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“The Cultural Legacy of Scotland”

Sunday, September 1 - Saturday, September 14, 2019

A 14-day tour of the Scottish Highlands; Edinburgh to Glasgow with heather-clad glens and purple-hued mountains in-between. See the Highland Games at Braemar, walk Culloden Moor, cruise mysterious Loch Ness, sip fine whisky and become re-acquainted with the culture and social fabric of a nation whose clans touched every continent. Your tour host is Michael Quinn.

Tour Cost based on “Land Only” and double occupancy \$4,395.00

Single Room Supplement: \$1,225.00

The tour is limited to 18 participants.

PROPOSED ITINERARY:

Day 1 - Sunday, September 1:

Evening departure from Toronto Pearson International to Glasgow.

Day 2 - Monday, September 2: (D)

Morning arrival at Glasgow International Airport, formerly named Abbotsinch. Here we begin our Scottish tour with a brief drive to The Kelpies, Scotland's modern engineering and artistic equine tribute before continuing on to the Falkirk Wheel for an introduction to, and demonstration of, modern Scottish technology. Lunch in Linlithgow, birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots: photo-op of its Palace, and a visit to her christening chapel. Mid-afternoon hotel registration upon arrival in Edinburgh, Scotland's capital. Opportunity to refresh - perhaps "forty winks" before we walk the Royal Mile with John Knox House, the High Kirk of St. Giles and the Palace of Holyroodhouse. An early dinner in-house.

Day 3 - Tuesday, September 3:

Morning guided tour of Edinburgh Castle. Sites will include the Argyle Battery, St. Margaret's Chapel, the Crown Room and the obligatory Battlements. Afterwards, the Hop On/Off city coach will provide a late morning full city orientation tour with dialogue and notable site references. ***Please note that the coach pass is valid for 24 hrs. and will be used the following morning.***

Afternoon at the National Gallery, Museum of Edinburgh, Portrait Gallery or the National Museum are highly recommended. A quick city bus to nearby Leith presents an opportunity to tour the Royal Yacht Britannia to see how the Royals lived at sea! Evening at leisure.

Day 4 - Wednesday, September 4:

Following breakfast, we visit Princes Street and the neo-gothic Scott Monument. A climb for the view before continuing to New Town, fine example of 18th C city planning with elegant Charlotte Square and Moray Place. Here too, a visit to Georgian House before ending the morning at the Botanical Gardens. The afternoon dictates choice: The merits of Scotland's principal export with a visit to Glenkinchie Distillery and a tasting of Lowland whisky, a visit to the Palace of Holyroodhouse or a wander through the Clooses of the old city. No appeal? - Then a touch of retail therapy at Jenners! Dinner and evening at leisure.

Day 5 - Thursday, September 5: (D)

Morning departure by way of the Tay Bridge and Dundee to Glamis Castle, the ancestral home of the late Queen Mother but inescapably associated with Shakespeare's "Macbeth". Tour followed by lunch in the castle, then on to Fettercairn. Here at its 1854 distillery, a tasting of "*Uisghe Beatha*" or "*water of life*" introduces the Highlands nectar. A photo stop at the Keith ancestral home of Dunottar Castle, precariously perched over the North Sea, before evening arrival at our charming country residence in Huntly. Dinner in the hotel.



Day 6 - Friday, September 6: (D)

This morning we begin our exploration of picturesque Speyside, traveling by way of Kildrummy Castle to the Cairngorm Mountains. We encounter familiar names... Tomintoul, Ballindalloch, Glenlivet, Knockandhu and Cardhu. Highland hospitality demands simple tastings but which and where? Lunch before a touch of Canada at Craigellachie. No "*Last Spike*" here but rather the Speyside Cooperage with demonstrations of traditional barrel making, so fundamental and essential to whisky maturation! Late afternoon return to Castle Huntly and dinner.

