

Scotland & Norway Private Tour

Please note that all of the itineraries listed in our web site are actual private tour itineraries we have prepared for clients over the past 12-18 months. By the very nature of what we do, each private tour itinerary is custom, exclusive and unique unto itself. Our over-riding goal is to create lifelong memories that you and your family will forever carry deep within your hearts.

Overview

Scotland, home of some of the largest areas of wilderness left in Western Europe, provides a welcome contrast from the furor that can be found in London. Here, hiking opportunities abound as you cross fields that once were host to battles fought to wrestle control of this nation. Many great castles still stand, providing a look into what royal life was like in the Middle Ages. The natural beauty of the expansive Scottish landscape is most impressive with hills covered in colorful heather and bracken.

Norway offers pure, natural allure – it is truly one of the most beautiful countries in the world. Norway’s amazing, steep-sided fjords, glacial lakes, and pristine rivers offer a variety of outdoor activities including hiking, biking, fly-fishing, and paddling. A bit similar to our trekking in Patagonia, Norway offers several small, unique eco-lodges that provide comfort and serenity while enjoying the natural wonders. This Scotland and Norway private tour is a great combination of going back in history and being immersed in nature.

<p>SCOTLAND</p> <p>Temperature Range Highs: High 50’s Lows: Low 40’s</p> <p>Area 49,757 SQ KM 30,918 SQ MI</p> <p>Population 5.4 Million</p> <p>Language English, Scots & Scottish Gaelic</p> <p>Capital Edinburgh</p> <p>Currency Pound Sterling</p>	<p>NORWAY</p> <p>Temperature Range Highs: High 60’s Lows: Low 20’s</p> <p>Area 239,354 SQ KM 148,728 SQ MI</p> <p>Population 5.3 Million</p> <p>Language Norwegian, Sami & English</p> <p>Capital Oslo</p> <p>Currency Norwegian Krone</p>
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Day 1

Fly to London

Through our sister company, premium air provider TRAVNET, we may assist with your international airfare, as well as with mileage points conversion.

Day 2

Arrive London + Train London/Edinburgh

Upon arrival in London, you will be privately transferred to London’s King Cross Station to board your first-class train to Edinburgh, Scotland. Upon arrival in Edinburgh, you will be privately transferred to the Balmoral, where the remainder of your day will be free to spend at your leisure.

The Balmoral, Edinburgh

Though we have never been big fans of large 150-room hotels, we certainly make an exception with

the 5-star, 188-room Balmoral. The best hotel location in all of Edinburgh (in the heart of the city at the east end of Princess Street), the property was completely renovated in 2012. Originally opened in 1902, the architecture is quintessentially Victorian. The rooms here are large, with the Deluxe Castle View Rooms being our favorite! Amenities include a five-room treatment spa, nice gym with weights, 50-foot indoor pool, and two restaurants.

Accommodations: The Balmoral, Edinburgh

Day 3

Edinburgh Private Tour

Your private touring will begin with the Edinburgh Castle, a historic fortress that rests atop Castle Rock, which archaeologists have found to have been inhabited since the Iron Age of the 2nd-century. You will then continue to the Royal Mile, a succession of streets forming the main thoroughfare of the Old Town, stretching from Edinburgh Castle to St. Giles' Cathedral, with Palace of Holyroodhouse at its foot.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: The Balmoral, Edinburgh

Day 4

Private Transfer Edinburgh/Fort William

Following breakfast, you will be privately transferred from Edinburgh to Fort William. En route, you will stop to see Loch Lomond, the largest inland lake in Great Britain, before continuing to The Bonnie Banks, and the Rest and Be Thankful mountain pass, offering a panoramic view of Glen Coe Valley. You will also visit the Scottish Islands including the Isle of Skye and the Isle of Mull, where you may stop at a whiskey distillery. Upon arrival at Inverlochy Castle Hotel, the remainder of your day will be free to spend at your leisure.

