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# Shetland & Orkney: Archaeology and Wildlife of the Northern Isles 2025

28 JUL – 14 AUG 2025

*Code: 22521*

Tour Leaders Gillian Hovell, Russell Casey

Fitness Level

**Level 3 - Challenging**
Among our most physically demanding

Explore the rugged natural beauty of Shetland & Orkney. View the prehistoric sites of Skara Brae, Maeshowe, Stones of Stenness & Ring of Brodgar; Kirkwall, Lerwick & the islands' spectacular birdlife.

# Overview

Explore the rugged natural beauty and prehistoric sites of Shetland & Orkney with Gillian Hovell, archaeologist and ancient historian, award-winning writer and lecturer at the British Museum and York University. Gillian will be assisted by Russell Casey.

- Local curators, rangers, and site archaeologists and directors add their passion and knowledge on our adventure to the unforgettable sites and natural reserves of these islands.
- Delight in the wide skies and stunning scenery of the wild remote islands of Shetland and Orkney and their beautiful wildlife and flora. Wilderness and Nature reserves full of seals, otters, Shetland ponies, and bird colonies (including puffins) are just the beginning!
- Travel in Summer when Shetland and Orkney enjoy long days and clear blue skies, making it one of the most popular months to visit. Bird watchers love the migratory cliffhangers, with puffins breeding on the islands between May and early August. Wildflowers bloom throughout the summer, covering the meadows, moorland and cliffs with colour.
- Sail to 9 unique and memorable islands: Shetland, Unst, Noss, Bressay, Orkney, Hoy, Rousay, Papa Westray, South Ronaldsay.
- Journey through 5000 years of history from the first Neolithic farmers on these northern isles; stone circles, tombs great and small and even homes survive here almost intact.
- Visit the world-famous sites of Skara Brae, Maeshowe, Jarlshof, the Ring of Brodgar and the Standing Stones of Stenness.
- Step over the threshold as a guest in the oldest standing house in Northern Europe, built in 3200 BC on an idyllically peaceful shore of the tiny island of Papa Westray.
- Enjoy a comprehensive tour of Neolithic Orkney, hosted by your lecturer and joined by an array of passionate expert site archaeologists who continue to unearth the story of the first farmers here.
- Discover great museums such as the superb National Museum of Archaeology in Edinburgh and the varied, intimate and fascinating local museums on the islands.
- Enter the Iron Age in *brochs* (a sophisticated type of stone-built round house found only in Scotland) that dominate the coastlines and explore enigmatic Pictish homes and carved stones.
- Travel in the wake of the Vikings, exploring their life, craft and achievements. Climb on board a life-size replica of a Viking ship and enter a longhouse on Unst, the northernmost island in the British Isles.
- Delve into the medieval world of castles and palaces, and the magnificent St Magnus' Cathedral in Kirkwall, built in 1137 by Viking Earl Rognvald.
- Explore the special histories of these islands in WWI and WWII: visit the Churchill Barriers built to protect the fleet in Scapa Flow, and its wonderful Italian Chapel.
- Sample traditional crafts of these peaceful and remote, most northerly islands of Britain.

Overnight Edinburgh (2 nights) • Overnight ferry Aberdeen-Lerwick (1 night) • Lerwick (4 nights) • Kirkwall (9 nights) • Overnight ferry Kirkwall-Aberdeen (1 night)

## About the Tour

Our voyage takes us from Scotland's historic Edinburgh through the astonishing, unique archaeology, history and natural beauty of the northern isles of Orkney and Shetland. We begin with a special curator-led tour of Edinburgh's National Museum of Scotland, home to finds from over five thousand years of human activity, and then we explore the brand new Victoria and Albert Dundee, Scotland's first design museum.

Sailing overnight to Lerwick brings us to the remote, wild natural beauty of Shetland, a land of seals, amazing birdlife and famous Shetland ponies. Sumburgh lighthouse and its RSPB (Royal Society for the

Protection of Birds) reserve, and the dramatic Noss National Nature Reserve bring us up close to birds such as the delightful puffins.

The archaeological jewel of Shetland with its millennia of prehistoric, Viking and medieval archaeology is Jarlshof. But nature and history brush shoulders everywhere here, as we discover on our guided walk on St Ninian's Isle and when we sail to Unst, the most northern island in Britain; here we experience reconstructions of Viking life and traditional crafts and enjoy a guided walk and picnic in Hermaness National Nature Reserve.

A sea voyage south brings us to the gently rolling hills of the Orkney islands. A local saying is 'if you scratch the surface of Orkney, it bleeds archaeology' and, at the Ness of Brodgar excavations, the discovery of 5000 year-old temples are changing our understanding of Neolithic life. Our own explorations take us to the famous Neolithic homes of Skara Brae and of Barnhouse near the ancient awe-inspiring stone circles of Ring of Brodgar and the Stones of Stenness. Cathedral-like Maes Howe tomb towers above us and we enter the intimate tombs of lakeside Unstan and hilltop Cuween, and clamber into the isle of Rousay's huge Minehowe and tiny Blackhammer and Taversoe Tuick tombs. On Papa Westray we take a scenic walk to duck under the threshold of the oldest upstanding house in Northern Europe, built in 3200 BC.

Orkney had a thriving culture in the tough Iron Age, and we explore this at the ground-breaking Cairns dig at Old Scatness, in the brooding Broch of Gurness, and as we climb down into the enigmatic underground Earth-house at Rennibister.

The Norse Vikings ruled these islands for over 400 years and we hear some of their dramatic Orkneyinga Sagas at the peaceful coastal ruins of their Orphir church. Our hotel in the heart of Kirkwall is moments away from the medieval Bishop's and Earl's palaces and the impressive St Magnus Cathedral built in 1137. Our tours of the Dounby Click Mill and the ruined Earl's Palace in Birsay give us a further taste of medieval life.

Orkney was a strategic location in the World Wars, of which Scapa Flow, the Churchill Barriers and the Italian Chapel are poignant reminders.

Island hopping days to peaceful Rousay and mountainous Hoy are full of archaeological and geological marvels, while crossing a tidal causeway at the Bourgh of Birsay brings us not just to a ruined monastery but also maybe to puffins.

Orcadian modern life is gentle and relaxed; we shall experience this everywhere, particularly when we stroll through the picturesque historic harbour town of Stromness. We shall also taste local gin on a tour of the Orkney Distillery.

Gillian describes the wealth and variety of archaeological sites including truly astonishing 5,000-year-old Neolithic stone circles, tombs and houses found in these islands. Watch it here.

https://youtu.be/hDotEO6Gy1g

# Leaders

## Gillian Hovell

Gillian previously worked at BBC Television and is an award-winning freelance writer, author and public speaker, specializing in archaeology, ancient history, and prehistory. She is actively involved in digs at major sites, including Orkney's famous Ness of Brodgar Neolithic site.

