



The Scottish Highlands: Great Country Houses, Castles & Gardens 2022

30 MAY – 13 JUN 2022

Code: 22219

Tour Leaders **Richard Barley**

Physical Ratings 

Discover Charles Rennie Mackintosh in Glasgow, view fine castles and gardens incl. Mount Stuart, Benmore, Inverewe, Cawdor, Glamis & Drummond, and visit the ancient Abbey of Iona.

Overview

ASA is delighted to announce that [Richard Barley](#) has kindly agreed to repeat this tour of the Scottish Highlands in 2022. He is currently the Director of Horticulture at The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and a member of the Board of Trustees for UK's National Garden Scheme. Richard regularly spends his holidays in Scotland and has developed a great passion for its spectacular landscapes, great castles and beautiful gardens.

- The best of Scotland's natural landscapes; we drive through deep glens with towering mountains and glittering lochs, and tour magnificent coastal scenery.
- Explore Scotland's greatest castles and finest estates including Balmoral, Inveraray Castle, Eilean Donan Castle, Cawdor Castle and Glamis Castle.
- View the Scottish Highlands' finest gardens: Mount Stuart Gardens, Benmore Botanic Garden, Drummond Castle, Inverewe and Dunvegan Castle.
- Tour the Edinburgh Royal Botanical Gardens, a world-renowned scientific centre for the study of plants, their diversity and conservation.
- Enjoy leisurely walks in the dramatic Glencoe, along the coast to view Dunnottar Castle, the forest paths of Scottish Highlands, and the rugged coastline of the Isle of Skye.
- By boat visit the Isle of Iona and its famous abbey founded by St Columba in 563 AD and view the large colony of Atlantic puffins which breed on Staffa.
- Due to reopen in Spring 2021, Glasgow's outstanding Burrell Collection is one of the UK's greatest art museums. It houses everything from Chinese porcelain to paintings by Cézanne.
- Tour Scotland's new design museum, the V&A Dundee, by architect Kengo Kuma.
- Study the work of Scotland's greatest turn-of-the-century designer, Charles Rennie Mackintosh. We visit the Hunterian's Mackintosh House and The Hill House in Helensburgh.
- Walk the streets of Glasgow with Peter Trowles, the former Mackintosh Curator at the world-renowned Glasgow School of Art and join him for tour of the Glasgow Art Club.
- Ride The Jacobite, a steam train made famous as the 'Hogwarts Express' in the Harry Potter films.
- Stay within the magnificent Cairngorms National Park at the Fife Arms that has an exceptional art collection and dine at the gourmet Three Chimneys Restaurant on the Isle of Skye.

Weather

The tour is timed for early June when the gardens enjoy their late spring flush. Gardens should have combinations of rhododendrons, blue Himalayan poppies, hawthorns, foxgloves, Laburnum, marsh orchids, alliums, euphorbias, aquilegias, late bluebells and roses. We avoid the busy July/August summer season when the biting midges are most active.

15-day tour of the Scottish Highlands

Overnight Glasgow (2 nights) • Rothesay, Isle of Bute (1 night) • Oban (2 nights) • Portree, Isle of Skye (3 nights) • Inverness (2 nights) • Braemar (2 nights) • Kinclaven (2 nights)

Leaders



Richard Barley

Director of Horticulture for The Royal Botanic Gardens Kew (London) & member of the Board of Trustees for UK's National Garden Scheme. Former CEO of Open Gardens Australia & Director, Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne.

A graduate of Burnley Horticultural College, Richard was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship in 1999 for the study of landscape management. In 1992 he became manager and then director of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, where he oversaw the development of significant plant collections, conservation programs, water management and renovation of historic features. In 2010 he was appointed CEO of Open Gardens Australia, overseeing the public opening of around 600 gardens per year. In 2013 he was awarded 'Person of the Year' by the Toronto Garden Tourism Council for International Garden Tourism, and was appointed Director of Horticulture for The Royal Botanic Gardens Kew overseeing the management of the garden and arboretum, display glasshouses, nurseries and the School of Horticulture. His role was expanded in 2015 to include Kew's Learning and Participation, and Visitor Operations activities. He supervised the restoration of the Temperate House, development of the Great Broad Walk Borders, the Children's Garden and the Agius Evolution Garden. In 2019 he was appointed to the Board of Trustees for the UK's National Garden Scheme.



Itinerary

The following itinerary describes a range of gardens and estates which we plan to visit. Many are accessible to the public, but others require special permission which may only be confirmed closer to the tour's departure in 2021. The daily activities described in this itinerary may change or be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate alterations in opening hours, flight schedules and confirmation of private visits. Participants will receive a final itinerary together with their tour documents prior to departure. Meals included in the tour price and are indicated in the itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=Lunch and D=dinner.

