

Overseas Adventure Travel[®]

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide[®]



Idyllic Great Britain: England's Lake District, the
Scottish Highlands & Orkney Archipelago

2025

Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will slip seamlessly into local life as you explore off the beaten path in your small group. Like all our itineraries, this one is designed to give you an intimate understanding of your destination, not just a superficial view. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation. And if you choose to travel solo, you will enjoy all these cultural experiences at an unmatched value, with our FREE Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the **87% of our travelers who personalize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis
Chair
Overseas Adventure Travel

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Eilean Donan Castle, Scotland

Idyllic Great Britain: England's Lake District, the Scottish Highlands & Orkney Archipelago

Small Group Adventure

England: Chester, Lake District | **Wales:** Conwy | **Scotland:** Edinburgh, Orkney Islands, Inverness

Small groups of no more than 16 travelers, guaranteed

17 days starting from \$6,595

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE**

For departure dates & prices, visit www.oattravel.com/nuk2025pricing

Uncover the scenic and cultural gems of the northern United Kingdom, a land of natural beauty and rich history. You'll revel in Great Britain's diverse charms and witness breathtaking landscapes, including the snowcapped peaks of Welsh Snowdonia, the lakes and mountain fells of England's Lake District, the green valleys and white cliffs of the Yorkshire Dales, the beauty of the Scottish Highlands, and more.

IT'S INCLUDED

- 15 nights accommodation
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- All land transportation
- 33 meals—15 breakfasts, 9 lunches, and 9 dinners (including 1 Home-Hosted Lunch)
- 17 small group activities
- Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next O.A.T. trip

Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.

Idyllic Great Britain: England's Lake District, the Scottish Highlands & Orkney Archipelago



WHAT TO EXPECT

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Moderate

Pacing: 5 locations in 16 days, plus a full day trip to Wales

Physical requirements: Must be able to walk approximately 3 miles unassisted each day and participate in 6-8 hours of daily physical activities

Flight time: Travel time will be 7-16 hours and will most likely have one connection

View all physical requirements at www.oattravel.com/nuk

GREAT BRITAIN: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

Unbeatable Value: Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry.

People-to-People Experiences: Spend **A Day in the Life** of a family-owned farm in England's Lake District and get a hands-on experience, as we help feed and herd the sheep. We'll also meet the industrious sheepdogs who assist the family corralling their flock. Plus, enjoy a traditional Scottish meal with a family in Edinburgh during a **Home-Hosted Dinner**.

O.A.T. Exclusives: Get a fuller picture of this region by engaging in **Controversial Topics** with the people who live here. For example, we'll meet with English and Welsh locals in Chester to talk about the divided topic of Welsh independence.

ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Fly to Manchester, England
2-4	Chester
5-6	Lake District
7-9	Edinburgh, Scotland
10-12	Orkney Islands • Kirkwall
13-16	Inverness
17	Return to U.S.

PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

Classic English Landscapes:
London to the Cotswolds
PRE-TRIP: 6 nights from **\$3,395**

Uncovering Wales: Coastal Cardiff to the Mountains of Brecon Beacons
POST-TRIP: 6 nights from **\$3,395**

ARRIVE EARLY

We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **London** before your pre-trip extension from **\$370** per room, per night
- Arrive early in **Chester** before your main adventure from **\$420** per room, per night

Idyllic Great Britain: England's Lake District, the Scottish Highlands & Orkney Archipelago

YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

6 nights in *Classic English Landscapes: London to the Cotswolds*

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Day 2 Arrive London, England

Day 3 Explore London

Day 4 Explore Cambridge

Day 5 Visit Blenheim Palace • Transfer to Cotswolds

Day 6 Explore Bath

Day 7 Explore Cotswold villages

Day 8 Begin main trip

Day 1 Depart U.S. for Manchester, England

Depart for your overnight flight to Manchester, England.

Day 2 Arrive in Manchester, England • Transfer to Chester

- Destination: Chester
- Included Meals: Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel Indigo Chester or similar

Morning/Afternoon: You'll arrive in Manchester in the morning or afternoon, depending on your flight arrangements. An O.A.T. representative will assist in your transfer to your hotel in Chester.

Upon arrival at our hotel, we'll check in and meet up with our Trip Experience Leader and those travelers who took our *Classic English Landscapes: London to the Cotswolds* pre-trip extension. You'll have some free time to settle

in and unpack. Then you may wish to join our Trip Experience Leader on an orientation walk of the surrounding area.

Dinner: You'll be provided with a voucher to get dinner on your own this evening.

Evening: You have the freedom to retire to your room for the night to rest, or to experience Chester's nightlife. You might like to find a local pub where you can grab a pint with your fellow travelers and toast to the discoveries to come.

Day 3 Explore Chester • Visit Roman Amphitheater • Welcome Dinner

- Destination: Chester
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel Indigo Chester or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Gather together for a Welcome Briefing with our Trip Experience Leader, during which we will introduce ourselves and review our itinerary in more detail (including any changes that may need to occur).

Then we'll walk to one of Chester's oldest attractions—its ancient Roman Amphitheater. Dating all the way back to the first century, this amphitheater is the largest discovered in Britain. While not as grand in scale as the Colosseum in Rome, excavations have shown the arena was used for various forms of similar entertainment, including gladiatorial combat.

We'll next begin a walking tour of Chester. We'll see more evidence of its ancient past in the surrounding Roman walls made of local red sandstone. We will also stroll Chester's old city and visit the Rows—a unique shopping district that features 2-story covered arcades and Tudor-style half-timber buildings. And we'll witness Chester Cathedral: Founded as a Benedictine abbey in 1092, then later rebuilt in 1250 in the Gothic style, the cathedral today represents all the major styles of English medieval architecture, from Norman to Perpendicular.

Lunch: Enjoy lunch at Katie's Tearoom. Quaint and old fashioned, this tearoom is housed in a 14th-century Grade II-listed building, and was originally used as a merchant house. Many of the building's original features remain, such as its wide, studded oak doors.

Afternoon: The remainder of the afternoon is free for independent exploration. Perhaps you'll visit Chester's famous Wishing Steps to see if anyone is putting in the considerable effort it supposedly takes to have a wish granted—for it is said that anyone who can run up and down the stairs twice without drawing breath will see their dreams come true.

Dinner: Enjoy a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

Evening: Free to spend as you wish—your Trip Experience Leader can provide recommendations.

Day 4 Overland to Wales • Conwy Castle visit • Llyn Idwal hike

- Destination: Chester
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel Indigo Chester or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll drive to North Wales this morning. We'll arrive at our first stop in North Wales, Conwy Castle—a UNESCO World Heritage site—which we'll explore with a local guide. This imposing fortress—built between 1283 and 1287 by Edward I during his conquest of Wales—is remarkably well preserved. In fact, its interior contains the most intact set of medieval royal apartments in the country. Outside, you'll see craggy Snowdonia mountains rise the distance while spread out below you is the harbor and narrow streets of Conwy which are still protected by an unbroken 4,200-foot ring of town walls.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Conwy.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll begin a scenic drive through the Snowdonian Mountains on the way to our next destination, Snowdonia Park. Upon arrival, we'll set off on hike to Llyn Idwal, a small, pristine lake tucked into the foothills of the mountains. Along the way, we'll cross a bridge spanning a cascading waterfall. We'll admire the natural beauty when we reach the lake—intrepid travelers may even wish to jump in for a quick swim.

Dinner: On your own in Chester—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: Free to spend in Chester however you wish.

Day 5 Lake District • Yorkshire Dales • Meet with a local dry stone waller

- Destination: Lake District
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: The Swan Grasmere or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We depart early this morning and begin our drive to the Lake District.

Our overland journey will take us through the Yorkshire Dales, a scenic region of northern England famous for its white limestone cliffs, rivers, and lush green valleys—or, “dales.” The natural beauty of this upland area earned it the recognition of being named a national park in 1954. We’ll have plenty of time to admire and appreciate the views during our drive, with a scenic stop or two along the way.

Lunch: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Afternoon: We’ll continue our drive to our hotel. Upon arrival, we’ll take an orientation walk with our Trip Experience Leader before checking in. We’ll then have some free time to settle in and unpack.

Later, we’ll meet up at our hotel with a local dry stone waller. During our journey through northern England’s countryside today, one defining feature you may have noticed is the rugged stone walls that curl around fields and line roadsides. Incredibly, these walls are created without the use of concrete—instead, craftsmen assemble these walls by expertly fitting each slab of rock and stone together.

Our local expert will explain the skill it takes to create these distinct walls and discusses how the knowledge of this age-old craft may be lost, as fewer and fewer people learn this distinct technique.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: The remainder of the evening is on your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 6 *A Day in the Life* of a Lake District farm

- Destination: Lake District
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: The Swan Grasmere or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today we’ll spend *A Day in the Life* on a family-owned farm in the Lake District. Upon arrival, we’ll be greeted by the farm’s owner, or another member of the family. We will learn about what life is like farming here in the Lake District, and how the farm uses traditional practices to ensure the health of the animals and the environmental stability of the land.

As we tour the farm, we’ll meet the different animals here, such as a flock of over 6,000 hens who produce free-range eggs and their herd of Jersey cows—you may even have the opportunity to milk one. Then we’ll visit the farm’s flock of sheep. Depending on the time of year, we’ll witness different demonstrations, from shearing to sorting new lambs. We’ll help feed the sheep as well. The farm also keeps around 15 colonies of native black bees. We’ll learn about the process of beekeeping and honey production, as well as enjoy a taste of the sweet results.

Lunch: At the farm. We'll enjoy traditional fresh, hearty fare, such as sausage, eggs, and beef burgers.

Afternoon: After our lunch, we'll next visit the farm's pigs and help to feed them. As we walk, we'll also see the indigenous hedgerows that surround the area and learn about their importance as a habitat for the local flora and fauna found within them.

We'll then meet the industrious sheepdogs who help corral the flock we met earlier today—and learn how these clever animals are trained during a herding demonstration. We'll then thank the farm owner and their family for their hospitality before driving back to our hotel. The rest of the afternoon is free for independent discoveries.

Dinner: On your own—perhaps you'll ask your Trip Experience Leader to recommend a favorite local pub or restaurant.

