

SCOTLAND – THE HIGHLANDS, SEA LOCHS & HEBRIDES ISLANDS

8-days / 7-nights moderate GUIDED cycling Oban & Western Isles of Mull & Jura STANDARD



This cycling cruise through the Scottish Highlands and Inner Hebrides islands offers a unique perspective on this remote, wild and beautiful region. This is an opportunity to explore Scotland's spectacular island scenery, crystal-clear waterfalls, charming villages and medieval castles. Learn about the long and often bloody history of Scotland, to enjoy the peat-smoked flavours of Scotch whisky – *uisge beatha*, 'water of life' – whilst listening to traditional music in a friendly pub. We start and end our tour in the attractive market town of Oban.

Sail on a traditional tall ship, a renovated and refitted former Dutch herring lugger, an ocean-going two-masted schooner, equipped with 10 comfortable twin cabins, all with ensuite shower/toilet. Meals are served in the saloon in the deckhouse. Join the captain astern to steer the ship and learn about sailing and sail rigging.

The daily moderate cycling tours require a good level of fitness, which can be acquired from steady cycling practise. Daily itineraries are between 26 - 60km over hilly terrain with long and steep climbs with time to rest or walk as you choose. Remember Scotland's wild weather can bring strong headwinds – or tailwinds if you are lucky. The route is mostly on quiet sealed roads and occasional trails.

E-bikes are available for a surcharge - ask for the cost and availability when booking. These battery-assisted bikes give a power boost to help you ascend those steeper hills and on longer cycling day against the wind.

Cost from: \$2505 per person twin share Single cabin supplement from \$580 (limited availability)

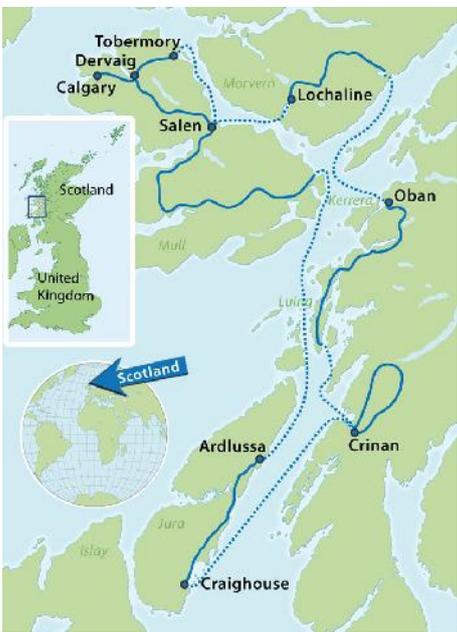
Departs: 7th, 14th, 21st June, 16th, 23rd, 30th August, 2020

Includes: 8-days / 7-nights on a tall ship with crew, double / twin or single cabins with shower/toilet, half-board on 7 days (breakfast and either lunch or dinner), English speaking tour guide, guided cycling tours as described in the itinerary, bicycle hire with pannier, overview-maps for the daily tours (available on board).

Not included in tour: Personal expenses, meals taken onshore, gratuities, local fees and entrance charges for museums and attractions, drinks (a flat rate of £50 per person for bottled water, coffee and tea paid on arrival). Bicycle insurance and transfer to Oban from Edinburgh can be arranged – please ask for pricing and details.



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Suggested itinerary – subject to weather and sailing conditions

Day 1 (Sunday) Arrive Oban

Plan to arrive in Oban, the gateway to the Inner Hebrides, by 5.00pm, although if you arrive earlier, you may stow your luggage on board. During a late dinner, get to know your crew and tour guides.

Day 2 (Monday) Oban and Isle of Luing

Cycling @ 22 miles (36km)

We set out from Oban on our bikes, heading southward over undulating terrain and along the shores of a small loch to Cuan Sound, where we take a ferry to the 'slate island' of Luing. Slate quarrying was once the economic mainstay of Luing and the shining grey slate was used to re-roof the Abbey at Iona and in the construction of many notable buildings on the mainland. Now tourism, lobstering and beef cattle are the main industries. We cycle across the island past fields and farmland and the picturesque white-washed parish church to the harbour at Toberonochy, where we meet our ship and sail to the small harbour village of Crinan to anchor for the night.