Glasgow - 2 nights

Day 1: Monday 30 May, Arrive Glasgow

- Transfer from Glasgow Airport for participants arriving on the ASA 'designated' flight
- Welcome Meeting at the hotel
- Orientation Walk with Charles Rennie Mackintosh Specialist, Peter Trowles
- Welcome Drinks at the Glasgow Art Club and exclusive tour by Club Archivist

Our tour commences in Glasgow, Scotland's most populous city, located on the banks of the Clyde. Travellers taking the ASA 'designated' flight are scheduled to arrive at Glasgow Airport in the early afternoon. On arrival we will be met by our private coach and transferred to our hotel, located in the heart of the city. If you are not taking ASA's designated flight, please make your own way to the [The Apex City of Glasgow Hotel](#). ASA can assist you with a private transfer if you so desire.

After time to refresh yourself and relax, there will be a short pre-tour meeting and then a short orientation walk Peter Trowles, the former Mackintosh Curator at the world-renowned Glasgow School of Art. We finish the walk at the Glasgow Art Club where we will have a tour of the building by the Club's Archivist, and a Welcome drink. After this visit, the evening will be at leisure. (Overnight Glasgow)

Day 2: Tuesday 31 May, Glasgow

- The Burrell Collection (*due to reopen in 2021*)
- Lunch at Mackintosh at the Willow
- Mackintosh House, The Hunterian (by special appointment)
- Glasgow Botanic Gardens
- Welcome Dinner

This morning we visit Glasgow's famous Burrell Collection, which is due to reopen in the Spring of 2021 after a major refurbishment. The collection, which played a key role in Glasgow's 1970s 'Renaissance', was amassed by shipping magnate Sir William Burrell (1861–1958) and given to the City of Glasgow in 1944. It is displayed in an award-winning building located in a beautiful woodland setting. The museum includes reconstructions of rooms from Sir William's former home. The collection, which focuses on late medieval and early Renaissance Europe, includes a Bellini *Madonna and Child* and a Rembrandt self-portrait. It also contains important examples of Chinese and Islamic art, ancient artefacts, and Scottish, French and Dutch late 19th-century art, especially the works of artists Manet, Degas and Rodin.

We shall have lunch at the recently restored Willow Tea Rooms on Sauchiehall Street, now called 'Mackintosh at the Willow'. They are the only surviving tea rooms designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh for local entrepreneur and patron Miss Kate Cranston.

After lunchtime we transfer to the Mackintosh House, a recreation of the main interiors from Charles Rennie and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh's original house which once stood nearby. Its decoration, fixtures and furniture resemble the original as closely as possible.

After exploring the Mackintosh House, we will transfer to the Glasgow Botanic Garden where we will view the splendid Kibble Palace. This 19th-century wrought iron framed glasshouse was originally designed as a private conservatory at Coulport on Loch Long for John Kibble by architects, James Boucher and James Cousland in the 1860's. It moved to its current location in 1873 and was used as an exhibition space, meeting place and concert venue. Now it is used to house temperate plants including a forest of tree ferns.

After transferring back to our hotel there will be some time at leisure before we dine together at a local restaurant. (Overnight Glasgow) BD

Rothesay, Isle of Bute - 1 night

Day 3: Wednesday 1 June, Glasgow – Helensburgh – Loch Lomond – Rothesay

- The Hill House, Helensburgh – a domestic masterpiece by Charles Rennie Mackintosh
- Mount Stuart House & Gardens, Rothesay, Isle of Bute

Today we drive from Glasgow to Rothesay, principal town on the Isle of Bute via The Hill House, Loch Lomond and Mount Stuart House. The Hill House (1902–1904), Helensburgh, designed for Walter Blackie of the publishers Blackie and Son, is one of Charles and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh's most famous works, probably second only to their Glasgow School of Art. Mackintosh also designed most of the house's interior, furniture and fittings. His attention to detail extended to prescribing the colour of cut flowers that the Blackies might place on a table in the living room! As part of the 10-year conservation program, Carmody Groarke have designed 'The Box', a steel frame structure covered in chainmail mesh which encloses the house and protects it from the weather. There are elevated walkways looping around and over the top of the house that affords us with unique perspectives of the house and surrounding countryside. Following a private tour of the house, there will be time to explore The Box and the lovely gardens.

We next drive from Helensburgh to Mount Stuart House on the Isle of Bute via Loch Lomond. Along the way, we shall stop to allow you lunchtime at leisure. Mount Stuart House, situated on the east coast of the Isle of Bute, is a flamboyant Gothic Revival country house and the ancestral home of the Marquesses of Bute. It was designed by Sir Robert Rowand Anderson for the 3rd Marquess of Bute in the late 1870s. Its interior includes a colonnaded Marble Hall at the centre of the main block and the Marble Chapel, which has an elaborate spired tower. Two earlier Georgian wings remain from the house's predecessor, which burnt down in 1877. The famous English Gothic Revival architect, William Burgess, built the house's oratory. The Scottish Arts and Crafts architect, artist, landscape designer and furniture designer, Robert Weir Schultz, designed much of the house's furniture as well as its gardens.

