

SCOTTISH TARTANS MUSEUM TOUR ITINERARY FOR AUGUST 25, 2016 - SEPTEMBER 5, 2016

To include Edinburgh Military Tattoo and Royal Braemar Gathering
arranged by Hope Vere Heritage Tours

Day 1 ~ Thursday August 25th

Depart USA for overnight flight to Edinburgh Scotland

Day 2 ~ Friday August 26th

Arrive this morning at Edinburgh International Airport and transfer a taxi to our Premier Inn, Haymarket Hotel in Edinburgh City. This afternoon you may wish to visit the National Museums of Scotland or explore shopping on your own. However, we suggest taking a rest, as we have a busy evening with our 7:00 pm Welcome Dinner at the Royal Overseas League overlooking Princess Street and the brightly lit Edinburgh Castle. After dinner, our coach will deliver us to the Royal Mile and we will attend the 9:00 pm performance of the world famous Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Day 3 ~ Saturday August 27th

After breakfast, we will enjoy a Panoramic City tour, on our coach to the top of Arthur's Seat then visit Edinburgh Castle, followed by private guided tour of the Scottish Parliament. This afternoon and Evening you are free to enjoy this vibrant city and its many wonderful pubs, restaurants and shopping opportunities.

Day 4 ~ Sunday August 28th

After our full cooked Scottish Breakfast, we will drive to Abbotsford August borders home of Sir Walter Scott. There we will view his collection of artifacts, armour and Scottish relics, which were the personal belongings of famous Scottish historical figures such as Wallace, Bruce and Burns. Lunch is on your own at the Abbotsford House Visitor Centre Tea Room. This afternoon, we will go to Rosslyn Chapel for a special visit with Ian Robertson, a leading historian and author, who will be delighted to sign copies of his book on the history of Rosslyn. Dinner options are many, in the city, and we will return to The Haymarket Premier Inn, Edinburgh City Centre, for our overnight stay.

Day 5 ~ Monday August 29th

This morning we will drive west, via the city of Glasgow, to Paisley Abbey where we will learn of the historical connections the Abbey has with Wallace and Bruce. We will meet members of The House of Tartan and have a private visit to the historic listed building proposed for the future Scottish Tartan Centre. Located nearby, is the statue of John Knox Witherspoon, the only American to sign the Declaration of Independence. Leaving Paisley, we will drive to Alloway, to the Robert Burns Center Museum for a private lecture on Burns' support of the patriots, during American Revolution. This evening, we will drive to the Dunblane Hydro Hilton for dinner and Overnight stay.

Day 6 ~ Tuesday August 30th

Today we will visit the Wallace Monument. For those wishing to climb the Turnpike Stairs to the top, they will be rewarded with a magnificent panoramic view of the surrounding country side, the Carse of Stirling Castle and Bannockburn. Before lunch, we will stop at Stirling Bridge, the site of William Wallace's victory in 1297 and then onto lunch in Stirling at a local pub. In the afternoon, we will visit Stirling Castle and Argyle's lodging before returning to the Dunblane Hydra Hilton Hotel for dinner and an overnight stay.

Day 7 ~ Wednesday August 31st

Our first stop this morning, before leaving Stirlingshire, will be at the Battle of Bannockburn Visitor Center, this being a state-of-the-art interpretation of Scotland's most famous battle. Bruce's victory at Bannockburn was the pivotal moment in Scottish history and gave Bruce the mandate for the Declaration of Arbroath. Although he had been crowned King of Scotland, in 1306, it was his victory at Bannockburn where his recognition was fully confirmed. We will then drive into the Highlands, via Glencoe, where we will enjoy a private talk given by a park ranger. This afternoon we will drive to Glenfinan, to the site where Prince Charles raised his standard for the Jacobite rebellion, and then to Fort William Premier Inn for an overnight stay. Dinner options are on your own, in this historic town.

Day 8 ~ Thursday September 1st

With our local Highland guide on board, we will drive along Kyle of Loch Alsh, past Eilean Donan Castle, to the Isle of Skye. Our drive takes us to the North Troternish Peninsula, where we will visit the Museum of Island Life. We will also visit the grave of Flora McDonald, who assisted Bonnie Prince Charlie to escape capture after his army's defeat at Culloden. We will then visit Dunvegan Castle, seat of Clan MacLeod, where we will have lunch on our own. Before we leave the Isle of Skye, we will stop at Portree. This Afternoon we will drive along the western shore of Loch Ness, to Inverness the capital of the Highlands, for Dinner at the Thistle Hotel. We hope to have a very special honoured guest join us for Dinner and then stay overnight at the Thistle Hotel, in Inverness.

Day 9 ~ Friday September 2nd

This morning we will visit Clava Cairns made famous, in recent years by Diana Gabaldon's "Outlander" television series. After this visit we will drive a short distance to Culloden Battlefield, have a private guided tour of this iconic site, where the last clan battle was fought. Following in the theme of the Jacobites, this afternoon we will visit Fort George, one of the most outstanding fortifications, in Europe. It was built in the wake of the Battle of Culloden (1746). It took 21 years to complete and was built by the Adam family of architects. Leaving Fort George, we will drive east to Nair, Elgin and Huntley in route to Aberdeen for an overnight stay at the Premier Inn Aberdeen.

Day 10 ~ Saturday September 3rd

This morning we will drive to Braemar, via Bancory and Ballater to attend the 150th year of the Braemar Highland Society's Gathering, known colloquially as the "Games". This gathering originated from what is believed to have been held by Malcolm III, when he and his first queen came to this area, around 1059. Legend has it, that he held a gathering, at the original settlement of Doldencha, under the present day grave yard. This annual Highland Games is held on the first Saturday in September and is traditionally attended by the British Royal Family. The Braemar Highland Society was created about 1826 and the gathering is held in the Princess Royal and Duke of Fife Memorial Park. Dinner and overnight stay will be at the Dundee Premier Inn.

Day 11 ~ Sunday September 4th

Our drive this morning will take us from Dundee, Scotland's fourth largest city where we will see Captain Scott's famous Antarctic expedition ship RRS Discovery. Dundee was an important centre with a long sea-faring and industrial heritage. We will then drive via St. Andrew the Home of Golf, through the Kingdom of Fife. This afternoon, we will have our Farewell Banquet in the Great Hall of Balgonie Castle, as the special guests of the Laird of Balgone, Raymond Morris. This candle-lit Great Hall has a wonderful history dating from the 14th century, to the present time, when the castle has been featured in the popular television series, 'Outlander' and in 'Game of Thrones'. Raymond, the Laird and his son, Stuart, will regale us of its history and show us how to tie a garter knot. This evening, we will stay overnight at the Airport Premier Inn, for airport transfer tomorrow morning.

Day 12 ~ Monday September 5th

After breakfast, you will transfer to Edinburgh International Airport for return flights home to the U.S.A. Wishing you safe flights home and we look forward to seeing you again.