Gillian Hovell BA (Hons), is an ancient historian and an archaeologist. She previously worked at BBC Television and is an award-winning freelance writer, author, and public speaker, specializing in archaeology, ancient history, and prehistory. Gillian is actively involved in digs at major sites, including Orkney's famous Ness of Brodgar Neolithic site, and she also lectures across the United Kingdom regularly. Gillian holds a degree in Latin and Ancient History from Exeter University in England. Gillian looks forward to sharing how archaeological finds and sites are full of human life and passion, and that history and archaeology are not just about the past, they're everywhere, and they add colour, depth and meaning to our lives today. Gillian is a lecturer at the British Museum in a London and York University. Gillian is author of *Visiting the Past: A Guide to Finding and Understanding Britain's Archaeology*, History Press Limited, Third Edition 2015.

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## Russell Casey

Leading ASA tours to diverse locations since 2009, Russell is a passionate traveller with wide ranging knowledge and interests from science & technology to world history. He is particularly interested in the interactions between peoples, their beliefs, customs, arts and culture and the transmission of this knowledge.

eading ASA tours (from Europe to the US and Central Asia) since 2009, Russell is a passionate traveller with wide ranging knowledge and interests from science & technology to world history. He is particularly interested in the interactions between peoples, their beliefs, customs, arts and culture and the transmission of this knowledge.

Russell worked in the health field as a medical physicist and in clinical informatics. He still maintains an interest in these areas consulting in radiation safety to the healthcare industry and clinical informatics consultancy to the IAEA.

A broad range of language studies & extensive travel to diverse regions has given him a greater

appreciation of the similarities & differences in people's history, culture & religion which has proved invaluable in resolving unexpected encounters.

Russell has a broad interest in literature, the "Art of the Book", calligraphy, textiles & metal work. He has a particular interest in how old skills, arts & crafts are revived & applied in the modern context.

Constantly researching tours, Russell strives to enhance the experience of fellow travellers. He has undertaken accredited Oxford University short courses to further his knowledge including studies in Islamic Art & Architecture & Religion in Prehistory. With organisational management skills developed over many years Russell utilises this expertise to manage ASA tours. He regularly updates his first aid skills with the Queensland Ambulance Service.

Well regarded by ASA tour lecturers for his management style, an ASA colleague commented: "I could travel with him to the end of the world!"

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# Itinerary

The following itinerary describes daily activities which may change or be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate alterations in opening hours, road conditions, weather conditions, flight or ferry schedules etc. Participants will receive a final itinerary together with their tour documents prior to departure. The tour includes breakfast daily, lunches & dinners indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch (on several days this will be a packed lunch provided by the hotel) and D=dinner.

## Edinburgh - 2 nights

### Day 1: Monday 28 July, Arrive Edinburgh

- Tour commences at 4.30pm in the foyer of the Radisson Blu Hotel, Edinburgh City Centre
- Welcome Meeting
- Introductory Lecture
- Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant

Meeting Point: The tour commences at 4.30pm in the foyer of the Radisson Blu Hotel, Edinburgh City Centre, located in the heart of the Old Town. From here we will walk to a nearby venue for a welcome meeting, following which our group leader, Gillian Hovell, will present a lecture to introduce us to the history and archaeology of the northern isles. We dine together at a local restaurant. (Overnight Edinburgh) D

### Day 2: Tuesday 29 July, Edinburgh

- Morning Lecture and visit to The National Museum of Scotland: Dr Hugo Anderson-Whymark, Curator of Prehistory (Neolithic)
- Afternoon at leisure

Our day begins with a presentation by Dr Hugo Anderson-Whymark, Curator of Prehistory (Neolithic) that

introduces us to the prehistory of Shetland and Orkney.He will then accompany up to the National Museum of Scotland which documents 5000 years of human culture. Here we discover the early humans who arrived after the last Ice Age (c.12,000 BC), the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers from 8000 BC and their skillfully made stone tools, and the first farmers who arrived with their remarkable new culture in the northern isles and Scotland around 3200 BC. The innovations of the Bronze Age (c.2100 – c.700 BC) are here shown in metalworking, while the perilous tribal Iron Age (c.700 BC – AD 500) echoed to the carnyx and glittered with gold torcs that we see. The material wealth of the Romans, who advanced north into Scotland even though they never conquered it, is evident in weapons, inscriptions, coins and vessels, although during this time 'Celtic' culture remained a vibrant culture. Enigmatic Pictish stones are followed by the domination of the Norse Vikings (800s – 1200s); a highlight here is the silver of St. Ninian's treasure (c.750-825) from the Shetland isle we shall later visit.

This afternoon we have plenty leisure time to explore Edinburgh independently or discover the wide range of other galleries in this remarkable museum which deal with everything from meteorites and dinosaurs to Scottish history (including the famous Lewis Chessmen of the late 1100s), and the Art, Design and Fashion, Science and Technology and World Cultures galleries. (Overnight Edinburgh, Scotland) B

## Overnight ferry Aberdeen - Lerwick

### Day 3: Wednesday 30 July, Edinburgh – Dundee – Aberlemno – Aberdeen

- V&A Dundee – Scotland's first design museum
- Time at leisure in Dundee
- Aberlemno Sculptured Stones: featuring some of the finest Pictish carving
- Northlink Ferry: Overnight Aberdeen – Lerwick departing at 1900hrs

Today we check out of our hotel and take our coach north to Dundee where we are treated to a special guided tour of the brand new Victoria and Albert Dundee, Scotland's first design museum. This landmark museum on the River Tay opened in September 2018 and contains exhibits as diverse as costume, interior design, illuminated manuscripts and engineering. V&A Dundee has been established in close partnership with the London's Victoria and Albert Museum, drawing on its world-class collections of art, design and performance across 5000 years of human ingenuity. Designed by Kengo Kuma, the renowned Japanese architect now designing the Tokyo 2020 Olympic stadium, V&A Dundee is a unique and complex structure with exterior walls which twist both horizontally and vertically, creating shapes like waves or the hull of a ship. Scotland's sea-cliffs inspired the form of the museum, its dramatic lines creating patterns and shadows which change with the weather, light and time of day.

There will we time at leisure in Dundee. In addition to strolling the streets of the old town, you may wish to visit the art gallery or Discovery Point to learn about the research ship that carried Captain Scott to the Antarctic.

We then drive northwards through the Scottish countryside to Aberlemno. Here we visit four remarkable Pictish stones, carved between 500 and 800. They display the range of carvings, from the early enigmatic prehistoric symbols to battles and hunts and Christian crosses and other sacred imagery.

An hour's drive takes us to Aberdeen, our gateway to the northern island of Shetland. We board our ferry, where we shall settle into our cabins and sail out from the Mainland before having dinner together on board. Gillian will provide a scene-setting talk for our time in Shetland. (Overnight ferry from Aberdeen to Lerwick) BD

## Lerwick, Shetland - 4 nights

### Day 4: Thursday 31 July, Arrive Lerwick – Sumburgh – Lerwick

- Arrival Lerwick by Northlink Ferries at 0730hrs
- Jarlshof Prehistoric and Norse Settlement, Sumburgh
- Light lunch at the Sumburgh Hotel
- Sumburgh Head: Visitors Centre, Lighthouse & Seabird Colonies of the RSPB Nature Reserve
- Iron Age Broch and Village at Old Scatness: Guided tour by regional archaeologist
- Pre-dinner talk at the hotel

We breakfast on board, having already berthed in Lerwick. On disembarking, we board our coach and travel south through the villages and sweeping rural landscape of mainland Shetland. Along our coastal route we may see Shetland ponies and seals, signs of generations of peat digging, and locations from the TV detective series, *Shetland*.