The gardens were begun in 1718 by the 2nd Earl of Bute, and later expanded by his son, the 3rd Earl of Bute and founder of Kew Gardens. The 300 acres of gardens and grounds include an 18th-century woodland, several formal gardens, designer wilderness, a kitchen garden, glass pavilion plant collection, a rock garden designed by Thomas Mawson, a magnificent old Lime Tree Avenue and a collection of endangered conifers.

After exploring the house and gardens, we shall drive the short distance to Rothesay. (Overnight Rothesay, Isle of Bute) B

Oban - 2 nights

Day 4: Thursday 2 June, Rothesay – Benmore – Inveraray – Oban

- Benmore Botanic Garden
- Inveraray Castle & Gardens

Today, on our way to Oban, we visit the Benmore Botanic Garden and Inveraray Castle. Benmore's 120-acre garden has a world-famous collection of plants brought from diverse regions including the Orient, Himalayas, North and South America. Trees includes a 150-year-old Redwood Avenue, as well as Douglas firs, Scots pines and Monkey puzzles. In spring and early summer, Benmore's slopes come alive with myriad blooms of its unique and world-leading rhododendron collection; 300 species are arranged by botanical grouping and geographic origin. There are Bhutanese and Chilean pavilions, the 'Golden Gates' (1878), a large pond, and a Victorian fernery. Among local fauna are red squirrels, sparrow hawks and the occasional Golden Eagle. A spectacular viewpoint at 137 metres offers panoramic views of Holy Loch and neighbouring mountains.

In the afternoon we drive to Inveraray Castle (1743), one of the UK's earliest Gothic Revival buildings, contemporary with Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill. William Adam and Roger Morris designed the house, which originally had flat roofs and crenelated façades. A third floor with a pitched roof and dormer windows was added on all four wings and its four round corner towers topped with steep conical roofs. The castle's 16-acre garden includes around two acres of formal lawns and flowerbeds which feature a stunning collection of rhododendrons and azaleas which flower from April to June. The park and woodland feature many fine tree specimens including *Cedrus Deodars* and *Sequoiadendron Wellingtonia*.

After exploring the castle and gardens, we shall drive to our hotel in Oban. The evening will be at leisure. (Overnight Oban) BL

Day 5: Friday 3 June, Full Day Boat excursion visiting the Isles of Iona and Staffa

- Iona Abbey, Isle of Iona

- Fingal's Cave, Basalt columns & Puffin colony, Isle of Staffa
- Carsaig Arches (Geographical formation)

Today travel by boat, from Easdale, to visit the small Isles of Iona and Staffa. On Iona we visit the Romanesque Abbey, a centre of Gaelic monasticism for three centuries. According to tradition, Iona monastery was founded in 563 by the monk Columba who had been exiled from Ireland. It played a crucial role in the conversion of the Picts (Scotland) and of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria (635). Iona consequently became the centre of one of the most important monastic systems in Great Britain and Ireland and was, until 715, an important supporter of Celtic, rather than Roman, Christianity. It also played a significant role in the development of insular art, such as the sculpted high crosses and the Book of Kells (8th c.), which may have been produced or begun in Iona's great *scriptorium*. Although the Columban community survived being raided by Vikings on several occasions, in 1203 the Benedictines established a new monastery, and an Augustinian Nunnery, on the Columban Monastery's foundations. The Abbey remained an important place for pilgrimage and worship. A number of early Scottish kings are thought to have been buried in its grounds. From 1899, the Iona Cathedral Trust undertook extensive restoration of the Abbey church, which had been dismantled and abandoned, along with the Nunnery, following the Scottish Reformation.

After exploring the monastery, and having lunchtime at leisure, our boat takes us to the uninhabited Isle of Staffa, where we shall view Fingal's Cave and the colony of Atlantic puffins who breed here between May and July. Other seabirds that either nest or feed from the island include gannets, guillemots, razorbills, great northern divers, fulmars and great skuas. The cave is composed of hexagonal volcanic basalt columns with a naturally formed arched roof that enhances the harmonies made by the echo of the smashing ocean waves. If the weather is kind to us then the boat will be able to nudge into the entrance where we may experience the natural acoustics that inspired Felix Mendelssohn to compose the *The Hebrides, Op. 26*. On our return journey to Easdale, we also view Carsaig Arches, natural arch cliff formations located on the south coast of the Isle of Mull. From Easdale we return by coach to our hotel in Oban. (Overnight Oban) B