Evening: The evening is free to spend as you wish—you may choose to settle down early in preparation for our journey to Edinburgh tomorrow.

Day 7 Overland to Edinburgh, Scotland • Visit Hadrian's Wall and Vindolanda Fort

- Destination: Edinburgh
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Voco Edinburgh Haymarket or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: This morning, we'll check out of our hotel and begin our drive to Edinburgh, stopping first at Hadrian's Wall—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—which is located near the border of England and Scotland.

Built to guard the wild northern frontier of the Roman Empire in AD 122 and stretching an incredible 73 miles from the North Sea to the Irish Sea, Hadrian's Wall was an ambitious undertaking that required vision and an outstanding level of engineering skill from the ancient Romans. The wall would become more than just a barricade—it evolved into a bustling, multi-cultural military zone comprised of forts, barracks, towers, and even small towns. The wall impresses to this day, its stone might standing starkly against the natural beauty of the Cumbrian and Northumbrian landscapes—reminding visitors just how far the power of the Roman Empire reached. We'll begin our explorations here, walking along a section of the wall, before taking the short drive to Vindolanda Fort.

Vindolanda Fort is one of Europe's most important ancient Roman archaeological sites. The sprawling site contains the remnants of nine forts, each built on top of the ruins of its predecessor. Soldiers from all over the Roman Empire, including Belgium, Germany, and France were stationed here. We'll also have the chance to walk through Vindolanda Gardens, located just beyond the fort.

Lunch: Enjoy a packed lunch at the conclusion of our tour.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll continue our drive to Edinburgh. Upon arrival, we'll check in to our hotel. We'll have some free time to settle in before joining our Trip Experience Leader on an orientation walk of the surrounding area.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own—perhaps you'll head to one of Edinburgh's traditional Scottish pubs.

Day 8 Explore Edinburgh • Visit Edinburgh Castle • Home-Hosted Dinner

- Destination: Edinburgh
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Voco Edinburgh Haymarket or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll kick off our discoveries in Scotland's capital on a tour of the city. Our local guide will share their insider's perspective of Edinburgh and you will have a chance to ask them any questions you may have as we explore together.

We'll begin our explorations in Edinburgh's labyrinthine Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. As we walk, we'll be transported back into Edinburgh's history as we stroll the winding cobbled streets and down the Royal Mile, a stretch of the city that extends from Holyrood Road to Edinburgh Castle—our next destination.

Perched atop Castle Rock—an extinct volcano—the castle is a mighty presence in the city. Once used as the royal residency for Scottish monarchs, a fortress for armies, and a prison for pirates and POWs, the castle now serves as one of Edinburgh's leading attractions. A visit to the castle would not be complete without discovering St. Margaret's Chapel—the oldest surviving building in the city, which dates back to the twelfth century. We'll enjoy a guided tour of the castle, wrapping up in time for lunch.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: The remainder of the day is yours for independent exploration. You can visit the city's New Town, where you'll notice neoclassical buildings from the 18th and 19th

centuries. Or, you may choose to visit Scottish Parliament where you can gain insights into the local body of government.

Dinner: Join a local Scottish family for a **Home-Hosted Dinner**. During our visit, we'll have the opportunity to get a glimpse of the family's daily life—where they live, what they cook, and how they feel about their homeland. We'll sit down together and savor a typical Scottish meal while making cultural connections across the table. Perhaps you'll have the opportunity to try traditional dishes like haggis with neeps and tatties (turnips and potatoes).

Evening: You are free to spend the evening as you wish. You may join your fellow travelers for a nightcap at the hotel bar, or you can retire to your room to get some sleep.

Day 9 Visit Rosslyn Chapel • Optional Scottish Night Music & Dance Show

- Destination: Edinburgh
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Voco Edinburgh Haymarket or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today, we'll drive to rural Midlothian where we'll visit stunning Rosslyn Chapel. Founded in the mid-15th century, Rosslyn Chapel continues to be an active place of worship to this day with services held here weekly. It is famous for its interior of intricate stonework, vibrant stained glass windows, and—more recently—as the setting for the finale of author Dan Brown's best-selling novel, *The DaVinci Code*. After wrapping up our discoveries, we'll return to Edinburgh.

Lunch: On your own.

Afternoon: The rest of the day is free for your own discoveries.

Dinner: On your own. Perhaps you'll try one of Scotland's beloved soups and stews, such as *cullen skink*, a creamy smoked fish soup.

Or, perhaps you'll choose to partake in an optional *Scottish Night Music & Dance Show*. In addition to savoring a four-course dinner, you'll also enjoy an evening filled with traditional Scottish music, dance, and storytelling.

Evening: On your own to spend as you wish.

Day 10 Fly to the Orkney Islands • Overland to Kirkwall

- Destination: Kirkwall
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: The Albert Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of our hotel early this morning and transfer to the Edinburgh airport for our flight to the Orkney Islands.

Located off the northeastern coast of Scotland, Orkney is an archipelago made up of 70 individual islands, only 20 of which are inhabited. Upon arrival, we'll head to Kirkwall, the largest town of the islands, and drive to our hotel. After dropping off our luggage, we'll join our Trip Experience Leader for an orientation walk.

Lunch: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Afternoon: The rest of the afternoon is free to make your own independent discoveries in Kirkwall, Orkney's colorful capital and an ancient Norse town.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: The rest of the evening is on your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 11 Explore Skara Brae and the Ring of Brodgar

- Destination: Kirkwall
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: The Albert Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: This morning, we'll depart for Skara Brae.

The most well-preserved Neolithic village in northern Europe, Skara Brae was established around 3000 BC—but then was literally lost to the sands of time. Uncovered in 1850 when a historic storm scoured away the sand, Skara Brae was revealed, and this UNESCO World Heritage Site today provides glimpses of the stone beds and seats that were part of life 5,000 years ago.

After we explore this ancient village, we'll begin our drive back to Kirkwall, stopping along the way to witness more of the islands' prehistoric past. Orkney's west mainland is home to a large collection of archaeological sites, including the UNESCO World Heritage Site the Ring of Brodgar—a Neolithic henge and stone circle older than Stonehenge and the great pyramids of Egypt.

Lunch: On your own.

Afternoon: Enjoy free time this afternoon to explore Kirkwall on your own.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: Free to spend as you wish.

Day 12 Explore the Orkney Islands • Visit Churchill Barriers

- Destination: Kirkwall
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: The Albert Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll depart for a day of discoveries around the island. A local guide will join us to provide information, details, and insider perspective.

Our first stop will be the Churchill Barriers. The barriers were built more than 80 years ago in response to a surprise attack: In October of 1939, a German U-boat entered Scapa Flow—a natural bay sheltered by five of the Orkney Islands—and fired torpedoes at the battleship *HMS Royal Oak*, resulting in the loss of 834 lives. To prevent future attacks, then First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill ordered the building of the Churchill Barriers to block off the eastern approaches to the naval anchorage of Scapa Flow. Though created during a time of conflict, today the barriers serve as vital links between these island communities.

A short walk from the barriers, we'll find Orkney's famous Italian Chapel. Built during World War II by Italian prisoners of war, the chapel is highly ornate—its decorations made from scavenged materials whenever possible. The tabernacle was crafted using wood from a shipwreck, while the gates enclosing the sanctuary were fashioned from scrap metal. Italian POW Domenico Chiocchetti—one of the chapel's most skilled creators—returned to Orkney in 1960 to assist in a restoration project.

Next, we'll continue to delve into Orkney Island's World War II history by visiting the site of the wreck of the *HMS Royal Oak*. Submerged almost entirely upside down in over 100 feet

in the water, the *Royal Oak* is a designated war grave and serves as a solemn reminder of the many lives lost that day in 1939.

Finally, we'll visit the Orkney Fossil & Heritage Centre. Travel back in time a few hundreds of million years ago and discover a wealth of geological wonders, impressive fossils of prehistoric sea creatures, and fascinating mineral-like rocks that glow in the dark.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: We'll head back to our hotel, after which the rest of the afternoon is free. Perhaps you'll visit the nearby Sheila Fleet jewelry gallery to see how this local woman entrepreneur has created a unique jewelry collection inspired by the land and sea surrounding the Orkney Islands.

Dinner: At the hotel's restaurant.

Evening: On your own. You may want to pack for our journey to Inverness tomorrow.

Day 13 Ferry ride to Scottish mainland • Inverness • Whisky distillery visit

- Destination: Inverness
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Best Western Inverness Palace Hotel & Spa or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of our hotel this morning and drive to the ferry terminal at Stromness, where we'll cruise across the water toward the Scottish mainland. As we sail, enjoy gazing out at the rolling green hills and rugged coastlines along the not-too-distant shore.

We'll arrive at Scrabster on Scotland's northern coast, disembark, and pause for lunch.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in the town of Scrabster.

Afternoon: Following lunch, we'll make our way to local whisky distillery, where we'll enjoy a tour and a tasting of Scotland's most famous libation. We'll then begin our journey to Inverness, dubbed the capital of the Scottish Highlands. Our route is the North Coast 500 road, a famously scenic drive along the coastal North Highlands—boasting views of rugged mountains, white sand beaches, and the sea.

We'll arrive at our hotel in Inverness later this afternoon and have time to settle in.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a café or restaurant.

Evening: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 14 Visit Rothiemurchus Estate • Visit Highland Folk Museum

- Destination: Inverness
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Best Western Inverness Palace Hotel & Spa or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: This morning, we'll drive across the scenic Cairngorms to visit Rothiemurchus Estate.

Rothiemurchus is a privately owned Highland estate located just south of the River Spey. It is nestled in the heart of Cairngorms National Park and is beloved throughout the region for the harmony its stewards have created between nature and the local people. The estate and its sprawling grounds have been under the care of the Grant family since the 16th century, but its history can be traced back even further, as is evidenced by the 13th-century castle that can be found on the property.

Lunch: Enjoy a traditional Highland lunch at the Rothiemurchus Estate.

Afternoon: We'll then drive to the Highland Folk Museum. This open-air museum, the first of its kind in Britain, features 35 historical buildings from as far back as the 1700s, offering a unique look at how life has evolved in this remote part of Scotland.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: Free to spend as you wish in Inverness.