At the southernmost tip of Shetland, with nothing but the Atlantic between us and Northern America, a narrow strip of land now serves as the island's airport; but 1000 years ago it was a vital site for the Vikings. We visit their settlement, later called Jarlshof (meaning 'Earl's House') by Sir Walter Scott. The Vikings were not the first to live here, for we walk through almost 4000 years of almost constant habitation; Neolithic and Bronze Age homes sit side by side, and later Iron Age houses and remarkable *brochs* (windowless towers built on the shores) were followed here by Pictish round decorated wheelhouses. The Norse Vikings then built their very different early medieval longhouses here; this area continues to be studied as an archaeological site of great importance. The Norse did not lose power in Shetland until 1468. A medieval house here from the 1300s and 1400s, with its barn and drying kiln, is remarkably similar to local houses built in Shetland until relatively recently. We can view all this from a platform built into the ruins of the 16th-century house that looms over the site.

After a light lunch at the nearby Sumburgh Hotel (used as a nursing home in the *Shetland* series), we visit Sumburgh Head Lighthouse and the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) reserve. We hope to see the regular fulmars, guillemots, kittiwakes and shags, as well as the ever popular puffins.

We next visit Old Scatness, where a site archaeologist will give us a guided tour of the excavated Iron Age *broch* and an impressive and thought-provoking reconstruction.

We shall head north again to Lerwick via a different route. We settle into our rooms at the Shetland Hotel before gathering in the evening for a talk and dinner. (Overnight Lerwick, Shetland) BLD

### Day 5: Friday 1 August, Lerwick: Day Excursion to the Island of Unst with Dr Val Turner

- Ferry trip to the Shetland Island of Unst (via Yell and Bluemill Sounds)
- The Underhoull to Lund Trail: a Viking World (incl. the Underhoull Longhouses, Underhoull Broch, boat noosts & St Olaf's Chapel) – approx. 2 hrs
- "Viking Haroldswick": Longhouse & Skidbladner Reconstructions
- Unst Heritage Centre & Unst Boat Haven
- Settlement of Skaw & Muckle Flugga
- Muness Castle

Today we explore the Viking heritage of Scotland, accompanied by Dr Val Turner, who has been Shetland's Regional Archaeologist since the post was created in 1986. Dr Turner has project managed two major excavations for her employers, Shetland Amenity Trust: Old Scatness Broch saw the twelve-year excavation of an Iron Age Broch and Village, which has rewritten the story of Scotland's Iron Age; and Viking Unst saw

the excavation of three longhouses and the construction of a replica longhouse and restoration of a replica Viking longship.

An early morning breakfast fuels us for our drive and the ferries that take us to the island of Unst, the northernmost island in Britain. On arrival we drive to Underhoull where we commence a two-hour scenic coastal walk across to Lund. On our journey we pass the Underhoull Longhouses, the Underhoull Broch which commands excellent views of the bay below, some stone-lined boat *noosts* (places where longships were pulled ashore and berthed) and St Olaf's Chapel. This 12th-century chapel, whose interior features a Pictish fish or serpent, was probably built for the occupants of the nearby Viking/Norse settlement. Its graveyard includes three distinctive Viking stone crosses.

From Lund we transfer by coach to 'Viking Haroldswick'. Here we explore the Skidbladner, a full-size replica of the 24 metre-long Gokstad ship found in a Viking burial mound in Norway in 1880. There is also the reconstructed Viking longhouse where we may gain further insights into the Norse way of life. Nearby, the Unst Heritage Centre and the Unst Boat Haven bring us forward to more recent history to reveal how generations of crofters and fishermen have lived and worked in Shetland.

Next, we drive north to the tiny settlement of Skaw, located on a peninsula in the northeast corner of the island. If the weather is clear, we may view Muckle Flugga, a small rocky island considered the northernmost point of the British Isles, although technically the nearby smaller islet of Out Stack is actually farther north. The Muckle Flugga Lighthouse was built by David and Thomas Stevenson. Thomas's son, Robert Louis Stevenson, visited in 1869 and it is said he returned home with the inspiration for his next book – *Treasure Island.*

Time allowing, our journey back to the ferries will include a brief stop to see Muness Castle. Built in 1598 by cruel Laurence Bruce, this is a fine example of tower house architecture. (Overnight Lerwick, Shetland) BLD

### Day 6: Saturday 2 August, Lerwick – St Ninian's Isle – Mousa – Lerwick

- Crofthouse Museum
- St Ninian's Isle
- Boat excursion to Mousa Broch

We begin our day with a curator-led tour of Shetland's exceptional Crofthouse Museum. Here we witness the tough life of a sea-based crofter.

A short drive takes us to the beauty and peace of St. Ninian's Isle where we cross the tombolo (a beautiful sandy natural causeway) for our 3-hour guided walk, where nature and history complement each other; an Iron Age settlement (c.800 BC to c.AD 400), a stone church and the remains of a later ruined church (c.1100s) all share this isle. It was here that the St.Ninian's Treasure (c.750-825) was found by a schoolboy in 1958. During this walk we will be accompanied by one of Shetland's regional archaeologists.

We then travel by boat to Mousa Island where we visit the well-preserved Mousa Broch, the tallest broch still standing. This is likely a result of its small diameter and thick walls. (Overnight Lerwick, Shetland) BLD

### Day 7: Sunday 3 August, Lerwick – Noss Island National Nature Reserve – Island of Bressay – Lerwick

- Walking Tour of Lerwick's Old Town
- Shetland Museum & Archives
- Wildlife Cruise of Noss National Nature Reserve and Bressay

We begin the day with a walking tour of Lerwick's Old Town led by a local guide. At the restored historic Hay's Dock we take a guided tour of the Shetland Museum & Archives to explore Shetland's rich heritage and culture.

Following a light lunch at a local café we drive 20km to Sandsayre Pier for our afternoon cruise to the stunning Noss National Nature Reserve and the isle of Bressay. We get close to the 25,000 seabirds who nest on these noisy cliffs and we also keep an eye open for seals, porpoises, whales, otters and dolphins. (Overnight Lerwick, Shetland) BLD

## Kirkwall, Orkney - 9 nights

### Day 8: Monday 4 August, Lerwick – Shetland Mainland – Kirkwall

- Stanydale 'Temple', near Bixter
- Scalloway Museum, Scalloway
- Light lunch at a Local Restaurant
- Clickimin Broch, Lerwick
- Northlink Ferry: Lerwick – Kirkwall (1730-2300)

After breakfast, we check out of our hotel and drive to mysterious Neolithic Stanydale Temple. Although we shall see many megalithic structures in Orkney, this is the only one surviving on Shetland. It comprises a wall of large boulders, some weighing up to 300kg, forming an oval enclosure measuring 14m by 10m. Its scale suggests that it was a public building but its purpose 5000 years ago can only be imagined.

We visit Scalloway museum that takes us from earliest history, through the traditional lives on Shetland to 'The Shetland Bus', the clandestine and dangerous heroic wartime operation which ferried men across the North Sea between Shetland and occupied Norway during World War II. Nearby is the Scalloway Castle. Currently closed for essential restoration work,this late 16-century castellated tower house was the home of Patrick Stewart, the Earl of Orkney and Shetland. His oppressive rule earned him the name 'Black Patie'.

