

# MacBACKPACKERS

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## Tours

### Freedom to jump-off and explore Scotland at your own pace for only £75

One of the best ways to see and get to know Scotland, is by flying by the seat of your pants on our Jump on Jump off Hostel Fully Guided Bus Service.

Our circular adventure through the Highlands, shows you all the most beautiful places, with our guides telling you tales of Scotland's Dark intriguing history, and also its alluring Myths and Legends.

And to make your Scottish adventure even more pleasurable, our Jump on Jump off tour lets you take your own time to travel this astonishing land.

### Jump on Jump Off Summer Timetable

- Edinburgh - Depart 9am
- Pitlochry - Depart 2pm
- Inverness - Depart 9am (overnight stop)
- Skye - Depart 1.15pm
- Fort William - Depart 4.30pm
- Oban - Depart 9am (overnight stop)

\*Arrive back in Edinburgh between 5pm & 6pm

### Itinerary

The tour departs Edinburgh Every Day and follows a circuit where you have the chance to Jump off and spend as many nights as you like at our Jump off/on points, which are:

- Pitlochry (closed October to March)
- Inverness
- Skye
- Fort William
- Oban (closed October to March)

\*Please note our Glasgow hostel is now closed.....Boo Hoo!

Our bus departs daily from each point throughout July & August. This enables you to start your tour at any of the points. There are small restrictions throughout the rest of the year.

Once leaving Edinburgh, your ticket is valid for one year and is also terminated once you return to your tour starting point.

## Summer Schedule

**Leg 1:** Departing Edinburgh (9am) we head north out of the city and over the Forth Road Bridge through Fife. Our first stop is at Scotland's ancient capital Dunkeld. A small gateway village to the Highlands. Now what better way to get those taste buds jumping is with a cheeky wee dram (whisky). Our next stop is at Edradour Whisky Distillery for a FREE whisky and Tour. Our first jumping off point (mid March to end of October) is PITLOCHRY (2pm), a quaint, stone built Victorian Highland town made famous by Queen Victoria herself. Spending a couple of nights here is a great chance for you to explore the gateway to the highlands and its mountains. A great base for a some cycling and walking. What better way to spend the day with a good old hike up the mountain of Ben Vraki, or pondering away your thoughts by the Black Spout waterfall, or just some good old chilling and relaxing in our very comfortable hostel.

**Leg 2:** After leaving Pitlochry, we then carry on our journey to Ruthven Barracks, an imposing 18th century ruined fortress, deep in the Grampian Mountains, where our tales of rebellion Scotland begin. We then head on to the eerie battlefield of Culloden. Still virtually untouched, this was the sight of the Highlanders last stand. Next stop is Loch Ness for a little bit of Monster spotting before pulling in to our next jump off point, Inverness (6pm) the capital of the Highlands, where our bus stops over night.

**Leg 3:** Leaving Inverness (9am), our first stop is Rogie Falls, for an enchanting forest walk to a magical waterfall, where if the season is right the salmon leap. Then it is cross country we go, by the Achnasheen road, in to the remote mountains of Wester Ross, passing the gorgeous Loch Carron , before pulling in to Kyle of Lochalsh, for our next Jump of Point, the Isle of Skye (1.15pm). Spending a couple of nights here, you have the option of exploring the Island with our Skye Day tour which runs from our hostel on certain days of the week. The tour takes you in to the heart of the island, through the rugged scenery, and you will see why this magical isle is one of Scotland's true gems. You will hear tales of romance and rebellion and magic. And if the weather is right, maybe venture out on a small mild hike to suit all.

**Leg 4:** And the adventure continues, on to the very picturesque Eilean Donan Castle (as seen in the film Highlander). Then we experience the amazing scenery of the west coast, passing through Glen Shiel and Glen Gary on to our next Jump off point, the activity centre of Scotland, the amazing Fort William (4.30pm). Base yourself here for a couple of nights, to explore Britain's Highest Mountain Ben Nevis, and to take a walk in to Glen Nevis, and kiss the ground where Mel Gibson walked. Yes people this was where they filmed the opening scenes of Braveheart.

