



Beyond the
TARTAN
with TIM GRIMM

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September 2019



Tim's friends and partners in Scotland are:

Bill Webster, Real Scottish Journeys
Nory Hope, Heartland Travel
Fiona's Walking Tours of Edinburgh

Introduction

from Real Scottish Journeys

Your journey will take you from lowland to highland Scotland and back again. After discovering Scotland's ancient capital with Fiona, you will travel north with Nory in to the *high* lands. As the landscape changes from meadow to mountain so does the story. Merchants trading goods and building fortunes are replaced by clan chieftains at war with their neighbours. Their daily currency was betrayal and brutality. Powerful royal dynasties played dangerous games with lives of ordinary highland people during the 18th century, then, they suffered the terrible reckoning.

This story will unfold as you journey through the most breath-taking and timeless landscape. Ancient volcanic rocks crush the soft strata of the Trotternish ridge on Skye. Glacial sea lochs fringe the western highlands in the shadow of high mountain tops. These fjords and their marine ecology are explored and explained. These winding coastal roads are full of surprises from wildlife to perfect sunsets, then a lonely castle just where you hoped there would be one. Perhaps ruined by time or still standing tall, another reminder of the long story, that takes you beyond the tartan.



Auld Reekie with Fiona

Hello from Edinburgh, where after 8 hard months of winter, we have finally arrived in Summer. Highs of 20 degrees this week (around 70 Fahrenheit) have made for very happy tour guides I am so looking forward to meeting you all in September, I'm Fiona, and let me start by telling you a little about myself and how I became a tour guide. I often think of it as a very happy accident: I found myself living in Paris when I turned twenty and whilst looking for work (that did not require me butchering the French language) I started taking visitors on walking tours around Paris. I have been working in tourism ever since. After a couple of years in management, business development and tour development for various tourism companies across Europe, I returned to 'bonnie' Scotland and went back to guiding in 2016. It was a risk to go back to guiding (what my mother might describe as 'not a real job') but it is hugely rewarding, and I honestly could not love it more. Edinburgh is a city full of rich history, bizarre culture and some of the best people, I cannot wait to share it with you.



Monday

9.30am: Hotel, introduction and morning meet up:

Let's start the tour at the hotel, I'll meet you all there, introduce myself, the city and maybe drink a quick coffee before heading out to explore.

10am: Edinburgh Castle.

We are going to start where Edinburgh began, the most iconic spot in the city, Edinburgh Castle. After a walk up to the Castle, I'll guide you around the historic site, then leave you to explore some of the museums within the Castle for yourself

12pm Walk down the Royal Mile and stop for lunch.

Once you've explored the Castle, we'll head down the Royal Mile, one of the most famous streets in the city and stop for Lunch. If you are feeling brave, this might be a chance to try some traditional Scottish Haggis.

1pm: Tour of The Old Town

Edinburgh, is a very simple city, divided into two key parts, the Old Town and New Town. On our first afternoon, we'll explore the Old Town. St Giles Cathedral, The Grassmarket, Greyfriars Kirkyard, Holyrood Palace, we'll cover all the key sites in this Unesco World Heritage Site.

4pm: Relax

If you want, you can head back to the hotel, relax for a while. Alternatively, let's go for a quick drink, try some whisky, and absorb the atmosphere.

Dinner and Evening Activity

For dinner we'll have some authentic Scottish fare, then we'll either attend The Stand: Edinburgh's most famous stand-up-comedy venue. Or we'll head to a small local pub to enjoy some traditional folk music. To be confirmed

Tuesday

9.30am: Hotel, introduction and morning gathering

10am: Hike up Calton Hill

Don't let the word 'hike', scare you, Calton Hill, is a pretty easy, gradual, small hill in the city centre. But it has some of the city's most beautiful monuments, and incredible views across the city. This should be a relaxing morning stroll!

11am: Tour of the New Town

The New Town of Edinburgh, isn't actually that new. The first phase was completed in 1767 and it's home to some of Scotland's most exciting historical figures. We are going to explore how Scotland helped to create the modern world and had some of the most enlightened figures of the 18th and 19th century.

12.30 Lunch

1.30 Walk down the Water of Leith

To the north of the New Town, you'll find the Water of Leith. Once the beating heart of Edinburgh's industrial past, it's now a beautiful, tranquil walkway in the heart of the city. We'll explore the walkway and (hopefully) see a more relaxed side of the city center.

3pm Stockbridge

Stockbridge is one of Edinburgh's most delightful neighborhood's, home to some of the cities best eateries, pubs, gift shops and cafes, it's a great way to see life in Edinburgh today. We'll hopefully have time to stop and enjoy the neighborhood, and perhaps escape to a local watering hole.

4pm Relax

Dinner and Evening Activity

For dinner are going to head to the south side of the city: an area we have yet to explore. We'll have dinner and then head to Summerhall, one of the cities best arts venues.