Portree, Isle of Skye - 3 nights

Day 6: Saturday 4 June, Oban – Glencoe – Eilean Donan Castle – Portree

- Glencoe & the An Torr Trail (1hr easy trail)
- Eilean Donan Castle

Today we drive from Oban to Portree on the Island of Skye via Glencoe and the castle of Eilean Donan. We begin at Glencoe, infamous for the Glencoe Massacre (13 February 1692), following the Jacobite uprising of 1689. Thirty-eight men from Clan MacDonald of Glencoe were killed by government forces because they had not been prompt in pledging allegiance to the new monarchs, William and Mary. Dramatic Glencoe, that takes its name from the River Coe, is U-shaped, formed by an Ice Age glacier. It is the remains of an ancient super volcano that erupted 420 million years ago. We shall take a one-hour guided walk in this awesome valley on the picturesque An Torr Trail before visiting the Glencoe Visitors Centre.

After lunch, we shall drive to Eilean Donan Castle, arguably the most picturesque in the United Kingdom. The castle is located on a small island, Eilean Donan (Island of Donnán), named after Donnán of Eigg, a Celtic saint martyred in 617. Three sea lochs, Loch Duich, Loch Long and Loch Alsh, meet here. The castle developed through several phases from the earliest fortifications (13th c.) through to its destruction in 1719 and subsequent reconstruction in the 20th century. After exploring the castle, we cross to the Isle of Skye. (Overnight Portree, Isle of Skye) B

Day 7: Sunday 5 June, Portree – Dunvegan – Portree

- Dunvegan Castle & Gardens
- Lunch at The Three Chimneys
- Afternoon at leisure in Portree

The Isle of Skye is the largest and northernmost of the Inner Hebrides' major islands. The island's peninsulas radiate from the mountainous spinal Cuillin Mountain Range; its rocky slopes afford some of Scotland's most dramatic views. Skye has been occupied since the Mesolithic period. It was ruled for a time by Norse leaders and for a long time by Clan MacLeod and Clan Donald. After the failed Jacobite risings (18th c.) the clan system was broken up and the land cleared, replacing entire communities with sheep farms and leading to overseas migration. Some one third of Skye's residents were Gaelic speakers in 2001 and local Gaelic culture is still important.

Today we shall visit Dunvegan Castle, which occupies the summit of a rock some 15 metres above sea level, on a promontory on the eastern shore of an inlet on Loch Dunovan. Its eastern, landward side is protected by a 5.5-metre-deep ditch. The castle is the seat of the MacLeod of MacLeod, chief of the Clan MacLeod, and is the oldest continuously inhabited castle in Scotland. Probably a fortified site from Norse times, the castle was first built in the 13th century and developed piecemeal over the centuries. In the 19th century the whole castle was remodelled in a 'medieval' style. The castle collection contains many beautiful paintings and important heirlooms such as the 'miraculous' Fairy Flag that assured Macleod victories and Sir Rory Mor's ceremonial drinking horn (possibly 10th c.).

We shall also explore Dunvegan Castle's five acres of formal gardens, first laid out in the 18th century. In stark contrast to the barren moor land and mountains which dominate Skye's landscape, the castle's Water Garden, Rose Garden, Walled Garden and woodland walks have an eclectic mix of flowers, exotic plants, specimen trees, pools fed by waterfalls and streams flowing down to the sea. The 2-acre walled garden was created in the 1990s and laid out on a formal plan with each of the four quarters having a different focus.

Following our visit to the castle we shall dine at The Three Chimneys, a world-renowned Scottish restaurant set in a stunning location beside the sea. The remainder of the day is at leisure for you to explore the charming fishing village of Portree which includes numerous restaurants and cafés. (Overnight Portree) BL

Day 8: Monday 6 June, Portree – The Trotternish Loop – Portree

- Full day exploring The Trotternish Loop incl. Fairy Glen, Quiraing, Kilt Rock and Mealt Falls & Old Man of Storr

Today we shall drive the scenic 'Trotternish Loop' around Skye's northern Trotternish Peninsula. This loop itinerary passes some of Skye's most extraordinary natural features. Staffin Bay is dominated by the dramatic basalt escarpment of the Quiraing; its impressive land-slipped cliffs and pinnacles constitute one of Skye's most remarkable landscapes. The Old Man of Storr is a 50-metre-high pinnacle of crumbling basalt. The Fairy Glen is a strange landscape of miniature conical hills, rocky towers, ruined cottages and a tiny roadside *loch* (small loch). The route also affords stunning panoramas of the surrounding sea. (Overnight Portree, Isle of Skye) BL

Inverness - 2 nights

Day 9: Tuesday 7 June, Portree – Armadale – Inverness

- Armadale Castle & Gardens, Isle of Skye
- The Jacobite Steam Train from Mallaig to Fort William
- Loch Ness