After a light lunch at a local restaurant, we take the short drive to Clickimin Broch, located on the outskirts of Lerwick, overlooking the Clickimin Loch. Once inside, the *broch* towers above us. To the west of the tower survive a collection of structures dating from c.1000 BC to AD 500.

We return to Lerwick to take our evening ferry to Kirkwall. Dinner will be served on board. Gillian will give us a short briefing for tomorrow. (Overnight Kirkwall, Orkney) BLD

### Day 9: Tuesday 5 August, Kirkwall

- Afternoon lecture
- Walking tour of Kirkwall
- St Magnus Cathedral
- Earls and Bishops Palace
- Orkney Distillery Tour

After our late arrival in Kirkwall the previous evening we enjoy a leisurely start to the day with the morning at leisure. At 1pm we gather for a lecture at the hotel, when Gillian will introduce us to the archaeology we are about to encounter on the Orkney Islands.

We then embark on a guided walking tour of Kirkwall to be introduced to the town's history and major

landmarks. We take a tour of the medieval St Magnus Cathedral and hear the interesting stories connected with it. It was founded in the 12th century by the Viking Earl Rognvald in honour of his uncle, St Magnus whose relics were hidden within its walls. Known as the 'Light of the North', it was built by the same Norman masons who built Durham Cathedral. Across the street from the cathedral are the ruins of the medieval Earl's Palace and the medieval Bishop's Palace.

Our afternoon finishes with a visit to the Orkney Distillery, makers of Kirkjuvagr Orkney Gin. We take a tour of the distillery and learn about the botanicals used that were brought to the island by the Viking settlers, before sampling the product for ourselves! (Overnight Kirkwall, Orkney) BD

### Day 10: Wednesday 6 August, Kirkwall: Day excursion to Westray and Papa Westray Island

- Ferry to Westray and Papa Westay Islands
- Knap of Howar Neolithic House
- Island tour including the remains of St Boniface Kirk and a nature walk

This morning we travel by ferry to Westray Island and then as foot passengers to the small island of Papa Westray. Here we transfer along the spine of the island to a peaceful field beside a rocky shore. Here we visit the extraordinary, partly subterranean, Knap of Howar: this is the oldest house in Northern Europe. We enter through its original threshold which is joined by a very low corridor to a contemporary 'workshop'. Its wall cupboards, room dividers and hearths seem pristine, but Unstan Ware pottery found here proves that this early farmstead is c.5500 years old; that's older than Skara Brae and nearly 1000 years older than the pyramids. A picnic lunch gives us a leisure time to enjoy the atmosphere of this special site.

We also visit the 12th century St Boniface Kirk, the only church other than St Magnus' Cathedral to survive the Reformation and continue in use. This site shows evidence of occupation from the Iron Age, and was a monastic settlement established in the 8th century. Our visit to Papa Westray concludes with an excursion to the north of the island where we enjoy a short nature walk. (Overnight Kirkwall, Orkney) BLD

### Day 11: Thursday 7 August, Kirkwall – Orkney Mainland

- Iron Age Broch of Gurness
- Dounby Click Mill
- Causeway to Brough of Birsay: remains of Pictish, Norse and later settlements
- The Earl's Palace, Birsay

After breakfast, we drive to the Broch of Gurness via Eynhallow Sound. This solid Iron Age structure glowered at the distantly visible Midhowe Broch across the waters on Rousay. The Broch of Gurness boasts many features such as room divisions, an interior spiral staircase and a surrounding ditch. Its stone walls rise high above us, reminding us of the powerful defensive function of these structures. Huddled around is the best-preserved *broch* village in Scotland; its many dwellings, built between 500 and 200 BC, are squeezed side by side within an outer wall. By the AD 300s though, the *broch* village had fallen into disuse and a Pictish 'Shamrock' shaped house was built within its ruined area.

We drive on, pausing at the Dounby Click Mill. This is the last of the horizontal watermills of Orkney. Although this is a restoration of a mill from early 1800s, it demonstrates an ancient technique, barely changed since the Norse or 'Click' Mills (so-named due to the noise they made) used in the Viking era. Within the small stone mill we may view all of its internal machinery including a horizontal paddle wheel, grind-stones, hopper and meal bin.

After lunch, we drive to the Brough of Birsay where we walk across a tidal causeway. Once on the isle, we tour the remains of a secluded medieval monastery and view (a copy of) the carved Pictish Stone that survived here. A walk up onto the top of the headland should give us glimpses of puffins and other sea birds.

Our coach ride back to Kirkwall includes a stop at the picturesque Earl's Palace in Birsay. This fine courtyard castle was the home of Robert Stewart, half-brother of Mary Queen of Scots; its many gun ports reveal how troubled the times were in the 1500s. (Overnight Kirkwall, Orkney) BL

### Day 12: Friday 8 August, Kirkwall, Day excursion to the Island of Rousay

- Ferry trip to Island of Rousay
- Taversöe Tuick Chambered Cairn
- Blackhammer Chambered Cairn
- Midhowe Chambered Cairn
- Midhowe Broch

We take a late breakfast this morning and then a short but glorious sea crossing carries us to the small Orcadian island of Rousay. Rousay abounds in prehistoric sites; over 100 have been recorded so far. The variety of structures found include *brochs*, burial cairns, standing stones, Norse burial *cists*, earth-houses, burnt mounds or *knows*, and Celtic chapels.Our circular coach tour of this island takes us first to Traverse Tuick, the tiny but unique double-storey Neolithic chambered cairn; we take turns to climb down into it.Not far down the road is the long chambered Blackhammer Cairn with its decorative facing stones. The structure is a typical stalled cairn, with an interior divided into seven compartments by pairs of upright stone slabs. Here, in c.3000 BC, the dead were laid with their ancestors' bones. Although each of these tombs may have been used for hundreds of years, only a few skeletons were found in each. At least 15 such cairns have been found on the island of Rousay alone.After a light lunch in a local restaurant with sea views, we drive on to Midhowe Cairn which we reach by a short but steep walk down the fields to the rocky shore. This vast Neolithic burial mound was truly monumental; we view its interior compartments and impressive stonework from walkways above it. Chambered tombs of this kind were communal burial places; the remains of at least 25 humans have been found here.There are more than 500 surviving examples of *brochs* in Scotland. Many stood alone, but *brochs* in Orkney and Caithness, including Midhowe and nearby Gurness, were surrounded by sizeable settlements. The remains of the Midhowe Broch's circular wall stands to a height of approximately four metres and within the structure the general layout of the ground floor has been remarkably well-preserved. As we enter, we can see the height, the separate rooms and the hearth and vital water well, all within this highly defensible stone tower that dominated the shoreline. (Overnight Kirkwall, Orkney) BLD

### Day 13: Saturday 9 August, Kirkwall: Day Excursion to the Island of Hoy

- Ferry to island of Hoy
- Dwarfie Stane
- Rackwick Bay and Beach
- Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum

A drive across to Stromness and a ferry trip takes us to the mountainous island of Hoy for a day's guided tour. The rocks here were carved out to make the 8.5m long Dwarfie Stane, possibly the only Neolithic rock-cut tomb in Britain. We consider the effort required to carve out this tomb using just stones, antlers and bones. We pass on to the cliffs and view the Old Man of Hoy, the sea stack made famous by the transmission on television of its climb by Chris Bonnington and his team in 1967.

