Scotland by Rail

Day 1 - Overnight flight to Edinburgh.

Day 2 - Your fantastic Scottish tour begins with a short guided tour around Scotland's fascinating capital. This neoclassical town is filled with history, contemporary street performers and beautiful Georgian architecture. We will stroll down the Royal Mile and head to medieval Old Town with its narrow, cobblestone streets to visit Edinburgh Castle.

Day 3 - Our first rail adventure will be the morning train along the Borders route to Tweedbank, recently reopened in 2015. We will be collected by coach to enjoy Melrose Abbey and Roslyn Chapel before heading back to Edinburgh.

Day 4 - We train to Glasgow where we will transfer to the Glasgow School of Art for a Rennie Mackintosh tour then another scenic rail ride on the West Highland line to Fort William. You will soon find yourself chugging along a hillside ledge overlooking Gare Loch before entering the Highlands, an idyllic, remote and untouched landscape. The incredible route skirts the banks of Loch Lomond and climbs from Crianlarich to Upper Tyndrum and wild Rannoch Moor. Mighty mountains provide the backdrop as we approach Fort William where we will spend the night.

Day 5 - We join the Jacobite Steam Train for a journey to Mallaig on the final leg of the West Highland Line, arguably the most scenic in the UK. The train steams past Ben Nevis, climbing the mountains surrounding Glenfinnan. Here we cross the 21-arched Glenfinnan Viaduct, one of the most iconic engineering works found throughout the British railroad network. We drop to the sea's edge and the landscape opens up with the first views of the rugged Small Isles: Rum, Eigg and Muck. After lunch, we transfer to the beautiful Isle of Skye by ferry.

Day 6 - We start the day exploring the Jurassic Trotternish peninsula with visits to The Storr, Kilt Rock and the Quirang. From here it's on to Dunvegan Castle and Gardens for a guided tour before a dram or two at the Talisker Distillery before a much deserved rest back at our Isle of Skye hotel.

Day 7 - Our coach will transfer you back over to the mainland via the iconic Skye bridge and to Eilean Donan Castle. Situated on an island at the point where three great sea lochs meet, and surrounded by some majestic scenery, it is little wonder that the castle is now one of the most visited and important attractions in the Scottish highlands. You have a guided tour here before being transferred to Kyle town. There is time for lunch before you board a train to ride the breathtaking Kyle of Lochalsh line to Inverness, crossing the Caledonian Canal as we skirt the shores of crystal-clear lakes, wind through wooded hillsides and over sparse moors, past charming loch-side towns, giving you time to soak up the terrific views of picturesque white-washed houses villages such as Plockton.

Day 8 - Today we will transfer by coach to Clansman Harbour for the Jacobite Loch Ness cruise. This two hour trip includes a 1 hour boat ride on the lake and 1 hour to explore Urquhart Castle ending with some leisure time in Clansman Harbour. After lunch we will tour the Culloden Battlefield, site of the last pitched battle on British soil where the Jacobites were decisively defeated by Loyalist forces in this pivotal moment in history.

Day 9 - This morning your private coach will drive you from Inverness to Aviemore in the Cairngorms National Park, in the Scottish Highlands. You have tickets for the Cairngorm Mountain Funicular Railway. This unique visitor experience allows people of all abilities to reach the Top Station and enjoy the Ptarmigan Restaurant with panoramic views from over 3,500ft.

After lunch, the coach will transfer you to a guided tour of Balmoral Castle, the Scottish holiday home of the Royal Family. Later on, return to Aviemore for a 1-night stay.

Day 10 - We enjoy a farewell dinner as part of a "Scottish Evening"—regaled by a Scottish piper with all manner of stories and snippets of local history while partaking of traditional Scottish dishes.

Day 11 - **Return flight home,** then service to your doorstep.