Today we drive across to eastern Scotland via Armadale Castle. We shall also take The Jacobite steam train from Maillag to Fort William. Armadale Castle, a ruined country house, was once the seat of the Macdonalds of Sleat. A mansion was first built here around 1790 and some of the garden dates from this time. In 1815, a Scottish baronial style mock-castle, intended for show rather than defence, was built next to the house. After 1855, part of the house destroyed by fire was replaced by a central wing. Since 1925 the castle, abandoned by the Macdonald family, has fallen into ruin but the magnificent 40 acres of woodland gardens have been maintained. "The sheltered aspect and the mild climate created by the Gulf Stream sea current make the Gardens a floral paradise. Magnificent trees, many over 100 years old, tower above carpets of bluebells, orchids and wildflowers in spring and summer. Ponds, herbaceous borders and terrace walks provide a tranquil place to sit or stroll, with walks through dappled woodland linking these sunny havens".

We shall next drive and take a ferry to the town of Maillag, where we board The Jacobite steam train. The Jacobite runs a distance of 70 kilometres on the West Highland line between Mallaig and Fort William, passing through an area of great scenic beauty including alongside Loch Eil, Glenfinnan Viaduct and Arisaig. The line, which first opened in 1901, was made famous as the 'Hogwarts Express' in the *Harry Potter* films. After alighting from the train, we drive to Inverness along Loch Lochy and Loch Olch. The evening will be at leisure. (Overnight Inverness) B

Day 10: Wednesday 8 June, Inverness – Inverewe – Inverness

- Inverewe House & Garden
- Private gardens of 2 Durnamuck (by special appointment)

We begin today with a visit to Inverewe Garden, a botanical garden created on barren land in 1862 by Osgood Mackenzie on an 850-hectare estate. The garden is noted for the extraordinary variety of its plants, containing nearly 6,000, made possible by the warming effects of the Gulf Stream. It has a noteworthy rhododendron collection in flower throughout the year and a large collection of Erythroniums that flower in Spring. In summer, the sloping walled gardens with views of the sea, display many exotic plants from all over the world. We shall take lunch at Inverewe's Osgood Café.

After lunch, we drive to 2 Durnamuck, a coastal plantsman's garden situated on the edge of Little Loch Broom. It constitutes a rich mix of herbaceous borders, trees and shrubs, vegetables, drystone wall planting, South African plants, Mediterranean plants and a wild meadow. Plants here have been collected from all over the world. The gardens were featured on *Gardeners' World* in 2016 and in *Garden Magazine* and *Country Life* in 2017. On our return to Inverness, the evening will be at leisure. (Overnight Inverness) BL

Braemar - 2 nights

Day 11: Thursday 9 June, Inverness – Cawdor Castle – Balmoral – Braemar

- Cawdor Castle & Gardens
- Balmoral Castle Gardens (to be confirmed)

Today we drive to Braemar, visiting two grand estates along the way. Our first visit is to Cawdor Castle. Set

amid fine gardens, this extensive castle is built around a 15th-century tower house. It passed to the Campbell family in the 16th century and remains in Campbell ownership. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is entitled 'Thane of Cawdor'; the castle, however, was built many years after the 11th-century King Macbeth. The stonework in the oldest part of the castle dates to approximately 1380. Today the 6th Earl's second wife, the Dowager Countess Angelika still lives in the castle. The castle is known for its gardens, which include the 17th-century Walled Garden, the 18th-century Flower Garden and the Wild Garden of rhododendrons and azaleas that was added in the 1960s. The castle grounds also include a wood featuring numerous species of trees, as well as over 100 species of lichen. A holly maze that was added to the Walled Garden when it was remodelled in 1981, depicting the Minotaur's labyrinth inspired by a Roman mosaic floor of the ruined Roman villa of Conimbriga in Portugal. There are also other gardens including the Paradise Garden, a symbolic representation of 'heaven-on-earth', and the Knot Garden. The French-styled formal Flower Garden was laid out in 1710 comprise yew hedges swathed by the climber, *Tropaeolum speciosum*, locally known as the 'Scottish flame flower'. In 1850, the lavender beds and rose gardens were added, and the herbaceous borders were developed during this time.

After lunch at Cawdor' Courtyard Café, we shall drive to Balmoral Castle. Balmoral Castle has been one of the residences of the British royal family since 1852, when the estate and its original castle were purchased privately by Prince Albert. It remains private property of the royal family and is not part of the Crown Estate. Albert found the existing house to be too small and commissioned William Smith of Aberdeen to design the current Scottish Baronial style house; Prince Albert amended Smith's original designs. The new castle was completed in 1856 and the old castle demolished shortly thereafter. The gardens surrounding the granite castle have been extended over time and now include formal gardens, Victorian glasshouses, conservatory, water garden, front lawn, a charming garden created by Queen Mary between 1923 and 1925, as well as a large kitchen garden designed by the Duke of Edinburgh.

