

Itinerary for Scotland's Hebrides and Highlands May 4-17, 2018

Day 1: Arrive Glasgow, board the van and head west towards the coast of Argyll and catch the ferry from Oban to Mull.

Day 2: We'll have four days on Mull—the fourth largest island in the Hebrides. Today we will explore the northern end of the island including beautiful Tobermory with its lovely brightly painted harbor-front.

Day 3: Today we'll visit Staffa—home of Fingal's Cave and the Treshnish Islands to see the huge seabird colonies. Here you can indulge in what the locals call "puffin therapy."

Day 4: We'll take a scenic drive across to the west side of the island through the imposing Glen More. We will take a boat trip to the Island of Iona and visit the ancient Abbey and look for the rare and elusive Corncrake.

Day 5: Today we'll visit spectacular Loch na Keal. We'll look for White-tailed Sea Eagles nesting in the surrounding woods. We will take a boat trip on the loch and see Sea Eagles really close up. Golden Eagles also nest here and Otters and Gray Seals inhabit the tidal edge.

Day 6: We'll leave Mull on the ferry and drive north and east towards the Spey Valley and our hotel in Aviemore.

Day 7: Today, we'll head for the Bird Reserve at Loch Garten to view the world-famous Osprey nest and visitor center. Crested Tits, Scottish Crossbills, Coal Tits, Redstarts and Great Spotted Woodpeckers live here.

Day 8: Today we will explore the Black Isle and the Cromarty Firth. We'll spend some time at Udale Bay and Nigg Bay bird reserves and visit "Tollie Red Kites" and watch the afternoon feeding of the kites.

Day 9: We'll continue our exploration of the Spey Valley with a visit to the Insh Marshes Reserve. Common Buzzards hunt the many rabbits and the birch woods are home to many songbirds. We might find a rare Marsh Harrier. In the afternoon we'll visit the Highland Wildlife Park where we can see native birds and animals of the Scottish Highlands.

Day 10: Today we'll take a day trip to Royal Deeside. and visit Balmoral Castle and it's beautiful grounds.

Day 11: Today we'll head northwest towards Loch Ness. Along the way we'll visit Loch Ruthven to see the rare nesting Slavonian Grebes. Then we'll loop around Loch Ness via Fort Augustus and travel the length of the loch to Inverness.

Day 12: We'll leave Speyside and head south to Glasgow through Stirling and Perth.

Day 13: After breakfast, we'll walk across the road to the airport and catch the plane home.