

SCOTLAND TRAVEL TIPS

The following is a list of useful information about travel to Inverness and Scotland, in general. If you have any specific questions concerning our itinerary, please contact BenchMark Travel Services at (978) 792-5150 or toll-free at (866) 535-8600 from the USA and Canada, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. You may also contact us via e-mail at tut@benchmarkincentives.com or by fax at (978) 834-6082.

TRAVEL DATES

You should plan to arrive in Inverness (INV) Scotland on Wednesday, September 22, 2021 and depart on your return flight home on Wednesday, September 29, 2021.

WHAT SHOULD I PACK?

September is an ideal time to experience Scotland's wild, natural landscape. The climate this time of year is quite moderate (46°F to 57°F) and is forever changing. As the old Scottish saying goes, "There's no such thing as bad weather, only the wrong clothes!" The most important thing to know when planning what to wear in Scotland is that you should pack for "four seasons in one day." Some essentials we suggest:

- Jeans or casual pants, long-sleeved jerseys and shirts or t-shirts that you can layer with a sweater or jacket for changing temperatures throughout the day
- Warm hat, gloves and light scarf
- Walking shoes, sneakers or water-resistant hiking boots with wool socks
- Swimsuit and cover up if you plan to take advantage of the hotel indoor pool and spa area
- Rain gear such as a wind/waterproof jacket and umbrella
- Personal medications and prescription eyeglasses
- Small water resistant backpack
- Binoculars
- Sunglasses, sunscreen and DEET insect repellent
- Currency converter - if you have a smart phone, there's an app for that
- Camera with charger or extra batteries
- Travel Insurance certificate, if you've purchased insurance (highly recommended)
- Passport and a copy of the picture page (keep separate from your passport)
- Electric plug adaptor designed for use from 110-240 volts.

Passport

ALL travelers must carry a passport, valid for at least six (6) months after your intended return date to your home country. At least two (2) blank pages must be available for the entry stamp. If you hold a passport with an expiration date less than six (6) months after your return date, you must renew your passport prior to departure.

If you are not a U.S. Citizen, your National Consulate or Embassy can answer any questions you may have regarding the individual travel documents required. You can find a worldwide index of Embassies via the web at: www.embassyworld.org

PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU WILL BE EXTENDING YOUR TRIP TO ANOTHER COUNTRY, YOU SHOULD CHECK WITH THE CONSULATE OF THAT COUNTRY TO ESTABLISH IF A VISA OR ANY ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION WILL BE REQUIRED.

Keep your passport in your carry-on bag with your airline ticket and/or e-ticket receipt. We also recommend packing a photocopy of the picture and signature pages of your passport in your checked luggage. If your passport does get lost while you are in Scotland, it is a lot easier to get an emergency replacement if you have the photocopies.

AIRPORT CHECK IN

Strict security measures at the airport may impact your travel plans and cause delays, which is why it is important that you allow plenty of time to get to the airport and check in at least three (3) hours prior to your flight's departure time. Due to constant changes of flight schedules, it is highly recommended that you confirm your flight's status before you leave for the airport.

Please take note of the check-in policies, carry-on restrictions and airport security rules that may impact your travel plans. Due to the fact that these security measures change regularly, we suggest that U.S. residents visit the following website for the most up-to-date information: www.tsa.gov.

PLEASE NOTE: THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REQUIRES AIRLINES TO SOLICIT EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION FOR U.S. PASSENGERS TRAVELING INTERNATIONALLY. PLEASE BE PREPARED TO GIVE AN EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER UPON CHECK IN.

Airport Security Update

The TSA has strict security screening procedures for ALL domestic and international flights originating in the United States. As of this writing, passengers will only be permitted to carry three-ounce sizes of liquids, gels and lotions past the security checkpoints in their carry-on luggage. Travel-size toiletries (three ounces or less) will be allowed in a clear plastic, one quart-size, zip-top bag. However, you will be asked to place the plastic bag separately on the X-ray conveyor belt.

PLEASE NOTE: A FEW EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE APPLY AND INCLUDE DIABETIC GLUCOSE MEDICATIONS SUCH AS INSULIN, BABY FORMULA, AND PRESCRIPTION LIQUID MEDICATIONS LABELED WITH A NAME THAT MATCHES THE PASSENGER'S TICKET. THESE ITEMS MUST BE DECLARED TO THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY OFFICERS AT THE SECURITY CHECKPOINT. BEVERAGES AND OTHER ITEMS PURCHASED IN THE SECURE BORDING AREA MAY NOW BE BROUGHT ONTO THE AIRCRAFT.