The Balmoral Estate, lying within the Cairngorms National Park, has been added to by successive members of the royal family, and now covers an area of approximately 20,000 hectares. It is a working estate, including grouse moors, forestry, and farmland, as well as managed herds of 2,000 – 2,500 deer, Highland cattle, and ponies. Approximately 8,000 acres of the estate are covered by trees. Ballochbuie Forest is one of the largest remaining areas of old Caledonian pine growth in Scotland. (Overnight Braemar) BLD

Day 12: Friday 10 June, Braemar – Pitmedden – Stonehaven – Braemar

- Pitmedden Garden: a Scottish Renaissance walled garden
- Dramatic ruined Castle of Dunnottar
- Harbour town of Stonehaven

Our visits (and coastal walk) today includes Pitmedden Garden, Dunnottar Castle and Stonehaven Harbour Town. Pitmedden Garden was originally laid out by Sir Alexander Seton in 1675. In the 1950s the National Trust re-created the garden based on 17th-century plans of the gardens found at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh as little of the original design was left. The old house had been destroyed by fire in 1807. This formal garden consists of almost 7 kilometres of clipped box hedging and infilled with 40,000 annuals. The *parterres* at the heart of the garden are a masterpiece of intricate patterns and sparkling colours; formal plantings include the design of Sir Alexander Seton's coat of arms. The garden is enclosed by a wall on one side and high terraces on the other three sides from where we will be able to enjoy the full impact of the geometric layout or from the original ogival-roofed stone pavilion at the north of the garden. Old apple trees in fan and espalier styles cover the south and west-facing walls and produce almost 2 tonnes of fruit at the end of the season. An orchard planted in 2014 has more than 200 fruit trees.

After lunch at leisure in a café in Pitmedden, we drive to Stonehaven Harbour Town where we shall alight

and walk 3 kilometres around the coast to Dunnottar Castle. The spectacular medieval castle ruins are located on the steep cliffs of a headland; its sheer cliffs drop 49 metres precipitously to the North Sea. The various buildings within the castle include a 14th-century tower house as well as the 16th-century palace. The site, however, was probably fortified much earlier in the Early Middle Ages. Dunnottar has played a prominent role in the Scotland's history through to the 18th-century Jacobite risings because of its strategic location and defensive strength. After thoroughly exploring these breath-taking ruins, we shall walk back to picturesque Stonehaven where there will be time at leisure before we return to Braemar. (Overnight Braemar) BD

Kinclaven - 2 nights

Day 13: Saturday 11 June, Braemar – Glamis – Dundee – Kinclaven

- Glamis Castle & Gardens
- V&A Dundee

Today, on our way to Kinclaven, we shall visit another castle, Glamis, as well as the Dundee Victoria and Albert Museum. Grand Glamis Castle has been owned by the Lyon family since the 14th century; it was the childhood home of Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother (Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon). Glamis is situated in the centre of the Vale of Strathmore, in a picturesque and well-wooded part of Forfarshire. The pink-grey castle's original 14th-century central tower was altered to an L-plan in the 16th century and had a large round stair-tower attached to it (1605); the spiral staircase within, possibly designed by Inigo Jones, is magnificent. The walls of the oldest parts of the tower are up to 5 metres thick, allowing for hidden passages within them. During the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, the building has been extended and features like bartizans and dormers have been added. The park was landscaped in 1790s in the style of 'Capability' Brown, and an Italianate Garden hedged by yew trees was laid out in 1910 by The Queen Mother's mother, Countess Cecilia to designs by Arthur Castings. It includes a raised terrace between two small gazebos, two long bowers of pleached beech, and borders of alliums, roses, *Iris sibirica*, nepeta and geraniums, punctuated by obelisks bearing honeysuckles, golden hops or roses. Wildlife such as butterflies, bees, pheasants and squirrels can also be spotted in this garden. The Walled Garden was redeveloped in 2015 by the 18th Earl and Countess of Strathmore and Kinghorne as it has fallen into disuse. It now beholds new flower beds, fruit trees and vegetables, and water features including a Monet-style bridge over an ornamental pond. The Nature Trail meanders through woodlands and pastures surrounding the Castle. Eastwards along the trail is the Pinetum that comprises a variety of exotic trees planted by the 13th Earl in c.1870. As Glamis Castle is famous for being the setting of Shakespeare's play *Macbeth* (1603-09), a series of seven sculptures have been commissioned to capture the essence of the play. They are located within the Pinetum and are carved by collaborative artists from Neith Art and Sculpture from Oak, Douglas Fir and Noble Fir grown on the Estate.

