



Why Visit Scotland (By Expedition Cruise)?

[Link: Why Visit Scotland \(By Expedition Cruise\)?](#)

[Experience the best of Scotland on an expedition cruise!](#) *'Staring into a Scottish landscape, I have often asked myself why - in spite of all appearances - bracken, rocks, man and sea are at some level one.'* ~Neal Ascherson So much more than the clan tartans, fine whiskey, and the lament of bagpipes we typically conjure thinking of Scotland, the country offers experiences diverse and fascinating for any traveller. Occupying the northern third of Great Britain, this small, proud nation boasts an epic and stirring history, stunning cities, UNESCO World Heritage sites, and some of the most rugged breathtaking scenery anywhere in the world. An expedition cruise is a unique and delightful way to see Scotland. There's no better way to explore the many wonders of such a place than on an expedition cruise! Take in rugged coastlines and dramatic cliffs; peaceful glens, ancient historical features and villages; tumbledown abbeys and rolling rivers; deliciously rich seafood and, naturally, a relaxing wee dram from a world-famous distillery. Scratch the surface of this remarkable nation, and you'll find a diverse and endlessly captivating place. There are a number of reasons why you should visit Scotland...

Archeological sites & Standing Stones

Scotland is famous for some fascinating historical sites, such as the Heart of Neolithic Orkney, an UNESCO World Heritage Site, found in the Orkney archipelago off the north tip of mainland Scotland. Here you will find Skara Brae, a stone village where you can see how people lived their daily lives long ago. The buildings here have been so well preserved that it is considered one of the most important Neolithic sites in western and northern Europe ([View our Scotland and other European cruises](#)).



Orkney, Scotland - People visiting the stone remains of the Neolithic village of Skara Brae, on the Orkney coast.

You will also find the 4,000 year-old Ring of Brodgar here, an archeological treasure and considered the most iconic symbol of Orkney's prehistoric past. This Neolithic henge and stone circle is 104 metres in diameter and originally consisted of 60 stones, of which 27 remain standing.



Ring of Brodgar

In the Outer Hebrides, you can find the Callanish Stones, a set stones placed in a cruciform pattern with a central stone circle, that date back over 5,000 years, older than Stonehenge. It is a fantastic

display of standing stones, with the central stone standing 4.8m (15 feet) tall. Folklore has said the stones are the remains of giants who were punished for refusing to convert to Christianity. While, archeologists think the stones acted as a celestial calendar or astronomical observatory.

Geographic Formations

Scotland has many famous geological formations. Along the Scottish coastlines you will find a spectacle of cliff scenery, sea stacks, arches and caves sculpted by the Atlantic Ocean.



The "Castle" sea stack at Yesnaby Cliffs on Mainland Orkney, Scotland

The Isle of Staffa, located in the Inner Hebrides, is famous for its numerous caves. The best known is Fingal's Cave, a large sea cave formed in cliffs of hexagonal basalt columns.



Staffa and Fingal's Cave

Fingal's Cave was created some 60 million years ago by the same ancient lava flow that created Ireland's Giant's Causeway, directly across the sea. Otherworldly in its symmetry, Fingal's Cave is one of the best examples of basalt columns worldwide and is renowned for its natural acoustics.



Basalt rock formation inside Fingal's Cave

Castles and Abbeys

Scotland is known for towering castles. Steeped in legend and architectural magnificence, they dot the landscape, a unique story behind each one. The structures, some crumbling and others restored to their former glory, are a testament to the country's dramatic and tumultuous past, offering a small glimpse into life during feudal times. Step back in time as you explore one of Scotland's magnificent castles. Scotland has some of the oldest and most well known castles in the world, the most famous being the Edinburgh Castle. There is also Balmoral Castle - the Royal family's private residence, Cawdor Castle - the fictional home in Shakespeare's Macbeth, or Eilean Donan - one of the most photographed castles in the world. The list of castles to visit in Scotland goes on. No matter where you travel in Scotland, a castle is never far away. Scotland's history has also been intertwined with religion. You will see this in the many abbeys around Scotland still standing. The Scottish border has the greatest concentration of medieval abbeys.



Iona Abbey

Birds and Wildlife

Scotland is a birdwatcher's paradise. Seabird colonies abound in the Scottish Isles, from the towering granite of St. Kilda to the grassy hills of Fair Isle. The cliffs of St Kilda, in the Outer Hebrides, are home to an estimated 1 million seabirds. It has the world's largest Gannet colony, the largest colony of Fulmars in Great Britain and Ireland, and Britain's largest puffin colony.



