



OPERATIF!

Music Lovers Tours

presents....

‘ SCOTLAND THE BRAVE ! ’

Join our fabulous tour of the Lowlands, Highlands & Isles...

Edinburgh, Glasgow, Skye, Inverness, Iona, Mull & more!

17th July to 12th August 2024 (*dates ex Australia*)



Picturesque Lakeside Castle

Jennifer and Stewart, founders of **OPERATIF! Music Lovers Tours**, will host our own, lovingly created itinerary, highlighting the wonders and colourful best of Bonnie Scotland.

Throughout the tour enjoy a relaxed pace, with time to truly absorb where you are. Take time for a full daily breakfast before we set off exploring. Most of all enjoy the good company of other lovers of music, adventure and exploring new places! Our exemplary (*and most engaging,*) Tour Director/Guide, will be ever-present to bring everything to life and to answer the curliest of questions. In almost all of our bases we spend at least three nights. We don't believe in rushing, nor in the 'see everything and tick it off as you go' approach to travel ! You won't see ALL of Scotland but you WILL indulge in a rich and comprehensive experience of the country, its history and culture, its contrasting scenery, its two largest cities, Edinburgh and Glasgow, its fabulous fresh food and of course, its welcoming people. There will be music as we travel around. We'll attend Ceilidhs (*traditional nights of music and dance where everyone joins in,*) we'll have a private performance and we'll attend concerts or theatre wherever we find performances are being presented. (*It's too soon yet to know what will be on offer while we're in various locations.*) The following overview gives just some of the many highlights of our three-week tour.

From the two large cities, to smaller coastal, island or highland towns and villages, variety abounds. We'll tour castles and stately homes, forts and battle grounds, museums and galleries (*large and small*) and always there will be time for your own exploration. Browse in little shops, chat with the locals in a pub, go for walks in the spectacular Scottish countryside, Its rocky crags, sweeping valleys, vast lochs, wild coastline, tranquil woods and gardens are waiting to thrill you ! If you prefer to indulge in your surroundings through the windows of our coach, your hotel, a welcoming little cafe or pub... then sit back and do it! This is *your* tour. We've merely created the itinerary for you to enjoy as you wish! We feel sure that you will love it....so... **OFF WE GO !**

MUSIC LOVERS TOURS

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OUR ITINERARY - IN A NUTSHELL *(The full day-by-day itinerary is sent to you once all timings and logistics of visits are fully finalised.)*

We fly into **Edinburgh** where we spend five nights, staying just off the Royal Mile. We explore the wonders of this historic and very cosmopolitan capital of Scotland. We'll take a guided walking tour of the historic centre and famous Castle (*home of the annual Tattoo*), visit **Holyrood House**, the seat of the Royal Family in Scotland (*where the monarch always stays when in town.*) A day out to see magnificent **Abbotsford House** (*Sir Walter Scott's 'perfect' house,*) will be a treat as will a tour of the **Royal Yacht Britannia** ! We'll catch some local performances *and much more!*

After **Edinburgh** we drive north to **Pitlochry**, a charming smaller place in the Highlands. We stay just on the edge of town in a large 19thC palace with lovely grounds. En-route to **Pitlochry** we visit **Bannockburn**, site of **Robert the Bruce's** victory over the English. Whilst based in **Pitlochry**, we'll take a day trip to visit **Glamis Castle**, home of the **Queen Mother's family**, and where Princess Margaret was born. It was the setting for **Shakespeare's Macbeth** too and where he murdered Duncan !) **Pitlochry** has a vibrant theatre where we aim to catch a show too.

Heading further north, our next base is **Inverness**. En-route we stop at picturesque **Loch Tummel**, before continuing on through the **Cairngorms National Park**, for our visit to **Balmoral Castle**. Whilst we can only access the ballroom with its photographic exhibitions featuring Royal family themes, the vast gardens and woods are a delight to stroll through. An audio guide provides lots of information and naturally, there is a delightful Tea Room for lunch or fluffy scones !