Day 3 (Tuesday) Kilmartin and Mull of Kintyre

Cycling @ 23 miles (37km)

After breakfast, we cycle from Crinan to the fascinating excavation site of Kilmartin. Stone circles, reminiscent of Stonehenge and prehistoric burial mounds, characterize the vast landscape. After visiting the museum grounds and enjoying lunch at the museum Cafe, return to Crinan and then cycle on past the Kintyre peninsula (made famous by the Paul McCartney song, *Mull of Kintyre*), riding through scenic landscapes to Loch Caolisport and cross over to the Island of Jura, where we spend the night.

Day 4 (Wednesday) Isle of Jura

Cycling @ 17 miles (27km)

After breakfast we cycle northwards on the island of Jura, home to just 200 human inhabitants and over 5000 red deer and we should catch a glimpse of these majestic creatures as we cycle. Renowned author George Orwell spent the last years of his life on Jura for the solitude and isolation it provided, and wrote *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in a remote cottage on the wild north coast of the island. We pass the conical Paps of Jura, rising 785 metres from the moors, and come to the small harbour where we meet our boat. Our fearless and experienced crew guide the ship safely past the swirling waters of Corryreckan, one of the largest natural whirlpools in the world. We moor for the night in a quiet bay on the Isle of Mull.

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Day 5 (Thursday) Isle of Mull: Loch Spelve – Tobermory

Cycling @ 37 miles (60km)

This ride takes in the spectacular beauty of Scotland's natural scenery. The route takes us through hilly terrain and along the coast. Around every corner another breathtaking view opens up. After the road divides and most vehicles turn off towards Iona, we have the road pretty much to ourselves, with sheep and shaggy highland cattle grazing peacefully. We cycle along a coastal road past Loch Na' Keal to Salen and re-join the ship. We sail to Tobermory where we moor in the bay tonight. This pretty little town, with its colourful houses, has a traditional Scottish pub where you may like to have dinner and a dram (at your own arrangements).

Day 6 (Friday) Isle of Mull: Tobermory – Salen

Cycling @ 31 miles (50km)

Our route explores the northern part of Mull, with some challenging climbs, and afterwards we can reward ourselves in a cosy tearoom. We continue on to the brilliant white beach and crystal clear water of Calgary Bay, one of the most beautiful beaches in Scotland. We cycle across the island and join the coast road shortly before reaching Salen, where our boat awaits us. A brief cruise takes us to Lochaline on the Morvern peninsula.

Day 7 (Saturday) Morvern Peninsula: Lochaline – Kingairloch

Cycling @ 16 miles (26km)

A short sail across the Sound of Mull to Lochaline on the Morvern peninsula, then we cycle a beautiful route across the peninsula. After a first ascent, we reach an almost traffic-free road leading through virtually treeless highlands. The route runs along hillsides, wild mountain streams and moorland and then back to the coast where we meet the ship and sail to Oban. We have some time at leisure this afternoon for a stroll through Oban – McCaig's Tower, a never completed replica of the Colosseum in Rome, is well worth a visit. If time permits you may like to visit the Oban Distillery, one of the oldest in Scotland, before our farewell dinner on the ship.

Day 8 (Sunday) Disembark

Tour ends after breakfast in Oban. Transfers to Edinburgh airport departing at a set time can be arranged at extra cost, please ask for details when booking.



All cycling distances given are approximate. We offer this as a Bike & Boat cycling tour however, you can decide each day if you want to cycle with the group and tour guide, ride independently using the maps provided, or stay with the boat and cruise. Whilst non-cyclists are always welcome on these departures, please note there are no alternative sightseeing arrangements made for cycling days.

The tour requires a minimum number of passengers to operate. Suggested itinerary may vary subject to wind and weather conditions or operational requirements.

Outdoor Travel offers **Bike & Boat** cycling cruises to many areas of Europe including the Amalfi Coast or Sicily in Italy, the **Dalmatian coast** of **Croatia**, and islands of **Greece**, the **Lycian Coast** of Turkey and also in **Vietnam**. **Bike & Barge** cycling cruises are available on many of the canals and rivers of Europe including the Seine, **Loire Valley** and **Burgundy** or **Provence** in France and on the 2-week route between **Paris** and **Bruges** through the Somme WW1 battlefield and memorial sites in northern France. We offer several routes in Holland, Belgium and Germany – along the **Saar, Moselle and Rhine** – or along the **Danube** in Austria or Romania. Bike & Barge holidays are available in the **Venice** region of Italy, along the **Amalfi Coast** or in Sicily.

Inn-to-inn cycling tours are available in most destinations in Europe, the USA (including California's Napa Valley), in China, Japan, Africa and New Zealand - ask for details.

Contact the experienced staff at Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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