TOUR CODE

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ADVENTURESABROAD

SCOTLAND WALKING TOUR

Walking The West Highland Way

14 days

Updated 06/01/2013

Day 1 *Arrival in Glasgow*

Arrive in Glasgow.

Welcome to Scotland! A land flowing with culture, fascinating history, haggis and whisky!

Overnight in Glasgow. Meal plan: Dinner, if required.

Day 2 *Glasgow*

We have a 3-4 hour walking tour of Glasgow today. We begin by walking up Hill Street stopping off along the way to point out St Aloysius' Church to the Tenement House. This first floor flat is a typical late Victorian example, consisting of four rooms and retaining most of its original features. The furniture, furnishings and personal possessions of Miss Agnes Toward, who lived there for over 50 years, present a fascinating picture of domestic life at the beginning of the 20th century. The tour continues with the short walk to Glasgow School of Art, one of the most interesting buildings in Glasgow and an important architectural work in the modern movement in Europe. Our tour here will include the Mackintosh Room with magnificent furniture and fireplace, and the two storied galleried library. Following this, a stroll to the famous Willow Tearooms, designed by Mackintosh in 1903 for Miss Kate Cranston, where we can enjoy tea and scones in the beautiful surroundings of that most Glasgow institution. Balance of day at leisure.

Overnight in Glasgow. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 3 *Glasgow - Drymen*

We travel to our starting point, a small town north of Glasgow that is a gateway to the highlands. If we arrive early there is a tea shop with home made cakes across the green and the small Clacan Inn where Rob Roy used to come down for a swift pint while collecting "Blackmail."

Overnight in Drymen. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 4 *Drymen - Rowardennan*

We begin our walk amongst the gentle scenery on the bonny banks of Loch Lomond. Passing highland cattle in the fields our route winds up through forest and across the moors up to Conic Hill which from the summit gives great views over the loch and across the islands. This marks the boundary of the Highland fault, and officially the start of the Highlands proper. The way drops down to Balmaha by the water, and then winds its way towards Rowardennan along the Loch shore with tree framed views. 14 miles, 6 hours.

Overnight in Rowardennan. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 5 *Rowardennan*

Rowardennan marks the road head, and a convenient place to make the ascent of Ben Lomond if you so choose. Otherwise you can enjoy this as a day at leisure, and / or take the ferry across to Inverbeg across on the other side of the loch (£4).

Overnight in Rowardennan. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 6 *Rowardennan - Crianlarich*

This morning on the western side of the Loch, we travel by road along the shore of loch Lomond to the start of today's walk at the famous, and from the outside, little changed "ancient" drovers tavern at Inverranan. This is to avoid deteriorated footpaths along the lake shore. Then it is a pretty walk up Glen Falloch across farmland, waterfalls and little torrents and finally into pine forest to drop down into Crianlarich under the shadow of Ben More. 10 miles 4 hours.

Overnight in Crianlarich. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 7 *Crianlarich - Loch Tulla*

The valley route goes via the ancient priory of St. Fillan associated with both Robert The Bruce and Rob Roy, through the morraines of Dalrigh, where the Bruce was defeated in 1306, then via Tyndrum where a seam of gold has been found. The route continues up past the peaks of Ben Lui and Ben Dorain to the Bridge of Orchy for a short time before continuing on to Loch Tulla, a beautifully situated lake surrounded by Scots pines a remnant of the ancient Caledonian forest. 14 miles, 7 hours.

Overnight in Loch Tulla. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 8 *Loch Tulla - Glencoe*

We leave the relative leafy tranquility of Loch Tulla and head up on the old military road across the wilds and the heather clad wastes of Rannoch Moor, past Ba Bridge, claimed to be the remotest part of the route. The views become ever more expansive with views into great corries once filled with glaciers. Often you can see deer on this section and there is a great interplay between land, lake, mountain and sky. A cairn memorial to Peter Flemming, the inspiration to his brother Ian for the James Bond character. The military road winds down to the old drovers Inn near the Gateway to Glencoe. This is in the shadow of perhaps the most impressive looking mountain of the tour, Buachaille Etive Mor, the shepherd of Etive Mor. 10 miles, 4 hours.

Overnight King's House Hotel. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 9 *Glencoe - Kinlochleven*

From the Inn the way passes under the Shepherd and then Up the Devil's staircase to 560 m (1,850 feet): not as bad as it seems, a well graded section of the way, offering spectacular views back from where we came. Then it is a long descent to sea level at the head of Loch Leven with views of the Blackwater damn, Loch Leven and The Pap of Glencoe. From the small town of Kinlochleven after a bite, it is a steep ascent to the hotel, but the views from the grounds are worth it.

11 miles, 5 hours.

Overnight in Kinlochleven. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 10 *Kinlochleven - Fort William*

We walk past the steep slopes of the Mamore hills, initially on the Victorian hunting tracks and then back onto the old military road, over Lairigmor Pass and through dense coniferous forest to Glen Nevis and past foot of Ben Nevis, Britain's highest peak, at 1336 m / 4,408 feet. 12 miles 5 hours.

Overnight in Fort William. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 11 *Fort William*

A free day to explore on your own or to climb Ben Nevis.

Overnight Fort William. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 12 *Fort William - Glasgow*

Today we travel by train back to Glasgow.

Overnight in Glasgow. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 13 *Galway, Ireland - Londonderry / Derry, Northern Ireland*

Our early morning departure enables us to make the most of our day. Northward from Galway, we find beauty in the landscape as we travel from the west coast to the northern tip of the island. We pass through the once quiet village of Knock, which has since been transformed into a place of pilgrimage. It was here that in 1879 two village women saw apparitions on the gable of the church, and today more than one million pilgrims travel to see the 'Apparition at Knock'.

The beautiful and varied scenery continues as we proceed on to Sligo, nearby which we visit the grave of poet/playwrite, William Butler Yeats (1865-1939), one of Ireland's most accomplished and renown literary figures. We will also pass through Donegal, once a Viking stronghold, at the mouth of the River Eske. We spend an hour in Donegal town to visit Donegal Castle or Magee's, the home of Irish Tweed, arriving in Londonderry / Derry*, Northern Ireland in the late afternoon.

* The true name of the city of Derry or Londonderry is a subject of dispute between Nationalists (mostly Catholic) and Unionists (most of whom are Protestant), with nationalists calling it Derry, and unionists, Londonderry. Although many unionists will call it Derry in casual conversation, they generally insist on calling it Londonderry during political discourse; the reverse is not true of Nationalists. The most visible sign of this dispute to the visitor is in the road signage; those pointing to the town from within the Republic refer to it as "Derry", while across the border it is written as "Londonderry".

Overnight in Derry. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 14 *Departure*

We depart from Glasgow.

Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.