

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 #3 (9 nights / 11 days)

Day 1

Depart via scheduled air service to Glasgow, Scotland

Day 2

Glasgow / Oban

(D)

Arrive in Glasgow

Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will assist the group to awaiting chartered motorcoach for a transfer to Oban

Late afternoon hotel check-in

Evening Welcome 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 3

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

Concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Britain

Evening dinner and overnight

Day 4

Oban / Isle of Skye / Fort William

(B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

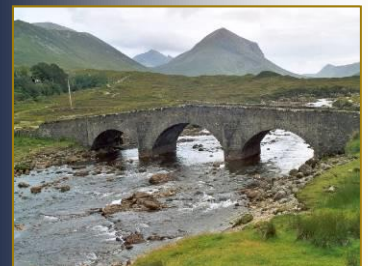
Transfer to Fort William via an excursion to the Isle of Skye

From Mallaig, board a ferry over to the Isle of Skye. In Armadale, visit the Armadale Castle and Gardens, situated in a spectacular setting on the Isle of Skye called the 'Garden of Skye'

Lunch on own

Take the ferry back to Mallaig, then continue to Fort William

Evening dinner and overnight



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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 5 **Fort William / Loch Ness / Inverness (B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Transfer to Inverness via Drumnadrochit, where the Loch Ness Monster Exhibition is situated and where you can see beautiful views of Loch Ness

Also enjoy a short boat ride on Loch Ness, a place of outstanding natural beauty, renowned for the Loch Ness Monster

Lunch on own

Continue on to Inverness for dinner overnight

Inverness is the administrative center for the Highland region, which consists of the old counties of Inverness, Nairn, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland and Caithness. The town has benefitted from its sheltered position at the mouth of the Moray Firth and at the northeastern end of the Caledonian Canal. Given the town's favorable location at the gateway to the Northwest Highlands, Inverness has become a busy tourist center and it makes a good starting point for excursions

Day 6 **Inverness (B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Enjoy a guided tour of Inverness, including visits to the Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, and St. Andrew's Cathedral. Travel 13 miles outside of town to visit Cawdor Castle. With its turreted central tower, moat and drawbridge, Cawdor Castle dates from the late 14th century and was built as a private fortress by the Thanes of Cawdor. It is most famous for being the 11th century home of Shakespeare's MacBeth and the scene of his murder of King Duncan, but it is historically unproven that either actually came here. The medieval tower was built around the legendary hollytree

Lunch on own

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

Evening dinner and overnight

Day 7 **Inverness / Perth / Stirling / Edinburgh (B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Transfer to Edinburgh via Perth to visit 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

Possible recital in St. John's

Lunch on own

Afternoon visit to Stirling Castle, erected in medieval times and "renovated" in the 16th Century, where John Knox spent some time preaching

Continue to Edinburgh for 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, 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

Day 8 **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.

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

Lunch on own

Enjoy a tour of St. Giles Cathedral. 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

Day 9 **Edinburgh / Haddington / Stirling** **(B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Morning excursion to Haddington, where John Knox was born and raised. 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

Return to Edinburgh for an evening concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Britain

Evening dinner and overnight

Day 10 **Edinburgh / Glasgow** **(B,D)**

Breakfast at the hotel

Day at leisure in this wonderful city. You may like to explore the Royal Mile, or perhaps enjoy some shopping time on Princes Street and 'Jenners', the Scottish equivalent of Harrods and Bloomingdales. Motorcoach and Tour Manager are at the group's disposal (within legal driving limits)

Lunch on own

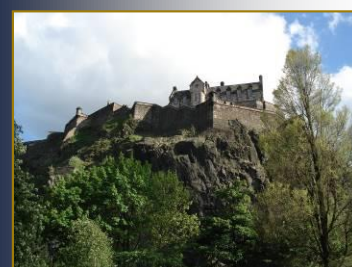
Late afternoon transfer to Glasgow for a Farewell Dinner and overnight

Day 11 **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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