

OUTDOOR TRAVEL



THE ACTIVE HOLIDAY COMPANY

# TALL SHIP SAILING IN SCOTLAND

## SCOTLAND - TALL SHIP VOYAGES

8 to 10 days cruising in the Hebrides Isles, the West Coast, Loch Ness and through the Caledonian Canal



Imagine sailing on a twin-masted schooner, from port to port, island to island exploring the Hebrides Islands off the rugged west coast of Scotland, or making your way through the famous Caledonian Canal and across Loch Ness (yes, of monster fame) through the beautiful Scottish Highlands of Scotland.

Imagine hoisting the sails, helping the ship's crew, and learning about seamanship and about life onboard a traditional sailing ship in seas where Vikings once sailed. Experience the culture and the history of these magical places along these wild and rugged coastlines, far off the beaten track with a Zodiac to take you to places that are only accessible from the water.

Imagine a journey with time to walk and discover, to share hearty meals and after dinner conversations with like-minded travellers over a glass of local whisky from an island distillery. Imagine the gentle sound of waves against the side of this traditional sailing ship moored in a small fishing port or a village near to some of the world's most beautiful glens.

These voyages will sail on a tall ship, an ocean-going two-masted schooner, formerly a North Sea herring lugger, renovated and refitted with 10 cosy, comfortable cabins, all with ensuite shower/toilet. Meals are served in the saloon in the deckhouse, and if you join the captain astern you may even get the opportunity to steer and help navigate or sail the ship.

**Departs:** Selected dates in July, August, September and October – ask for details

**Costs:** From **\$1595** per person twin share for an 8-day / 7-night voyage on the Caledonian Canal.  
From **\$2340** for a 10-day / 9-night journey to the Outer Hebrides islands.  
Single cabins available on request with a supplement – ask for details and availability.

**Includes:** Twin share cabin accommodation with private bathroom (with an option to upgrade to *standard plus* cabin for a surcharge – ask when booking), half board, use of Zodiac for landings, experienced crew including captain, steersman/deckhand and chef, experienced guide for walks/hikes where indicated.

Each voyage will begin with a briefing on life aboard the boat, safety procedures, the local region and the proposed itinerary. There will usually be an introduction to the working of the ship by a member of the crew – explaining about the sails and ropes. Then, once the sails are hoisted we can feel the ship responding to the wind. The engine is switched off and we are in the hands of the captain, the wind, the waves and sea currents.

The itinerary is determined by the captain dependant on tides, wind and the weather conditions.

**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations**



## TRADITIONAL GAELIC FOLK MUSIC & SAILING

**Starts:** in Oban in July, August, September and October

**Ends:** in Oban

**Highlights:** Traditional live folk music every day, Whisky tasting, relaxed and flexible sailing itinerary

### Suggested itinerary:

**Day 1** Arrive in Oban and board the ship. Once you have embarked, you will get to know the crew and your fellow passengers. This is followed by an welcome dinner and a small introduction to the local Whisky, and we will raise our glasses to a beautiful voyage ahead. And then the music will begin.....

**Day 2** We sail to the Isle of Mull, past rugged mountains and tranquil estuaries. On our way to Tobermory, the island's capital, we pass picturesque Duart Castle guarding the sea cliffs of Mull. Tobermory is a quaint, colourful fishing village with a famous distillery, and is home to one of the friendliest pubs in all of Scotland, where we play and listen to music until the wee hours.

**Day 3** Just a short sailing journey to the islands of Staffa and Iona. Staffa is a small, uninhabited island known for its spectacular sea caves, including Fingal's Cave, which we visit in the Zodiac. It is a cathedral-like cave lined with hexagonal basalt columns formed by the ceaseless pounding of the ocean's waves, and inspired parts of Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*.

We also visit tiny Iona, which was a centre of Celtic Christianity in the early Middle Ages after Irish St Columba settled there and founded a monastery. Although the monastery was sacked by Vikings in 802 AD, the island today still calls to many seeking a spiritual experience. We anchor off the coast of Iona this evening.

**Days 4 and 5** We head to Colonsay to celebrate with the locals during Ceol Cholasa, a small and beautiful music festival on this small and beautiful island. Thanks to the hard work of the locals and generosity of musicians Ceol Cholasa attracts some of the best musicians in Scotland. Music is everywhere during the festival – on stages, in the pubs, at spontaneous parties, and onboard the Flying Dutchman.