Day 15 Explore Isle of Skye • Sligachan hike

- Destination: Inverness
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Best Western Inverness Palace Hotel & Spa or similar

Activity Note: Our overland journey to the Isle of Skye will take approximately four hours, with stops along the way.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll begin our journey to the Isle of Skye, driving through the dramatic landscapes of the Highlands which are rich with history, myths, and legends. Our drive will take us through the lofty peaks and serene lochs for which the region is famous.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll drive to Sligachan, a small settlement along Skye's eastern coast, where we'll set off along a popular hiking trail to witness scenic views of the dramatic Cuillin Hills. On our way back to Inverness, we'll make a brief photo stop at Eilean Donan Castle, the iconic Scottish monument set on its own small island overlooking the Isle of Skye.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: The rest of the evening is on your own. You may want to turn in early after your day of discoveries.

Day 16 Visit Culloden Battlefield • Farewell Dinner

- Destination: Inverness
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Best Western Inverness Palace Hotel & Spa or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll discover a bloody chapter of Scotland's history today when we drive to the Culloden Battlefield. On April 16, 1746, the last major battle fought on mainland British soil occurred here, and as a result more than 1,500 soldiers perished. This battlefield was the site of the final Jacobite uprising, an effort to restore the House of Stuart to the British throne. The battle only lasted one hour and came to a close when Government forces led by the Duke of Cumberland crushed the army of Prince Charles Edward Stuart.

Lunch: On your own back in Inverness.

Afternoon: Free to make independent discoveries.

Dinner: Enjoy our special Farewell Dinner in Tulloch Castle, which dates from the twelfth century, when the Bains and later the Davidson clans laid claim to its lands. Like its lively history, the castle's fortunes have changed many times. It retains many of its period features, including the 250-year-old Great Hall, and painstakingly restored original fireplaces and ornate ceilings. We'll feel like Scottish lords and ladies as we dine on regional specialties. Together with our fellow travelers, we'll raise a glass and toast to our discoveries in the northern United Kingdom with a hearty *Slàinte mhath*—"cheers" in Scottish Gaelic.

Evening: The evening is free to spend as you wish—you may want to retire early for your journey home tomorrow.

Day 17 Return to U.S. or begin your post-trip extension

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: You'll check out of the hotel and transfer to the airport for your return flight home or—for those travelers taking our post-trip extension—continue on to *New! Uncovering Wales: Coastal Cardiff to the Mountains of Brecon Beacons*.

END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

6 nights in *Uncovering Wales: Coastal Cardiff to the Mountains of Brecon Beacons*

Day 1 Inverness • Fly to London, England • Transfer to Cardiff, Wales

Day 2 Meet a local Welsh speaker • Explore Cardiff • Visit Cardiff Castle

Day 3 Visit St. Fagans National Museum of History

Day 4 Gower Peninsula hike • Brecon Beacons

Day 5 Explore Brecon Beacons National Park

Day 6 Visit Big Pit National Coal Museum • Transfer to London, England

Day 7 Return to U.S.

OPTIONAL TOURS

During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Trip Experience Leader. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards. We also accept Visa and MasterCard debit cards, but it must be a debit card that allows you to sign for purchases.

In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2–3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2–3 months following your return.

Please note: *Optional tour prices are listed in U.S. dollar estimates determined at the time of publication and are subject to change. Optional tours may vary.*

Scottish Night Music & Dance Show

(Day 9 \$145 per person)

Join us for an evening of traditional Scottish music, dance, and storytelling at the award-winning Royal Surgeons Hall in Edinburgh. We'll dine on a four-course meal—and perhaps enjoy a local whiskey or two.

PRE-TRIP

Classic English Landscapes: London to the Cotswolds

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » 6 nights accommodation
- » 12 meals—6 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 3 dinners
- » 8 small group activities
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Experience the quintessential charm of England, from its bustling capital to its medieval villages. First explore London, where you'll witness historic monuments and modern marvels alike—from the majesty of Westminster Abbey to the artistic splendor of the East End. Next, visit the ancient Roman baths and admire the unique 18th-century architecture for which the city of Bath is known. Finally, discover the Cotswolds—the rolling hills that span five counties of Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, Wiltshire, and Worcestershire.

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart the U.S. for your overnight flight to London, England.

Day 2 Arrive London, England

- Destination: London
- Accommodations: Rochester Hotel by Blue Orchid or similar

Morning: Depending on your flight schedule, you'll arrive in London either in the morning or early afternoon. You'll be met at the airport by an O.A.T. representative, who will assist with your transfer to the hotel. Throughout the day, our Trip Experience Leader will lead travelers on orientation walks of the neighborhood surrounding our hotel as they arrive.

Lunch: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to provide you with recommendations.

Afternoon: You're free to relax after your flight.

Dinner: On your own—you may ask your Trip Experience Leader for some recommendations on their favorite places.

Evening: You're free to visit a local London pub or retire early to prepare for tomorrow's discoveries.

Day 3 Explore London

- Destination: London
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Rochester Hotel by Blue Orchid or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After a panoramic drive introducing you to London’s major landmarks like Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament, set off on foot with a local guide to explore London’s rich antiquities and striking architecture up close. You’ll also learn how to get around on the famous London “tube” (subway).

Lunch: At local restaurant.

Afternoon: The afternoon and evening are free to explore independently.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: Free to explore independently. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for activity ideas.

Day 4 Explore Cambridge

- Destination: London
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Rochester Hotel by Blue Orchid or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Depart for Cambridge, a city located on the river Cam and home to the prestigious University of Cambridge. Enjoy some free time to explore the town and campus and admire its exquisite architecture, riverside meadows, and a buzzing city center. The campus is scattered throughout the city, so along the way you’ll witness some of the 31 colleges and 150 departments that make up this revered institution.

We’ll also enjoy a punting tour of Cambridge’s many canals, with a local guide joining us as we peacefully glide past the different colleges and universities.

Lunch: At a local café.

Afternoon: After returning to London, the remainder of the day is free.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: You may explore independently, or rest at the hotel.

Day 5 Visit Blenheim Palace • Transfer to Cotswolds

- Destination: Cotswolds
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: The Fleece at Cirencester Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Visit one of England’s most impressive stately homes, Blenheim Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was born here in 1874, and many of his personal items, paintings, and writings are on display in a separate sequence of rooms called the Churchill Exhibition.

Lunch: On your own near Blenheim Palace.

Afternoon: After lunch, we’ll continue our drive to England’s idyllic Cotswolds.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 6 Explore Bath

- Destination: Cotswolds
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: The Fleece at Cirencester Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Drive to Bath, where we’ll enjoy an included tour of its famous Roman baths. Bath is named for the springs that well up in this city, producing about 500,000 gallons of water each day at 120 degrees Fahrenheit. The lead-lined bath, steps, column bases, and

edging stones all date from Roman times. After our tour, you'll have some free time to explore on your own.

Lunch: On your own in Bath.

Afternoon: Further explore Bath during a guided walk with a local architectural historian who will shed light on Bath's dominant architectural style—Georgian—which evolved from the Palladian revival style that first became popular in the early 18th century. Then, return to our hotel in the Cotswolds.

Dinner: On you own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: Free to spend however you wish.

Day 7 Explore Cotswold villages

- Destination: Cotswolds
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: The Fleece at Cirencester Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: The Cotswolds are perhaps most famous for their quaint homes made of yellow limestone (called Cotswold stone) and topped with thatch roofs or jagged slate. Fittingly, our discoveries today begin with a panoramic drive through some of the region's most attractive hamlets.

Lunch: At a village pub.

Afternoon: This afternoon, our explorations of the Cotswolds continue with a hike among its rolling green hills and flowering meadows, which were designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1966.

Dinner: In a local pub.

Evening: At leisure. Perhaps you'll go for a stroll through town to enjoy the serenity of an English evening.

Day 8 Begin main trip

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Transfer to Chester, England, where you'll begin your main trip.

POST-TRIP

Uncovering Wales: Coastal Cardiff to the Mountains of Brecon Beacons

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » 6 nights accommodation
- » 13 meals—6 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 4 dinners
- » 6 small group activities
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Journey to Wales—a small country with an over-abundance of history, culture, and natural beauty. Begin your discoveries in the vivacious capital city of Cardiff, which offers an intriguing mix of modern delights and ancient sites such as medieval Cardiff Castle. Learn about the country's ancient language and how it has endured over the centuries. Then leave the city behind and witness the stunning landscapes of Brecon Beacons, from its rolling hills and wide beaches to its majestic mountain ranges.

Day 1 Inverness • Fly to London, England • Transfer to Cardiff, Wales

- Destination: Cardiff
- Included Meals: Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Cardiff

Morning: Depart for the airport this morning and catch a short flight to London, England.

Lunch: On your own, en route to London. You may wish to pick up something at the airport to enjoy on the plane.

Afternoon: Upon arrival, we'll transfer to our hotel in Cardiff, Wales—about a 3-hour drive. After checking in, we'll have some free time to settle in. Later, join our Trip Experience Leader for a short orientation walk of the surrounding area.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 2 Meet a local Welsh speaker • Explore Cardiff • Visit Cardiff Castle

- Destination: Cardiff
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Cardiff

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: This morning we'll be joined by a local who is not only a native Welsh speaker, but a singer as well. Welsh is an ancient Brythonic language (also called British Celtic) and has been spoken here since before the ancient Roman occupation. The Welsh language has faced many challenges over the centuries: Its use was banned by Henry VIII in 1536 and pushed out further during the

Industrial Revolution when a large influx of English speakers moved to Wales. In modern times, the Welsh people have reclaimed their language, and it is spoken at home, in schools, in the workplace, and in courts of law. Our guest speaker will speak to their language's complex history before treating us to a song or two sung in Welsh.

Then, we'll meet up with a local guide who will lead us on a walking tour of Cardiff. Though a relatively young capital city—having earned the title in 1955—Cardiff is an intriguing mix of modern vibrancy and ancient culture. An urban center with a rising food scene and bustling waterfront, Cardiff is also home to medieval Cardiff Castle. We'll cap off our explorations at this unique fortress, which has been enhanced over the centuries with Gothic-style features such as its famous clock tower.

