

In the Footsteps of the Reformer John Knox

A Performance and Historical Tour of Scotland Part of the *American Celebration of Music in Britain*

Standard Tour #1 (7 nights / 9 days)

Day 1

Depart via scheduled air service to Glasgow, Scotland

Day 2

Glasgow / Stirling / Edinburgh (D)

Arrive in Glasgow

Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will assist the group to awaiting chartered motorcoach for a transfer to Edinburgh via a visit to Stirling Castle, one of Scotland's strongest and most impregnable fortresses

Continue to Edinburgh for late afternoon hotel check-in

Evening Welcome Dinner and overnight

Edinburgh - with its striking medieval and Georgian districts, overlooked by the volcanic sill of Arthur's Seat to the south and the Calton Hill to the north, Edinburgh is widely regarded as one of Europe's loveliest capitals. The city is famous for the arts (it was once known as the "Athens of the North"), a preeminence reflected in its hosting every year of Britain's largest arts extravaganza, the Edinburgh Festival. Its museums and galleries display the riches of many cultures

Day 3

Edinburgh (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

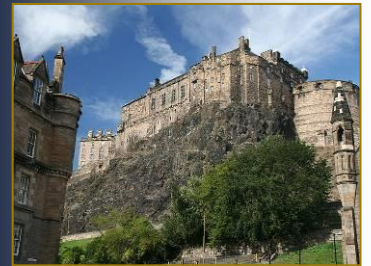
Half-day guided sightseeing tour of Edinburgh. Tour Edinburgh Castle, which along with its rock, is probably the best-known view in Edinburgh. It has been a royal residence since the 11th century, although the majority of buildings you will see are those resulting from its use as a military garrison. We will see the Honours of Scotland (including the Scottish Crown Jewels) and the Royal Scots Regimental Museum. Also visit Arthur's Seat, Charlotte Square, St. Giles, the Royal Mile, Sir Walter Scott Monument, St. Andrew Square and other landmarks

Lunchtime concert in St. Giles Cathedral as part of the American Celebration of Music in Britain

Lunch on own

When the reformed Protestant religion was formally ratified by law in Scotland in 1560, Knox was appointed minister of the Church of St. Giles, then the great parish church of Edinburgh. He was at this time at the height of his powers. He spent most of his reformation years preaching from the pulpit in the cathedral's Thistle Chapel. A higher testimony to the worth of a man not without faults was pronounced at his grave in the churchyard of St. Giles by the Earl of Mortoun, the regent of Scotland, in the presence of an immense funeral procession, who had followed the body to its last resting-place: "Here lyeth a man who in his life never feared the face of man, who hath been often threatened with dagger, but yet hath ended his days in peace and honor."

Evening dinner and overnight



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Day 4**Edinburgh / Haddington (B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Morning excursion to Haddington, where John Knox was born. Enjoy a visit to the Haddington House Gardens, the peaceful medicinal gardens of St. Mary's Pleasance, which is maintained by the Haddington Garden Trust. It includes a wild meadow, sunken garden, and orchard

Lunch on own

Afternoon visit to St. Andrew's Cathedral

Evening concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Britain

Evening dinner and overnight

**Day 5****Edinburgh / Perth / Fort William (B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Transfer to Fort William. Stop en route in Perth to visit to St. John's Presbyterian Church. The parish church of St John which was built in the 15th century and then restored in 1923/1924 by Sir Robert Lorimer and was the stage for the reformer John Knox to launch his campaign against idolatry. His sermon led to the "purging" of churches and the destruction of monasteries

Lunch on own

Possible recital in St. John's as part of the American Celebration of Music in Britain

Continue on to Fort William for dinner and overnight

Fort William lies on the shore of Loch Linnhe in the shadow of Britain's highest mountain, Ben Nevis. The town makes an ideal touring centre from which to discover the beauty of the surrounding countryside. The fort referred to in the town name was built by William of Orange in the middle of the 17th century but it was demolished in 1890 to make way for the new railroad line. Local people find employment in the aluminum works, a paper factory, the Ben Nevis distillery (founded in 1825 by John MacDonald but now owned by the Japanese firm, Nikka Distillers) and, increasingly, tourism

**Day 6****Fort William / Isle of Skye / Oban (B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Take an excursion to the Isle of Skye, renowned for its varied scenery. Board a ferry to Armadale to visit the Armadale Castle and Gardens, situated in a spectacular setting within the Sleat Peninsula of the Isle of Skye called the 'Garden of Skye'

Lunch on own

Return to Mallaig via ferry

Continue on to Oban for dinner and overnight

The busy town of Oban lies by a sheltered bay in the lee of the island of Kerrera. Since Victorian times the town has been one of Scotland's most popular resorts and it is also an important harbor for services to the West Highlands and the Hebrides. It also makes a good base for excursions into the Highland mountains and lochs. Ganavan Sands behind Dunollie Castle offers opportunities for bathing



Day 7**Oban / Isles of Mull & Iona (B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Full-day excursion to Isles of Mull and Iona. Take a ferry from Oban to Craignure on the Isle of Mull, then take another ferry from Fiannphort to the Isle of Iona to visit the Iona Cathedral and the religious settlement. Now under the administration of the National Trust for Scotland (1979), the island was a Druid shrine long before St Columba landed there in 563. Known originally as "Hy", then "Iona insula", the monastery that St. Columba and his 12 companions founded on Iona served as their base as they sought to convert Scotland to Christianity. The monastery on Iona was destroyed on more than one occasion by Vikings, but it was always rebuilt. The chancel and parts of the 13th century Norman chapel are still intact. Many Scottish kings and chiefs, including Macbeth, were buried in Iona

Lunch on own

Return by the same ferries to Oban

Evening concert in Oban as part of the American Celebration of Music in Britain

Evening dinner and overnight

**Day 8****Oban / Glasgow (B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Transfer to Glasgow

Lunch on own

Afternoon sightseeing in Glasgow includes a visit to the Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum, one of Scotland's most popular museums. Do not miss Salvador Dali's "Christ on the Cross". The RBS Exhibition Gallery and the community exhibition space both have a running program of temporary exhibitions and displays.

Evening Farewell Dinner and overnight

Glasgow is Scotland's largest and most highly populated city. In the 1980's and 1990's, Glasgow transformed itself into a vibrant post-industrial city. The city centre, with its ornate Victorian buildings is the stage for the new Glasgow, sparkling with nightlife, shopping, pubs and restaurants that are just about unmatched anywhere else in Scotland

**Day 9****Depart for home (B)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Transfer to Glasgow's airport for return flight

This is a very flexible itinerary. Except for confirmed appointments and performances, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable. In the event of an unavoidable conflict in the performance and the sightseeing schedule, the concert schedule will prevail, and it may be necessary to exclude some sightseeing activities.

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