And Colonsay, despite its small population, pulls its weight in tourist attractions. It is home to a small craft brewery (truly a microbrewery!) serving excellent beer, a cosy bookstore, and even a small publishing house specialising in Scottish history. There are also a number of ruined hilltop forts dotted around the island if you want to stretch your legs.

**Day 6** A beautiful sailing trip to Oban, past the unspoilt, wild nature of the islands to the Scottish west coast. The rugged beauty of Jura, silence on the water, the indescribable scenery, rugged coastline with surprising coves and quiet fishing villages and the magnificent sight of the islands in the distance all conspire to make this an unforgettable journey.

**Day 7** Cruise ends after breakfast in Oban.

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# SAILING AND FINE SCOTTISH WHISKY

**Starts:** in Oban in July, August, September and October

**Ends:** in Oban

**Highlights:** Whisky tasting at distilleries in Arran, Islay, Jura, and Oban, traditional music and friendly pubs

**Day 1** Arrive in Oban and board the ship. Once you have embarked, you will get to know the crew and your fellow passengers. This is followed by an welcome dinner and a small introduction to the local Whisky, and we will raise our glasses to a beautiful voyage ahead.

**Day 2** Our journey begins after breakfast with a tour of the Oban Whisky distillery. Here they give a fun and interesting tour, including huge barrels with a capacity of 35,000 litres. Of course at the end there is possibility to taste (and buy). That afternoon we sail towards Crinan a very beautiful little spot here we moor in the lock which gives access to the Crinan Canal. A unique experience

**Day 3** Today, we set sail for Jura and taste the single malts available at the Isle of Jura distillery. Jura is a paradise of unspoilt wilderness and natural beauty. There is only one road along the more sheltered East Coast of the island, to Craighouse, where the distillery is located.

**Day 4** We sail to Islay, the Whisky island par excellence. On the way there, we pass the high Mull of Kintyre, the most southern point of the Kintyre peninsula. The lighthouse from 1788 is a familiar local landmark, but the location gained worldwide fame in 1997, when Paul McCartney and Wings scored a huge hit with *Mull of Kintyre*. It was a tribute, he called it a declaration of love, to a piece of land, which he by the way also owns.

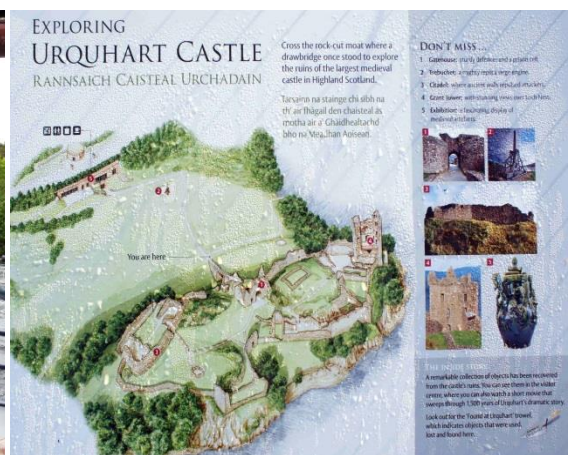
**Day 5** Islay owes much of its fame to its 8 distilleries that produces millions of litres of liquid gold. Because of the multiple taxes on alcohol, it is said that this is the most heavily taxed part of Great Britain. We will visit a large number of distilleries. The ship will sail from one distillery to the next, because most of them have their own jetty.

**Day 6** We sail to the Kintyre peninsula and then transfer by bus on to Campbeltown. This town used to be called Kinlochkilkerran (literally: at the head of the loch near the church of Saint Kieran), until Archibald Campbell, Count of Argyle, built a stronghold here in 1667, after which it became an important region that distilled a lot of Whisky. At one point in time there were 34 different distilleries. Enough reason to crown itself "Whisky capital of the world". But they mainly focused on quantity, not quality, and many distilleries closed down during Prohibition in the United States and the ensuing Great Depression. The lyrics of the local folk song "Campbeltown Loch, I wish you were Whisky" are hilarious, accompanied by (of course!) bagpipe music.

Today, only three distilleries remain in Campbeltown: the ancient Glen Scotia, the new Glengyle and the internationally renowned and acknowledged Springbank distillery. So there is plenty to do on shore. The friendly town also has a historical museum and an Art Deco cinema from 1913, that still runs movies.