Inverlochy Castle Hotel

Located in the picturesque Fort Williams and built in 1863, this luxury 17-room castle/country house is set among the most beautiful grounds and scenery in all of Scotland. The lavishly designed Victorian rooms are spacious, though perhaps a bit too colorful for many of our Mies-loving friends. In addition to amazing views of the grounds and surrounding mountains, all rooms are individually designed with elaborate furnishings, many preserved as gifts from the king of Norway (plus updated amenities and 40-inch TVs for your BBC fix!). Among our favorite areas at Inverlochy are the colorful walled gardens and lovely paths for walking. Please note a jacket is required for dining at the castle's renowned Albert and Michel Roux Jr. restaurant. We enjoyed reading Queen Victoria's quote from her 1873 visit to Inverlochy: "I never saw a lovelier and more romantic spot".

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Inverlochy Castle Hotel

Day 5

Nevis Gorge Half-Day Hike

Among the many geological wonders you will see with your private guide today, the most notable will be the slopes of Ben Nevis, the highest peak in Scotland; the 400-foot cascading Steall Waterfall; and Binnein Mòr, the highest peak in the Mamores mountain range.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Inverlochy Castle Hotel

Day 6

Private Transfer Fort William/Sutherland

Following breakfast, you will be privately transferred from Fort William to Sutherland. Upon arrival at Kinloch Lodge, the remainder of your day will be free to spend at your leisure.

Kinloch Lodge

Located in the far northwest highlands of Scotland, Kinloch Lodge is a remote and markedly peaceful private lodge near the village of Tongue. Originally owned by the Duke of Sutherland, the property was sold in the 20th-century and bought by Anders Holch Povlsen, a Danish environmentalist and currently the largest landowner in Scotland. With very little cell phone service in the area, it is a place for enjoying the scenery of the open nature. The rooms are cozy and spacious, with a warm and homey design. We particularly love the property's conservatory! With a staff, chef, and outdoor guide, the Kinloch takes care of every detail so that guests may make themselves at home and fully enjoy time to themselves or with loved ones. Activities you may enjoy here include guided hikes, early-morning deer watching, biking, and picnicking on an island near the Kyle of Sutherland.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: Kinloch Lodge

Day 7

Full-Day in Sutherland

Enjoy your full-day at Kinloch Lodge in Sutherland. Activities here include guided hikes, early-morning deer watching, biking, and picnicking on an island near the Kyle of Sutherland.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: Kinloch Lodge

Day 8

Private Transfer Sutherland/Perth

Following breakfast, you will be privately transferred to the luxury golf resort of your choice, near the city of Perth. The route from Fort William to Perth runs right through the heart of the Scottish Highlands, passing Loch Laggan and Ardverikie House, the setting for the BBC series, 'Monarch of the Glen'. As you continue south into the heart of the Grampian Mountains, you come upon the romantic site of the white-turreted Blair Castle, which you have the chance to tour, learning the history of the major Highland clans. You will follow the River Tay downstream toward the quaint town of Dunkeld, before ending your day at your luxury hotel/golf resort.

Our favorite options are Greywalls Hotel & Chez Roux, The Gleneagles Hotel, and the Old Course Hotel.

Greywalls Hotel & Chez Roux

Only a 30-minute drive east of Edinburgh, this 1901 stone manor house was designed by architect Sir Edwin Lutyens. The structure was later converted to a 23-room luxury inn overlooking the ninth and 18th greens of the championship Muirfield Golf Course. Most of the notably Edwardian-style decorated rooms offer uninterrupted views over the golf course or the lush four-acre Gertrude Jekyll-designed gardens and rolling farmland. Amenities include fine dining, tennis courts, a croquet lawn, and a nice spa with massage services.

The Gleneagles Hotel

Just an hour from Edinburgh Airport, we feel the 5-star, luxury Gleneagles Estate is a fitting end to your London & Scotland private tour. Despite its 232-room size, the Gleneagle's service and attention to detail are truly remarkable. While staying here, past clients have given special praise to the resort's Estate Rooms. Just below the Suite level, Estate Rooms are spacious with updated amenities and offer spectacular views of the gardens, grounds, and the Perth countryside. In addition to several restaurant choices, amenities include a 2014 renovated ESPA spa, two indoor pools, and a well-equipped gym. The wellness areas offer several fitness classes including pilates, yoga, and cardio. Outside activities include falconry, cycling, hiking, horseback riding, tennis, and more.

