

# GUIDED WALKING TOURS NORTHERN HIGHLIGHTS



*In choosing Sutherland, the Orkneys and Shetlands you will discover three of the most fascinating travel destinations in northern Europe.*



*Here you'll encounter extremes of nature, where mankind has left an astonishing legacy of monuments to 6000 years of history; a rich culture born of the mingling of Celtic and Viking peoples, and some of the most abundant birdlife in the world, as well as picturesque little fishing villages in which visitors and locals alike relax to a daily pace of life characterised by peace and tranquillity. You too will be seduced by the atmosphere and charm of the island which the Gulf Stream favours with a mild climate and warm summer months.*



**The varied walks take us along immense cliffs with bizarre rock formations and caves, over deserted white beaches to fishing villages, over pretty green hills and through hollows bright with wild flowers to the world of mountain and waterfall that is the northern Highlands.**

**Your tour takes in the Highland capital, Inverness, followed by a drive through the wilds of Sutherland; you will spend a day walking on Scotland's north coast, three days in the Orkneys, three days in the Shetlands and finally you'll be able to visit the beautiful city of Aberdeen.**

**In the North Atlantic, summer daylight hardly fades; long, lingering sunsets create an enchanting atmosphere and bewitching light that dissolve into a romantic twilight only around midnight.**



**You'll stay in highly commended small hotels which pride themselves on providing personal service and excellent food. Two nights are spent on the very comfortable island ferries.**

**Your walking and tour guide has lived for many years in Scotland. He is an experienced walking leader and Scottish Tourist Guide.**

**Sightseeing highlights of the tour include the famous stone age settlement of Skara Brae, numerous important stone circles - most notably the Ring of Brodgar - the Churchill Barriers, Scapa Flow, the Italian Chapel, St Magnus' Cathedral in Kirkwall, brochs, strange rock stacks such as the Old Man of Hoy and Dore Holm - as well as the possibility of a Scottish evening and much more.**

**To these many sights you can add - either going in a group or as an individual - visits to other prehistoric sites such as Maes Howe and Jarlshof, to local art galleries and interesting museums, or to the most northerly whisky distillery, Highland Park. You can seek out unpretentious pubs where you can chat with the locals about the area and its people, about the islands and about beer and whisky.**

You do not need to be an experienced walker, but you should enjoy going for walks of at least 4 hours. Your guide can offer alternatives to the more strenuous hikes. You may wish to spend a whole day with no walking, in order to relax or to make your own arrangements to engage with the cultural wealth and leisure activities of the islands.



Walking groups are small, the minimum being 10 people. On the walks you'll need only a small day-sack for your camera and so on. Your luggage is transported.

Usually we walk straight from the hotel. For transfers we take a boat, using a coach or minibus only when necessary, so that your transfer itself becomes an adventure and you can enjoy your holiday far from streets and cars.

### **Daily Itinerary:**

**Day 1:** Airport pick-up from Edinburgh or Inverness, followed by a delightful journey to the north coast through remote Sutherland.

**Day 2:** The chance to take an idyllic coastal walk along the deserted white sandy beaches and impressive cliffs of Faraid Head or to climb Scotland's most northerly Munro, Ben Hope.

**Day 3:** Ferry to the Orkneys, and an impressive walk along Yesnaby's rocky coast, a magnet for a variety of seabirds, dolphins and whales.

**Day 4:** A short ferry trip to the Orkney island of Hoy, a walker's paradise. The day's walking is richly rewarding through enchanted glens to the Old Man of Hoy and along 300m cliffs.

**Day 5:** Orkney highlights: sightseeing trip to Skara Brae, the Ring of Brodgar, Churchill Barriers, Scapa Flow, Italian Chapel, St Magnus Cathedral, and, on request, the Highland Park distillery. There are also delightful short walks and some free time in the island capital,

**Kirkwall. Night ferry in the evening to Shetland.**

**Day 6:** Shetlands. A return crossing of one island on foot and a walk right round another. Starting from the Shetland capital, Lerwick, you travel by ferry to Bressay. A walk to the eastern shore, and a ride in an inflatable boat brings you to the nature reserve of Noss, world-famous seabird cliffs and a spectacular circular island walk. Finally, back to Bressay and Lerwick by the same route. If sea conditions prevent access to Noss, cliff walk to a lighthouse and views of the Shetland archipelago from a hilltop viewpoint on Bressay.



**Day 7:** Shetlands. Along the narrow roads of the North and West Mainland you'll encounter Shetland ponies and flocks of sheep. You roam the breathtaking sandstone cliffs of the Eshaness Peninsula with their caves, unique stone arches and towering rock stacks.

**Day 8:** Shetlands. The South Mainland is a paradise for natural history photographers. Experience an unforgettable walk over the most beautiful sand-tombolo in Great Britain to St Ninian's Isle where we will see a variety of seabirds and may also see seals. Free time in the pleasant 'capital', Lerwick, and in the evening the overnight ferry to Aberdeen.



**Day 9:** A short tour of the Granite City of Aberdeen with the world's only granite cathedral, St Machar's. Airport transfer and departure or follow-on holiday programme.



**DEPARTURE DATES 2010:** (always Friday to Saturday)

"Spring walks": 07 - 15 May,

"Summer walks": 09 -17 July, 06 -14 August,

*all departures, minimum of just 8 people*

*maximum group size 16!!*

*Further departures by arrangement*

### **DO YOU WANT TO EXTEND YOUR TOUR?**

*This holiday combines perfectly with the following tours:*

*"In the Heart of Scotland" (walking, culture and sport based on one centre, great value).*

*"Western Highlands - in the Footsteps of Rob Roy" - our classic!*

*"Islands and Highlands" (Mull, Iona, Skye, and Western Highlands).*

*"Scotland in Style - Railway Adventure" (guided or self-guided).*

*"We organise your own individual holiday extension".*

*Travel to your starting point by aeroplane, train or car; individual holiday extensions can be arranged for you in hotels, bed and breakfast guesthouses or self-catering holiday cottages.*

**NEW.** *In addition to our German-speaking tours, an English-speaking programme for those who would like to walk and travel in mixed-nationality groups. Please ask us for details!*

### **INCLUDED IN THE PRICE**



*Walking tours include all sightseeing, guiding, entry fees, ferries (two night ferries), rail journeys and transfers as detailed in the programme.*

*Experienced walking and tour guide. 6 nights in highly commended small hotels with en-suite rooms and full breakfast, 2 nights aboard ship in twin cabins with shower/WC, breakfast not included*

*(single berth cabins share facilities), 1 light evening meal, 5 full evening meals, airport and luggage transfers, maps, welcome drink.*

**PRICES FOR 2010:**

per person in double/twin room (single supplement £ 189.00).

booking through a travel agent: **£ 993.20**

(flight not included)

booking directly with Rob Roy Tours: Price on enquiry

special rates for small groups

**PREDICTED departures 2011:**

06.05., 08.07., 05.08.,

Further departures by arrangement

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*Your specialist for guided and self-guided walking and cultural tours, study, activity and creative holidays and for specialist groups in the whole of Scotland - on the islands and in the Highlands, in England, Wales and Ireland.*