Our tour includes a visit to Rackwick Bay and Beach where we enjoy a picnic lunch, and the Hoy Heritage Centre, which gives an overview of life on Hoy.

We visit the recently opened Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum, which tells the story of the naval anchorage during World War I and World War II, before sailing back to the Orkney Mainland and our hotel. (Overnight Kirkwall, Orkney) BL

### Day 14: Sunday 10 August, Kirkwall – Orkney Mainland – Stromness – Kirkwall

- Marwick Head Nature Walk
- Stromness
- Unstan Chambered Cairn Tomb
- Evening lecture at hotel by guest archaeologist

This morning we drive to the Marwick Head Nature Reserve where a local wildlife expert will guide us on a walk to learn about the flora and birdlife of this dramatic stretch of coastline. From the cliffs we can look into the heart of a seabird colony that includes fulmars, kittiwakes and guillemots.

After lunch in the picturesque harbour town of Stromness we drive to the Unstan Chambered Cairn, a burial mound that sits on a peninsula jutting out into the loch. Views across to the Ring of Brodgar and the Standing Stones of Stenness provide a fresh view of these truly unique Neolithic monuments. Unstan Chambered Cairn, which was probably built as a communal burial place, is another example of a stalled cairn. Excavations here uncovered a remarkable collection of pottery bowls, all of the same design. Similar bowls were subsequently found in several other Neolithic tombs in Orkney, and are known as 'Unstan Ware'. Several of the reconstructed vessels are in the National Museum of Scotland.

This evening we gather for a presentation by a guest lecturer who will introduce us to one of the most fascinating archaeological sites on Orkney – the Ness of Brodgar. (Overnight Kirkwall, Orkney) BLD

### Day 15: Monday 11 August, Kirkwall: Orkney Mainland

- Neolithic Orkney UNESCO World Heritage Site: Maeshowe Chambered Cairn
- Neolithic Orkney UNESCO World Heritage Site: Standing Stones of Stenness
- Barnhouse Neolithic Settlement
- Ness of Brodgar – special 'virtual visit' by local archaeologist
- Neolithic Orkney UNESCO World Heritage Site: Ring of Brodgar

Today we continue visiting some of Orkney's most important archaeological sites in the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site. We begin at the Standing Stones of Stenness. Over 5000 years old, this constitutes one of the earliest stone circles on Orkney. Although only four of the original 12 stones still stand, these are impressive as each reaches a height of 6 metres.

Just yards away we explore the Barnhouse Neolithic settlement, perched on the edge of the loch. The site provides an interesting contrast to the neighbouring village of Skara Brae; the site has 15 small round free-standing dwellings in varying stages of development.

From the Barnhouse Settlement we can see Maeshowe Chambered Cairn; we shall drive round to visit this cathedral-like tomb on a guided tour. Considered the finest chambered tomb in North West Europe, it is more than 5000 years old. This impressive monumental tomb also features runic graffiti left by 12th-century Norse crusaders on the walls of the main chamber.

We pass the solitary Comet Stone and eat a picnic lunch before visiting the is of the Ness of Brodgar. The extensive excavations of the Ness of Brodgar concluded in 2024 and the site was reburied to preserve the remains discovered. An archaeologist intimately involved with this project will lead us on a 'virtual tour' of the Ness of Brodgar to explain the importance of the site and its place within the landscape.

We conclude the day with a tour around the Ring of Brodgar. A perfect circle, built in c.2500 to 2000 BC, this was one of the last of the stone circles. The third largest stone circle in Britain, it covers an amazing 8500 square metres, and all its stones had been brought from a different part of the island. Twenty-seven of its original 60 stones survive. (Overnight Kirkwall, Orkney) BL

### Day 16: Tuesday 12 August, Kirkwall: Skara Brae

- Morning at Leisure in Kirkwall
- Neolithic Orkney UNESCO World Heritage Site: Skara Brae, including an exclusive out-of-hours visit to the interior of the Neolithic houses

After a morning at leisure in Kirkwall, we embark on one of the highlights of our tour – Skara Brae. Located on the shores of the Bay of Skaill, this site was revealed after a terrifying winter storm blew the sand-dunes away in 1850. The homes had survived virtually intact, protected by the sand that filled them; hearths, beds, dressers (or altars), storage tanks and even indoor toilets survive, all dated from between 3300 BC and 2200 BC. The people who lived here would have seen, or even taken part in, the building of the stone circles of the Stones of Stenness, the Ring of Brodgar and the Ness of Brodgar ceremonial centre.

The Neolithic homes themselves are fragile and not open to the public. However, we will take a special out-of-hours guided tour of these extraordinary structures and feel for ourselves just how homely they were!

Our visit will also include time to visit the 17-century Skaill House with its collections of prehistoric and historic items (including Captain Cook's dinner service) and paintings. (Overnight Kirkwall, Orkney) BD

## Overnight ferry Kirkwall to Aberdeen

### Day 17: Wednesday 13 August, Kirkwall – South Ronaldsay – Aberdeen

- Churchill Barriers
- Italian Chapel
- Orkney Wine Shop
- Orkney Fossil and Heritage Centre
- Cuween Hill Chambered Cairn
- Rennibister Earth House
- Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant

Our last morning in Orkney takes us to the island of Ronaldsay in the south east. We drive over the Churchill Barriers, constructed to protect Scapa Flow during World War II, that link the island to the mainland of Orkney. The Italian prisoners of war who built the Barriers also built for themselves the beautiful and touching Italian Chapel. They constructed the chapel from two Nissan huts, and decorated the interior with 3D wall paintings that create the impression of a stone chapel; the sanctuary image was based on the reproduction of a painting of the Madonna kept in the pocket of one of the prisoners. Everything they used to create this very remarkable place was recycled.

We stop briefly at the Orkney wine shop and then move on to the Orkney Fossil and Heritage Centre to

explore the exhibits at leisure.

We return to mainland Orkney to walk the rough track leading up to Cuween Hill Chambered Cairn. The view alone from here across the sea and hills would be worth the short walk but this small, very personal, intimate Neolithic tomb has a surprise within it; its stonework and corbelling is astonishing. The cairn attests to a belief in an afterlife 5000 years ago; there is evidence of complex burial rites. Bones of men, dogs and oxen were found buried here.

Descending to the coach we are just minutes from Rennibister Earth House, thought to date from the first millennium BC. The function of such Iron Age underground tunnels, called *souterrains*, remains a mystery; theories include that they were storehouses or defensive hiding holes. We climb down the short metal ladder into the remarkably constructed site. Inside the main chamber, the drystone walls curve upwards to a corbelled roof supported by four stone pillars. There are also five small stone alcoves built into the walls of the chamber.