Seabirds at St. Kilda

In the Shetlands, Fair Isle and Foula are world-class attractions for birdwatchers. The island of Foula is named after the Old Norse word for 'bird island'. Here you will find puffins, Razorbills, cormorants (shags), fulmars, guillemots (murre), as well as Arctic Terns, Red-throated Loons (divers) and Great Skuas. This area boasts 350 bird species, some, including jaegers (skuas), in substantial numbers. Both Fair Isle and Foula are also great places to spot migrating rarities.



Puffin in Shetlands Scotland | [Scotland Slowly Cruise](#)

Scotland also has excellent whale watching opportunities, and travelling by expedition cruise is a great way to encounter some of these animals. Minke Whales, porpoises and dolphins are all common. At some times of the year, you may even find orcas and basking sharks. Occasionally you will see pilot, humpback and northern bottlenose whales. Loch Gruinart is one of the top wildlife sites in Scotland, and has an extraordinary range of key Hebridean birds and other wildlife, including Barnacle Goose, Greater White-fronted Goose (Greenland), Corn Crake, and Hen Harrier.

Stunning Landscapes - Wonders of nature unparalleled



Old Man of Storr

No matter where you go by expedition cruise around Scotland, its landscapes are among the most striking in the entire UK. It offers a taste of almost everything - dramatic seascapes, imposing cliffs, white sandy beaches, rolling hills, jagged mountain faces, and stunning lochs. The famous Scottish Highlands offer abundant, wild, and majestic scenery, where you can find blissful solitude amidst the mountains and lochs. Perhaps you've noticed the northern Scottish scenery featured in popular films and television series such as Harry Potter and Outlander. Orkney's Islands offer exquisite turquoise waters, sandy white beaches, dramatic cliffs, standing stones and rock pools, and with its endless hiking trails, it is a magnet for people who love the outdoors. And, the Isle of Skye, is among Scotland's most popular destinations, where you can explore the extraordinary landscape of the Trotternish Ridge.

Whiskey

No visit to Scotland is complete without a sampling of fine whiskey. Wet your whistle at a number of world-famous distilleries. Whisky is Scotland's national drink and biggest export. There are over 130 active distilleries in Scotland spread across five whisky regions. Islay is one of five whisky distilling localities and regions in Scotland (this could go in image caption).



Whisky barrels on Isle of Islay

And Scottish cities too!



Edinburgh, Scotland,

Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, is known for being one of the most beautiful cities in the world. It has a rich history and is a powerhouse for arts, culture and higher education, hosting the famous Edinburgh Fringe festival each year. You can visit Edinburgh castle or the Scottish National Gallery for a dose of culture. It is also home to some of the finest wool, cashmere and tartan in the world. Glasgow is a port city situated on the River Clyde, down in Scotland's western Lowlands. Famed for

its Victorian and art nouveau architecture, the lasting legacy of Glasgow's prosperity is in trade and shipbuilding, between the 18th and 20th centuries. Today, the city is a national cultural hub with acclaimed museums and a vibrant, thriving music scene. It's also home to the Scottish Opera, Scottish Ballet, and the National Theatre of Scotland. Glasgow often marks the beginning of Eagle-Eye's expedition cruises of Scotland here. Aberdeen is known for its robust granite architecture and beautiful gardens. Explore Aberdeen's museums (often free!), charming historic districts, great restaurants, festivals, and internationally renowned golf courses. You can even catch a wave at the surfing beaches! There are also a record number of whiskey distilleries in the city of Aberdeen - famous worldwide for the popular spirits' history and quality.

[**Scotland by expedition cruise**](#)

Scotland offers a variety of seaports of all sizes, making it an ideal expedition cruise location. Perfectly positioned for a wonderful variety of UK itineraries, Scotland provides ports to support travel to diverse European destinations such as the Faroe Islands, [**Iceland**](#), and even as far as the spectacular Fjords of Norway. Our expedition cruise ship provides a very different way to travel and is a fabulous way to enjoy this enchanting country. In addition to the nation's world-renowned highlights, you will enjoy getting to more remote destinations, accessible only by water. A much smaller and more intimate cruise experience, equipped with zodiacs for adventuring into more isolated locations. [**Read more about why to take an expedition cruise**](#) **BOOK YOUR SCOTLAND EXPEDITION CRUISE NOW!**