**Leg 5:** From Fort William we then head down to Scotland's most prettiest Glen, the haunting Glen Coe, where you will hear tales of clan massacres. Its then and amazing coastal drive in to the region of Argyle to the wee Victorian fishing harbour of Oban (7pm) our next Jump off point. Oban is the gateway to the isles, so choosing to spend a few days her, will give you a chance to head off on your own and explore the the spiritual islands of Iona and Mull, or even just chilling in Oban is a rewarding experience, with its castle ruins, a perfect place to watch the sunset, its lovely beach walks, or even head to the local chippy for a wee fish supper. It also here where our bus stops over night.

**Leg 6:** From Oban (9am) it is time now on our last leg, to head back to Edinburgh. But of course we still have a full day of touring. On leaving Oban, we head through Glen Lonan, in search of the Hairy Coo. We then drive along the banks of Loch Awe stopping to explore the funky Conans Kirk, and the Ghostly ruins of a Campbells stronghold, Kilchurn Castle. As we say goodbye to the Highlands, with a tear in our eye, we have one last story to tell. Heading to the city of Stirling we visit the Wallace Monument, where we fill you in on what really happened to Mr Wallace way back in 1297. From Stirling it is then a short drive back to the Scottish Capital for you guys to go off enjoy the cities amazing nightlife...Hopefully with your new found tour friends!

## Out of season bus restrictions from the 1 September 06

As we wind down from Scotland's High season of July and August, although you will be able to depart Edinburgh every day, there will be a few wee restrictions once you head up North.

- Edinburgh Departures - Every Day
- Pitlochry Departures - Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat & Sun
- Inverness Departures - Tue, Thur, Sat, & Sun
- Skye Departures - Tue, Thur, Sat, & Sun
- Fort William Departures - Tue, Thur, Sat & Sun
- Oban Departures - Wed, Fri, Sun & Mon

\*Please Note...Tours may alter from this itinerary due to weather, road works etc.

## 7 day Grand Tour of Scotland in Winter - £175

- Price includes 7 full days of touring on our comfortable mini buses, and our friendly fun guides
- Accommodation is not included, but we do book it for you at our cosy wee hostels
- Departs Every Sunday at 9am
- Throughout the winter it will depart Monthly at 8am
- Arrives Back to Edinburgh Every Saturday between 5pm/6pm

This wonderful 7-Day tour around Scotland's Highlands and the Isle of Skye is unique. It offers a great adventure with all the fun and thrills of an expedition to the wilds of Scotland. This tour has it all from the dark shores of Loch Ness, to the mystical Isle of Skye, to Argyles Ancient Scotland. And with our excellent fun, and knowledgeable guides, all with stories to tell on this proud land, and our comfortable transport and our very own cosy wee hostels to make you feel at home, you are definitely going to have the time of your life.

We take you to castles, lochs, ancient standing stones, and ancient forests. We stay in the best locations at our very own cosy wee hostels. How about trying some Scottish dancing at a local pubs Ceilidh, or sampling some whisky at one of Scotland's many distilleries, or even getting up close and personal with a Hairy Coo. To add to the excitement how about a swim with the Loch Ness monster, or getting at one with the "Little People" of Skyes Faerie Glen.

But most importantly, our MacBackpackers guides will tell you stories from Scotland's dark intriguing history, and of myths and legends galore, which by the end of your tour will give you a full understanding of Scotland's Story and what makes Scotland not just a land of beauty and charm, but an atmospheric land of passion.