On our return to Kirkwall, we enjoy a final dinner at a local restaurant before checking in for our late-night overnight ferry back to Aberdeen. (Overnight ferry Kirkwall-Aberdeen) BLD

### Day 18: Thursday 14 August, Aberdeen Ferry Terminal – Aberdeen Station

- Transfer to Aberdeen Railway Station arriving at approx. 8.30am

The ferry arrives in Aberdeen at 6am, and breakfast is served. At 7am we check-out of our cabins and disembark for our coach transfer to Aberdeen railway Station. B

# Accommodation

In Shetland & Orkney accommodation is provided in basic 3-star hotels. All rooms have en suite bathrooms.

- Edinburgh (2 nights): 4-star Radisson Blu Edinburgh – located in the heart of Edinburgh's Old Town, this historic building has been transformed into elegant contemporary accommodation.
- Ferry from Aberdeen to Lerwick (1 night) – with Northlink Ferries. Our group will be accommodated in a mixture of Outer twin cabins or Inner 4-berth cabins used as either sole or double occupancy. Cabins are modern, clean and fully equipped with en-suite washbasin, toilet and shower facilities. They also include individual temperature control and tea & coffee-making facilities. Please see images below.
- Lerwick, Shetland Islands (4 nights): 3-star The Shetland Hotel – providing basic accommodation with generously sized rooms, close to Lerwick Harbour and an easy walk to the historic town centre.
- Kirkwall, Orkney Islands (9 nights): 3-star The Kirkwall Hotel – a charming historic building overlooking Kirkwall harbour with modern, comfortable rooms.
- Ferry from Kirkwall to Aberdeen (1 night) – with Northlink Ferries. Our group will be accommodated in a mixture of Outer twin cabins or Inner 4-berth cabins used as either sole or double occupancy. Cabins are modern, clean and fully equipped with en-suite washbasin, toilet and shower facilities. They also include individual temperature control and tea & coffee-making facilities. Please see images below.

## Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation is for sole occupancy throughout the tour. In Edinburgh this is a double room (for single use). In Shetland and Orkney (where hotel options are extremely limited) this will be a single room. A cabin for single use will be provided for the overnight ferry between Aberdeen and Lerwick, and between Kirkwall and Aberdeen. 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.

Notes:

- *Hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*
- Porterage is NOT provided at the hotels or during ferry excursions. All participants MUST be able to handle their own luggage.

Northlink Ferries: Aberdeen - Lerwick - Kirkwall - Aberdeen

## Cabin Outer Twin

A large window, providing natural light, gives a spacious feel to these cabins. They have two comfortable fixed beds, positioned side by side.

## Inside 4-berth cabin

With two lower fixed berths and two pull down bunks accessed by a fitted ladder, these cabins are great for families and visitors travelling in groups. Please note – inside cabins do not have windows.

# Tour Map

Bergen
Haugesund
Inverness
SCOTLAND
Dundee
North Sea
Glasgow
United Kingdom
NORTHERN IRELAND
Isle of Man
Leeds
Google
Map data ©2019 GeoBasis-DE/BKG (©2009), Google
Terms of Use

# Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD $13,380.00 Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 31 March 2024

AUD $13,580.00 Land Content Only

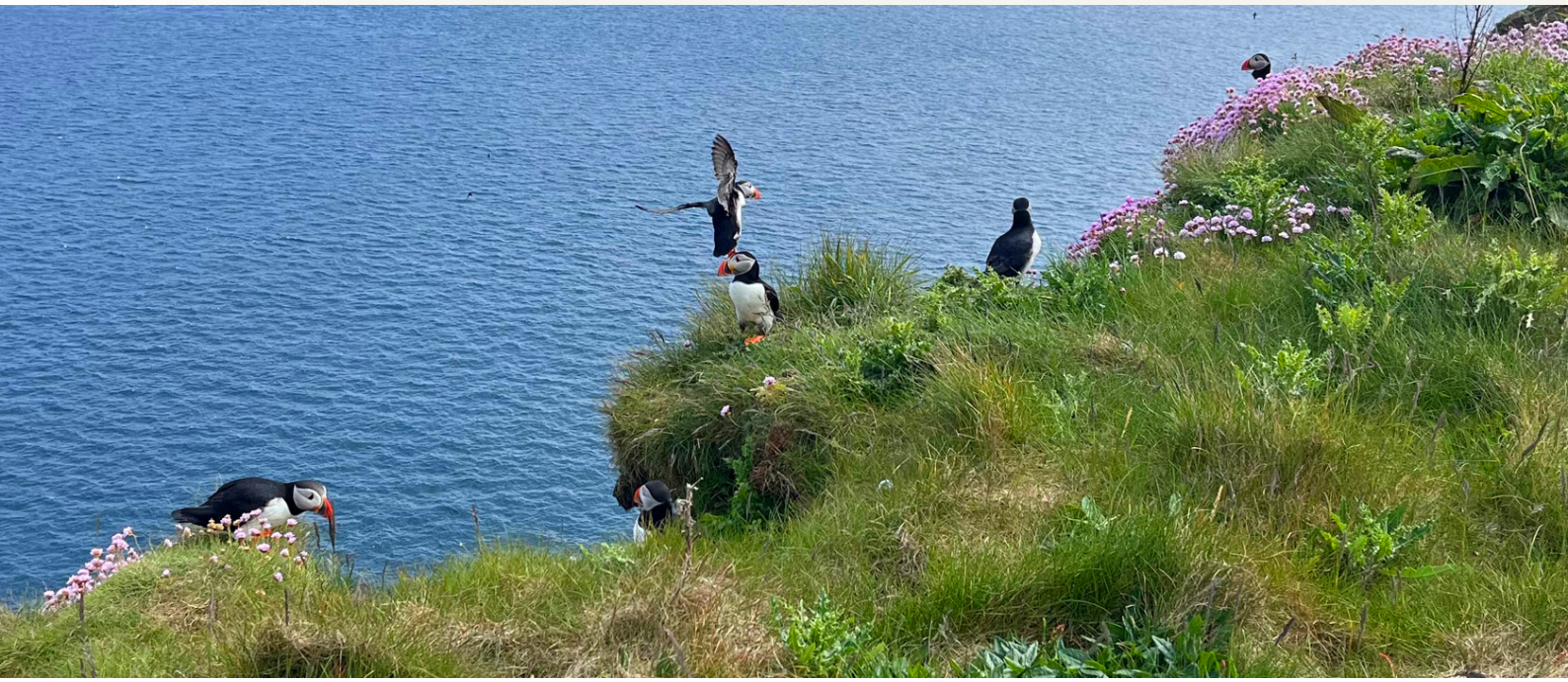
AUD $1980.00 Single Supplement

### Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with private facilities in a 4-star hotel in Edinburgh, basic 3-star hotels in Lerwick and Kirkwall, 2 nights travelling with Northlink Ferries in twin-share cabins (Aberdeen - Lerwick, Kirkwall - Aberdeen)
- All meals, indicated in the tour itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=dinner
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals may only include water
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach or public ferries as outlined in the day-by-day itinerary
- Departure airport transfer to Aberdeen Airport according to the time outlined in the tour itinerary
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Tour reference book
- Entrance fees to all sites; boat excursions as outlined in the itinerary
- Use of audio headsets during site visits
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals

### Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Edinburgh, Aberdeen-Australia
- Porterage at hotels or during ferry excursions between Aberdeen - Lerwick, Lerwick - Kirkwall, Kirkwall - Aberdeen
- Personal spending money
- Arrival airport transfer
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel insurance
- Visas as applicable



# Fitness Criteria & Practical Information

Fitness Level

**Level 3 - Challenging**

Among our most physically demanding

You must be able to:

- manage at least five to seven hours of physical activity per day with ease.
- walk at a regular to moderate pace; some days for at least 5-7kms. Outdoor activities include nature walks along elevated grasslands, beaches, clifftops and numerous prehistoric sites. The terrain may be rocky or uneven; some stretches may be on relatively steep slopes. The majority of sites are unsheltered and constantly exposed to the wind.
- negotiate challenging prehistoric sites including passage tombs with poor lighting, low ceilings, steep and uneven stairs.
- cope with a more demanding tour schedule which involves longer days, regular early morning starts and extensive inter-island ferries.
- board/alight coaches, ferries and small boats unassisted.
- contend with a shower over a bath; walk-in showers may not be available at all hotels.
- manage your own luggage at some hotels and for all ferry transfers.

Fitness Levels

Please also view the fitness criteria required for our tours, graded from Level 1 to Level 3, at www.asatours.com.au/fitness-level/

All ASA tours are active programs suitable for people with a good level of mental and physical fitness and good mobility. They are not suitable for people who lack stamina, have difficulty walking at the group's pace or who have mobility issues. An unavoidable aspect of every tour is the need to manage walking, stair-climbing and standing for long periods of time.

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. Before enrolling on an ASA tour please read the fitness requirements carefully.

### Weather

Travel during the months of July and August when Shetland and Orkney enjoy long days and clear blue skies, making it one of the most popular months to visit. Bird watchers love the migratory cliffhangers, with puffins breeding on the islands between May and early August. Wildflowers bloom throughout the summer, covering the meadows, moorland and cliffs with colour. Summer brings almost nonstop daylight, known locally as 'simmer dim'. Average temperatures in July: in Lerwick 15° to 10°C, and Kirkwall 16° to 9°C.

## Booking Conditions

### ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION and send it to Australians Studying Abroad together with your non-refundable deposit of AUD $1000.00 per person payable to Australians Studying Abroad.

ASA CULTURAL TOURS

# Reservation Application

TOUR NAME _____

TOUR DATES _____

Please complete **one application, per person in block letters and sign**. Parental signature is required for participants under 18 years of age. Please mail this form with the appropriate deposit to: **P.O. Box 8285, ARMADALE, VICTORIA, 3143**. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation.

## 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 ☐

## Passport

Number _____ Expiry date __/__/____ Nationality _____

☐ Colour copy of my current valid passport enclosed ☐ I'm renewing my passport ☐ ASA has a colour copy of my current passport

## Covid Certificate

☐ A copy of my current international certificate enclosed

## Travel Plans

☐ I plan to leave Australia before the tour commences. Planned departure date __/__/____

☐ I will be arranging my airfare independently and taking the Land Content Only option.

## 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

**Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information**

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

☐ fish ☐ poultry ☐ red meat ☐ dairy products

☐ eggs ☐ pork ☐ nuts

☐ Other _____

## Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence ☐ Postal Mail ☐ Email Address _____

## Emergency Contact Details

**Note: this person MUST be available by telephone and be present in Australia for the duration of your tour with ASA**

Name _____ Relationship to Traveller _____

Address _____

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

EMAIL address _____

ASA CULTURAL TOURS

# Medical Information

The purpose of seeking this information is to assist ASA to determine, where necessary, whether ASA is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs and whether your health and safety (or that of your fellow travellers) is likely to be compromised given your choice of tour. It will also assist you and ASA if you fall ill or have an accident whilst travelling.

- ASA reserves the right to decline your Reservation Application if this Medical Information section is not completed properly and may reject or cancel your reservation, or terminate your participation on any tour, if ASA subsequently learns that you have failed to make full and proper disclosure.
- ASA is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. ASA's privacy policy is available for viewing at **www.asatours.com.au**
- If ASA has any concerns about the information you have provided, it will contact you to request clarification before considering your Application.
- ASA requires you to consider carefully your limitations in light of ASA's Physical Endurance Star Rating System in ASA's Brochure and Itinerary when choosing your tour.
- If you are not likely to satisfy ASA's Participation Criteria (see below), ASA, in its sole discretion, may reject your Reservation Application.
- It is a condition of your tour that you agree to accept the directions of ASA's Tour Leaders in relation to your suitability to participate in activities planned on tour.
- ASA reserves the right to cancel your participation on a tour if your behaviour is in ASA's opinion causing undue distress or damage to any person or their property.
- If your participation is discontinued during a tour, ASA will assist by arranging your onward travel (if required) at your own cost, but you will not be refunded for forfeited parts of the tour.
- ASA tour groups are not accompanied by a medical practitioner. ASA recommends that you see your doctor for advice about your specific needs while overseas. You may also wish to contact a travel and vaccination clinic for advice. www.traveldoctor.com.au tel:1300 658 444; www.travelvax.com.au tel: 1300 360 164.
- Travel insurers require you to declare all existing medical conditions.
- Please carry a complete list of medications with you during the ASA tour. Include **generic names** of each medication (consult your local pharmacy for information).

Please mark **X** in the YES or NO box to every question below and provide details where necessary:

## 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. **You must also be fully vaccinated against Covid-19.** 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. The responsibility of the Tour Leader is to ensure that the larger group enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing individual assistance to any one guest.

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Can you walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions? | ◯ | ◯ |
| 2. Can you walk unassisted on and over uneven surfaces? | ◯ | ◯ |
| 3. Can you climb at least 3 flights of stairs and/or walk up and down steep slopes unassisted? | ◯ | ◯ |
| 4. Can you walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15 - 20 minutes unassisted? | ◯ | ◯ |
| 5. Can you organise, manage and carry your own luggage? | ◯ | ◯ |
| 6. Can you follow and remember tour instructions and meet punctually at designated times and places? | ◯ | ◯ |
| 7. Can you administer your own medication? | ◯ | ◯ |
| 8. You do NOT have impaired vision or hearing which may impact your capacity to participate on this tour? | ◯ | ◯ |

## Mobility and Fitness

As many of ASA's international sites do not provide access to wheelchairs or similar mobility aids, we regret that ASA tours are not suitable for people who require the use of a walking frame, wheeled walker, wheelchair or motorised scooter.

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Do you suffer from any medical conditions that may compromise your mobility and/or fitness to participate on this program? | ◯ | ◯ |

If yes, please specify

_____

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

_____

## Allergies and/or Food Intolerances

ASA will make reasonable endeavours to organise meals to suit you, provided that you give ASA adequate notice of your specific dietary requirements or allergies. You may be required to research dietary alternatives, as not all destinations may be able to offer suitable food substitutes.