Old Course Hotel

Overlooking the Royal & Ancient Clubhouse and the 17th fairway of the iconic Old Course at St Andrew's, your stay here may be your trip highlight. The 144-room Old Course Hotel is decorated in a contemporary style, with room options featuring modern interior design or classic elegance. There are several bars and restaurants, with the Road Hole Restaurant being the favorite among clients who have stayed here (great views!). We are excited to mention that the hotel's Kohler Waters Spa has been relaunched, following an expansive renovation. The 25,000 sq. foot spa includes 13 treatment rooms, a 65-foot indoor swimming pool, steam room, ice fountain, and a cold plunge pool. Enjoy this special place!

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Greywalls Hotel & Chez Roux OR The Gleneagles Hotel OR Old Course Hotel

Day 9

Golf Resort Free-Day

Enjoy the golfing and amenities at your luxury golf resort!

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Greywalls Hotel & Chez Roux OR The Gleneagles Hotel OR Old Course Hotel

Day 10

Private Transfer to Edinburgh + Fly Edinburgh/Oslo

Following breakfast at your luxury golf resort, you will be privately transferred to Edinburgh for your onward to Oslo. Upon arrival in Oslo, you will be transferred to the Amerikalinjen Hotel or The Thief Hotel.

Amerikalinjen

Once home to the Norwegian America Line, established in 1919, Nordic Choice Hotels has refurbished and repurposed this historic building exactly 100 years later in 2019. We were lucky enough to see the beautiful Amerikalinjen on our Norway and Denmark scouting trip the day after it opened! The Amerikalinjen hotel perfectly balances the old with new, with the impeccable care one would expect from the same owners as Oslo's other premier hotel, The Thief. In contrast to The Thief (which we found extremely luxurious but rather quiet and secluded), the Amerikalinjen is located in the center of the city, just a short walk to the central train station. The decor is a blend of early 20th-century, in keeping with the building's history, and modern amenities. Spaces are large and open, as the hotel encourages guests to mingle and move freely from one space to the next. We loved the large terrace area with its glass ceiling, the basement jazz club, and the attached café featuring a daily jazz band! Though the spa isn't as nice as the one at The Thief, we found the

Amerikalinjen to be bright, beautiful, and lively — much more suited to our client’s who travel in with young people and in large groups!

The Thief

The Thief sits in the hideaway of Tjuvholmen (Thief Islet), once a haven for smugglers and other bandits. Filled with international art pieces and designer furniture collected by the hotel’s owner, Peter Stordalen, it is perhaps the most sophisticated and chic luxury hotel in Norway. Here, you can see local and international musicians performing live music or visit The Thief Art Space, showcasing the works of emerging, contemporary artists. Each of the 118-rooms feature rainfall showers, floor-to-ceiling windows, and private balconies looking out across the surrounding fjords. Each of the suites are interesting and unique, built around separate concepts, such as the Broom Suite, named and furnished after Lee Broom, an award-winning British designer; and the Apparatjik Suite, featuring video art, music, and art installations signed by the members of the international supergroup from which the suite gets its name. The amenities here include a rooftop terrace, lounge-library, a 40-foot swimming pool, and a gym. When visiting, we especially loved the very nice spa with sauna, steam room, and invigorating cold showers!

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Amerikalinjen Hotel or The Thief Hotel

Day 11

Full-Day Oslo Private Tour

Europe’s fastest-growing capital and one of the greenest cities in the world, Oslo was named the European Green Capital for 2019. With a large number of public parks, one of the lowest carbon footprints in the world, well-patronized public transport, and a commitment to sustainable food production and green space, it is easy to see why. Greenery is not the only thing booming in Oslo, as it is quickly becoming quite a culinary destination with the most northern, three-Michelin-starred Maaemo, and its fusion of Icelandic-Korean eats.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Amerikalinjen Hotel or The Thief Hotel

Day 12

Train Oslo/Flåm

We consider Norway’s noteworthy “Norway in a Nutshell” program to be the most efficient and comfortable way to see the country’s most plentiful mountain and fjord scenery. Included today are the scenic Bergen and Flåm railways; the steep hairpin bends of the Stalheimskleiva are a bit nerve-racking, but still fun!