Lunch: On your own in Cardiff. There are many restaurants and cafés to choose from.

Afternoon: Continue to make independent discoveries in Cardiff.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own. Perhaps you'll grab a nightcap at a local Welsh pub.

Day 3 Visit St. Fagans National Museum of History

- Destination: Cardiff
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Cardiff

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today we'll visit St. Fagans National Museum of History, an open-air heritage museum that celebrates Welsh culture, traditions, and the country's long history. We'll be greeted by a specialist from the museum's curatorial and conservation team who will

give a talk about the museum, its creation, and highlights of the site. Then you'll have the rest of the morning free to explore the grounds at your own pace.

Lunch: Included at St. Fagans.

Afternoon: Return to our hotel in Cardiff and enjoy the rest of the day at your leisure.

Dinner: On your own. Perhaps you'll try a simple plate of traditional Welsh Rarebit—toasted bread covered in a melted cheese sauce with mustard, spices, or ale.

Evening: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 4 Gower Peninsula hike • Brecon Beacons

- Destination: Brecon Beacons
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Brecon Beacons

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll bid Cardiff *hwyl fawr* (goodbye) this morning and begin our journey to Brecon Beacons—a sweeping, scenic region full of mountains, hills, and green valleys carved out by the Ice Age.

On the way, we'll stop at Gower Peninsula. Officially designated by the UK as an area of stunning natural beauty, the peninsula is home to wide beaches and lush vegetation, and is popular with hikers, birdwatchers, and surfers. We will set off on a 3-mile hike along the coast from Caswell Bay to Mumbles Pier.

Lunch: At a local seaside restaurant.

Afternoon: We will resume our journey to Brecon Beacons, arriving late this afternoon. After checking into our hotel, our Trip Experience Leader will guide us on an orientation walk of the surrounding area.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: Spend your first night in Brecon Beacons however you wish.

Day 5 Explore Brecon Beacons National Park

- Destination: Brecon Beacons
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Hotel in Brecon Beacons

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Gain an appreciation for the stunning natural beauty of Wales today on a full-day excursion to Brecon Beacons National Park. Upon arrival, we'll board the Brecon Mountain Railway for a vintage steam train ride up the mountainside. Our journey will follow the original route of the Brecon & Merthyr Railway which closed in 1964, passing verdant fields and forested hillsides, before reaching the route's original summit—high in the Brecon Beacons mountains.

After our round-trip journey, we'll next head to the medieval market town of Talgarth.

Lunch: On your own in Talgarth.

Afternoon: Enjoy some free time to explore Talgarth on your own. Perhaps you'll witness the ruins of medieval Bronllys Castle or visit Talgarth Mill—the only working watermill in Brecon Beacons National Park.

Then we'll sit back and enjoy a scenic panoramic drive through Brecon Beacons National Park before heading back to our hotel.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: On your own. Perhaps you'll find a local pub to unwind at after the day's activities.

Day 6 Visit Big Pit National Coal Museum • Transfer to London, England

- Destination: London
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: London Airport Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of our hotel today and begin our overland transfer to London, England.

Along the way, we'll stop to learn about the mining heritage of Wales at its award-winning Big Pit National Coal Museum. Originally a working coal mine from 1880 to 1980, the museum offers guests a rich and immersive look at Wales' long history of coal mining, including an underground hard-hat tour of the old mines.

Afterwards, we will drive to Castle Combe, a charming Cotswolds village known for its natural beauty, and spend some time exploring here.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: We'll resume our drive to London, arriving later this afternoon. Check in to our hotel for the night, and enjoy a few hours of free time.

Dinner: Gather with your fellow travelers at the hotel restaurant for a Farewell Dinner this evening, and toast to your discoveries in Wales.

Evening: At your leisure. You may wish to prepare for your flight home tomorrow.

Day 7 Return to U.S.

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: You'll check out of the hotel and catch your flight for your return home.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** You will need a total of 2 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to England:** No additional passport pages are needed.
- **Post-trip extension to Wales:** No additional passport pages are needed.

Entry Requirements

A detailed instruction packet and fees will be available on your My Planner about 100 days prior to your departure. In the meantime, we’re providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. This info is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.

- **United Kingdom:** The United Kingdom requires an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) for entry. This includes entry to England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. You will need an ETA if the UK is your final destination. The ETA will be valid for 2 years.

Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

Overseas Taxes & Fees

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.

RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

Is This Adventure Right for You?

Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

PACING

- 5 locations in 16 days, plus a full day trip to Wales

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs or other mobility aids
- Must be able to walk approximately 3 miles unassisted each day and participate in 6–8 hours of daily physical activities
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience
- You may encounter animals on this trip. We make every effort to keep these encounters safe, however animals may behave unpredictably or dangerously at times. Please use caution when interacting with animals on this trip: Keep a safe distance, stay alert, and respect the animals

CLIMATE

- The weather in the northern United Kingdom is traditionally fickle, but summer temperatures usually range from the low 40s to the mid 60s
- Autumn generally brings mist, showers, and brisk weather in the 40s
- Most of the country receives some rain at least 200 days a year

TERRAIN

- There is a fair amount of hiking, and walking over uneven, unpaved, or cobbled surfaces

TRANSPORTATION

- Travel by motorcoach and ferry
- There are several 1–4 hour drives (sometimes with around 1–2 hours between stops)
- Agility and balance are required for boarding or disembarking the ferry

ACCOMMODATIONS & FACILITIES

- Hotel rooms are smaller than U.S. and offer basic amenities

- All accommodations feature private baths with showers

Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at **www.cdc.gov/travel** or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

No Vaccines Required

Recommended Vaccines

At the time of writing there were no required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to "Find International Travel Information", select "Country Information", then enter the country into the search bar; if you don't see any medications specifically mentioned under the "Health" section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.

- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Water

- Tap water is safe to drink on this trip.
- If you prefer bottled water is widely available for sale. Or consider bringing a reusable water bottle from home to fill up at your hotel before you head out for the day.

MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not accepted in the United Kingdom.**
- **You will not be able to pay with U.S. dollars on this trip;** you will need local currency.

Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like www.xe.com/currencyconverter, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

United Kingdom: Pound Sterling (GBP)

Scotland: Pound Sterling (GBP)

How to Exchange Money

If you want to exchange money before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets. Or you can wait and change money on the trip instead—but it might be helpful to arrive with some local currency in case you run into a bank holiday or an “out of order” ATM.

On your trip, the easiest way is to withdraw funds from a local ATM. The ATM will give you local money and your bank at home will convert that into U.S. dollars.

You can also exchange cash at some hotels, large post offices, and money exchange offices. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2004) are best. Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$10 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM.

Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although Discover and American Express cards are accepted in some countries outside the U.S., they are not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

Chip Cards

Many countries have adopted credit cards that have an embedded computer chip. These cards are inserted into the reader instead of swiped. The card owner then authorizes the purchase using a PIN instead of signing.

Though this technology is common in the U.S., occasionally there are machines in other countries that can't read U.S. cards or the machine can read the card, but asks for a PIN. This doesn't happen often, and is nothing to worry about. You can usually resolve the situation by asking the cashier to let you sign. (If you don't speak the language, just mime signing on your hand.) If you are not able to sign for a purchase, such as at an automated ticket booth, you can use another form of payment, such as a debit card that has a PIN.

Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$10–\$14 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader

is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*

- **Hotel Housekeeping:** Many travelers will leave the equivalent of \$1–\$2 per day, per room for the hotel housekeeping staff. *Please note: Because of the difficulty in exchanging a small amount of dollars, it would be easier for the housekeeping staff if you left their tips in local currency.*

Please Note: Your tour price includes gratuities on the main trip and optional extensions for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters that may assist you during the scheduled activities on your adventure. All tips are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency or in U.S. dollars. Please do not use personal or traveler's checks for tips.

AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Personalization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Personalization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our Personalization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Personalization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **U.S. Departure:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have an O.A.T. Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. Unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond our control, the Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time. If you are flying domestically before your international flight, the representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.
- **U.S. Return:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, an O.A.T. Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights. Again, it is our goal to have our Representative waiting to assist your group. In rare instances, unforeseen circumstances may prevent this service.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45–30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: www.rome2rio.com

Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.
- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)

- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as “OPT Boston”.
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you’re on the trip. But if you’d like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner).

Communicating with Home from Abroad

Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone can accept one.

Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype or FaceTime. These services are usually less expensive than making a traditional call, but you’ll need a Wi-Fi connection and the calls may count towards your phone plan’s data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

Calling Cards and 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.).

One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

United Kingdom: +44

Scotland: +44

PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on bag per person.
Weight restrictions	For your main trip, the internal flight will be on Loganair, the weight limit is 44lbs for checked bags and 13lbs for carry-on bags.
Size Restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (length+width+depth). Generally, 62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches.
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
<p>Pre-trip extension to England's Southwest Coast: Because of stricter limitations on the flight from Newquay to Manchester, you will be limited to 44lbs for checked luggage and 13lbs for your carry-on. In addition, the overhead bins on the plane are smaller than average. They will fit a backpack or handbag but not a roller suitcase.</p> <p>Post-trip extension in England: Same as the main trip.</p>	
REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS	
<p>Luggage rules: Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.</p>	

Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.

- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.

Your Luggage

- **Checked Luggage:** Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Due to space limitations on our motorcoaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Porterage at airports and hotels is provided for **one** bag per person. All bags should have luggage tags.
- **Carry-on Bag:** You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.
- **Locks:** For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.

Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

- **Travel light:** A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. To have a varied travel wardrobe, yet keep your luggage light, we recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated clothing items that can be mixed to create different outfits.
- **Pack casual clothes:** Comfortable, informal apparel is acceptable at each of your destinations. At dinner, you will not need to wear “dressy” clothing; men do not need jackets or ties and women do not need fancy dresses. You may want one or two “smart casual” outfits for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it's completely up to you.
- **Consider clothing designed for travel, sports, or camping:** With modern fabrics, lightweight packing for comfort and protection through a wide range of weather is easy.
- **Plan to dress in layers.** Weather in Scotland is unpredictable, and can feature warm and cold temperatures at any time of the year. The most practical travel wardrobe consists of items that you can wear in layers. Then you can easily add or remove a layer according to any fluctuations in temperatures.
- **Bring rain gear:** Regardless of your month of travel, rainfall and heavy fog is certainly a possibility. We suggest you bring a folding umbrella and waterproof shell (including rain pants). Water-resistant walking shoes are advantageous in case heavy downpours pass through. This will be particularly helpful during some of your outdoor activities, such as open-air boat rides.