Once in **Inverness**, the '**capital of the Highlands**,' we check into another palace hotel, right beside the river Ness, a tributary of the famous loch. (*Hopefully the monster won't come slithering up the banks whilst we sleep !!*) We'll enjoy some free time to explore the town, it's museum, art gallery, covered Victorian market and cathedral, all very close by. Whilst based here, we'll take a day out to visit the **battlefields of Culloden** and it's excellent visitor's centre. We'll also tour nearby **Fort George**, the largest in the UK and home of the King's own Highlanders. **Inverness** has a busy local theatre too so let's hope they're presenting something appealing for us !



Eilean Donan

Moving on, it's time for some island life so we head off, bound for the rugged and romantic **Isle of Skye**. En-route we see **Urquart Castle**, nestled right on the shores of **Loch Ness**, and we'll visit the most picturesque of castle ruins, **Eilean Donan**....

On **Skye**, we spend time exploring the tiny capital, **Portree**, visiting the Aros centre (*a visitors cum arts centre*) and the **Museum of Island Life**. You'll have time to browse in little shops, and walk about town admiring the colourfully-painted houses and pretty little harbour. We visit **Armada Castle**, home of the **MacDonalds** (*Remember Flora and Bonnie Prince Charlie ?*) After a couple of days exploring **Skye**, we sail back to the mainland, (*over the sea from Skye this time*), bound for **Glencoe**, our next base, at the foot of **Ben Nevis**, near **Fort William** in the **Western Highlands**. We dock in **Mallaig** and from here, we board the old **Jacobite** steam train to **Fort William**, (*no, not to Hogwarts !*) passing over the historic **Glenfinnan Viaduct** !



The Jacobite Railway !

A Gathering of the **Cameron Clan** is planned whilst we're in the **Fort William** area. This will be great fun if it comes to fruition. (*We've already included a visit to the museum at **Achnacarry House**, home of the clan chief.*) There is rugged scenery around us, so our walkers can stride out in nature, in search of red deer and golden eagles. (*Others may choose more passive endeavours!*) Leaving **Glencoe**, we spend a morning in the coastal town of **Oban**, before boarding the ferry across to the **Isle of Mull** and our base at **Craignure**. Whilst on **Mull** we will take the boat over to isolated **Iona**, the birthplace of Celtic Christianity. We'll also visit the 700 year old seat of the



Tobermory

Macleans, Duart Castle, with some fine furnishings. Time exploring the colourful coastal town of **Tobermory** is a must too and for many, a visit to the Tobermory Distillery will be a highpoint ! Leaving **Mull**, we sail back over to the mainland, making for a '*famous in song*' body of water, **Loch Lomond** ! We'll spend a night staying close to its banks and in the morning, take a relaxing



cruise to see various parts of the loch and to stop and spend time in one of the delightful villages. Our final stop is the vibrant city of **Glasgow**. With four nights to enjoy this colourful city we'll see traditional Scottish music and dance, attend a Ceilidh, visit the vast **Kelvin Grove Art Gallery and Museum** and even tour a refurbished **Clyde-built Tall Ship, The Glenlee** !



From **Glasgow**, we'll take our coach back to **Edinburgh** one evening, to enjoy the spectacular **Royal Edinburgh Tattoo** ! When it's time to head home, we'll fly out of Scotland from Glasgow.



OUR PREMIUM PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- * Return Emirates Economy Flights (*upgrades or extensions are easily booked also*)
- * 24 nights in Scotland
- * Daily full buffet breakfast
- * 13 Dinners, with wine
- * Hand-picked 4-star hotels of character, all in prime locations
- * Deluxe Coach Travel
- * All scheduled visits, entries and activities
- * A variety of performances, theatre, traditional Ceilidhs & private concerts
- * Our esteemed Tour Director/Guide, one of the UK's very best !
- * Created and fully hosted by Jennifer Parish & Stewart Cameron

CONTACT US NOW FOR PRICING - TWIN SHARE OR SINGLE
Land Only, Business Class & other options, (eg *delayed return*) are available
DEPOSIT - \$3,000 (*refundable until July '23,*) followed by 3 part-payments