To minimize any delays at the screening checkpoint we strongly suggest that you pack the following items in the luggage you plan to check on the plane: all creams, lotions and ointments, suntan lotions, moisturizers, bug sprays, gel deodorants, gel-cap pills, hair styling gels, hair sprays of all kinds including aerosol, liquid hair products, lip gels, glosses or liquids, liquid foundations, make up removers or facial cleansers, mascara, mouthwash, nail polish, perfumes or colognes, liquid sanitizers, liquid soaps, bubble bath and toothpaste.

Also, passengers may be asked to remove their shoes so that they may be x-rayed with their carry-on bags. Laptop computers, cellular phones, iPads, tablets, Kindles and other portable electronic devices must still be screened at the security checkpoint as well, but will be allowed on board the aircraft.

PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU ARE FLYING FROM EUROPE OR ANY COUNTRY OTHER THAN THE UNITED STATES, LOCAL POLICIES REGARDING CARRY-ON LUGGAGE WILL APPLY. PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR AIRLINE FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS.

COVID-19 UPDATE

The TSA has made changes at security screening checkpoints in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as metering passengers to increase distance between individuals as they enter the security checkpoint queue, placing visual reminders of appropriate spacing on checkpoint floors and staggering the use of lanes in the security checkpoint where feasible. Other steps taken to make the security process safer include using a fresh pair of gloves upon passenger's request, and using new Explosives Trace Detection swabs for each person.

TSA is also allowing one liquid hand sanitizer container, up to 12 ounces per passenger, in carry-on bags until further notice. Since these containers exceed the standard allowance typically permitted through a checkpoint, they will need to be screened separately. This will add some time to your checkpoint screening experience. Please keep in mind that all other liquids, gels and aerosols brought to a checkpoint continue to be limited to 3.4 ounces or 100 milliliters carried in a one quart-size bag.

Once again, security measures may change between now and the time we depart for Scotland, so we suggest that you visit the TSA website prior to our TUT "Heart of the Highlands" trip for the most up-to-date travel information: <https://www.tsa.gov/travel>.

CARRY-ON LUGGAGE

You are permitted to carry one item of hand baggage (max 22 lbs. - 21x15x9 in.) in addition to one small personal item onboard the aircraft. Your personal item (e.g. small handbag or laptop case) must fit comfortably under the seat in front of you.

Passengers with more than one carry-on, plus a personal item will be required to check the additional luggage. Be sure to pack the essentials in your carry-on bag, such as your airline tickets, passport, a light change of clothing, any valuables, medications, toiletries, and perhaps a book or a snack.

Although regulations have recently changed, the TSA still recommends that sharp objects be placed in your checked luggage. It's not just the obvious items, but includes such innocuous items as razors for shaving, nailfiles, Swiss army knives, and corkscrews. Lighters and matches, or any type of scissors (e.g., from a sewing kit or first aid kit) should also be packed in your checked luggage.

LOST LUGGAGE

In the event that one of your bags goes astray, you'll want to file a Baggage Claim Report before passing through customs at the airport. Also, be sure to inform a member of the TUT Travel Staff so that they can work with the airlines to recover your lost luggage as quickly as possible.

HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

ALL TRAVELERS should make sure that your standard adult immunizations and 'boosters' are up to date. Additional vaccines are not necessary for travel to Scotland, unless you are traveling from certain countries that require proof of vaccination against certain diseases.

TIME ZONE

Like the rest of the United Kingdom, Scotland is on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and is five (5) hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. So, if it's 1:00 p.m. on September 24 in Inverness, it is:

- 8:00 a.m. on Thursday in New York, New York United States
- 7:00 a.m. on Thursday in Chicago, Illinois United States
- 6:00 a.m. on Thursday in Denver, Colorado, United States
- 5:00 a.m. on Thursday in Los Angeles, California, United States

If your home city is not listed above, you can find current local time and time zone information at <http://www.timeanddate.com/>

COMMUNICATIONS

Phone

Private mobile phones may be used while in Scotland although reception may vary. If you plan to use a cell phone be sure to confirm with your wireless provider that you have an international calling plan and advise them that you will be traveling to Scotland. In addition, all hotel rooms have a telephone.

If family and friends need to contact you during the program you can be contacted at all our hotels:

Achnagairn Estate

Kirkhill
Inverness IV5 7PD
United Kingdom
T: +44 1463 831878

Isle of Glencoe Hotel

Ballachulish
Glencoe, Fort William,
Ballachulish PH49 4HL
United Kingdom
T: +44 1764 651843

Kimpton Charlotte Square

38 Charlotte Square
Edinburgh EH2 4HQ
United Kingdom
T: +44 131 240 5500

The international prefix and country code for Scotland is +44. To call a Scottish number from abroad, dial the country code before the phone number. If you are calling from the USA or Canada you will also need to dial 011, prior to dialing the number.