After lunch at Glamis Castle, we shall drive to Dundee. The Victoria and Albert, Dundee, is the first design museum in Scotland and the first Victoria and Albert museum outside London. It is also the first building in the United Kingdom that was designed by the Japanese architect Kengo Kuma (b. 1954), whose innovative design was inspired by the eastern cliff edges of Scotland; the Museum opened in 2018. Along with interesting temporary exhibitions, the Museum has the Scottish Design Galleries that feature a permanent collection of design works. A highlight is Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Oak Room that was originally completed in 1908. Catherine Cranston commissioned this tearoom, situated on Ingram Street in Glasgow. The Oak Room was restored from over 700 original parts that were stored by Glasgow City Council for over 50 years; it took 16 months to install. After exploring the Museum, we shall drive to our hotel in Kinclaven. (Overnight Kinclaven) BLD

Day 14: Sunday 12 June, Kinclaven – Drummond Castle – Kinclaven

- Drummond Castle
- National Park Nature Walk
- Farewell Dinner

This morning we visit Drummond Castle. Drummond Castle, the property of Drummond family from the 14th century, occupies a prominent spine of rock known as the Gask Ridge in Perthshire. The castle is especially famous for its gardens, which Historic Environment Scotland describes as ‘the best example of formal terraced gardens in Scotland’. The gardens date to the 1630s, when the 2nd Earl of Perth laid out the first terraced garden around the castle. The gardens were restructured in the 19th century and renewed again in the 20th century. A dominant feature of the garden is the *parterre* designed in a St Andrew’s Cross with a multiplex 17th century sundial at its centre. Both French and Italian influence can be seen throughout the garden. The castle comprises an original tower house, built by John Drummond, 1st Lord Drummond of Cargill (c. 1490). Appended to the tower is a 17th-century mansion. Both the tower and mansion were rebuilt in the 19th century. We shall visit the castle, tour its extraordinary gardens, and eat lunch here.

After lunch we will explore the natural landscape by going on a nature walk. This evening we shall convene for an evening farewell meal. (Overnight Kinclaven) BLD

Tour ends, Edinburgh Airport

Day 15: Monday 13 June, Kinclaven – Edinburgh – Edinburgh Airport

- The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
- Light Lunch
- Jupiter Artland: Contemporary sculpture park and art gallery, Edinburgh
- Transfer to Edinburgh Airport

Today, the last day of the tour, we visit Edinburgh’s Royal Botanical Gardens and, after lunch, a contemporary sculpture park and art gallery, Jupiter Artland. The 28-hectare Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, were founded in 1670 as a physic garden to grow medicinal plants. It now consists of four specialist gardens across Scotland: Edinburgh, Dawyck, Logan and Benmore. Its collection consists of more than 13,302 plant species, and its herbarium contains in excess of 3 million preserved specimens. The Botanic Garden’s Edinburgh gardens are an extremely important member of a worldwide network of institutions dedicated to ensuring that biodiversity is not further eroded. Inverleith House is an 18th-century building situated in the Gardens. It is now a contemporary art gallery.

After a light lunch at the Gardens, we shall drive to the award-winning Jupiter Artland on our way to Edinburgh Airport. Jupiter Artland is a contemporary sculpture park and art gallery that occupies the 120-acre grounds of 19th-century Bonnington House. Its grounds have been developed as a sculpture park and two new wings designed by Benjamin Tindall Architects provide indoor gallery space. Renowned artists, such as Anish Kapoor, Antony Gormley, Andy Goldsworthy, Marc Quinn, Laura Ford, Shane Waltherner and the late Ian Hamilton Finlay, were given the challenging brief to respond to the park’s natural surroundings and fit their works into the spaces they chose. The centrepiece was created by American landscape architect and critic Charles Jencks.

After visiting Jupiter Artland, we shall drive to Edinburgh Airport. Those booked on the ASA ‘designated flight’ will depart Edinburgh on EK24 at 2015hrs. If you are not booked on this ASA flight, please contact ASA’s office for assistance with transfers or further travel. BL

Accommodation

ASA has selected 3- and 4-star hotels that are themselves historical buildings and/or are located in historical centres. All hotels provide rooms with en suite bathroom.

- Glasgow (2 nights): 4-star Apex City of Glasgow Hotel – a modern, boutique-style hotel in the heart of the vibrant city centre. www.apexhotels.co.uk
- Rothesay, Isle of Bute (1 night): 3-star The Glenburn Hotel – housed in a Victorian building, situated above its own terraced gardens with panoramic views across Rothesay Bay to the Cowal Peninsula. theglenburnhotel.co.uk
- Oban (2 nights): 4-star Perle Oban Hotel – built in 1882, this historic hotel is located in the town centre, overlooking the harbour. perlehotels.com
- Portree, Isle of Skye (3 nights): 4-star The Cuillin Hills Hotel – set in 15 acres of private grounds, with spectacular views over Portree Bay to the Cuillin Mountain range. Facilities include an award-winning restaurant. www.cuillinhills-hotel-skye.co.uk
- Inverness (2 nights): 3-star Best Western Palace Hotel & Spa – set on the banks of the River Ness and opposite Inverness Castle, it is within a 5-minute walk to the restaurants and shops of Inverness. www.invernesspalacehotel.co.uk
- Braemar (2 nights): 3-star The Fife Arms – housed in a Victorian coaching inn, situated within the village of Braemar, deep in the breathtaking Cairngorms National Park. Owned by Iwan and Manuela Wirth of internationally acclaimed art gallery Hauser & Wirth, the property has recently undergone a complete renovation and boasts a stunning art collection and a garden by a royal-approved designer. thefifearms.com
- Kinclaven (2 nights): 4-star Ballathie Country House Hotel – one of UK's leading country house hotels, situated within its own private estate, overlooking the River Tay. Facilities include an award-winning 2AA Rosette Restaurant. www.ballathiehousehotel.com

