

ISLAND HOPPING: ARGYLL EXPLORER



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Argyll and the Isles is a glorious coastal region of glittering sea lochs, islands, hills and glens. It has 3723km of coastline, 61 medieval castles, 4 national nature reserves, 24 gin and whisky distilleries and 23 inhabited islands. It is a region which has travelling by ferry at its heart and the journey is very much part of the experience – look out for wildlife from sea birds to dolphins while on board.

[#relaxed](#) [#slowtravel](#) [#ferries](#) [#scenery](#) [#mountainsandsea](#)

This itinerary is designed for travel at a slower pace, for clients to enjoy the scenery, make plenty of stops to take in the viewpoints and to get to know a local lifestyle centred around the sea, beaches, mountains and sunsets.

DAY 1: THE ISLE OF BUTE

Your clients will make their way to Wemyss Bay, 1 hour from Glasgow, 2.5 hours from Edinburgh. There, a 30-minute ferry ride will take them to the Isle of Bute. The island is renowned for its fantastic, sheltered beaches and its famous grand architecture and colourful gardens. Catch views of Arran and the local seal colony from Scalpsie Bay or enjoy the wide sandy beach at Ettrick Bay.

Mount Stuart, the island's striking 19th century neo gothic mansion with its famous collection of art and literature, complete with a white marble chapel, that would not be out of place in Venice, and its stunning gardens is a must-

see attraction on the island.

We recommend a pre-dinner visit to the Isle of Bute Gin Distillery in the heart of Rothesay before dining and relaxing at the hotel. Overnight for example at the newly refurbished Glenburn Hotel (Bespoke Hotels).

DAY 2: ARGYLL'S SECRET COAST

Travelling to the northern tip of Bute today, the ferry will take your guests from Rhubadoch to Colintraive. The ferry departs every 30 minutes and takes a mere 5-minute over to the eastern shore of the Kyle of Bute and to the unspoilt village of Colintraive.

Not far from Colintraive your clients will find the Caol Rhu Sculpture Park a truly hidden gem on Argyll's Secret Coast. Entering the enchanted grounds of Caol Rhu feel a bit like stumbling out of a rabbit hole into a strange world beyond. The sculpture park is an outdoor gallery which displays and sells work created

in Scotland by established artists. These have included pieces of famous artists such as Andy Scott, the creator of the famous Kelpies and Rob Mulholland, the creator of 'Still' the popular mirror man that until recently stood in Loch Earn.

The route from here takes your clients along the scenic route around Loch Ruel with a number of stunning viewpoints to enjoy with the National Trust for Scotland's view point over the Kyles being an absolute highlight.

Tighnabruaich, on the shores of beautiful Kyles of Bute is the perfect place to stop for lunch or afternoon tea. The village is popular for sailing and yachting, but also has a number of excellent restaurants and cafes to choose from. The Restaurant at the Kames Hotel is passionate about locally sourced seafood and meat, Tide & Thyme is a lovely bistro restaurant offering everything from brunch to coffee and cakes in a relaxing atmosphere serving the best of local



PLANNING YOUR CLIENT'S JOURNEY

We recommend that you pre-book the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay CalMac ferry for your clients in advance of their travel to ensure availability.

The ferry crossings between Rhubodach and Coplintraive, Portavadie and Tarbert and Hunters Quay and Gourock are not bookable in advance.

We recommend turning up in plenty of time for the planned crossing and reassuring your clients that if they miss a crossing all three are regular services and they can stay in the queue and catch a later ferry.

BEST KNOWN FOR:



Events



Mountain Biking & Cycling



Forests & Gardens



Artists & Crafts



Food & Drink

From Left to right,
Inveraray Castle
Loch Fyne Oyster Bar

produce. There are also a number of overnight options here such as the Royal an Lochan Hotel.

If your clients are to overnight at Portavadie, sitting on the shores of Loch Fyne, they will have found the perfect place to unwind amid glorious scenery. The spa and leisure experience – also available non-residence - offer an exceptional way to enjoy the views over Loch Fyne with a seasonal outdoor infinity pool and all year hot tubs.

Alternatively, there is a short 25 minute ferry crossing from Portavadie to Tarbert, on the other side of Loch Fyne which offers a choice of accommodation options from cosy guest houses to a castle style hotel at Stonefield.

Ferries depart every hour between 09.30hr until 19.30hr.

DAY 3: DISCOVER LOCH FYNE

Leaving hotel this morning your client will travel north along Loch Fyne to Inveraray with a possible visit at Inveraray Castle. The iconic castle is the ancestral home of the Duke of Argyll, Chief of the Clan Campbell, and is one of Scotland's most magnificent buildings. The castle's imposing size and impressive turrets are visible for miles around. Inside, view the lavish State Dining Room, the tapestries and the stunning Armoury Hall with its walls adorned with muskets, pole-arms and axes. The gardens are open to the public with the

option of walking to the summit of nearby Dun na Cuaiche for panoramic views down the village and across Loch Fyne. Inveraray Jail, one of the world's best preserved jails and court houses is an alternative experience. The town offers a range of options for coffee, cake and independent shopping.

Take the road from here north around the head of Loch Fyne where you can lunch at the iconic Loch Fyne Oyster Bar – booking essential - or sample their deli counter, spend time at Fyne Ales or explore Ardkinglas woodland garden. From here take the A815 south to Dunoon with the opportunity to take a short walk in Puck's Glen. Allow one hour to follow a magical trail that winds along a Victorian walkway up the dramatic rocky gorge that is said to be home to mischievous spirits. Pass several waterfalls beneath the towering Douglas firs. During your visit, keep a sharp eye out and you might just spot the mystical Ghillie Dhu!

From Dunoon your clients can take the ferry (Western Ferries, prebooking not required) to Gourock to continue their journey to Glasgow and beyond or into the South of Scotland.



For all you need to know
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ARGYLL & THE ISLES

ARGYLL EXPLORER

- Main Route
- - - Vehicle Ferry Routes
- ✈ Airports
- Points of Interest

Transport links are changing regularly as lockdown lifts. Please always check before travelling and book ahead where possible.
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LOCH FYNE

COWAL

BUTE

A819

Cairndow

Inveraray

Tarbet

Strachur

A83

A811

A82

Tighnabruaich

Colintraive

To Glasgow

Tarbert

Wemyss Bay

Portavadie

Rothesay