## Winter Itinerary

- 2 Nights Inverness
- 2 Nights Isle of Skye
- 2 Nights Oban

**Day 1 - DEPARTING EDINBURGH:** Leaving Edinburgh we head north over the Forth Road bridge, across Fife towards the beautiful Highlands. Our first stop is at the tranquil waterfalls of the Hermitage for a very relaxing walk, and then what better than a heart warming dram (whisky) and tour at Scotland's smallest whisky distillery. Next we journey to the lands of Atholl and the pass of Killicrankie where our tales of a rebellious Scotland begin, with our first bloody battle tale. As the desolate Grampian Mountains take over the woodlands of Atholl, our next stop is at the commanding ruins of Ruthven, an 18thc-government fortress built to control the lawless Highlanders. Before arriving in Inverness we take time to visit the emotional Drumossie Moore, scene of the Highlanders last stand, on the battlefields of Culloden. Its then in to Inverness the capital of the Highlands our base for the next 2 nights

**Day 2 - LOCH NESS DAY TOUR:** It's up early and down to the dark and mysterious shores of Loch Ness. We start with the north shores, taking in the small village of Drumadrochit and the ruins of Urquart Castle. Taking a break from the Loch we then head up to Scotland's ancient forests of Glen Affric for a wee walk and a spot of energising tree hugging. We are now ready to head back to the loch shores. The loch is part of a mighty fault line, and at the village of Fort Augustus, we see some amazing engineering of the 19thc. An amazing chain of canal locks part of the amazing Caledonian Canal, lifting boats from the Ness to the next loch. It is now time for the untouched natural scenery of the south shores. Driving through the deer clad Monilith Mountains, and down to the Falls of Foyers a, we finish the day on the shores of this vast body of water for a quick dip, a great way to find out if the monster really does exist. Our day has now come to an end, and we head back in to town in time for a pint, and a bit of swinging that kilt at a local Ceildh, a chance for you to try your skills at Scottish dancing.

**Day 3 - NORTHERN WILDS:** It is now time to pack up and leave Inverness, and head to the west to the Island of Skye. Heading over the Kessock bridge and on to the Black Isle, we take in the luscious forests and falls of Rogie where hopefully if the season is right the salmon leap. After our enchanting walk, it is back on the bus and time to explore one of Europe's last unspoiled wilderness, We head up to the wilds of Wester Ross, where we head through the heart of the Torridon mountain range, the oldest exposed rock in world, and then down towards our final destination, the mystical magical Isle of Skye, where the village of Kyleakin, and our homeliest of all hostels will be our home for the next 2 nights.

**Day 4 - ISLE OF SKYE:** Yes it is day number 4 on the Macbackpackers bus, and our adventure begins for this breathtaking day, exploring one of Scotland's most famous islands. Before heading to its northern tip, we pass through the mighty Cuillin mountains on to Portree, the islands capital, where we stop for supplies and also a wee look around this close nit community of a town, with its quaint little harbour. The Trotternish peninsula is the focus for the rest of the day, stopping at amazing waterfalls and the seriously haunted ruined Macdonald stronghold, perched on top of a sea cliff. We scramble up one of the island amazing rock formation, a small mild hike to suit all, so leave your high heels at home. It is now time to bring it down for a little chill time and pay our respects to the "little people" at the enchanting Faerie Glen, before heading back to Kyleakin for the night.

**Day 5 - WEST COAST:** It is time now to wave goodbye to the island, and back over the bridge to the mainland. Our first stop of the day is at the very scenic Eilean Donan Castle as seen in the movie Highlander. We then travel through the lands of Kintail, where every mountain has a story of romance, adventure and betrayal, so have those handkerchiefs at the ready. Gliding through the plethora of colour that blesses Glen Shiel and Glen Garry, we head down to Fort William the home of Britain's highest mountain, the powerful Ben Nevis. Our next stop is in the haunting Glen Coe, the scene of a terrible massacre that took place between the Macdonald's and the Campbell's, and while hearing the tales of this glens past, we also enjoy a small walk, a chance to absorb its amazing atmosphere. Jumping back on the bus, we take Argye's coastal path down towards Oban, passing on the way the very famous castle Stalker, arriving in Oban the quaint little Victorian harbour village, in time for you guys to enjoy some fish and chips in front of hopefully an amazing west coast sunset.

