



## Suggested Itinerary *(tentative and subject to change)*

### Day 1 >> Fri. May 12:

Your adventure begins as you board your flight to Edinburgh, Scotland.

## Welcome!

### Day 2 >> Sat. May 13: (Edinburgh)

A private coach bus will be chartered exclusively for your group's transfer from the airport to your hostel in Edinburgh.

5 nights in 4 or 6 bed dorms with private bathrooms incl. breakfast at the

**Edinburgh Central Youth Hostel** in Edinburgh.

**Morning/Afternoon:** Arrival at Edinburgh Airport. After clearing customs and immigration, meet your on-site coordinator who will be available to introduce you to Europe today. A private coach bus will take you from the airport to your hostel in Edinburgh. Check into your room and then start off your program with an **orientation session** at your hotel and an **orientation walking tour** provided by your coordinator.

**Evening:** A special **welcome dinner** awaits your group at a restaurant in Edinburgh.

### Day 3 >> Sun. May 14: (Edinburgh)

**Morning:** Your morning starts with a private **guided walking tour of Edinburgh**. Your local guide will show you the Old and the New Town of Edinburgh, which are listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Sites. During the tour you will see the Calton Hall, St Giles Cathedral, Greyfriars Churchyard and the Princes Street Gardens.

**Afternoon:** After a break for lunch, explore the **Edinburgh Castle** at your own pace, which dominates Scotland's capital from its great rock (entrance fee included). Its story has helped shaping the nation's story. Battles and sieges were fought over it, royalty lived and died within its walls, and countless generations have been and still are inspired by it.

### Day 4 >> Mon. May 15: (Linlithgow - Stirling)

A private coach bus will be chartered exclusively for your group for today's excursion.

**Morning:** After breakfast, your private coach bus will bring you to Linlithgow to explore the ruins of **Linlithgow Palace** at your own pace (entrance fee included). The palace has been a favoured residence of the Stewart kings and queens from James I (1406-37) onward. Mary, Queen of Scots, was born at the Palace in December 1542 and occasionally stayed there during her reign. Although maintained after Scotland's monarchs left for England in 1603, the palace was little used, and was burned out in 1746.

**Afternoon:** After a short stop for lunch, start your guided tour of **Stirling Castle**, one of the largest and most important castles, both historically and architecturally, in Scotland. Several Scottish Kings and Queens have been crowned at Stirling, including Mary, Queen of Scots, in 1542. There have been at least eight sieges of Stirling Castle, including several during the Wars of Scottish Independence, with the last being in 1746, when Bonnie Prince Charlie unsuccessfully tried to take the castle.



### Day 5 >> Tues. May 16: (North Berwick)

A private coach bus will be chartered exclusively for your group for today's excursion.

**Morning:** Your private coach bus will bring you to North Berwick, where you will explore **Tantallon Castle** at your own pace (entrance fee included). Set on the edge of the cliffs, looking out to the Bass Rock, the castle was home to the powerful Red Douglas dynasty, which often clashed with the Crown. It was besieged by both James IV and James V but was ultimately destroyed by Oliver Cromwell's troops in a siege of 1651. Afterwards, your private coach bus will take you to the city center of North Berwick.

**Afternoon:** Enjoy a free afternoon in **North Berwick**, a vibrant and scenic harbour town, boasting great beaches, and an eclectic mix of shops, cafes and restaurants. The town is known for the witches' gathering of Halloween 1590 and the ensuing North Berwick Witch Trials, which sentenced many innocent people to their death between 1590 and 1592. It was the first major witchcraft persecution in Scotland, and began with a sensational case involving the royal houses of Denmark and Scotland after Anne of Denmark's and James VI's ship was nearly capsized in stormy seas while a coven witches gathered on the Auld Kirk Green in North Berwick.

### Day 6 >> Wed. May 17: (Edinburgh)

**Morning:** After breakfast, enjoy an audio guided tour of the **Palace of Holyroodhouse**, the official residence of the monarch of the United Kingdom in Scotland since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Nowadays it is still the setting for state occasions and official entertaining.

**Afternoon:** The afternoon is free to explore the city further on your own. Consider visiting the National Museum of Scotland and follow the story of Scotland from prehistory to the present day. The National Museum incorporates the collections of the former National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, and the Royal Museum. Next to the national collections of Scottish archaeological finds and medieval objects, the museum contains artefacts from around the world, encompassing geology, archaeology, natural history, science, technology, art, and world cultures.

### Day 7 >> Thurs. May 18: (Edinburgh - Perth - Inverness)

A private coach bus will be chartered exclusively for your group for today's transfer.

3 nights in 4 or 6 bed dorms with shared bathrooms incl. breakfast at the **Inverness Youth Hostel** in Inverness.

**All day:** Check-out of your rooms and depart for Inverness with a private coach bus. On your way stop at the **Scone Palace** in Perth for a visit at your own pace (entrance fee included). The palace was the crowning place of Scottish kings on the Stone of Scone, also known as the Stone of Destiny, where Macbeth, Robert the Bruce and Charles II were once crowned. Built of red sandstone with a castellated roof, it is one of the finest examples of late Georgian Gothic style in the United Kingdom. After some free time for lunch in Perth, continue your journey to Inverness. Upon arrival, check-into your rooms and meet your coordinator for a short **orientation session**.



