

4 Day Islay Whisky Tour

Enjoy a trip to the Whisky 'Mecca' – the Isle of Islay of the west coast of Scotland. There are eight whisky distilleries on this small Hebridean Island set on the wonderful rugged coastline influenced by salty sea spray and peat smoke. We will enjoy whisky tasting amidst the wonderful countryside, wildlife and culture that are all ingredients in creating these world class whiskies.

Thursday

Departing Edinburgh at 8am we stop at the beautiful village of Luss on the 'bonnie banks' of Loch Lomond, Scotland's largest Loch. We wind our way through Argyll to the fishing town of Kennacraig to take the ferry to Islay.

Islay is famous for friendly people, easy to spot wildlife and whisky. We visit Caol Ila whisky distillery for one of the lighter Islay whiskies, pale in colour, with peaty, floral and peppery notes. Enjoy a tour with a couple of drams and a special dram. Enjoy a visit to the Islay Brewery to taste some delicious handcrafted, high quality cask and bottle conditioned beers, also known as real ale.

After the short drive to Bowmore settle in to your beautifully restored distillery cottage or Bed and Breakfast. You will find a choice of places to eat in Bowmore from pub food to fine dining. Enjoy some fantastic whisky bars.

Friday

We visit the south east corner of Islay famous Laphroaig, Lagavullin and Ardbeg distilleries and the Port Ellen maltings, providing most of the barley for Islay distilleries.

These southern distilleries are the most powerful, producing medium-bodied whiskies, saturated with peat-smoke, brine and iodine. Not only do these distilleries use heavily peated malt (54 ppm at Ardbeg, 40 ppm at Laphroaig), they use the island's brown water for every stage of production.

Enjoy a tour of the Lagavulin distillery with warehouseman Ian and a taste of whisky straight from the casks in the warehouse. Enjoy tasting a new spirit, an 8, a 16, and a 40 year old from Ian's first year working at Lagavulin. Enjoy a tour and couple of drams at Ardbeg and a couple of drams at La Phroig. Lunch is usually enjoyed at the old Ardbeg malting barn. Enjoy a short walk along the coastline, taking in the scenery and wildlife. We will go looking for seals and visiting Kildalton Celtic cross.

Saturday

Visit Bowmore Distillery has stood on the shores of Loch Indaal, since 1779. Bowmore Distillery is one of an ever

decreasing handful of distilleries to produce its own floor malted barley. The barley is still laboriously hand turned, by the Maltman, using the traditional wooden malt shovel. Enjoy a tour and a couple of drams

Taste a less heavily peated and lighter Islays at Bruichladdich distillery and see their bottling plant, the only one on the island. In the fields you may see the precious barley growing for use in the production of the Islay malts.

Enjoy lunch at Kilchoman distillery (pronounced kilhoman) and a short walk along beach before a tour of the distillery itself. Established in 2005, it is a farm distillery and the first to be built on Islay for 124 years. Kilchoman gives everyone the opportunity to see all that is best in the grass-roots traditions of malt whisky distilling and a dram.

Enjoy a visit to Loch Gruinart (pronounced Groo-nyart) bird reserve for a chance to spot geese, waders, birds of prey & otters. Enjoy an oyster fresh from the oyster farm before heading back to Bowmore for the evening.

There is the option to try an afternoon round of Links golf or trout fishing.

Sunday

Take a morning ferry past Laphroaig, Lagavulin and then Ardbeg distilleries and around the Isle of Texa. We return again to the mainland and visit the picturesque town of Inverary.

We wind our way back along the shores of Loch Fyne and through the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park to Glengoyne distillery. Here you can choose to take a tour of the distillery or create your very own blended whisky in a Master Blender Session. This is an optional extra of £30.00 per person. Return home with a small bottle of your perfect whisky! Arrive Edinburgh 6pm.

These are the silent seasons for the distilleries. Tours are still running, there's just no production.

Ardbeg - Only over Christmas & New Year.

Bowmore - 25th June - 18th August (no tours but whisky experience instead).

Bruichladdich - 7th July - 9th August

Coal Ila - 18th June - 19th July

Glengoyne - 23rd June - 8th Aug

Kilchoman - none!

Lagavulin
- 21st August - 20th Sept

Laphroaig - 14th July - 14th Aug

Book now...

Accommodation at B&B or distillery cottage with continental breakfast included.

Four distillery tours and two further tastings included.

Toilet stops will be available regularly.

Trekking shoes are suitable footwear. Easy walks, mostly on well defined paths, with no special difficulties.

Hotel pick-ups and drop offs available subject to locality for no extra charge from Pick-ups from 7.30am. Drop offs on the last day for around 6.30pm.

*Please reserve optional extras at time of booking through Wild Green Travel, paid directly to the provider.

A round of golf at the Machrie Links course is £49 plus £10 club hire. Golfers must be of a reasonable standard. More information can be found at www.machrie.com

The Aromatherapy massage lasts about an hour and includes some stress free work with the customer too so they feel completely relaxed. Sandra charges £35.00 per hour payable at the time of the massage including oils and towels etc. Sandra provides a therapeutic massage couch or massage chair depending on what the individual requires.

Trout fishing on the banks of Loch Gorm at is £20 including rod hire from Ballinaby Farm. Boats can be hired for an extra £30 pounds, £40 with outboard electric motor.