In Summerhall on a Tuesday they host a ceilidh club (traditional Scottish Dancing) they are also home to a gin distillery, a beer brewery, you might even be able to try your hand at some axe throwing. The options are extensive and it is sure to be an evening to enjoy!

Wednesday

On Wednesday you have time to yourself. If you want to relax, then do just that. However, if you are keen to explore I can organize a short morning tour based on your interests. I will also provide you all with a folder, full of maps, flyers and various day-trip options. You can head down to the coast and enjoy seaside towns, head up Arthur's Seat for panoramic views of the city or explore the Port of Leith home to some of the best pubs in town. The options are endless, and I will do my best to ensure you get the most out of your free time in the city. Looking forward to meeting you all, enjoy your summer and see you September
Fiona.

Introducing Nory your Guide and Driver in Highlands and Skye

Nory is a natural storyteller. Working for much of his career in business, he has turned from sealing deals to sharing Scotland with visitors from around the world. He is an enthusiastic amateur historian and an excellent host. Winters are spent delivering his own special brand of tours at Heartland Travel. Throughout the summer he works with Real Scottish Journeys guiding our Classic Skye tour and private tours for Tim Grimm's special guests.





Thursday **Edinburgh to Skye**

An early start, so please set your alarm. I will collect you from your hotel at 08.00. After introductions, we drive to the highlands passing my home town, Stirling. We will glimpse the National Wallace Monument, then we stop at Doune Castle. Its ancient walls echo long ago battles and recently the adventures of Monty Python and Outlander.

Time for short break in Callendar for coffee at my favorite pie shop, Mhor Bread. From here the landscape changes dramatically from farm to forest to mountain as we travel north across the highland boundary fault. There are plenty of short photo stops along the way as we pass into Glencoe.

We stop for lunch at the recently refurbished visitor center with plenty information about Scotland's most famous glen. Through Glen Sheil over the Ratagan Pass for a stunning view of the 5 sisters of Glen Sheil. Then over the sea to Skye on the just maybe smallest ferry in the world. Arriving in Portree early evening.



Friday **Exploring Northern Skye**

We will explore the Northern tip of Skye, it's remarkable geology, dinosaur discoveries and social history. First, we drive west to Neist Point (point of the horse), plenty of time to walk to an old Stevenson lighthouse, which hides behind the mighty sea cliffs that dominate the peninsular. On a clear day the western isles are visible. Perfect spot to look for wildlife.

Then on to Trotternish. We explore the fairy glen a magical, miniature landscape that continues to amaze every visitor young and old. We will make a short stop in the village of Uig, coffee and maybe a wee taste of Skye ales in the Skye Brewery. Then over the hill road to visit the Quiraing, Kilt Rock and photo stop at the Old Man of Storr.



Saturday **You are on Raasay Time**

We travel as foot passengers to the Isle of Raasay. Step back in time and travel the islands the old way by ferry. On the 25 min crossing you will travel with local islanders who still live their life to the rhythm of the sea and the ferry timetable. There are spectacular views of Skye. Take your time on Raasay to explore, perhaps, climb Temptation hill or join a tour around the new Raasay distillery. Raasay house was ancestral home to the MacLeod's of Raasay

and was destroyed and then rebuilt. Carved stones, an iron age Souterrain and the story of iron mining are all easy to discover. We will enjoy some lunch before returning to the ferry. We then return to Portree for a free afternoon. You can shop, write a postcard or walk the Scorrybreac. Or hop on the bus again with me and visit Dunvegan Castle if time allows.



Sunday Skye to Inverness

Time to pack your bags again as we are on the road again heading to the *Capital of the Highlands*. Along the way we will visit Eilean Donan Castle, perhaps the most iconic castle in Scotland and home to Tim's distant cousins. Then we are off exploring Loch Ness. Lunch in Fort Augustus. Then on to Inverness.

After checking in Loch Ness Country House Hotel, there is some time to settle in, I will return to collect you and we are off to in the early evening to The Trentham Hotel in Dornoch for dinner and a private Scottish Concert and don't forget your dancing shoes.



Monday The Reckoning

The Jacobite rebellion ended at Culloden Battlefield in 1746 and sealed the fate of the highland people to this day. We will visit the remarkable museum at Culloden which explores their story, their rebel prince and a nation divided by war. Free afternoon in Inverness or short tour of the Black Isle.



Tuesday A glimpse of what we had!

On our last day we will visit and explore part of Cairngorm National Park to see the last remnants of Scotland's ancient Caledonian Pine forest. A last wee stop in South Queensferry to see our famous bridges, that cross the river Forth. Three bridges that stretch three centuries of Scottish engineering. Returning to Leith at 17.30 Evening concert with Leith Folk Club with Tim Grimm.