**Day 7** A beautiful sailing trip to Oban, through the unspoilt, wild nature of the islands to the Scottish west coast. The rugged beauty of Jura, silence on the water, the indescribable scenery, rugged coastline with surprising coves and quiet fishing villages and the magnificent sight of the islands in the distance

**Day 8** Cruise ends after breakfast in Oban.



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## OBAN TO INVERNESS: THE CALEDONIAN CANAL

**Starts:** in Oban in July, August, September and October

**Ends:** in Inverness

**Highlights:** Mountain lakes, spectacular scenery, Caledonian Canal from the Atlantic to the North Sea

**Day 1** Arrive in Oban. Once you've embarked, you can get acquainted with other participants and the crew. This is followed by an elaborate dinner and we'll raise our glasses to a beautiful journey.

**Day 2** We start the day with a visit to the Oban distillery, where we participate in the fun and interesting tour, learning more about how whisky is made, and ending with an opportunity to taste. Afterwards, the crossing to the Isle of Mull is quite short, since the island is right next to Oban. *Mull*, Gaelic for cliff or hill, was once a Viking stronghold and they plundered it in the year 1100 AD. We tie up in the picturesque fishing village of Tobermory.

**Day 3** Again a visit to a famous distillery is on the agenda this morning. First we tour the Tobermory distillery; then after lunch we sail across the Sound of Mull to the mainland at the head of Loch Sunart. Here we board the Zodiac for a transfer to Ardnamurchan Distillery, one of the newest distilleries in Scotland, in a stunning location in the wilderness near Glenbeg. After our tour of Ardnamurchan we return to the boat and sail for Fort William, tying up at a quiet loch somewhere along the way.

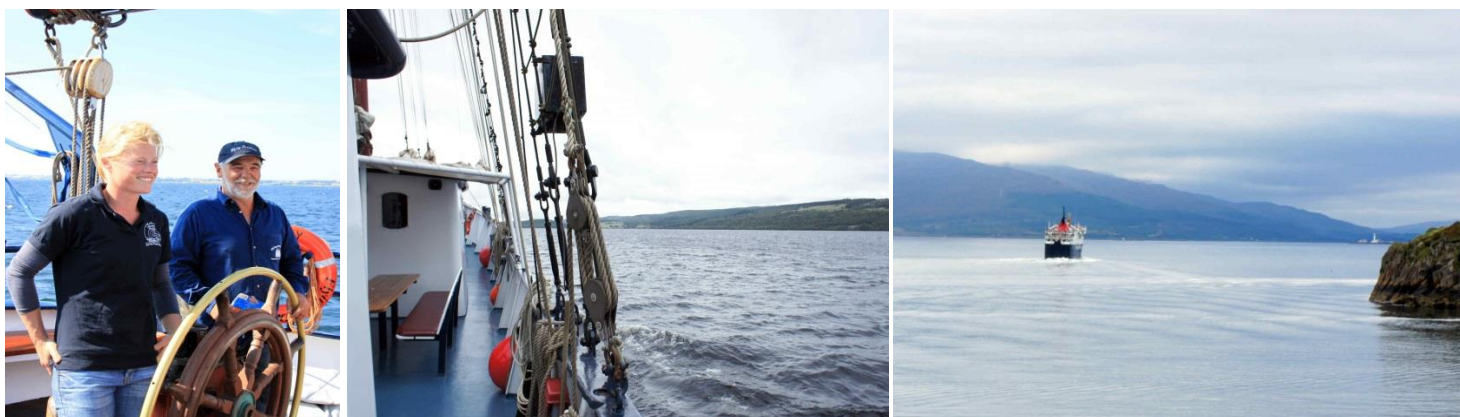
**Day 4** This morning we continue towards Fort William after breakfast. We sail along the beautiful west coast where we can truly appreciate the spaciousness and beauty of this pristine area. We will have wonderful views of the Isle of Mull. We go through the sea lock at Corpach, the entrance to the Caledonian Canal.

**Day 5** We continue to the famous Neptune's Staircase, eight locks in a row. We always attract a lot of attention, because we are one of the biggest ships that can go through the Canal and the locks. After the locks, we arrive in a fairy tale part of the canal with some little lakes now and then, but sometimes also very narrow, with high rising trees in autumn colours. We sail to mesmerising lakes Loch Lochy, Loch Oich and Loch Dochfour. And if it's possible, we will set sail upwards and let the wind take us over the magnificent lakes. Enjoy the tranquillity of the water and the beautiful landscape that floats by. Watch the amazing skies and views. At the end of the day, we moor at Fort Augustus in the middle of the Highlands, where we may visit a cosy pub.