- **Good walking shoes are critical.** This program features many included tours that follow steep, unpaved or cobbled routes; and even an average day of light sightseeing or shopping can put great demands on your feet. If you prefer more ankle support, take light hiking boots. In case you get caught in the rain, we suggest you bring an extra pair of walking shoes, and rain boots or galoshes.

Suggested Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. We recommend using www.weather.com and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

And don’t forget a reusable water bottle—you’ll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

What not to pack: Do not pack aerosol cans, as they tend to leak during air travel. Leave behind any credit cards that are not essential for your trip, valuable jewelry, and anything that you would hate to lose.

Recommended Clothing

- ☐ Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer
- ☐ Trousers, jeans, or skirts
- ☐ Comfortable walking shoes and/or water resistant shoes
- ☐ Rain jacket/windbreaker with hood and rain pants: At any time of year, you’ll encounter the heavy rains, wind, and fog associated with the lush green landscapes of Scotland. Since you’ll be exposed to the elements during several activities (such as open-air boat rides and hikes), we strongly suggest that you bring rain gear.
- ☐ Sleepwear
- ☐ Socks and undergarments
- ☐ A jacket or sweater, depending on the time of year

Essential Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, sunscreen, shampoo/conditioner, shower cap, body soap, etc.
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription
- ☐ Sunglasses with a neck strap

- ☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor
- ☐ Compact umbrella
- ☐ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards
- ☐ Travel money bag or money belt
- ☐ Camera, spare batteries, and memory cards

Medicines

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines
- ☐ Vitamins
- ☐ Cold remedies: Sudafed/Dristan
- ☐ Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin
- ☐ Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax
- ☐ Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta
- ☐ Anti-diarrheal: Imodium
- ☐ Band-Aids, Moleskin foot pads
- ☐ Antibiotics: Neosporin/Bacitracin

Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

Voltage

Electricity at hotels in Scotland, England, and Wales is 220–240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner’s guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V 50/60Hz service will ruin the motor. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Plugs

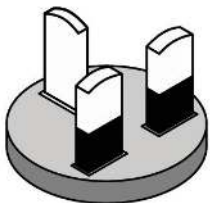
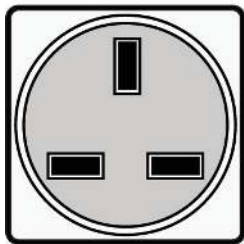
The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you'll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Although you are only traveling in one country on this trip, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

United Kingdom: G

Scotland: G

Type G



CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

England: The weather across England can be unreliable and unpredictable, with lovely sun-drenched mornings regularly turning into damp, overcast afternoons—and vice versa. Still, legends about incessant rain in England are exaggerated. London, in fact, has less rainfall accumulation than Rome, which is known as a sunny city. It's just that in London, the rain is spread over more days. The British capital is very much a city of the temperate zone. With occasional exceptions, London's summers tend to be moderately warm, with few days having temperatures above 75° F; winters as well tend to be moderately cold, with few days dropping below 30° F. Spring and autumn are generally comfortable, with little more than a sweater or light overcoat required. The weather in York and Bath is similar.

Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use www.weather.com for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	CHESTER, ENGLAND			EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Average Amount of Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	45 to 37	86	2.7	44 to 34	86 to 80	14
FEB	46 to 36	83	2.3	45 to 34	86 to 75	10
MAR	49 to 37	80	2.5	48 to 37	86 to 68	12
APR	54 to 41	77	2.8	53 to 39	87 to 65	10
MAY	60 to 47	75	3.0	58 to 44	87 to 65	11
JUN	65 to 52	75	3.4	63 to 48	86 to 64	10
JUL	67 to 55	76	3.5	67 to 52	88 to 66	10
AUG	66 to 55	79	3.3	66 to 51	90 to 66	11
SEP	63 to 52	81	2.9	62 to 49	89 to 69	10
OCT	57 to 47	83	3.0	55 to 43	88 to 74	13
NOV	49 to 41	86	3.0	49 to 39	87 to 79	13
DEC	45 to 37	86	3.0	44 to 34	87 to 82	13

MONTH	INVERNESS, SCOTLAND			LONDON, ENGLAND		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	42 to 35	85 to 81	2.0	45 to 34	90 to 80	23
FEB	43 to 34	86 to 76	1.6	46 to 34	90 to 74	19
MAR	47 to 37	86 to 70	1.5	52 to 37	91 to 68	21
APR	50 to 39	86 to 68	1.5	57 to 39	90 to 60	20
MAY	60 to 49	87 to 67	1.8	63 to 44	90 to 59	18
JUN	60 to 49	86 to 68	1.9	69 to 49	90 to 61	18
JUL	64 to 53	88 to 70	2.6	73 to 53	91 to 59	17
AUG	63 to 52	89 to 68	2.8	73 to 53	94 to 64	18
SEP	58 to 48	88 to 71	2.3	59 to 44	93 to 72	21
OCT	53 to 44	87 to 75	2.6	59 to 44	93 to 72	21
NOV	46 to 39	86 to 81	2.4	51 to 39	92 to 78	22
DEC	43 to 36	86 to 83	2.1	46 to 35	90 to 82	22

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

Culture of the British Isles

England has been a very homogenous country, but as their empire expanded around the globe, they have experienced some social and cultural diversification from Afro-Caribbeans, Asians, Muslims, and other immigrant groups.

The British class system has historically been a powerful point of stratification in the social, economic and political spheres of life. Differentiations between the working class and middle class were once largely defined by one's occupation. Today, class differences have more to do with schooling, social orientations, and upbringing. Though British society has progressively become less class conscious, the class system remains integral and continues to shape the people's sense of belonging. Despite social stratifications, there is a strong egalitarian belief that everyone should have equal opportunity to better their circumstances regardless of their background.

From Geoffrey Chaucer and William Shakespeare to Lewis Carroll and J.K. Rowling, in its literature, England arguably has attained its most influential cultural expression. For more than a millennium, each stage in the development of the English language has produced masterworks.

Despite the religious upheavals and charged politics, the people of Northern Ireland are warm and friendly. Their culture is intertwined with England, Scotland, and Ireland, yet the people of Northern Ireland, for the most part, do not consider themselves of these regions. With different cultural influences, there is a rich lineup of festivals throughout the year, including St. Patrick's Day—a fervent celebration passed on from the Republic of Ireland—and controversial celebrations like Orangefest—commemorating the victory of Protestant King William of Orange over Catholic King James II.

Comfortably residing beside Northern Ireland's natural beauty are remnants of the island's long history—haunting ruins left to crumble in the middle of a field or by the roadside. From tumbled-down stone structures left behind by the Vikings to traces of medieval culture found in countryside castles, Northern Ireland's history is always on display. Some of the country's more tragic history has also left its mark in the resilient character of its people, such as the Troubles of the 20th century—a period that rocked Northern Ireland for three decades, and when the dust settled, more than 3,500 people were killed, and more than 47,000 wounded.

As beautiful as Northern Ireland is to behold, it is its people that give the country its heart and soul. From cities to small towns, a strong sense of camaraderie connects every community. Yet, each community follows the contour of political and sectarian differences. There is a shared participation in global culture, such as Hollywood movies, football, and popular music; however, the nationalist and unionist communities maintain their own cultural practices. Irish music and dance as well as Gaelic football and hurling form a cultural focus in the nationalist communities, while unionist communities are heavily influenced by trends of the U.K. But, no matter the community, locals gather together at the pub to exchange stories, join in a song, or listen to music.

Scots are known to be outgoing, steadfast, practical, and full of humor. They are also fiercely proud of their culture—in part, perhaps, because it has taken a lot for them to retain it. Scotland has endured centuries of attempted repression by the English—not to mention other invaders like the Romans, Vikings, and Normans.

Scottish Gaelic is still an official language, and even though very few Scots speak it, many signs are translated into Gaelic and Gaelic words have infiltrated the larger culture. Many Scots identify with their ancient clans, and proudly wear their clan tartans for weddings, holidays and special occasions. Though these were originally part of Highland dress, they are now the national dress of the whole country.

Within Scotland, there is an imaginary line that runs roughly from Aberdeen to Glasgow that separates the Highlands in the north and west, from the Lowlands in the south and east. Generally speaking, Highland culture is more Gaelic and rural; whereas Lowland culture is more hybrid and urban. Scottish folklore is rich and widely loved. You'll hear tales of *kelpies* (shape-shifting water spirits), *wulvers* (werewolves, but kind ones), *selkies* (seals who can take human form), and all manner of mythical beasts—Nessie the Loch Ness monster being the most famous. Some of that folklore has inspired Scotland's rich literary tradition, which gave us greats like Robert Louis Stevenson, Sir Walter Scott, Arthur Conan Doyle, J.M. Barrie, and the most revered Scottish poet of all, Robert Burns. Today, you can experience some of the most exciting contemporary art, music, theater and more at cultural festivals like the Edinburgh International, the Fringe, Up Helly Aa (Shetland fire festivals), Aye Write! (the Glasgow book fair), and more.

That's quite a lot to celebrate, and Scots love to do just that the local pub, another cultural icon. Wander in and share a beer or a whisky, and pretty soon you'll be having a *blether* (conversation) with your bar mate. Just don't call what you're drinking a Scotch (it's called whisky here), and don't call your new friend that, either. It's considered antiquated and offensive. They are Scots or Scottish—and fiercely proud of it.

Language in Scotland

There are three official languages in Scotland. The first is English, which is spoken by more than 99% of the people. The dialect you will hear most often is Scottish English, and sometimes, it is hard to understand! But if you just ask people to speak more slowly, you will catch on. The second most spoken language is Scots, a Germanic language that is related to Old English. The

third language, Gaelic, is Celtic in origin. Scottish Gaelic is different than Irish Gaelic. It is spoken by nearly 90,000 people in Scotland, most of which are concentrated in the Highlands and the western islands. But very few people speak only Gaelic.