INTERNET

All of the guest rooms and public areas of the hotels we will be staying in offer complimentary WiFi internet service to connect laptops, mobile phones, etc.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CONVENTIONS

Although largely informal in their everyday dealings, the Scots do observe the following rules of etiquette.

- **Greetings** Shake hands with men, women and children when meeting for the first time and when saying goodbye. Scots expect a firm handshake with eye contact.
- **Conversation** Generally friendly but often reserved, the Scots avoid conversations that might embarrass.
- **Table service** In general, cafes have table service, but pubs do not. In some pubs, you should order food at the bar (after noting your table number); others will have food servers to take your order.
- **Buying your round at the pub** Like the English, Welsh and Irish, Scots generally take turns to buy a round of drinks for the whole group, and everyone is expected to take part. The next round should always be bought before the previous round is finished. In pubs, you are expected to pay for drinks when you order them.

ELECTRONICS AT THE HOTEL

The voltage in Scotland is 230/240 volts, North America operates at 110-120 volts. Most modern appliances have been designed for use from 110-240 volts, however you will need to purchase a three-point round-pin adaptor for the plug. Please bring your own with you.

Important: If your home supply is 110 volts and your electrical equipment does not have a 110/220 or 110/240 switch on it, you will also need to get a voltage converter to step the 220 volts down to 110 volts. These are best purchased in your home country. Electronics you should check are your phone charger, camera chargers, electric toothbrush, travelling clothes irons, hair curlers, shavers, hair dryers, laptop chargers etc. Many of these devices are “dual” voltage meaning they operate either at 110v or 220/240v. There should be a label on the appliance advising that it is capable of dual voltage, (if not or in doubt don't use it).

FOOD

Scotland is a pantry of dreams and a bountiful land of plenty in terms of fresh produce. From Scottish salmon to homemade buttery shortbread the authentic dishes are tasty and more diverse than you might think. If you've never sampled Haggis, then you're in for a real treat! This dish uses every part of the animal adding lots of flavor and spices, served with neeps and tatties (that's turnip and potatoes to you). The fish and seafood that Scotland's waters have to offer are just sensational. There's a variety of fresh fish to sample, including Atlantic salmon, trout and pollock, not to mention an abundance of mussels and oysters. Scottish soup with a cold-smoked haddock from Aberdeenshire, potatoes and leek is a hug in a bowl. And then there is the melt in your mouth shortbread cookies.

WATER SAFETY

The tap water is perfectly safe to drink in all of the hotels where we will be staying, however some travelers may not be accustomed to its taste and will prefer to have bottled water. Not all tap water in rural areas is safe for consumption, so take precautions if necessary. Avoid drinking water from streams and rivers, especially in areas where there is human habitation. **Bottled water is included on all of our TUT transfers, adventures and meals.**

FOR YOUR PROTECTION

Remember, the airlines and hotels will not take responsibility for lost or stolen valuables. We suggest that you pack them in your carry-on bag and when on tour they can be stored in your room safe. While touring or shopping leave your passport and the bulk of your money in the safe. Take with you only the money you intend to spend. Carry a copy of the picture page of your passport with you in case your passport is lost.

THE LANGUAGE

English is the main language spoken in Scotland however; there are a wide range of different accents and dialects spoken across the country. From the largest cities right through to the smallest of islands, differing accents can be found. These range from soft, sing-song to stronger and more pronounced. Here are a few phrases you may hear with a Scottish brogue during our trip:

Wylcome	Welcome
Whit like are ye?	How are you?
White ye cawit?	What's your Name
Gled tae meet ya	Glad to meet ya
Guid mornin	Good Morning
Guid Efternuin	Good Afternoon
Guid Evenin	Good Evening
A Wee Bit	Just a Little
Ay	Yes
Naw	No
Thank Ye	Thank you
Chum	Friend
Fizzy Juice	Soda/Soft Drink
Haud yer wheesht	Please, be Quiet
Banter	Witty Conversation
Braw	Brilliant/Fantastic
Whaur's the Lavvy?	Where's the Restroom?
Ah dinnae ken	I Don't Know
Laddie	Male
Lassie	Female
Glen	Valley
Burn	Stream or Creek
Backgreen	Garden or Backyard

SHOPPING IN SCOTLAND

Once you've seen the beautiful views, you'll understand why hundreds of artists, designers and craftspeople are inspired to make so many wonderful products. Think unique jewelry, knitware from the Harris Tweed Company, pottery and even tasty food and drink. Look out for little shops everywhere you go - they're not just on the main streets, but will often be down by the harbor, in art galleries or even on countryside farms. Whether you are searching for a stunning painting, a beautiful piece of clothing, or bottle of Whiskey - It's about capturing your very own piece of Scotland.