**Day 6 - ANCIENT SCOTLAND:** Today is a day of going back in time, to a time before the Pyramids were built, and to also Scotlands beginning. We head to Kilmartin Glen, one of Europe's biggest archaeological sites. The glen is packed with Neolithic standing stones, obelisks and tombs dating back 2000 years. Also south of Oban we explore the remains of the dark age hill fort of Dunadd, one of the many possible sites of King Arthur's Camelot... .Mmmmmm was he Scottish!!!!. Time to jump back in to our time machine of a bus, and going forward now in time we head to Carnasserie a 16thc castle and then on to Seil Island once the heart of the Scottish slate industry, before heading back to Oban for the night.

**Day 7 - BACK TO EDINBURGH:** Our last day has arrived, but of course we still have one last full day of adventure. On leaving Oban we head through Glen Lonan the burial procession route for many a king, in search of the Hairy Coo. After our Hairy Coo safari, it is now down to the shores of Loch Awe and to the Campbell stronghold, Kilchurn Castle. Our next adventure takes us in to the land of the roguish Macgreggor clan, the most famous one being Rob Roy Macgreggor, with many a tale to tell of this Highland hero, we take you to the Drovers Inn for a pub lunch. This pub is one of Scotlands oldest, and also maybe frequented by Rob Roy himself. As we say goodbye to the Highlands, with a tear in our eye, we have one last story to tell. Heading to the city of Stirling we visit the Wallace Monument, where we fill you in on what really happened to Mr Wallace way back in 1297. From Stirling it is then a short drive back to the Scottish Capital for you guys to go off enjoy the cities amazing nightlife...Hopefully with your new found tour friends!

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## **5 day Skye & Loch Ness - £125**

- Price includes 5 full days of touring on our comfortable mini buses, and our friendly fun guides
- Accommodation is not included, but we do book it for you at our cosy wee hostels
- Departs Every Tuesday at 9am
- Throughout the Winter it will depart Monthly at 8am
- Arrives Back to Edinburgh Every Saturday between 5pm/6pm

See the absolute best that Scotland has to offer with our 5 day Grand Tour. The tour takes in all of Scotland's greatest sights, from Glen Coe to Loch Ness, from whisky distilleries to the magical Isle of Skye. No-one can unlock Scotland's secrets better than we can with this tour. With comfortable transport, entertaining and knowledgeable tour guides, plus our great value

price, this tour is second to none.

**Day 1 - DEPARTING EDINBURGH:** Leaving Edinburgh we head north over the Forth Road bridge, across Fife towards the beautiful Highlands. Our first stop is at the tranquil waterfalls of the Hermitage for a very relaxing walk, and then what better than a heart warming dram (whisky) and tour at Scotland's smallest whisky distillery. Next we journey to the lands of Atholl and the pass of Killicrankie where our tales of a rebellious Scotland begin, with our first bloody battle tale. As the desolate Grampian Mountains take over the woodlands of Atholl, our next stop is at the commanding ruins of Ruthven, an 18thc government fortress built to control the lawless Highlanders. Before arriving in Inverness we take time to visit the emotional Drumossie Moore, scene of the Highlanders last stand, on the battlefields of Culloden. Its then in to Inverness the capital of the Highlands our base for the next 2 nights.