Useful Phrases

Scottish English has some colorful slang and expressions that you are likely to hear:

- *Aye* means “yes.” *Naw* means “no.”
- *Braw* is something that is great or fantastic, as in “that dinner was braw.” If it’s really, really great, you can say it was *pure barry*.
- *Fitba* is football. And football (in case you didn’t know it) is soccer.
- *Haud yer weesht* is a very brusque way to say “be quiet.”
- *To go out on the skite* means to have a night on the town, usually fueled by alcohol. Do that, and you might get *steaming* (very drunk.) The next day, you might look a little *peely-wally*, or sickly and pale. In that case, you may want to drink an Irn Bru (pronounced iron brew.) This popular carbonated beverage tastes like bubblegum and orange, and aside from being Scotland’s most popular soft drink, it is said to cure hangovers.
- *Haste ye back!* Is what you’ll want to do upon leaving Scotland: Come back soon.

Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most countries is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph children or older women. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

In museums or at archaeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don’t be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don’t leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize this.

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful.

English Cuisine

The French used to have a joke about their English neighbors that went something like “other countries know how to cook while the English know how to boil”. Even the Brits themselves would joke about their standard “meat, potatoes, and two veg” meals. But starting in the 90s there was a revival of British classics using fresh ingredients, flavor-boosting “low and slow” cooking methods, and sometimes borrowing elements from other cuisines. As a result, modern British cooking now has many admirers (see the devoted fans of *Great British Bake Off* or the cookbooks of Jamie Oliver, Gordon Ramsay, and Nigella Lawson as proof). Add to this the fact that the UK has a diverse choice of restaurants—Indian, Thai, Italian, French, and Chinese to name a few—and we can say that the English eat very well. Popular dishes include:

- **Bangers and Mash:** Sausage and mashed potatoes.
- **Bubble and Squeak:** A potato and cabbage/brussel sprout dish.
- **Fish and chips:** A well-known meal and is usually bought from special shops (chippies) where the cooked food is wrapped and sprinkled with salt and vinegar.
- **Toad in the Hole:** Sausages served with **Yorkshire Pudding**, a baked pudding made from eggs, flour, and milk or water.
- **Cream Scones:** A baked good served with jam and clotted cream.

Scottish Cuisine

Scotland has some of the most creative chefs in the United Kingdom and considering the fantastic pantry they have to work with—with world-class seafood, game and produce—it’s no wonder that the country boasts eleven Michelin-starred restaurants. Sixteen products of Scottish origin qualify for the European Union’s PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) designation, including Shetland lamb, Orkney Island Scottish cheddar, Scottish salmon, and Scottish whisky. The daily Scottish diet tends to consist of meat, carbohydrates, and fried food. Here are some delicacies that you can sample all over the country:

- **Salt ‘n Sauce:** A tangy, brown condiment unique to Edinburgh that’s a cross between malt vinegar, brown gravy, and ketchup. This can be found at local fish and chip shops often referred to as **chippies**.
- **Cullen Skink:** A fish soup of smoked haddock, potatoes and leeks. Traditionally, it’s made from **finnan haddie**, a cold-smoked haddock from Aberdeen; or **Arbroath smokie**, a hot-smoked haddock.
- **Angus Aberdeen beef:** Rich marled beef often used in roast, stew, or steak.

- **Black Pudding:** A sausage made from congealed pig's blood mixed with oats, fat, and seasonings. It may not sound appetizing, but because it's loaded with protein, potassium, calcium and iron, it's considered a "superfood."
- **Bangers and Mash:** Sausage and mashed potatoes. Sometimes served with something besides pork, such as venison or apples.
- **Lorne sausage:** Square sausages made with beef.
- **Haggis:** Scotland's national dish. It's made from minced sheep's liver, lungs, and heart; mixed with spices and oatmeal; and served inside the stomach lining. It is usually served with **neeps and tatties** (mashed swede or rutabaga and potatoes.)
- **Cranachan:** A rich parfait of cream, raspberries and oats.

Whatever your meal includes, you can toast it with a wee dram of **Scottish whisky**. If you order it in a pub, please don't call it "Scotch." If you ask for it on the rocks, you may get a pitying look along with your ice. To impress your bartender, order a single malt and specify one of the six official Scottish whisky regions: Lowlands, Speyside, Highlands, Campbeltown, Islay and Islands. Then raise your glass and say *slainte-mhath* (pronounced "slange var")—to your health!

Welsh Cuisine

Just like their language and ancient customs, the people of Wales have proudly preserved their traditional cuisine—much of which was borne out of poverty. Traditional Welsh cooking is linked to the diets of fishermen, farmers, and men who worked in the mines. Lamb, beef, freshly caught fish, and vegetables from the garden figure prominently in Welsh cooking. Popular dishes include:

- **Cawl:** A classic dish of Welsh lamb with leeks and root vegetables>
- **Glamorgan sausage:** A vegetarian sausage-shaped dish made with Caerphilly cheese, leeks, and breadcrumbs.
- **Bara Brith** (speckled bread): A Welsh national fruitcake that starts out by soaking dried fruit in strong black tea overnight.
- **Welsh Rarebit:** Melted cheese on toasted bread, originated in the 17th century as a way to accentuate the local wheat bread and savory cheddar or Caerphilly cheese made in Wales.

Passages from the 1939 novel *How Green Was My Valley* may provide you with a more accurate portrayal of Welsh cuisine: "When we sat down, with me in Mama's lap, my father would ladle out of the cauldron thin leek soup with a big lump of ham in it ... There was everything in it that was good ... and the smell alone was enough to make you feel so warm and comfortable ..."

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

Crafts & Souvenirs

England

Different parts of the United Kingdom (UK) are known for different specialties. Even if your trip only takes you to one part of the country, you'll find these items for sale throughout. Popular items include umbrellas, Cadbury chocolate bars, Derby-style hats and fascinators, Paddington toy bears, Wedgwood china, orange marmalade, Woods of Windsor soaps and lotions, football team shirts, Wellington boots, Burberry trench coats and accessories, books by British authors, Earl Grey tea, Beatles memorabilia and so much more. You can find all kinds of items emblazoned with Union Jacks, London Underground (Tube) imagery, and images of the royal family.

Scotland

Scotland has many fine local products to choose from, including shortbread, handmade soaps, Celtic jewelry, and bagpipes. There are plenty of items emblazoned with the Scottish flag, Nessie the Loch Ness monster, and golf imagery (since the game was invented here.) If there's a dog lover on your gift list, consider a memento of Greyfriar's Bobby. He was a 19th-century Skye Terrier who supposedly stood by his master's grave in Edinburgh's Greyfriar's churchyard—every day for 14 years.

Many of the best souvenirs are wearable, like Scottish cashmere, Harris tweed, quality woolens, Balmoral caps, tams, and tartans (which found on everything from umbrellas to scarves and pajamas.) While the kilt is the quintessential Scottish garment, there are also special accessories that complete the look: a *sporrán* (pouch), *sgian-dubh* (a small ceremonial knife—which might be hard to get back to the U.S. in your luggage), and jaunty knee-high socks. Although women don't wear kilts, they do wear tartan skirts and special shoes known as *ghillie boots*.

And of course, there's whisky (without an "e"), which is so synonymous with Scotland that many Americans call it "Scotch." Not a whisky fan? Scotland is also known for high-quality gin.

Wales

Popular Welsh souvenirs to bring home are Welsh cheese, Welsh love spoons, Welsh slate (as a coaster, cheese board, or even an engraved decoration), laverbread, Welsh cakes, or traditional wool blankets.

U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, www.cbp.gov has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

United Kingdom

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 94,525 square miles
- **Capital:** London, with a separate parliament in Edinburgh for Scotland, a National Assembly in Cardiff for Wales, and a National Assembly for Northern Ireland in Belfast.
- **Government:** Constitutional monarchy
- **Languages:** English, Welsh, Gaelic
- **Location:** Situated off the northwest coast of Europe, the island of Britain is occupied by England, Wales, and Scotland—collectively called Great Britain. Together with Northern Ireland, Great Britain makes up the nation officially called the United Kingdom (UK). England, in the southern part of Britain, is separated from Scotland on the north by the granite Cheviot Hills. To the west along the border of Wales—a land of steep hills and valleys—are the Cambrian Mountains. To the south of England is the English Channel and to the east is the North Sea, which also washes the eastern coast of Scotland. To the west of England is the Irish Sea, mixed to the north with the Atlantic Ocean.
- **Population:** Entire UK 65,105,246 (estimate): England – 55,268,100, Scotland – 5,404,700, Wales – 3,113,200, Northern Ireland – 1,862,100
- **Religions:** Christian (Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, etc.) 59.5%, Muslim 4.4%, Hindu 1.3%, other 2%, unspecified 7.2%, none 25.7%
- **Time zone:** Great Britain is five hours ahead of Eastern Time: when it is 6 am in New York, it is 11 am in Wales, England, and Scotland.

National Holidays: United Kingdom

National holidays can vary depending on which part of the country you're in; please refer to the section for the specific area that you'll be visiting. The United Kingdom also celebrates a number of national holidays that

follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

England

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 50,346 square miles
- **Capital:** London

- **Location:** Consists of 48 counties, occupying the southern part of Great Britain
- **Languages:** English
- **Population:** 55,268,100
- **Religions:** Christianity 59.4%, Non-religious 24.7%, Unknown 7.2%, Muslim 5.0%, Hindu 1.5%, Sikh 0.8%, Jewish 0.5%, Buddhist 0.5%
- **Time Zone:** Same as the rest of the United Kingdom, five hours ahead of Eastern Time

National Holidays: England

In addition to the holidays listed below, England celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

1st Monday in May Early May Bank Holiday

Last Monday in May Spring Bank Holiday

Last Monday in August Summer Bank Holiday

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

England: A Brief History

Prehistoric England was home to Celtic and other tribal peoples, then was ruled by the Roman Empire from about AD 43 to AD 410. After Rome fell, Jutes, Angles, and Saxons established small kingdoms and fiefdoms. When the Viking marauders hit England's shores in the 9th century, many of those small kingdoms were unified by King Alfred the Great of Wessex. Strength in numbers.