**Day 6** Today, we will go through 6 locks to get to the famous Loch Ness and we might even see Nessie. Monster or not, it's a wonderful trip through Scotland in a breathtaking environment. For those who are interested, the Zodiac will take us to a friendly pub after dinner.

**Day 7** At the end of the day we get to Inverness, having travelled straight through Scotland to the East Coast. Inverness is a cosy city with authentic bars, and tonight we will have the opportunity to hear (and perhaps join in!) traditional Scottish music in one of these charming pubs.

**Day 8** Cruise ends after breakfast in Inverness.



## EXPERIENCE THE NORTHERN HEBRIDES

**Starts:** in Mallaigh in July, August, September and October

**Ends:** in Oban

**Highlights:** Rugged coastline and remote islands; Skye, Uist, Harris and Lewis, spectacular landscapes, traditional Scottish fishing villages, Gaelic language and culture

**Day 1** Arrive Mallaigh. Get acquainted with other participants and crew, after which you will have plenty of time to get settled and familiarise yourself with the ship. The reception dinner and information and instructions will follow this. After this, we will raise our glasses to a beautiful trip.

**Day 2** We sail towards the Isle of Skye, one of the largest islands of the Hebrides. Skye is an absolute must-see and has some truly impressive landscapes: steep cliffs, picturesque coasts, a famous whisky distillery (Talisker) and many sights to see. We moor in Portree, Skye's largest town, with 2000 inhabitants.

**Day 3** We can spend a large part of the day exploring Skye. Both cycling and hiking are a possibility here – ask your crew for details. In the afternoon we sail further along the coast of Skye and drop anchor in a beautiful bay.

**Days 4 - 6** Explore the rugged and remote Outer Hebrides islands of Harris, Lewis, and North Uist. These are islands of undiscovered beauty, so remote that few tourists make the effort to go here. The signs on the roads are in Gaelic and the food supply depends on how much room was available on the boat it came on.

On the Isle of Lewis we tie up in Stornoway, the capital. The islands of Lewis and Harris are connected through a narrow isthmus and have totally different characters. What they generally do have in common is their Gaelic culture and language, and day of rest on Sunday. Lewis is the northern part with rolling hills and lochs and a surprisingly dense population – Stornoway (Steomabhagh in Gaelic) is a busy fishing port. Harris is the southern part with dramatic scenery: deep bays and high mountains. The west coast of Harris consists of a series of breathtaking beaches, flanked by dunes and the local Machair (a type of plant, unique to these islands). The islands have a wealth of prehistoric monuments and nature reserves. North Uist is a paradise for wildlife lovers – its peaceful 'drowned landscape' of peat bogs and lochans is home to abundant birdlife including the very rare corncrake and the merlin. The waters around the island are home to otters, porpoises and grey seals.

**Day 7** To Barra – we lay in at Castlebay and visit Kisimul Castle, the 'Castle in the Sea', which sits dramatically on a rock islet in the bay. The ancient seat of the Clan MacNeil, the castle provides wonderful views from the battlements. This is the only surviving medieval castle in the Outer Hebrides.

**Day 8** An unforgettable journey to the Isle of Mull today across the Sea of the Hebrides. We moor in the picturesque and colourful fishing village of Tobermory, home to a number of cosy, friendly pubs.

**Day 9** We sail for Oban, taking in magnificent views of Mull and Scotland's unspoilt west coast. En route we sail past Duart Castle, perched atop sea cliffs at Mull, an impressive and very photogenic site. We arrive in Oban for our farewell dinner this evening.

**Day 10** Cruise ends after breakfast in Oban.



These are unique sailing and sightseeing journeys. Selected dates have been set-aside for **Bike & Boat cycling cruises** with 8-days / 7-nights of guided cycle touring from Oban to Mull, Tobermory, Fort William and through the Caledonian Canal back to Oban – early bookings are essential – ask for details.

**Outdoor Travel** specialises in active holidays in many areas of the world including Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Active holidays include inn-to-inn or centre-based walking, trekking, cycling, e-bike touring, Bike & Barge or Bike & Boat cruises, boating or barging, horse riding, sea-kayaking and cooking.

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