

# Hebridean Hopscotch Guided Island Hopping Holiday

**Tour Style:** Island Hopping

**Destinations:** Scottish Islands & Scotland

**Trip code:** XWLDW

**Trip Walking Grade:** 3



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

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Enjoy a Hebridean Hopscotch holiday, visiting the Isles of Skye, Raasay, South Uist, Barra and Vatersay. On Skye wander amidst the eerie pinnacles of the Quiraing, and along the shores of Loch Coruisk with stunning views of the Cuillin mountains. Soak up scenes from Whisky Galore on Barra's and Vatersay's white sandy beaches.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

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- Full Board en-suite accommodation
- Experienced HF Holidays Walking Leader
- All transport to and from the walks including all ferry journeys
- Luggage transfer between accommodation

## HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Cruise from Elgol to Loch Coruisk on Skye and walk with fantastic views of The Cuillin Ridge
- Visit the eerie pinnacles of The Quiraing on the Trottenish Ridge on Skye
- Walk along beautiful beaches on Barra
- Spot wildlife as you visit and walk on five beautiful Scottish Islands

## TRIP SUITABILITY

Hebridean Hopscotch is graded three. While none of the walking is particularly difficult, and much is on paths, tracks and beaches, some sections on Skye and Raasay are rough, steep and sometimes boggy, and the stepping stones (boulders) across the river at Coruisk on day 3 can be challenging. The Vatersay route is mainly on short grass which can also be boggy, and in some places can get a little churned up by the cows. Your leader will endeavour to find the easiest route for you. Weather too can be unpredictable. You will require a good level of fitness as you will be walking every day. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant fitness and equipment required to join this holiday. A sustained effort is required to complete each walk and provision cannot be made for anyone who opts out. Some sections of the walks are across remote country and the terrain can be rough underfoot in places. Please be sure you can manage the daily mileage and ascent detailed in the daily itineraries. Each walking day on this holiday will vary between approximately 6 and 7 hours and it is important for your own enjoyment, and that of your fellow guests that you can maintain the pace. It makes a lot of sense to spend time getting some additional exercise before your holiday. We suggest that you try to fit in a number of longer walks, including some on hilly terrain. Other exercises such as cycling, jogging and swimming are also excellent for developing increased stamina.



## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Arrival Day On The Isle Of Skye

Your leader will be at reception at 18:30 to meet the group and for a quick introduction to the holiday before dinner.

## Day 2: Dun Caan, Isle Of Raasay

We take a short ferry crossing to the Isle of Raasay where we follow a sometimes boggy path up to the distinctive summit of Dun Caan at 1,450 ft (443m) the highest point on Raasay. From here 360° panoramas give us views to the Cuillin, and to the Applecross and Torridon hills on the mainland.

9 miles (14.5 km) with 1,700 feet (525m) of ascent.

## Day 3: Skye - Loch Coruisk To Sligachan

We join a short cruise from Elgol to Loch Coruisk where we are almost certain to see seals. Leaving the boat we cross the river on stepping stones and ascend to the saddle below Sgurr Hain for fantastic views across to the Cuillins. From here we descend Glen Sligachan for a well-deserved wee dram. An alternative walk will be taken if the weather is too poor for the boat from Elgol to run.

7½ miles (12km) with 1,350 feet (410m) of ascent.

## Day 4: Skye - The Quiraing

Our final walk on Skye is amidst the eerie pinnacles of the Quiraing. This supernatural landscape is often used in films, and we make the classic circuit through the geological giants of "The Needle", "The Table" and "The Prison". In the afternoon the ferry takes us to North Uist.

3 miles (5km) with 1,250 feet (380m) of ascent.

## Day 5: South Uist - Daliburgh To Pollachar

We walk from the hotel out to the beach, and then follow the coast southwards, sometimes by the beach, sometimes on the machair, the fertile grassland so distinctive of these islands. Our walk ends at the Pollachar Inn where we can enjoy a dram and savour the scent of a peat fire.

8 miles (12.5km) with negligible ascent.

## Day 6: Vatersay

Island hopping again, to Eriskay and on to Barra, recently voted 'Britain's most beautiful isle'. From here we visit Vatersay, the southernmost of the inhabited Western Isles, with its fascinating history.

4½ miles (7km) with 460 feet (140m) of ascent.

## Day 7: Barra - Eoligarry And Heaval

We start our walk from Barra's tiny airport and explore the north of the island, taking in cockle shell beaches, fine views, and the medieval church of Cille Bharra. In the afternoon there is an option to climb Heaval, at 383m the highest point on Barra.

8 miles (13km) with 750 feet (230m) of ascent, plus for Heaval 2½ miles (4.5 km) with 900 feet (275m) of ascent.

