

Hiking the Scottish Highlands **– Lakes, Glens, Lochs and Mountains**

Itinerary in full:

Day 1 Arrival

Meeting point is Newtonmore, which is in the midst of the Cairngorms National Park.

This is the UK's largest National Park and is home to 25 per cent of our threatened plants and animals – it's a special place.

Newtonmore has found fame around the world as a result of being featured in the popular BBC TV series 'Monarch of the Glen'. If there is time we can enjoy an early evening hike round the scenic Wild Cat Trail, before enjoying a special Highland meal at a local restaurant. We stay in Newtonmore.

Day 2 Cairngorms

We venture onto the Cairngorm plateau for a fine walk round the northern coires; or bowls, of Cairngorm mountain itself with the possibility of climbing Ben MacDui, Scotland's second highest summit. Alternatively we can do a low level walk in the lochans and pine forests of Rothiemurchus Forest from Loch an Eilean to Glen More.

We stay in Inverness. Ascent 2000-2500 ft.

Day 3 Torridon

We begin with a drive north, before crossing to the west coast and Torridon, approx 2 hrs. From here we can climb Ben Damph with views to the sea and the other stunning peaks of the mountain range. Or alternatively we can do an atmospheric coastal trek along the Diabeg peninsula. The Torridon mountains rise up straight from the sea and its one of our favourites spots. We stay in Torridon. Ascent 2800ft.

Day 4 Glen Shiel

We head off on a scenic drive past the world famous Eilean Donan Castle, featured in many movies, and enter Glen Shiel. This is one of those areas where you can just feel the past, where cattle herds made their way to market, where the Clans fought battles and where Spanish soldiers made a last stand on a peak in the Glen. Today we aim to take the stalkers path, (stalkers are those who hunt the red deer on the estates) and climb onto the ridge and the summit of Maol Chinn-dearg. Alternatively we can do a coastal walk in and visit the world famous Eilean Donan Castle. Ascent 3000 ft. Overnight Glen Shiel.

Day 5 Glen Nevis

This morning we leave Glen Sheil and head for Fort William on the west coast aiming to climb in the Mamores. However, if the weather is good we could consider the highest mountain in the UK, Ben Nevis. . Alternatively we do "The Best Short Walk in Scotland" up Glen Nevis to the Steal waterfall. We plan to continue driving a short way south to cross the sea loch by ferry to the tiny community of Ardgour, beautifully situated on the banks of Loch Linnhe. Ascent 3000-4000 ft. Overnight Ardgour.

Day 6 Glencoe

You can not visit Scotland without taking in the historic Glencoe, past scene of clan feuds, battles, and murders. This steep sided Glen was the scene of one of the blackest days in Scots history when the Campbell Clan murdered their hosts the MacDonalds. But don't let that put you off – its stunningly beautiful and well worth the visit. We have a wide choice of hikes here all providing stunning scenery and views. Then we stay head south, aiming to stay at a famous ancient Inn near Loch Lomond. Ascent 3000-3800 ft. Overnight Inveranan.

Day 7 Loch Lomond

We continue south with the aim of climbing one of the peaks above the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond. This will probably be a rocky mountain with a dramatic skyline called The Cobbler. We then continue down the side of Loch Lomond to Glasgow to our hotel. Ascent 2600 ft. Overnight in Glasgow.

Day 8 Departure

Today is departure day.