

7-night Highland Railway Tour

Destinations: Scottish Highlands & Scotland

Trip code: LLHRH-7



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Enjoy the scenic beauty of Scotland by rail. The Strathspey Railway – Scotland's longest stretch of heritage rail - travels across central Scotland on a round trip from Aviemore to Broomhill passing through beautifully restored stations. On the West Highland Line, a modern train takes you on a journey across the wild Rannoch Moor via Crianlarich to Oban. The grand finale is a ride on the Jacobite steam train across the mighty Glenfinnan Viaduct.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- High-quality Full Board en-suite accommodation and excellent food in our country house
- The guidance and services of our knowledgeable HF Holidays Leader, ensuring you get the most from your holiday
- All transport on touring days on a comfortable, good-quality mini-coach
- All admissions to places of interest that form part of your holiday itinerary, excluding National Trust and English Heritage properties

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Ride on the Strathspey Railway from Aviemore to Broomhill, the longest heritage line in Scotland

- Enjoy views from Britain's most scenic railway, the West Highland Railway
- Journey on the steam-hauled Jacobite service to Mallaig

TRIP SUITABILITY

Our Heritage Tours are your opportunity to immerse yourself in an area of history that interests you, at the same time as exploring the local area with a group of like-minded people. Each day our leaders will provide fascinating commentary on the places visited and share their knowledge with you. Whenever there's the choice we'll always book steam-hauled trains but sometimes these are replaced by diesel locomotives or use mainline services. This holiday is also subject to the railways amending their timetables, so slight tweaks to the running order of the programme could occur.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

You're welcome to check in from 4pm onwards.

Day 2: Strathspey Railway

Today, we head across the beautiful central Highlands to the Strathspey railway, for a round-trip from Aviemore to Broomhill. This was once part of the Highland main line to Inverness but was bypassed and closed. At 10 miles it's the longest heritage railway in Scotland and has some beautifully restored stations and beautiful views of the Cairngorms. Monarch of the Glen anyone?

Day 3: The Jacobite

One of the week's highlights: a ride on the steam-hauled 'Jacobite' train from Fort William on the 1901 West Highland extension to Mallaig. The journey is incredibly scenic and takes in the spectacular viaduct at Glenfinnan and outstanding coastal scenery around Arisaig. We've time to explore Mallaig, a bustling fishing port.

Day 4: Free Day

Our Discovery Points help you make the most out of your free day. There's plenty of maps and a selection of the best local walking routes, as well as weather forecasts and public transport options – plus details about other places to visit.

Day 5: The West Highland Lines

Today we'll see 'The Jacobite' crossing the swing bridge over the canal. We shall then take a train over the remote and wild Rannoch Moor to Crianlarich, where we change for the picturesque route to Oban. After some free time to explore Oban, we'll return to the country house via the former railway bridge at Connel Ferry.

Day 6: Glenfinnan & The Nevis Range

We start the day with a cruise along the long, narrow and deep Loch Shiel before dipping into Scottish history at the nearby Glenfinnan Monument, commemorating the 1745 Jacobite rising. The Nevis Range Gondola will take us up the lower slopes of one of Britain's highest mountains with splendid panoramic views of Fort William,

Loch Eil and, on a clear day, maybe even as far as the Inner Hebrides.

Day 7: The Kyle Line

Passing spectacular Eilean Donan Castle on our way to Kyle of Lochalsh, we'll then take the train to Inverness on a railway that was built to carry not only fish but the fishing boats too! On our return, we'll travel through the rift valley of the Great Glen, parallel to the Caledonian Canal and beside Loch Ness, with plenty of opportunities to look for Nessie, the monster that lurks deep beneath the dark waters.

Day 8: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

ACCOMMODATION

Alltshellach

Situated in a stunning location on the shores of Loch Leven, Alltshellach is a stately Scottish house set amid a rugged landscape. The house is a picture of Highland solidity, with spectacular views of craggy mountains and grassy slopes beyond the loch. This pocket of domesticity lets you admire nature at your leisure though, sipping tea or G&T as you watch clouds scud across the sky. In fact, this one-time home of the Bishop of Argyll & the Isles has been recast as a hiker's hotel, with an air of old-world splendour, excellent accommodation, a generous indoor pool, three lounges and a supremely cosy Highland Bar that's well-stocked with local beer and whisky, all of which is (almost) enough to distract you from the vast vistas over the waters. But it's the great outdoors you're here for and the house is ideally situated for accessing the Mamores, the mountains of Glen Coe and tackling Ben Nevis as well as bagging munros and spotting local wildlife.