CUSTOMS

Upon Departing for Scotland

If you have just bought a new and expensive digital camera, watch, laptop computer or similar item, it will be worth your while to stop at the Customs Office at your international departure airport and register these items. It usually does not take much time and will save you from the possibility of delays and/or having to pay duty on these items on the return home.

Returning from Scotland

U.S. Citizens will clear customs in the United States. Per the norm, you will need to declare everything that you may have bought in Scotland or did not take with you when you left your home country. Of course, how much you will be permitted to bring home under "duty free" status varies by country and is often determined by the length of your trip. For those traveling from outside of the United States, it is wise to confirm details with the Customs personnel at your departure airport or contact your local Consulate prior to your departure.

Each U.S. citizen may bring back \$800.00 USD worth of "duty free" items (a maximum of \$1,600.00 USD per household) as long as they are in your possession or brought back as accompanied baggage. Duty will be waived on items that you mail home to yourself, if the value is \$200.00 USD or less. Antiques that are at least 100 years old and fine art are considered "duty free."

Citizens who individually declare between \$800.00 USD and \$1,000.00 USD will be charged a duty on the amount over \$800 USD (up to \$1,000.00 USD) by Customs officials at the first point of entry, so remember to keep your receipts handy. The \$800.00 USD "duty free" exemption may include 200 cigarettes (1 carton) or 100 cigars and, if you are over the age of 21, one (1) liter (33.8 ounces) of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, liquor, etc.).

CURRENCY AND MONEY MATTERS

The currency in Scotland is not different from the rest of the United Kingdom in that it is also consists of British Pounds (£), although Scottish banks print their own versions of "Scottish notes." One pound is comprised of 100 pence and coins can be obtained in 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p, 50p, £1 and £2 denominations. Bank notes are commonly divided into £5, £10, £20 and £50 amounts.

Scottish Notes can be exchanged at the airport, major banks, foreign exchange bureaus, and all international credit cards are widely accepted as well. You will be able to access currency from ATM machines (cashpoints) as long as you have a four-digit pin-code. As of this printing \$1.23 USD = \$1.00 GBP.

The rates of exchange will no doubt vary somewhat before we depart for Scotland, but in the meantime, here are a few samples of the exchange rate for those who will be traveling from the U.S.A:

10.00 USD = 8.13 GBP	10.00 GBP = 12.31 USD
25.00 USD = 20.32 GBP	25.00 GBP = 30.77 USD
50.00 USD = 40.63 GBP	50.00 GBP = 61.53 USD
75.00 USD = 60.95 GBP	75.00 GBP = 92.30 USD
100.00 USD = 81.26 GBP	100.00 GBP = 123.06 USD

If you would like to check the current international rates of exchange, visit the XE website: www.xe.com. Or download the XE Currency App (<http://www.xe.com/apps/>) so you can calculate currencies on-the-go!

Currency Exchange

While banks are probably the best and most economical places to exchange currency, there are many places where you can exchange smaller amounts outside of banking hours, though they do tend to be quite a bit more expensive. Our hotel will also exchange currency, again at well above the bank rate.

Banking Hours

The majority of banks are open Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with some city offices open Saturday morning.

TravelMoney

Visa TravelMoney is a good way to carry money abroad. It is simply a card, which you "pre-pay" with your spending money before you travel. Then you can use your Visa TravelMoney card to withdraw cash from ATMs or to spend money in shops and restaurants exactly as you would use a bankcard at home. You can buy Visa TravelMoney at branches of Travelex and also at AAA, CAA, CUNA, ICBA and ABA. Visa TravelMoney is just as secure as a Traveler's Check. It has PIN and signature protection, and you can choose to take a second card with you, which will still be active if the first card is lost or stolen. Plus you are covered by 24-hour emergency assistance to help with replacement cash in a hurry.

Credit Cards

Visa and MasterCard credit cards are widely accepted throughout Inverness and Scotland. Discover, Diner's Club and AMEX are not as widely accepted but most major shops accept them. It is important to note that not all places accept debit cards. Some of the smaller establishments do not accept American Express or any credit cards, so it is always good to ask if you do not see a sign in the window or at a register.

When you receive your monthly credit card statement it will show the converted costs and will reflect the rate of exchange at the time of your purchase. Please be aware that in most cases, an extra fee for converting from foreign currency will be added to your credit card.