Day 7 - Saturday, September 7: (D)

We travel this morning to Deeside, by way of the Royals chapel church at Crathie and summer residence at Balmoral before arriving at Braemar where in 1715 the Stuart Standard was first raised, marking the continued family claim to the Crown and calling the clans to arms. Today the site of the world renowned Highland Games, our grandstand seats should provide excellent opportunities to see "The Royals", enjoy pipe bands, traditional highland dancing and tossing the caber! Return to hotel and time to enjoy an aperitif before dinner.

Day 8 - Sunday, September 8:

A leisurely breakfast before we continue our Speyside exploration. Communities and sites will include Dufftown, Rothes and Keith each long associated with Glenfiddich, Glen Grant and Strathisla. Midday brings us to Cawdor Castle, one of the legendary residences referenced in Shakespeare's "*McBeth*". Today still a

private residence, it offers a perfect example of Scottish castle architecture adapted to 21st C living! Lunch on the grounds followed by individual tours of both the castle and the magnificent formal gardens. Before our early evening Inverness arrival, we visit the late Neolithic Clava Cairns, with their peculiar geometric patterns and burial tombs – stark clues to the Stone and Bronze Age inhabitants of the Highlands. Dinner at leisure.



Day 9 - Monday, September 9:

Following breakfast, a short drive to Culloden Moor where in 1746, the troops of George II shattered both the Jacobite Rebellion with its Stuart ambitions and the centuries old social fabric of clan life. The memorial cairns and plaques offer mute testament to the last battle on British soil and Bonnie Prince Charlie's quest for the Throne. Afternoon at leisure and evening in the community ...a cruise on Loch Ness, a woolen purchase (or two), a walk in the town or a stroll in the nearby hills.

Day 10 - Tuesday, September 10: (D)

Leaving the capital of the Highlands, we travel through Drumnadrochit to Urquhart Castle with its magnificent view of mysterious Loch Ness. Entering the Great Glen, a geological fault bisecting the Highlands through a series of natural freshwater lochs, linked by the Caledonian Canal, we continue on towards Fort Augustus and Invergarry to the quintessential poster castle of Eilean Donan. Time for a brief visit before continuing on to the Kyle of Lochalsh and the Hebridean Isle of Skye. Registration and dinner in our hotel.

Day 11 - Wednesday, September 11: (D)

A full-day tour of the island - the perfect harbour of Portree, the Storr and Quiring Ridges, Kilt Rock, the community of Kilmuir with its Museum of Island Life. After lunch, Dunvegan Castle, hereditary seat of the Clan Macleod. In the late afternoon, we return to our hotel by way of the Cuillin Hills and Colbost where Talisker is the local distiller (a wee dram here for what ails ye!!). Dinner this evening in our hotel.

Day 12 - Thursday, September 12:

An early departure from Skye by ferry to mainland Mallaig where our route aptly named *The Road to the Isles*, takes us to Glenfinnan and the '45 Memorial to the Stuart's second attempt to acquire the Hanoverian Crown. Passing Fort William and skirting Ben Nevis, Scotland's highest peak, we approach Glencoe and visit the infamous 17th-century massacre site of Clan MacDonald members. Lunch then on to Loch Lomond and Glasgow with a brief tasting at Auchentoshan Distillery (time permitting) before registering at our centrally located Glasgow hotel. Evening orientation stroll including the Central Railway Station, the Lighthouse-CRM's first public commission, today Glasgow's Museum of Architecture and Design and the statue dominated George Square! Independent dinner...but fish & chips in a "wee poke" is the easy and only recommendation!

Day 13 - Friday, September 13: (D)

The morning will be our Hop On/Off city orientation tour featuring highlights such as: St. Mungo's Cathedral, Mercat Cross, Kelvingrove Museum and Sauchiehall Street. Then before an afternoon of personal choices, consider tea or lunch in the delightfully restored Mackintosh interior of the Willows Tea Room! But don't forget our evening *Auld Lang Syne* dinner this evening. Afternoon optional proposals:

