the home of Co Leis Thu? – the genealogy research centre for the Western Isles.



7 ST CLEMENTS CHURCH – Built late 15th century by the eighth Chief MacLeod of Dunvegan and Harris. Houses various grave slabs, carvings and the eighth Chief's magnificent wall tomb – the finest of its kind in Scotland.



8 ST KILDA – 64km west of the Outer Hebrides, St Kilda is the remotest part of the UK. Its original inhabitants were evacuated in 1930. Now a double World Heritage Site for its natural and cultural significance.



9 BALRANALD NATURE RESERVE Sandy beaches, rocky foreshore, machair, sand dunes, marshes and shallow lochs. Information centre explaining importance of traditional crofting agriculture. Many species of wading birds nest here.



10 KISIMUL CASTLE – Originally a Viking stronghold, this is the only significant surviving medieval castle in the Western Isles, seat of the Chiefs of Clan MacNeil.

Island Hopping in the Outer Hebrides