PLEASE NOTE: IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND HOW TO TAKE CASH ADVANCES OUT ON YOUR CREDIT CARD PRIOR TO YOUR DEPARTURE.

ATM Transactions

Automated Teller Machines (ATM's) are widely available at banks, along main shopping streets and in malls, which accept credit cards and foreign bank cards. Banking fees for ATM withdrawals and foreign transactions vary widely, so please check the rates with your bank(s).

PLEASE NOTE: Before you depart, be sure to call your bank and/or credit card provider(s) to alert them that you will be traveling to Scotland and plan to use your card(s) while traveling.

Value Added Tax

All goods and services are subject to a 20% sales tax (VAT) included in the displayed price. Visitors can sometimes reclaim this tax on purchases from certain stores where the value is over a minimum amount (usually 90-100 pounds). Here are some tips on reclaiming your tax:

1. The Retail Export Scheme is voluntary, so not all retailers offer the service. Look for the sign "Tax Free Shopping" in the windows of stores, which participate.
2. Ask the sales assistant for the form for reclaiming the tax. Fill in the form and retain it.
3. VAT refunds cannot be processed after you return home - only at the point of exit from the UK.
4. When leaving the UK, keep the goods involved in your hand luggage.
5. Show the items purchased and the form to a customs officer at the VAT desk at the airport as you leave the UK.
6. The customs officer checks the goods and validates the claim voucher.
7. Sometimes the refund is issued immediately otherwise you have to send the validated voucher to the store where you bought the goods in the envelope provided.
8. A check (sometimes minus a small service charge) will be sent to you; you can also have the refund applied to your credit card account.
9. Keep a note of the store's address and contact details (e-mail address if they have one) in case you have to

contact them later.

10. It may take anything up to three months to process the refund. If you encounter any problems, contact the store.
11. Also see the government's Customs and Excise Web site for more on the [Traveler's Guide to the Retail Export Scheme](#).

TIPPING

All of our TUT functions, meals, transportation, local guides, drivers and hotel staff are tipped so there is no need to reach into your pocket for that. If you are out on your own, there are no hard and fast rules for tipping in Scotland. If you are happy with the service, a 10-15% tip is customary, particularly in a restaurant or cafe with table service. Tipping in bars is not expected. For taxi fares it is usual to round up to the nearest pound. However, tipping for good service or kindness is appreciated. If you want to tip and are in doubt about how much, think 10%. All tips are at your discretion!

Please Note: Your American TUT Travel Staff will not expect or accept any tips.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

BenchMark Travel Services strongly recommends the purchase of travel insurance* before any TUT trip! Travel insurance offers travelers coverage for unforeseen problems, from a cancelled flight to a serious illness—or in rare cases, even an act of terrorism or the financial default of a travel supplier. If you miss a travel connection, even for reasons beyond your control, you are NOT necessarily protected from financial loss unless you have travel insurance. For example, if you encounter mechanical problems, flight delays, or inclement weather that causes you to miss connecting flights, the airline carrier might re-book you, although in many cases (such as bad weather) it is NOT guaranteed (in which case you may either have to purchase an entirely new round-trip ticket or forego the entire prepaid trip without any reimbursement). Travel insurance can cover new flights or provide trip cancellation coverage (for a covered loss), as well as emergency medical expenses and medical transportation. Travel insurance also provides 24 hour "911" emergency travel service, in case a traveler has to change a flight or a hotel room, in addition to assistance with emergency cash transfers, lost baggage, and pre-trip consultation services (travel advisories, passport requirements, inoculation information, etc.).

How to Purchase Travel Insurance

You can obtain travel insurance from Travel Guard International.* To view the various policies offered, log onto www.travelguard.com. You will have two (2) options to purchase travel insurance: 1. U.S. and Canadian residents may call Travel Guard directly at 1-800-826-1300. 2. Visit Travel Guard's website at www.TravelGuard.com to process the insurance yourself. In this case you will be asked for a travel agent code, please give Travel Guard the code 22735731 as this code will identify your booking with BenchMark Travel Services. Please be sure to read all policy information thoroughly and note that if you have a pre-existing condition you must apply for the insurance within 14 days of the trip deposit date.

*Please Note: Travel Guard insurance is only available to U.S. and Canadian residents at this time. If you live elsewhere, please check for insurance coverage within your home country from independent providers.

MORE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions prior to traveling, please contact BenchMark Travel Services at the numbers below. We expect that questions will arise during your stay in Scotland; therefore the TUT Travel Staff will be readily available at the Hospitality Desk, located in a convenient area in all our hotels. If you need assistance, feel free to stop by the Hospitality Desk any day during the trip.

BenchMark Travel Services

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