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Do you have any food allergies or intolerances? | ◯ | ◯ |

If yes, please specify

_____

_____

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2. Have you ever had an anaphylactic reaction to anything? | ◯ | ◯ |

If yes, please specify

_____

_____

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Do you carry an epipen? | ◯ | ◯ |
| 3. Do you have any other allergies or reactions to anything, including medical drugs? | ◯ | ◯ |

If yes, please specify

_____

_____

## Existing Medical Conditions

You alone are responsible for managing any existing medical conditions, your medication and any medical equipment that you may need when on your tour. Please plan for contingencies and take extra medication, dietary supplements and/or fully charged batteries for medical equipment if your health and safety depends on these. You should take into consideration that power sources at some destinations may be unavailable, inadequate, inconvenient or unreliable.

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Have you any significant medical conditions that may impact your capacity to complete this tour? | ◯ | ◯ |

If yes, please specify

_____

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

_____

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2. Do you require some form of powered medical aid, such as a CPAP machine? | ◯ | ◯ |

These machines may not be operable on certain international flights, modes of transport, in remote or other areas with inadequate or unreliable power sources without a fully charged independent long life battery or batteries.

**Diabetics:** You may be travelling and sightseeing for many hours at a time. Insulin dependent diabetics must carry extra supplies of insulin (as this medication cannot be obtained in some destinations), regulators, applicators, storage and refrigeration equipment, as well as any necessary supplements. Accommodation may not provide refrigerators in rooms.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3. Are you diabetic? | ◯ | ◯ |
| Are you insulin dependent? | ◯ | ◯ |
| 4. Do you suffer from travel sickness? Remember to use an appropriate medication while on tour. | ◯ | ◯ |

ASA CULTURAL TOURS

# Declaration, Liability and Booking Conditions

## Declaration

I declare that: I have read and understood the ASA Tour Itinerary, Reservation Application and Booking Conditions. I am aware of ASA's terms as relating to refunds, cancellations, responsibility and liability. I understand that ASA relies upon this declaration when considering this Application. I accept the inherent dangers, risks and uncertainties in travel and those beyond ASA's control and understand they may occur before or during any tour. I have made full and complete disclosure and have not knowingly withheld any medical information about myself from ASA. I have completed this Reservation Application honestly and accurately. I warrant that I am able to participate independently in all activities described by ASA in the itinerary without assistance from any person.

I will advise ASA in writing if any aspect of my fitness and or health conditions change materially at any time before my departure date. I understand and accept that the itinerary, accommodation and lecturers scheduled for this tour may change.

I agree and consent that ASA may give my personal information in this Reservation Application to tour service providers and relevant authorities as required by law, but only for the purpose of making bookings with and engaging services associated with the tour. I understand that if I do not consent to the use of my personal information for this purpose, ASA will decline my Reservation Application.

In consideration of ASA's acceptance of my Reservation Application, I irrevocably release and indemnify ASA from all claims that I, or any other party, may have against ASA its employees, invitees, agents and contractors, however arising in respect of any loss, damage, injury, death or expense incurred in the course of booking, preparing for, travelling to, on and from or cancelling any tour.

I release and indemnify ASA with respect to:

1. Every general risk to which I or my personal belongings may be exposed in the course of preparing for, travelling to, on or from any ASA tour;
2. Every special risk, in particular medical risks, to which I may be exposed in the course of preparing for, travelling to, on or from any ASA tour arising from, including, but not limited to:
   a. intermittent power cycles and/or the temporary or permanent loss of power (beware CPAP or any other medical machine users);
   b. dietary, food or other allergies (ASA cannot guarantee that traces of items to which you are allergic are not present in food or drink you are served, medication you are administered or other substances with which you may come into contact);
   c. any event or situation that may compromise the administration of necessary medication or my health, safety and wellbeing generally; and
   d. any event or happening beyond ASA's control
3. All claims arising as a result of my or ASA's cancellation or termination of any tour, part of a tour or of my continued participation on a tour for any reason (subject to ASA's refund conditions below).

## Limitation of Liability

ASA is not a carrier, event or tourist attraction host, accommodation or dining service provider. All bookings made and tickets or coupons issued by ASA for transport, event, accommodation, dining and the like are issued as an agent for various service providers and are subject to the terms and conditions and limitations of liability imposed by each service provider. ASA is not responsible for their products, services, terms and conditions. If a service provider cancels or does not deliver the product or service for which you have contracted, and does not give a refund, your remedy lies with the service provider, not ASA.

ASA will not be liable for any claim (e.g. sickness, injury, death, damage or loss) arising from any change, delay, detention, breakdown, border closures, cancellation, failure, accident, act, omission or negligence of any tour service provider or authority however caused (contingencies). You must take out such travel insurance as is available against such contingencies.

ASA's liability in respect of any tour cancelled or changed will be limited to the partial refund of amounts you have paid, less an administration fee of $500 and other costs and charges of third party service providers. No compensation will be payable to you by ASA where ASA cancels or changes a tour, or any part of a tour.

ASA reserves the sole discretion to cancel any tour or to modify itineraries in any way it considers appropriate and in the best interests of health, safety and wellbeing of tour participants. Tour costs may be revised, subject to unexpected price increases or exchange rate fluctuations.

## Booking Conditions

### DEPOSITS

A non-refundable deposit of $1000.00 AUD per person is required to reserve a place on an ASA tour.

### CANCELLATION FEES

If you cancel your booking the following charges apply:

More than 75 days before departure: your initial deposit of $1000.00 is non-refundable.**

75-31 days prior 50% of total amount due

30-0 days prior 100% of total amount due

**$500.00 of this amount (ie 50% of your deposit) may be credited to another ASA tour departing within 12 months of the original tour you booked. We regret, in this case early-bird discounts will not apply.

***We take the day on which you cancel as being that on which we receive written confirmation of cancellation.***

### UNUSED PORTIONS OF THE TOUR

We regret that refunds will not be given for any unused portions or services of the tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation, flights or transfers.

### WILL THE TOUR PRICE OR ITINERARY CHANGE?

If the number of participants on a tour is significantly less than budgeted, or if there is a significant change in exchange rates ASA reserves the right to amend the advertised price. We shall, however, do all in our power to maintain the published price. Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of ASA make it necessary to change airline, hotel or to make amendments to itineraries. We will inform you of any changes in due course.

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

ASA requires all participants to obtain comprehensive travel insurance. A copy of your travel insurance certificate and the **reverse charge** emergency contact phone number must be received by ASA no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the tour.

### FINAL PAYMENT

The balance of the tour price will be due 75 days prior to the tour commencement date.

**PLEASE READ THE ABOVE CAREFULLY, PRINT AND SIGN BELOW**

☐ I accept the conditions on this booking form

☐ I have read the information about the physical requirements of the tour in the detailed itinerary and confirm that I am able to meet these requirements

Applicant's Signature

Print Full Name

Dated

ASA CULTURAL TOURS

# Payment Form

## 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

The above amount is payable for:

- ☐ Intention to Travel
- ☐ Tour Deposit
- ☐ Balance of Payment
- ☐ Upgrade from Intention to Travel to a Deposit
- ☐ Travel Insurance
- ☐ Other (eg. Airfares, Accommodation) _____

## 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

_____

**AUSTRALIANS STUDYING ABROAD**
206 Williams Road, Toorak VIC 3142 (PO Box 8285, Armadale VIC Australia 3143)
Phone +61 3 9822 6899 Email info@asatours.com.au

**www.asatours.com.au**
License No. 31248 ABN 27 006 589 242