Note: Hotels are subject to change. In this instance a hotel of similar standard will be provided.

Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation is for sole occupancy throughout the tour. The number of spaces available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

Tour Map



Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$TBA Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 31 July 2021

AUD \$TBA Land Content Only

AUD \$TBA Single Supplement

For competitive Economy, Business or First Class fares please contact ASA for further information.

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with private facilities in 3- and 4-star hotels.
- Buffet breakfast daily, lunches & dinners as indicated in the itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=dinner
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals may not have drinks included.
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach as outlined in the itinerary
- Full day boat excursion to Iona (weather permitting)
- Airport-hotel transfers if travelling on ASA's 'designated' flights
- Porterage of one piece of luggage per person at hotels (not at airports)
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Entrance fees to all sites
- Use of audio headsets during site visits
- Tour notes
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- International Airfare: Australia-Glasgow, Edinburgh-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport-hotel transfers if not travelling on the ASA 'designated' flights
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel Insurance



Physical Endurance & Practical Information

Physical Ratings 

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

This 15-day tour of the Scottish Highlands involves:

- Moderate walking and standing during site visits; walking tours may include steep slopes, flights of stairs, cobbled streets and uneven ground during garden visits.
- Moderate travel by air-conditioned coach
- Full day excursion by boat to Iona (weather permitting)
- Visiting a number of towns and villages on foot, walks uphill from bus parks to historic town centres and other sites.
- 3- and 4-star hotels with six hotel changes.
- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage. Hotel portage includes 1 piece of luggage per person.

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether this is a suitable tour for you.

Please note: it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the ASA Reservation Application Form.

Prior to departure, tour members will receive practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: www.smartraveller.gov.au

Booking Conditions

Making a Tentative Reservation before the tour price has been published

ASA INTENTION TO TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD \$100.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD \$400.00 per person. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your deposit of AUD \$500.00 is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

Or

- CANCEL your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD \$100.00 per person deposit, less a \$33.00 service fee (including GST).

Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. ASA's ability to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs, your health and safety and the health and safety of other tour members, is of paramount importance to us. For this reason the ASA Reservation Application includes a Medical Information section. As a general guideline, you must be able to accomplish each of these activities without assistance or support:-

- walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions
- walk confidently on and over uneven surfaces
- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- walk up and down steep slopes
- walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15-20 minutes

- organise, manage and carry your own luggage
- follow and remember tour instructions
- meet punctually at designated times and places
- administer your own medication



Intention to Travel Application

TOUR NAME _____

TOUR DATES _____

Booking before the tour price is available

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD\$100.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD\$400.00 per person. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your deposit of \$500.00 AUD is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

OR

- Cancel your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD\$100.00 per person deposit, less a \$33.00 service fee (including GST).

Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr Mrs Ms Miss Dr Other _____

FIRST NAME _____ Preferred FIRST NAME _____

MIDDLE NAME _____ SURNAME _____

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ POSTCODE _____

TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

Date of birth ____ / ____ / ____ GENDER Male Female

Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like: a twin-bedded room a double-bedded room a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling: on my own with a friend/family member Travel Companion _____

Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish poultry red meat dairy products

eggs pork nuts

Other _____

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence Postal Mail Email Address _____

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- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- walk up and down steep slopes
- walk at a steady pace and no less than 1 km every 15 - 20 minutes
- organise, manage and carry your own luggage
- follow and remember tour instructions
- meet punctually at designated times and places
- administer your own medication.

Applicant's Signature _____

Dated _____

Tour / Course Name

Name of Traveller 1

Name of Traveller 2

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$

 (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

Payment by (please indicate): Cheque Direct Debit (see below) Credit Card (see below)

International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic
Swift Code ANZBAU3M
BSB 013-423
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No.

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

Date Money Transferred

Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard, Visa & American Express 2%

Please debit my: Mastercard Visa American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number

Expiry Date

Security Code (CVC)

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ)

Cardholders Name

Cardholders Billing Address

Postcode

State

Country

Phone

Email

Cardholders Signature