## Day 8: Departure Day From Barra

Choose a scenic ferry journey to Oban or a dramatic flight from Barra airport's unique runway on the beach to start your journey home.

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## ACCOMMODATION

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### **Sligachan Hotel, Sligachan, Isle Of Skye - Hebridean Hopscotch**

Nestled amongst the red and black Cuillins, with the sparkling waters of Loch Sligachan to its front, the Sligachan hotel has served mountaineers, walkers and lovers of the wild Highland scenery since 1830. Rooms include tea and coffee making facilities, TV and hairdryer. WiFi is available in a designated room. Please note - for 2022 our accommodation on Skye will be at the Hebridean Inn

### **Borrodale Hotel, Daliburgh, South Uist - Hebridean Hopscotch**

The Borrodale Hotel is set in the peaceful crofting community of Daliburgh on the Isle of South Uist. Less than a mile beyond the hotel, the Atlantic Ocean laps lengths of white sand strewn beaches. The Borrodale Hotel has a friendly, relaxed atmosphere and true Island hospitality. Rooms include tea and coffee making facilities, TV and radio, direct dial telephone, hairdryer, iron and WiFi. Drying facilities are available.

### **Castlebay Hotel, Isle Of Barra - Hebridean Hopscotch**

Built in 1880 and overlooking Kisimul Castle and Vatersay, the Castlebay Hotel is a 3-minute walk from the Castlebay Barra Ferry Terminal. Rooms include tea and coffee making facilities, hairdryer, TV and WiFi. An iron and both drying and laundry facilities are also available.

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## USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

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### **Holiday Information**

#### **An Introduction To Skye And The Hebrides**

We begin our journey on the Isle of Skye – home to some of the finest walking and most impressive mountain scenery in the British Isles. Between the two extremes of coast and Cuillin mountain range lie scenes of unspoilt natural splendour, rare wildlife, ancient forests and historical monuments.

Across Little Minch from Skye, the linked islands of North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist and Eriskay are broken by a lochan-studded landscape. Beyond the Sound of Barra, we explore our final two – the islands of Barra and Vatersay, so small and compact that the sea is rarely out of sight.

From the stark magnificence of the Cuillin mountains, to Barra's beautiful cockle-shell beaches, each of the walks will take you to a world far removed from the hustle and bustle of mainland Britain, to a peaceful haven, and stunning scenery. Our itinerary includes walks on Skye, Raasay, South Uist, Barra and Vatersay, and travels through the islands of North Uist, Benbecula and Eriskay, giving you time to explore the contrasts of this stunning scenery and explore each island's distinct individuality.

We try to create a relaxed atmosphere on the walk but please listen to safety instructions from your leader.

Keep members of the group in view especially when weather or visibility is poor. If you leave the group, then your leader will no longer have responsibility for you. Our leaders consider the safety of the group as a whole and are likely to be more cautious over potential risks such as bad weather.

### **Food & Transport**

#### **Packed lunches**

Our packed lunches will be too much food for some and not enough for others, if you feel you might need more food during the walk, please bring a supply of snacks to supplement this – it won't always be possible to

buy these on the route. Your packed lunches will include: bread sandwiches or rolls with a choice of filling; some fresh fruit; fruit cake/flapjack or similar, crisps and/or yoghurt, fruit, biscuits.

## **Dietary Requirements**

Our partner hotels can cater for most dietary requirements, but it is important you advise us of any allergies and dietary restrictions you have at the time of booking.

## **Luggage Transfers**

When you change from one Hotel to another we will arrange for your luggage to be transferred for you. This is included in the cost of your holiday. Please remember that other people will need to move your suitcase so please pack thoughtfully with a maximum of 20 kilos. If you can limit your luggage to one bag, rucksack or suitcase that would be very helpful. Please make sure your bags are clearly labelled with your name and "HF Holidays".

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We will arrange for your luggage to be transferred for you. This is included in the cost of your holiday. Please remember that other people will need to move your suitcase so please pack thoughtfully with a maximum of 20 kilos. If you can limit your luggage to one bag, rucksack or suitcase that would be very helpful. Please make sure your bags are clearly labelled with your name and "HF Holidays".

## **Joining Instructions**

Arrival on Skye

This holiday starts at The Sligachan Hotel on the Isle of Skye. There are several options using public transport. Starting points are Inverness or Glasgow, both of which can be reached by air or by train.

### **By Bus From Inverness And Glasgow:**

Citylink Bus run from Inverness Bus Station, Glasgow Airport, and Glasgow Buchanan Street Bus Station to Uig on Skye, stopping at Sligachan. It is advisable to book seats.