### Day 8 >> Fri. May 19: (Loch Ness)

A private coach bus will be chartered exclusively for your group for today's excursion.

**Morning:** After breakfast, your private coach bus will take you to Fort Augustus to start your guided **Loch Ness Cruise** and enjoy breath-taking views of Loch Ness in all its natural wonder. Experience the sights, wildlife and history of the famous loch as you cruise past Cherry Island, the loch's only island and admire the loch-side view of the striking Fort Augustus Abbey.

**Afternoon:** Start your afternoon by exploring **Urquardt Castle** at your own pace and experience a glimpse of medieval life and enjoy stunning views over Loch Ness from the ruins of the greatest castle in the Highlands (entrance fee included). Climb the Grant Tower that watches over the iconic loch, peer into a miserable prison cell, said to have held the legendary Gaelic bard Domhnall Donn, and imagine the splendid banquets staged in the great hall. The castle has a distinctly Highland heritage and the site has witnessed some of the most dramatic chapters of Scottish history.

### Day 9 >> Sat. May 20: (Culloden - Inverness)

A private coach bus will be chartered exclusively for your group for this morning's excursion.

**Morning:** Your morning starts as you travel by private coach bus to Culloden where you will explore the **Culloden Battlefield** and the new visitor center at your own pace (entrance fee included). The Battle of Culloden was the final confrontation of the Jacobite rising of 1745 and part of a religious civil war in Britain. On 16 April 1746, the Jacobite forces of Charles Edward Stuart were decisively defeated by loyalist troops commanded by William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, near Inverness. With over 1,200 dead in just one hour Culloden was a short but bloody battle - the last to be fought on British soil.

**Afternoon:** Enjoy a free afternoon in Inverness to explore the capital of the Highlands further on your own. Consider visiting the castle grounds of Inverness Castle, currently used as a courthouse. The red sandstone structure evident today was built in 1836 by architect William Burn however there has been a castle at this site for many centuries. The first castle is said to have been built by Máel Coluim III of Scotland, after he had razed to the ground the castle in which Macbeth of Scotland according to much later tradition, murdered Máel Coluim's father Donnchad I of Scotland.



#### Day 10 >> Sun. May 21: (Inverness - Dufftown - Aberdeen)

A private coach bus will be chartered exclusively for your group for today's transfer.

2 nights in twin rooms with private bathrooms incl. breakfast at the 3-star **Hotel Ibis Aberdeen Centre** in Aberdeen.

**Morning:** After breakfast, check out of your rooms and continue your journey with your private coach bus to Aberdeen.

**Midday:** **Optional:** Enjoy a group lunch on the way to the whiskey distillery.

**Afternoon:** Stop at a **whiskey distillery**, such as Glenfiddich Distillery in Dufftown, for a guided tour through every part of their tradition in order to find out how the world's most awarded whiskies are created. The special conclusion to this visit is a tutored nosing and tasting of world-renowned single malts. Afterwards, continue your journey to Aberdeen. Upon arrival, check into your rooms and meet your coordinator for a short **orientation session**. The remainder of the afternoon is free to explore your new surroundings on your own.

#### Day 11 >> Mon. May 22: (Aberdeen)

**Morning:** Start your morning with a **guest lecture** on the Irish and Scottish Enlightenment, held by an expert from e.g. the University of Aberdeen (exact topic to be discussed in conjunction with the faculty leader).

**Afternoon:** The remainder of the day is free to explore Aberdeen further on your own. The city lies in a picturesque spot on the North Sea between the Rivers Dee and Don and is often referred to as "The Flower of Scotland" due to its numerous parks and gardens. Aberdeen is Scotland's biggest fishing port and has developed into an important center for Europe's offshore oil industry since the end of the 1960s when oil was first discovered in the North Sea. Escape the city center and head to Footdee to explore the timeless cobbled streets of the quaint and peaceful conservation fishing village. This part of Aberdeen is one of the most unique communities in the UK huddled at the end of a rewarding stroll along the beach front.

#### Day 12 >> Tues. May 23: (Aberdeen - Edinburgh)

A private coach bus will be chartered exclusively for your group for this morning's transfer.

2 nights in 4 or 6 bed dorms with private bathrooms incl. breakfast at the **Edinburgh Central Youth Hostel** in Edinburgh.

**Morning:** Your private coach bus will take you back to Edinburgh. After an approx. 4 hour drive, check into your rooms and enjoy some lunch on your own.

**Afternoon:** Enjoy a guest lecture on "**Political Economy and the Industrial Revolution in Scotland**", held by an expert from e.g. the University of Edinburgh.

#### Day 13 >> Wed. May 24: (Edinburgh)

**All day:** Use your last day in Edinburgh to explore the city further on your own. Consider going to the top of Calton hill with its grassy slopes and panoramic views of the city, including down the length of Princes street and Edinburgh Castle. There is a good view north of the ruddy-coloured cliffs of Salisbury Crags, Arthur's Seat, and the undulating slopes of Holyrood Park.

**Evening:** A **farewell dinner** will be arranged for your group at a restaurant in Edinburgh.