

SCOTLAND

~ Hebridean Odyssey ~

4th to 12th August



The Outer Hebrides or Western Isles, as they are alternatively known, are situated on the extreme North West of Scotland and known as the “Long Island” as they stretch for over 100 miles. The islands are steeped in history and culture, ranging thousands of years. Ancient stone circles stand on the same land as modern civilization. The contrast of the ages and cultures is experienced all over the Outer Hebrides, both in the towns and out in the hills and mountains.

Wednesday 4th August Departing from Oxted early morning and, making stops for refreshments along the way we make our way to Carlisle where we shall be spending our first night.

Thursday 5th August Continuing northwards we cross the border and journey on via Gretna, bypassing Glasgow and driving on alongside Loch Lomond to Crianlarich, Tyndrum and Loch Awe arriving early afternoon at the popular coastal resort of Oban, known unofficially as the capital of the West Highlands. The remainder of the day will be at leisure.

Friday 6th August This morning will be at leisure for further exploration of Oban, then early afternoon we take the ferry to the Isle of Barra, arriving at our hotel in time for dinner.

Saturday 7th August A day at leisure to relax and explore the peaceful Isle of Barra, considered by many to be the most beautiful little island in Britain. Its tranquil beaches, distinctive culture, where Gaelic is widely spoken, and an ancient history make any visit to Barra a memorable one.

Sunday 8th August Today's Island hopping will see us visit 7 islands in one day! We start with an early morning crossing from Barra to Eriskay. Famous for the Eriskay Ponies, it is also the real 'Whisky Galore' island. It was just off Eriskay, between Great Todday and Little Todday that the S.S. Politician ran aground in 1941 with 50,000 cases of whisky aboard. The locals managed to save several hundred cases before the ship sunk, providing them with a good supply of their 'water of Life'. We then take the causeway across to South Uist, where the west coast is a continuous sandy beach, while the east is dominated by mountainous peaks. From here, another causeway connects with Benbecula, where we shall enjoy morning coffee. The Benbecula causeway links to North Uist, a relatively flat island covered with peat bogs, low hills and lochans. Boarding the late afternoon ferry we make the 1 hour crossing to Harris and travel up the west coast past numerous un-spoilt, white sandy beaches and some of the most breathtakingly beautiful scenery in the Western Isles.



Harris Beach

The final leg of today's journey is to Lewis and the hotel in Stornoway our home for the next two nights.

Monday 9th August Today we are joined by a local guide for a full day guided tour of Lewis, the most northerly island of the Hebrides and the largest island of the Outer Hebrides. It has a history that goes back thousands of years and ancient stone circles and standing stones can be found everywhere. On the west coast of the Island, at Callanish, stands the awesome collection of stone circles and rows of standing stones called the "Hebrides' Stonehenge". Other sights we are likely to see during our tour include the moorland interior, where peat is still cut for fuel, traditional croft dwellings and Carloway Broch, one of Scotland's best preserved defensive structures dating back 2,000 years. We return to the hotel in time for dinner.

Tuesday 10th August Morning at leisure in Stornoway before our early afternoon crossing to Ullapool on the mainland, which takes just under 3 hours. We then continue on through wonderful mountain scenery to our Pitlochry Hotel.

Wednesday 11th August Departing after breakfast we make our way to Edinburgh where there will be time to explore and find lunch. Edinburgh is one of the world's most attractive capitals, rich in vivid reminders of the past and abundantly endowed with memorable buildings, including the great crag-perched castle and elegant Georgian houses. Many other cities can boast long, stirring histories and a wealth of noble architecture, but few can match Edinburgh's dramatic grandeur, or equal the way in which its busy streets are balanced by a profusion of parks, leafy squares and immaculate gardens bright with flowers. Mid afternoon we continue on to our Carlisle hotel.

Thursday 12th August Continuing our journey homewards, making stops for refreshments along the way, we arrive back mid evening.

What's included:

Hallmark Hotel, Carlisle

Caledonian Hotel, Oban

Isle of Barra Hotel, Barra

Caberfeidh Hotel, Stornoway

Swallow Fishers Hotel, Pitlochry

A total of 8 nights Dinner, Bed & Breakfast.

All bedrooms have private facilities, TV & hospitality tray.

Time to explore Oban, Barra & Edinburgh

All ferry fares

Scenic drive '7 islands in one day'

Coffee/tea on Benbecula

Full day guided tour of Lewis

COST: £899.00 per person

Single Room Supp: £117.00



Callanish Stones