### **By Train From Glasgow To Mallaig:**

Train from Glasgow to Mallaig (a classic rail journey via Fort William on the West Highland Line), then Calmac ferry to Armadale. Buses from Armadale are infrequent and a taxi is recommended either to Sligachan (45 mins) or to Broadford (20 mins) where you can pick up the local Stagecoach bus or the Citylink Bus (see above).

By train from Inverness:

Train from Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh (another classic rail journey) then bus as above (NB the bus will not wait if the train is delayed).

### **By Car:**

If you wish to come by car and leave it on Skye there is a public car park at Sligachan, but note that it may not be possible to get back to Sligachan by public transport on the departure day (depends on Uist buses and timing of ferries from Lochmaddy to Uig).

Departure from Barra

### **By Air From Barra:**

Barra Airport is Britain's only airport with scheduled flights that land on a beach - a spectacular end to the

holiday. There are daily flights from Barra to Glasgow Airport (and then onward to other airports). See [www.flybe.com](http://www.flybe.com) for timetables and booking.

### **By Ferry From Barra:**

There are daily CalMac ferries from Barra to Oban. From Oban you can continue your journey to Glasgow and beyond by train or citylink bus.

See [www.calmac.co.uk](http://www.calmac.co.uk) for timetables and tickets.

## **Essential Information**

### **Essential Equipment**

To enjoy walking/hiking comfortably and safely, footwear, clothing and equipment needs to be suitable for the conditions. Safety and comfort are our priorities, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities.

- Footwear with a good grip on the sole (e.g. Vibram sole) is the key to avoiding accidents
- Waterproof walking/hiking boots providing ankle support and good grip are recommended (ideally worn in), and specialist walking socks to avoid blisters.
- Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed, are better than a single layer (include spares)
- Fabrics (lightweight and fast drying) designed for the outdoors are recommended
- Waterproof jacket and waterproof over trousers
- Warm hat and gloves. Gaiters are an optional but useful extra
- Denim jeans and capes are not suitable on any walks
- Rucksack with a waterproof liner
- Thermos flask for hot drink
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre)
- Spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar
- Small torch
- First aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed)

### **Optional Equipment**

- Walking poles are useful, particularly for descents
- Insect repellent
- Sun hat
- Sunglasses
- Sun cream
- Camera

## **Trip Information**

### **Travel Insurance**

We strongly recommend that you take out travel insurance and any other personal insurance relevant to you and the holiday. It is particularly important with the possibility of flight changes and cancellations due to the challenging weather conditions that can occur on the islands and might impact your onward travel arrangements.

## Useful Information

Our experienced and knowledgeable volunteer leaders undergo a thorough assessment to lead you on your Guided Walking/Hiking Trail and are delighted to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with you.

Please ensure you complete and hand in your registration form on arrival and let the leader know about any medical problems you may have. This may be useful in the event of a problem on the walk and will be treated confidentially by the leader.

## In The Event Of A Problem

If you become separated from the party, please stay where you are. Your leader will retrace their steps to find you.

All our leaders carry a mobile phone, group shelter, spare maps and a compass. In the unlikely event your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack. Call the emergency services (call 999 in the UK, or 112 overseas).

Please then try to call the hotel where you are staying to let them know there is a problem.

## Ticks

Ticks are tiny creatures that live in vegetation and can attach themselves to passing animals or walkers and may carry a risk of Lyme Disease. Please refer to NHS advice and guidelines for information prior to your holiday.

## Suggested Reading and Maps

Your trail leader will carry all the necessary maps and guides. For your own interest you may consider looking at some of the following:

- [www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk](http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk)
- Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 maps
- Landranger 23: North Skye
- Landranger 24: Raasay & Applecross
- Landranger 31: Barra & South Uist
- Landranger 32: South Skye & Cuillin Hills
- Exploring Raasay: Nick Fairweather
- The Outer Hebrides Guide Book: Charles Tait
- The Isle of Skye Guide Book: Charles Tait
- Skye, the Island and its Legends: Otta Swire
- Hostile Habitats: Mark Wraitham & Nick Kempe
- Polly, the True Story Behind Whisky Galore: Roger Hutchinson
- A School in South Uist: F. G. Rea
- The Raasay Iron Mine: Laurence & Pamela Draper

## HOW TO BOOK

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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 – 5.30pm, Saturday: 9am – 1pm, Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday: closed

## PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

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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 £30 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit [hfholidays.co.uk/membership](http://hfholidays.co.uk/membership) for details.

### **BACS PAYMENTS**

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: National Westminster Bank, Account Name: HF Holidays Limited, Account Number: 48904805, Sort Code: 60-00-01, IBAN: GB90NWBK60000148904805

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](http://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](http://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

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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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