Matchless Country House Accommodation

Accommodation Info

Need To Know

Important Covid-19 Steps We Have Taken For Guest Safety: Please Read

As we slowly reopen in the wake of the Coronavirus lockdown, our country house stays are set to be organised a little differently; extra steps have been taken to keep our guests, house teams and leaders safe while we return to action. We ask all our guests to respect the measures put in place.

Initially the overall capacity of the houses has been reduced. Guests must wear face coverings in public spaces. To adhere to social distancing guidelines, we have taken the necessary steps to space out furniture and seating in public areas. In addition, a one-way system will be in place around the house. Adequate signage will be displayed to support the direction of travel to be followed by guests and house teams.

As a temporary measure, we will not be servicing rooms during a stay. Extra tea, coffee, milk, and toiletries will be made available on request for all guests. It is recommended that guests bring their own toiletries for the duration of their stay. We have removed all non-essential and reusable items from our rooms for the meantime including cushions, hairdryers, bathrobes, bed throws, and printed materials to reduce the number of items that need to be disinfected. Hairdryers will be available on request. Clean towels will be available on request. We will though be increasing the frequency of cleaning in our public areas providing particular attention to frequently touched items including door handles and handrails.

For now, there is no cream tea on arrival day. We have also adapted our food offering to remove all buffets and open food items. Different sittings may be required for breakfast and dinner due to the occupancy and size of the house. Picnic lunches will now be pre-ordered the night before from an order form in the room. The bar in each country house will be open, and we will be offering a table service for drinks. At this time there is no, or only a very limited, evening social programme available. Outdoor swimming pools at those houses that have them will re-open throughout August, except at Freshwater Bay House, where the pool will remain closed for 2020. Indoor swimming pools will remain closed.

For more information and to see all the steps taken, [visit our page on how house stays will be adapted](#).

Rooms

Tea & coffee-making facilities, TV, Hairdryer, Toiletries, Wi-Fi

There are 38 comfortable bedrooms, all in the main house, with a range of 'Good', 'Better' and 'Best' options to choose from. Rooms radiate cosiness thanks to little touches – a remedy for even the dreichest day. Those with a view are worth the extra spend, as you'll be overlooking the gardens and loch. The Best rooms include Room 21, a spacious corner room with lovely views of Loch Leven, while Room 23 is a stately showstopper that was once the official Bishop's bedroom, complete with original features and cracking views.

All 'Good' rooms are ensuite and furnished to a high standard. There are also several 'Better' and 'Best' Rooms that are either larger or have a desirable view, a more luxurious mattress and larger televisions – upgrade your stay for just an extra £15-25 per person per night. You can choose a specific room for an extra £30 per room, subject to availability. Upgrade supplements still apply

Facilities

Free Wi-Fi, boot room and drying room, extensive gardens, heated indoor swimming pool, multi-purpose ballroom, library and board games to borrow

After a day exploring, return to the house and its specially tailored walkers' facilities. Stroll the gardens that dip down to the loch. The small peninsula at the bottom of the lawns is called An Dunan and often becomes an island at high tide – look for prehistoric rock art cut into the slabs on its side. Make time too to plunge into the heated indoor swimming pool (currently closed) and do a couple of lengths under the watchful eye of the mountains through the panoramic windows. Inside the house, head for one of the communal areas: you'll have three to choose from and can kick back, relax and catch up with other guests. Later, stop in the Highland Bar for a nip of whisky or a nightcap – the comfy seats make a fine spot for a dram and there's a range of good single malts to choose from that'll have you believing you're living a laird's life.

Food & Drink

As at all of our country houses, holidays are full board, from afternoon tea served as a welcome treat through that evening's meal to a hearty breakfast on the day of departure. Lunch is a chance to stock up on our famous picnic snacks. Food at Alltshellach is full of Scottish flavours and focusses on locally sourced and seasonal produce. Once a week the dining room hosts a Local Food Night, when you might be treated to Cullen Skink Soup and a trio of smoked salmon, mackerel pate and steamed mussels with Highland oat cakes, while mains may include Highland game and 'Barlotto', a type of nutty risotto made from barley instead of rice. Finish off with a spoonful of Iron Brew Ice, chocolate and marmalade mouse and Atholl brose, a luxurious blend of honey, whisky and carefully selected herbs for a flavour of the Highlands.