**Day 2 - LOCH NESS DAY TOUR:** It's up early and down to the dark and mysterious shores of Loch Ness. We start with the north shores, taking in the small village of Drumadrochit and the ruins of Urquart Castle. Taking a break from the Loch we then head up to Scotlands ancient forests of Glen Affric for a wee walk and a spot of energising tree hugging. We are now ready to head back to the loch shores. The loch is part of a mighty fault line, and at the village of Fort Augustus, we see some amazing engineering of the 19thc. An amazing chain of canal locks part of the amazing Caledonian Canal, lifting boats from the Ness to the next loch. It is now time for the untouched natural scenery of the south shores. Driving through the deer clad Monilith Mountains, and down to the Falls of Foyers a, we finish the day on the shores of this vast body of water for a quick dip, a great way to find out if the monster really does exist. Our day has now come to an end, and we head back in to town in time for a pint, and a bit of swinging that kilt at a local Ceildh, a chance for you to try your skills at Scottish dancing.

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**DAY 5 - WESTCOAST:** It is time now to wave goodbye to the island, and head back over the bridge to the mainland. We travel through the lands of Kintail, where every mountain has a story of romance, adventure and betrayal, so have those hankerchiefs at the ready. Gliding through the plethora of colour that blesses Glen Shiel and Glen Garry, we head down to Fort William the home of Britains highest mountain, the powerfull Ben Nevis. Our next stop is in

the haunting Glen Coe, the scene of a terrible massacre that took place between the Macdonald's and the Campbell's, and while hearing the tales of this glens past, we also enjoy a small walk, a chance to absorb its amazing atmosphere. Through the glen continuing south over the desolate Ranoch moor, we then head out of the Highlands down to Stirling, to pay homage to Mr William Wallace at the Wallace Monument. Edinburgh is our final destination, arriving back in Scotland's dynamic Capital, for some heart felt goodbyes.

\*Please Note...Tours may alter from this itinerary due to weather, road works etc.

### **3 day Isle of Skye - Departs Fridays and Sundays - £79**

- Price includes 3 full days of touring on our comfortable mini buses, and our friendly fun guides, telling you stories galore.
- Accommodation is not included, but we do book it for you at our cosy wee hostels
- Departs Every Friday & Sunday at 9am (Winter 8am)
- Arrives Back to Edinburgh Every Saturday between 5pm/6pm

3 Days of breathtaking scenery and magical mystical stories from our knowledgeable and fun Guides. This Island is the largest of the Inner Hebrideans, and a "must see" by everyone. It is steeped in myth and legend, and historical tales of clan rivalry. Not only do you have this amazing island adventure, but also we visit the dark shores of Loch Ness, the dramatic Eilean Donan Castles and the haunting Glen Coe.

#### **Typical Itinerary:**

**Day 1:** Departing Edinburgh, we head North over the Forth Road bridge, across the Kingdom of Fife towards the beautiful Highlands. Our first stop is at the village of Dunkeld. A Highland gateway village, and also once the ancient capital of Scotland. Heading in to the heart of the highlands, we pass through the Grampian mountains, where we hear tales of Roman invasion, and a very rebellious Scotland. Driving via Inverness, we then head down to the Dark shores of Loch Ness. We drive over the north shores of the Loch in search of a wee monster called Nessie, and take in the views of Urquart castle, a ruined stronghold on the shores of the Loch. Driving through Invermorriston Glen, we are now on our way to Skye. Over the Skye Bridge we go to the village of Kyleakin where we will be spending the next two nights in our cosy wee hostel.

**Day 2:** And now our adventure begins, a day exploring one of Scotlands most famous Islands. Before heading to its northern tip, we pass through the mighty Cullin mountains on to Portree the islands Capital, where we stop for supplies, and also for a wee look at this village, with its quaint little fishing harbour. The Trotternish Peninsula is the focus for the rest of the day, stopping at amazing waterfalls and the seriously haunted ruined Macdonald stronghold perched on top of a sea cliff. We scramble up one of the islands amazing rock formations, a small mild hike to suit all, so leave your high heels at home. Now it is time to bring it down for a little chill time and to pay our respects to the "little people" at the enchanting Faerie Glen. And as the sun goes down we head back to the village of Kyleakin in time for a pint at the local pub.