Some of England's medieval monarchs stand out for their lasting impacts on history. William the Conqueror brought Norman rule to England in 1066. Richard the Lionheart embarked on the Third Crusade in 1189. King John was compelled to sign the Magna Carta in 1215, laying the foundation for constitutional monarchy.

English King Edward I conquered Wales in 1283 and sought to rule Scotland as well. Those imperial ambitions were not limited to the island of Great Britain—England under Edward III fought the Hundred Years' War with France between 1337 and 1453, ultimately losing all its possessions on the French side of the Channel. Then, between 1455 and 1485, the York and Lancaster families battled for the crown in the Wars of the Roses. The victor, Henry Tudor, who was a Lancaster but through illegitimate descent. He married a York, and their offspring, Henry VIII, became the third Tudor king in 1509.

Henry VIII is best known for his six marriages, the first of which, to Catherine of Aragon, he sought to end through annulment. When the Pope forbade it, Henry separated the Church of England from papal authority and made himself its head. His daughter, Elizabeth I, became queen in 1558 and ruled for 44 years—a golden age of cultural flowering, and the expansion of England's naval prowess.

England fell into civil war between 1642 and 1649, when Oliver Cromwell executed King Charles I and briefly replaced the monarchy with a republic. The monarchy was restored in 1660 with the enthronement of Charles II, though royal power was restored with limitations.

The United Kingdom came into being with the 1707 Act of Union between the parliaments of England and Scotland. Then, by 1714, the first of four King Georges ascended the throne, beginning the Georgian era, a time when England laid the groundwork for Empire. It reached its fruition in the 19th century during the Victorian era, when the British Empire straddled the globe.

During the 19th century, the entire island of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom, having been incorporated into the UK in 1801. The Irish however, sought independence, and in 1921, all but the six northern counties of Ulster became the Republic of Ireland—leaving the UK in its present form. But the United Kingdom was still able to call on its crown colonies, protectorates and Commonwealth when it declared war on Germany in 1939. The Battle of Britain and the destructive air attacks known as the Blitz besieged England from July 1940 to June 1941. Prime Minister Winston Churchill, one of England's most influential statesmen, led the country to victory.

As a popular song of the war years put it, “There’ll Always Be an England.” But what of the United Kingdom? In recent years, the desires of the Scots and Welsh for greater autonomy have led to the process called “devolution.” In 1999, Scotland regained its own Parliament, and Wales established its own National Assembly. In 2014, a referendum was held in Scotland to vote on independence from the United Kingdom, but was defeated.

In 2016, a United Kingdom referendum passed with 51.9% in favor of leaving the European Union. Brexit went into effect on January 31, 2020, with an 11-month transition period, during which the government of former Prime Minister Boris Johnson must negotiate a new EU trade deal. With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic the same year, Johnson was faced with serious policy decisions to mitigate civilian casualties. Johnson's struggles came to a head in July 2022, following multiple scandals, when the former Prime Minister stepped down.

His successor, Liz Truss, was in office from September 6th, 2022 to October 25th, 2022. Two days after her appointment, Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen of the United Kingdom for over 70 years, passed. Faced with universal criticism and financial instability, Truss resigned from her position, to be succeeded by Rishi Sunak, who was in office from October 25th, 2022 to July 5th, 2024. Rishi Sunak called for a general election in July 2024, and lost the election to Keir Starmer, from the opposing Labour Party.

King Charles III was coronated as the King of the United Kingdom and 14 Commonwealth Realms on May 6th, 2023.

Scotland

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 30,918 square miles

- **Capital:** Edinburgh (regional); Scotland is part of the United Kingdom, whose national capital is London
- **Location:** Consists of 32 council areas, occupying the northern part of Great Britain and islands
- **Languages:** English, Scots, Scottish Gaelic
- **Population:** 5,404,700
- **Religions:** None 49.4%, Church of Scotland 24.1%, Roman Catholic 14.5%, other Christian 7.8%, Other 2.3%, Muslim 1.6%, Unknown 0.3%
- **Time Zone:** Same as the rest of the United Kingdom, five hours ahead of Eastern Time

National Holidays: Scotland

In addition to the holidays listed below, Scotland celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/02 2nd January Holiday

1st Monday in May Early May Bank Holiday

Last Monday in May Spring Bank Holiday

First Monday in August Summer Bank Holiday

11/30 St. Andrew's Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

Scotland: A Brief History

We know that various hunter-gatherer tribes inhabited Scotland as far back as 9,600 BC. By 3,000 BC, they used tools, established farming and scattered standing stones all over. You can see some of these Neolithic monoliths on the Isle of Lewis, Shetland, Orkney, and beyond.

The Romans arrived in Great Britain 43 AD, but when they attempted to occupy Scotland, they met fierce resistance from the native tribes, who they referred to as Caledonians. The Romans built several fortifications, including Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall. But they were never able to conquer the Caledonians and by 212 AD, they left.

In the wake of the Romans, Scotland was divided into four main kingdoms. The Picts held the northeast, the Scots (from Ireland) established Dal Riata in the west, the Britons occupied the southwest, and the Angles had Bernicia, which eventually morphed into Northumbria and stretched into England. Their rivalries were set aside in the face of a new threat: by 793 AD, Viking marauders arrived, ferociously attacking the monasteries at Iona and Lindisfarne, taking over villages and establishing trading posts. In 843 AD, the various kingdoms united under Kenneth MacAlpin, the first King of Alba. Eventually, his domain became known as Scotland. A nation was born.

When the Normans took over England in 1066, many Anglo-Saxons moved north into the Scottish Lowlands. This is when the Scots began adopting English cultural ways. But when a succession dispute arose, the English King Edward I seized the opportunity to invade and name himself king. This led to the first War of Scottish Independence in which William Wallace, of *Braveheart* fame, routed the English at Stirling Bridge in 1297. The victory was short lived, as the English returned in 1298, captured Wallace and executed him in 1305. But Robert the Bruce picked up the baton (and the crown), and defeated the English at Bannockburn in 1314. Scotland's independence was assured, but peace was not.

Centuries of conflict with England ensued, often fueled by religion and marked not just by physical violence, but by various English attempts to suppress Scottish culture. The connections between clans were broken, and the chieftains became feudal lords whose rapacity often forced their own people off lands in evictions known as "clearances." In 1707, the two nations signed onto the Act of Union, which united England and Scotland under the same flag and Parliament, but allowed Scotland to keep its own church and legal system. The United Kingdom was born, but again, the bloodshed did not die as years of rebellion continued. The last one, led by Bonnie Prince Charlie, culminated with the Battle of Culloden in 1746.

Despite tensions, Scotland's economy was supercharged by the Industrial Revolution. The 18th century saw the Scottish Enlightenment, and Glasgow became a great trading port. Scotland's educational system flourished, and its inventors exported their genius around the world. During World Wars I and II, the Scots' warrior legacy made huge contributions to the Allied War effort.

Following deindustrialization in the 20th century, the Scottish economy hit a wall. Tensions with England continue, manifesting as periodic calls for independence. In 2014, voters rejected a referendum for independence by a slim margin. They may well be reconsidering that decision: only 38% of Scots were in favor of Brexit, and a 2020 poll showed that 52% of voters support leaving the UK, post-Brexit.

Wales

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 8,006 square miles
- **Capital:** Cardiff (regional); Wales is part of the United Kingdom, whose national capital is London
- **Location:** Consists of 8 counties, occupying the southwestern part of Great Britain
- **Languages:** English, Welsh
- **Population:** 3,113,200
- **Religions:** Christian 57.6%, None 32.1%, Unknown 7.6%, Muslim 1.5%, Other 1.2%
- **Time Zone:** Same as the rest of the United Kingdom, five hours ahead of Eastern Time

National Holidays: Wales

Wales typically celebrates the same holidays as England, in addition to a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar,

such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

Wales: A Brief History

One of the oldest regions in the world, the area of land occupied by Wales is thought to have been inhabited since about 250,000 BC. Celts began arriving on Britain's shores in about 600 BC. The Romans came in 55 BC, but didn't fully occupy present-day Wales and England until about 60 AD. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century, various independent kingdoms sprouted across Britain and were under constant threat by Anglo-Saxon invaders—a period that some say gave rise to the exploits of King Arthur who engaged in battles against them. When the Anglo-Saxons eventually gained control of much of present-day England, remote regions such as Wales clung to their language and customs. And by the sixth century, Wales had developed a unique identity that set it apart from the rest of Britain.

While the Kingdom of England was formed in 927 AD, internecine struggles among various Welsh kingdoms prevented Wales from uniting under a single ruler for very long. After the Norman conquest of England, the Welsh kingdoms gradually came under the sway of the English crown. Then, in the late 13th century, King Edward I conquered Wales and claimed it as a territory of England—and the successors to the English monarch would begin holding the title of the “Prince of Wales” to signify their control of the region.

After a smattering of revolts against English rule were launched by the Welsh in the 15th and 16th centuries, Henry VIII passed laws aimed at incorporating Wales into the Kingdom of England. In 1707 Wales became part of the Kingdom of Great Britain and about a century later (in 1801) was folded into the United Kingdom.

While the British Empire rose and flourished in the 19th century, Wales embraced changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, and saw its population rise dramatically. But with the breakup of the British Empire after the Second World War, the industries of Wales also went into a steep decline, eventually giving rise to nationalist sentiments and possible paths to independence.

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading

England

A Traveller's History of England by Christopher Daniell (2005, History) An entertaining refresher course in English history, from hunter-gatherers to Margaret Thatcher's resignation. Written by a noted British historian and archaeologist

London by Edward Rutherfurd (1998, Fiction) A very ambitious historical novel of London's past, which sweeps from Roman times through the medieval, Elizabethan, Victorian, and Edwardian eras on up to the present.

All Creatures Great and Small by James Herriot (1998, Memoir) A heart-warming book, in which a veterinarian in Yorkshire shares amusing anecdotes about his dealings with animals and their owners.