Accessibility

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on 020 3974 8865

TRAVEL DETAILS

Our address is: Alltshellach, Onich, Fort William, Invernesshire PH33 6SA
Tel: [01855 821357](tel:01855821357)

By Train:

The nearest station is in Fort William, however most guests travel to Glasgow then catch our transfer coach (not running for 2020 holidays). For train times and route planning by train visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or phone 03457 48 49 50.

By Air:

Many guests opt to fly to Glasgow Airport, then join our transfer coach to Glen Coe.

By Bus:

If you are not travelling on a Saturday, the journey from either Glasgow Buchanan Street or the airport can be made using the Scottish Citylink bus, numbers 914 or 915. See www.citylink.co.uk for the timetable. Ask the driver to stop at the north side of Ballachulish Bridge - from here it is a 400 metre walk to Alltshellach.

By Car:

From Glasgow take the A82 towards Crianlarich. Continue on the A82 towards Fort William. Head for Ballachulish keeping the village on your left. Go straight on at the roundabout over the steel bridge and take the second right B863 to Kinlochleven and the seafood restaurant. Alltshellach is 400 yards further on, on your right.

Travelling From Overseas

Ideally book a flight to Glasgow Airport. From here you can join our coach transfer to Alltshellach (see above).

The next best option is to fly to Manchester Airport, which has a better range of long-haul flights. There are trains from the airport to Glasgow (some direct, others need 1 change). Allow 4 hours to get to Glasgow, then join our coach transfer to Alltshellach. See www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times.

There are also flights to Edinburgh with a train transfer to Glasgow.

LOCAL AREA

Alltshellach is situated beside the shores of Loch Leven. This is a spectacular location with magnificent views of the surrounding mountains.

About 2 miles away, across the loch is the village of Ballachulish. Here you'll find a post office, food store and bank. A much wider range of facilities can be found in Fort William, about 14 miles to the north.

As the adventure capital of Britain, the Lochaber region is a popular destination for all outdoor enthusiasts. During your stay in Glen Coe you may enjoy visiting the following activities and places of interest:

Jacobite Steam Train

Ride the Jacobite steam train from Fort William to Mallaig. This stunningly scenic line includes the famous Glenfinnan viaduct, featured in the Harry Potter films. Steam trains run every day and early booking is recommended. www.westcoastrailways.co.uk/jacobite

Isle Of Mull

Reached by car ferry from Oban, or Lochaline, Mull is one of the most popular Scottish islands. You could visit the colourful harbour at Tobermory or the abbey on Iona. www.calmac.co.uk/mull

Isle Of Lismore

The peaceful island of Lismore is ideal for a relaxed exploration. You can hire bikes at Port Appin, about 30 minutes' drive south of Alltshellach, then take the short ferry crossing to the island.

Oban

The bustling harbour town of Oban, about 45 minutes' drive south of Alltshellach, is a popular destination. There's always plenty of activity around the harbour and it's well worth the walk up to McCaig's Tower, a remarkable folly built in the style of a Roman amphitheatre, with commanding views over the town.

Eilean Donan Castle

Nearly 80 miles drive north from Alltshellach is this romantic and much photographed Scottish lochside castle. Located on a small island just offshore, the castle is isolated by the sea at high tide, only accessible via a stone bridge. www.eileandonancastle.com

Ice Factor

Try your hand at ice climbing on the indoor wall at nearby Kinlochleven. www.ice-factor.co.uk

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

What To Bring

To enjoy your holiday comfortably and safely, it's essential that your clothing and footwear is suitable for the conditions likely to be encountered. Changeable weather is possible throughout the year, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities – hot, cold, wet or dry.

All of our Heritage Tours involve active sightseeing and you should, therefore, be prepared for walking between the sights and wear flat, comfortable shoes. You will be spending most of the day on your feet. In the evening most guests wear casual clothing. You will probably find a small rucksack or cross-body bag useful for carrying spare clothing, a camera, sun protection, and drinks during the day.

Please be sure to bring your National Trust or English Heritage membership cards if you have them - admissions to sites owned by these two organisations are *not included* in the price of your holiday. If you are a member of an organisation which has reciprocal arrangements with National Trust or English Heritage, do be sure to bring your membership cards too.

HOW TO BOOK

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday: 9am – 1pm Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday: closed

PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £20 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit hfholidays.co.uk/membership for details.

BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit hfholidays.co.uk/insurance

PEACE OF MIND

ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website atol.org.uk

MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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