Upon arrival in Flåm, you will be met by a 29|2 Aurland representative, and transferred to the lodge.

29|2 Aurland

Conceived in 2012 by the engaging owners, Tone (pronounced “Tone-a”) and Bjørn Ronning Vike and their young children, we consider the boutique, nine-room 29|2 Aurland Lodge to be among the most beautiful eco-lodge settings anywhere in the world. Being just a short, 15-minute transfer from the historic village of Flåm, the 29|2 is set in the innermost reaches of the world’s longest and deepest open fjord. Though the 29|2 may not have the outward luxury amenities of two of our favorite up-scale outdoor lodges (Deplar Farm in Iceland and Explora Patagonia in Chile) the lodge more than makes up for it in terms of its extraordinary location

overlooking the fjord and nearby Aurlandselvi River (hence its huge demand during the peak summer season). The buildings on the farm have been restored one by one, to ensure guests will have an authentic feeling of Norwegian rural life and the local community through the walls that surround them. Please note, the stairs and some doorways are quite small and may be difficult to maneuver for some. They are careful to book room assignments based on clients' needs for space and easy access. In decorating the various rooms, Tone and Bjørn have experimented with traditional colors and used both second-hand and new furnishings, with great support from interior architect, Gunvor Røkholt. The uniquely designed rooms are spread out in three adjacent buildings: the Riverside Farm Lodge, the Goat Barn, and the Fisherman's Cabin.

Meals: Breakfast, Late-Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: 29|2 Aurland

Day 13-14

Full-Days at the 29|2 Aurland

Among the fun, outdoor activities you may experience here are biking, sea trout fly-fishing, Nordic skiing, local goat farm visits, amazing hikes (including a short waterfall hike and the scenic, six-hour Aurlandsdalen hike), the Stegastein Lookout excursion, and fjord kayaking or traditional Osolver row-boat experiences! If interested, you may also opt to enjoy the estate's wood-heated sauna and scenic outdoor hot-tub before dinner! Please note, it takes about seven hours to heat the hot-tub, so please do let them know in advance if you wish to take advantage of this fun treat.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: 29|2 Aurland

Day 15

Fjord Cruise + Private Transfer to Bergen

Following breakfast at the 29|2 Aurland, you will be transferred to Flåm for a two-hour fjord cruise to Gudvangen aboard a modern, 100% electric boat with amazing views from all angles.

Upon arrival in Gudvangen, you will be met by your private driver, who will transfer you the remainder of the way to the Opus XVI in Bergen, with a stop for lunch in the charming town of Voss.

Opus XVI

Following our scouting visit, it was clear that the best, luxury hotel in Bergen hands-down is the boutique Opus XVI. As relatives of the late, world-renowned Norwegian composer (and Bergen's most famous citizen), Edvard Grieg, managing directors Britt Marie Grieg and Alexander Grieg sought to create a boutique experience for guests full of culture and never lacking in luxury. A timeline of Grieg's life can be found in a mini-exhibition on the lower-level of the hotel. Located in a historic building originally built in 1876 for Bergen's largest bank, the Opus is just steps away from the UNESCO World Heritage site of Bryggen. With only 65 rooms and suites, each one has been individually decorated with a blend of classic and modern styles. Enjoy the library, the beautifully decorated dining and lobby areas for afternoon tea, a small gym, and the high-touch Nordic hospitality at this boutique property!

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Opus XVI

Day 16

Half-Day Bergen Private Tour

Bergen, whose history goes back to the Viking Age, was once a very important seaport. A member of the Hanseatic League, a commercial and defensive confederation of merchant guilds and their market towns, Bergen was the center of prosperous trade between Norway and the rest of Europe. The rich heritage of this town is still visible in the many colorful, wooden houses that creep up the hillsides.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Opus XVI

Day 17

Fly Bergen/Home

Following breakfast, you will be privately transferred to the Bergen Airport for your flight home.

Meals: Breakfast