Bath by Edith Sitwell (1932, History) Sitwell, the famed Bloomsbury writer, provides a fine portrait of Beau Nash, the 18th-century "Master of Ceremonies" who put the city Bath on the Georgian social map. Insightful commentary on the fashions of the day, the development of the city, and the colorful array of politicians, peers, matchmakers, gamblers, artists and con artists who flocked here to "take the waters."

Scotland

Complete Poems and Songs of Robert Burns by Robert Burns (2012, Poetry) A collection by the famous Scottish poet who is known for writing in the Scots language, including the famous *Auld Lang Syne*.

Corrag by Susan Fletcher (2010, Historical Fiction) In Glencoe in 1692, 38 members of the Macdonald clan are killed by the redcoats of William III—after they'd enjoyed the family's hospitality for a week. This real-life incident is told from the perspective of Corrag, a young woman who is accused of witchcraft after the event, and imprisoned in Inverary.

44 Scotland Street series by Alexander McCall Smith (2004, Fiction) Alexander McCall Smith, also known for the bestselling No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series, depicts the lives of colorful residents in an Edinburgh apartment building

The Crow Road by Iain Banks (1992, Fiction) Set in the west Highlands (in a town reminiscent of Oban), this darkly comic tale from one of Scotland's most acclaimed writers touches on themes of love, death, sex, addiction, family and the power of the Scottish landscape. In it, Prentice, a bumbling student, attempts to unravel the disappearance of his Uncle Rory, just one of the eccentric characters in the sprawling McHoan family. The Crow Road is a real road in Glasgow, but the expression "to take the crow road" means you are dead.

The Scottish World: History and Culture of Scotland by Harold Orel, et al (1981, Culture) Ten essays seek to show that Scottish culture is distinctly different from English in its art, architecture, literature, music, and history.

Wales

The Ladies of Llangollen: A Study in Romantic Friendship by Elizabeth Mavor (2011, Non-Fiction) A beautifully written account of two 18th-century women who abandoned their aristocratic lives in Ireland to settle in Llangollen, Wales. Wanting to keep their lives private and away from the glare of society, their achievements, intelligence, and wit would instead make them local legends.

The Matter of Wales: Epic Views of a Small Country by Jan Morris (2000, Travel Writing) One of the world's leading travel writers celebrates her native country in this deeply personal study of the architecture, landscapes, and national character of Wales.

Here Be Dragons by Sharon Kay Penman (1985, Historical Fiction). This is the first book in a highly praised trilogy that follows the decline of Welsh kings. Penman skillfully melds history and fiction and brings 13th-century Wales vividly to life.

Suggested Films & Videos

England

All Is True (2019, Drama) After the Globe Theater is burned in a fire, William Shakespeare (Sir Kenneth Branagh) returns to Stratford-Upon-Avon and his stoic wife, Anne Hathaway (Dame Judi Dench). Fame is trailing him, as are the ghosts of his past, and the genius for wit and wordplay that he can no longer summon. Also starring Sir Ian McKellen.

Atonement (2007, Drama) On the eve of World War II, a 13-year old girl irrevocably changes the lives of three people when she mistakenly accuses her sister's lover of a crime. The depiction of the manors and manners of the British gentry is at once searing and beautifully evocative. And the war scenes—notably the famous tracking shot on the beaches of Dunkirk—are harrowing. This Oscar winner stars Keira Knightley, James McAvoy and a young Saoirse Ronan.

Gosford Park (2001, Drama) “Upstairs, Downstairs” meets Agatha Christie in this whodunit set in an English country estate in 1932. The powerhouse ensemble cast includes Helen Mirren, Maggie Smith, Michael Gambon, Kelly MacDonald and Clive Owen.

British TV

The Crown (2016, Historical Drama) A Netflix original drama following Queen Elizabeth II in the mid-20th century as she assumes the throne and the events that follow.

The Great British Baking Show (2010, Reality Cooking Series) Sometimes known as *The Great British Bake Off*, this competition features 12 aspiring bakers from Britain as they take on challenges to create everything from traditional British treats to twists on the classics with their “showstopper” dishes before facing the judges.

Prime Suspect (1991, Mystery) This gritty modern crime drama introduced Helen Mirren to wider audiences as the no-nonsense detective Jane Tennison. The show deals with some dark subject matter, such as crime and alcoholism.

Scotland

Mary Queen of Scots (2018, Historical Drama) History has cast Queen Elizabeth I (Margot Robbie) and her cousin Mary (Saoirse Ronan) as enemies. This film imagines them as both power brokers and pawns whose mutual admiration is crushed by the misogyny, nationalism and treachery of their courts.

Macbeth (2015, Drama) Evocative Scottish settings, outstanding production values and the timeless themes of Shakespeare's tragedy make this a must-see. Stars Michael Fassbender and Marion Cotillard bring intensity and depth as Scotland's most famous power couple.

Trainspotting (1997, Dark Comedy/Drama) Danny Boyle's electrifying breakthrough film follows a young heroin addict (Ewan MacGregor) and his outrageous friends as they struggle to score in the underside of Edinburgh. Plenty of black humor and provocative social commentary.

Scottish TV Shows

Outlander (2014–present, Drama) Based on the novels of Diana Gabaldon, this wildly popular, historical time-travel series begins when a WWII nurse visits Inverness, Scotland, where she is mysteriously carried from the standing stones at Craigh na Dun back in time to 1743. She falls in love with a rebel Highlander, whose Jacobite cause, she knows, is doomed.

Shetland (2013–present, Mystery) Small town life is more complicated than it seems in this acclaimed BBC series. Follow detective Jimmy Pérez as he investigates crime amidst the elemental landscapes of the Shetlands.

Wales

The Englishman Who Went up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain (1995). Scored with a Welsh choir, this heartwarming tale recounts the experiences of two cartographers who arrive in a Welsh village in 1917. Loosely based on actual events, the film reveals how the Welsh are very different from the English.

How Green Was My Valley (1941). Grab a hankie for director John Ford's Academy Award winning film that chronicles the lives of a 19th-century Welsh coal-mining family.

Useful Websites

Overseas Adventure Travel

www.oattravel.com

Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

www.oattravel.com/faq

International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

Electricity & Plugs

www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets

Foreign Exchange Rates

www.xe.com/currencyconverter
www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM Locators

www.mastercard.com/atm
www.visa.com/atmlocator

World Weather

www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
www.wunderground.com

Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

www.travlang.com/languages

Packing Tips

www.travelite.org

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

www.cbp.gov/travel

Transportation Security

Administration (TSA)

www.tsa.gov

National Passport Information Center

www.travel.state.gov

Holidays Worldwide

www.timeanddate.com/holidays

History & Culture

en.wikipedia.org

Useful Apps

Flight Stats

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

LoungeBuddy

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

Timeshifter

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

GoogleMaps

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

Triposo

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

Rome2rio

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

Flush or Sit or Squat

Find a clean toilet anywhere

Uber

Ride sharing around the world

Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus

ATM locations

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

TunnelBear

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

What's App, Skype, or Signal

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

Duolingo, FLuentU, or Babbel

Learn dozens of foreign languages

Google Translate

Fast and simple translations

XE

Currency conversions

SizeGuide

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

Best Units Converter

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

Tourlina

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

Happy Cow

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

Eatwith

Dine with locals all over the world

Meetup

Connects you with locals who share your interests

Skyview

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

Travello

Find travel friends on the road

ALIX for One

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

TripWhistle

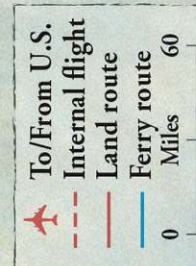
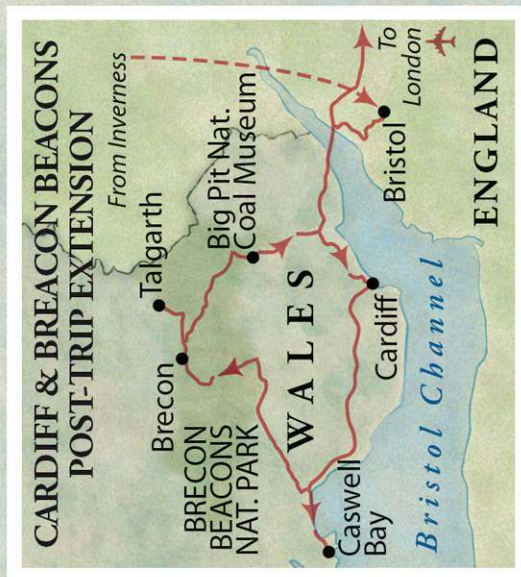
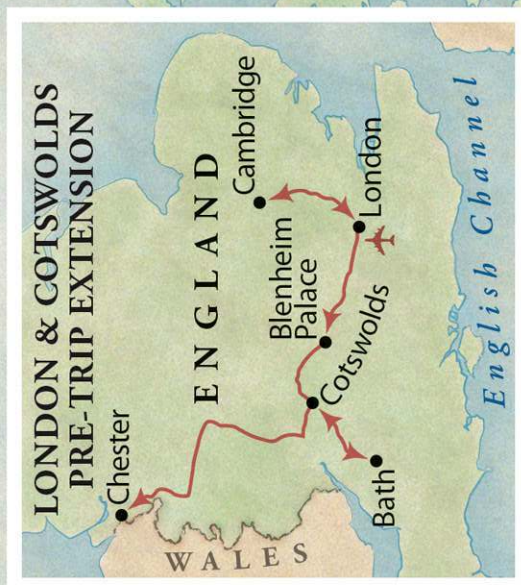
Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

GeoSure

Safely navigate neighborhoods around the world

Chirpey

For women only, connect with other women, find out what's safe, meet up, and more



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Submitted by Joy and Don Janke,
8-time travelers from Stevensville, MI



Submitted by Julia Schneider,
5-time traveler from Pinellas Park, FL



Submitted by Martin Schwartzman,
30-time traveler from Woodbury, NY



Submitted by Paul Stark, 17-time traveler
from Edina, MN



Submitted by David Fong, 16-time traveler
from Foster City, CA



Submitted by Steven dos Remedios,
23-time traveler from Oakland, CA



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