**Day 3:** Departing Skye we head back over the bridge to the mainland, where our last full day of adventure begins at one of Scotlands most scenic castles, Eilean Donan, as seen in the movie Highland. Its then a very scenic drive through the lands of Kintail, where every mountain has a story of romance, adventure and betrayal. Gliding through the colours and scenery of Glen Shiel and Glen Garry, we head down to Fort William and then on to the breathtaking Glen Coe, the scene of Scotlands most haunting massacres. This glen is definatly one of Scotland jewels. While hearing the tales of its horrific past, you also have a chance to absorb its amazing atmosphere. Continuing south over the desolate Ranoch moor, we then head out of the Highlands down to Stirling, to pay homage to Mr William Wallace at the Wallace Monument. Edinburgh is our final destination, arriving back in Scotland's dynamic Capital, for some heart felt goodbyes.

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## **Walking tours of Edinburgh's Old Town**

If you've been on one of the great value MacBackpackers tours or stayed in one of Scotland's Top Hostels, then our walking tour is completely free and departs every morning all year around from High Street Hostel, Number 8 Blackfriars Street, at 10am.

The tour usually lasts a couple of hours and will give you a taste of the long and coloured history of the Old Town of Edinburgh.

The tours go from the stunning Edinburgh Castle all the way down the Royal Mile to the Royal Palace of Holyrood.

## **Christmas and Hogmanay Tours in Scotland**

Each year MacBackpackers put together a selection of 3, 5 and 7 day tours ensuring an unforgettable Yuletide. Bookings for our fantastic Christmas & Hogmanay tours are now open! But be quick - they're gonna sell out fast.

All tours are fully-guided with history, legends and numerous stops along the way at ancient castles, standing stones and the most spectacular scenery Western Europe has to offer.

### **Christmas Tours**

#### **7 day Santa Cruise**

Jump aboard for a fantastic Christmas in the beautiful, snow-capped Highlands, spending a full week exploring the hills and highroads of some of Europe's most incredible scenery.

- 7 day fully-guided tour
- 6 nights accommodation in Oban, the Isle of Skye and Inverness - breakfast included
- All of Scotland's greatest sights - from Glen Coe to Loch Ness, the Cuillin mountains, glens, & more
- Christmas on the beautiful Isle of Skye
- Full Christmas dinner

## **5 day Christmas Caper**

Our 5 Day Christmas tour encompasses a host of superb sights and experiences, including Loch Ness, Christmas on the Isle of Skye, forest walks, the Cuillin mountains, amazing Glen Coe and much more.

- 5 Days fully guided tour
- 4 Nights Accommodation (including breakfast) in Inverness, the Isle of Skye and Oban
- Christmas on the beautiful Isle of Skye with full Christmas dinner
- Nessie spotting at Loch Ness (swimming optional)
- Minimal probability of weasel attack

## **3 day Christmas Cracker**

Christmas and the Loch Ness monster are inextricably linked in the hearts and minds of many people, to the point that the two have become interchangeable - this spectacular tour is a chance to spend Christmas in Inverness, Capital of the Highlands and home to Scotland's beloved Yuletide beastie.

- 3 Day fully guided tour
- 2 nights Accommodation in Inverness (breakfast included)
- Christmas in Inverness
- Awesome scenery, including Rannoch Moor, Glen Coe, the Great Glen, beautiful Perthshire and more
- Full Christmas dinner

## **Hogmanay Tours**

### **7 day Hogmanay Hooley**

An unforgettable new year adventure, with Hogmanay in Edinburgh, travel to and from London and a fantastic MacBackpackers tour around the glorious Highlands - yer cannae beat it!

- Transport from London to Edinburgh and back
- 4 day fully guided MacBackpackers tour
- 6 nights accommodation around Scotland, including in Edinburgh for New Year's
- A ticket to Edinburgh's world famous street party
- Awesome scenery, including Rannoch Moor, Glen Coe, Loch Ness, the Great Glen, Culloden Battlefield and more