



# A Luxury Woolly Exploration of the Highlands and Islands of Bonny Scotland

Isles, Castles, Glens, Weaving, Whiskey, Sheepdogs and more...



Follow the  
Footsteps of  
Outlander's Jamie  
and Claire



Perfect for non-  
weaving  
companions  
with Options for  
Golf,  
Horseback  
Riding, Fishing,  
Walking,  
Photography & More...



October 28 -  
November 14,  
2024



## Meet Our Scottish Weaving Mentor...



### Fiona Hutchinson

We are so excited to work with Fiona, an accomplished tapestry weaver trained in the Tapestry Department of Edinburgh College of Art. She graduated with a 1<sup>st</sup> Class Honours Degree and Postgraduate Diploma in 1985. She divides her time between teaching, commission work and developing her own work for exhibition.

Teaching is an important part of her creative practice. She teaches workshops for Dovecot Studio, West Dean and guilds throughout the UK. Fiona is also a teaching fellow in tapestry weaving and stitched textiles at Edinburgh University.

As an artist and teacher working predominantly but not exclusively in Gobeiln tapestry, content is paramount in the development of her work. Fiona aims to create a dialogue between the subject, materials and viewer. While traditional techniques and craftsmanship are important, it is the idea, the vision and her hand that defines the work.

Growing up in the city, but by the water's edge, the sea is enormously important in Fiona's life. Over the last 35 years it has provided her with a starting point for her creative journey. Whether from personal experience or research, her aim is not to create a representation of the seas and oceans but something experienced, a deeply felt personal connection. It is as much a self-portrait as it is a reflection on the sea.

### A Tapestry and Textile Artist. The subject is the Sea, materials and medium are textile.

*"Ideas take a long time to evolve, almost as long as it takes to weave them. Starting with an experience: a sea journey, yacht race, the local harbour, or a wet and windy day on the coast. This personal experience is enhanced by research, both written and visual. Ideas are refined and developed through drawing, painting, and sampling.*

*Techniques and materials play an increasingly important role in the development of my ideas. The manipulation of traditional tapestry and textile techniques provides me with a creative language in which to explore my ideas. As we are all becoming more aware of issues around resources and sustainability, I am ever conscious of the need to use materials I*

*have or can repurpose. This has led to discovering a wealth of recycled or repurposed materials with which to work." ~ Fiona Hutchinson*





## Monday, October 28

## The Scenic Road to Oban

Today is the beginning of our journey through Scotland. We meet as a group in Edinburgh at the Radisson Blu Hotel located on the Royal Mile for a 930AM departure into the wonders of the countryside. \*\* We'll take the long and scenic route to treat ourselves to the wonderful sites and views.

Our destination is Oban, the Seafood Capitol of Scotland, and the Gateway to the Isles. The city is scenically nestled on the West Coast and encompassed by miles and miles of scenic coastline and verdant countryside. We'll spend three nights here so that we can explore the nearby islands of Iona and Mull. Our accommodations are a combination of The Manor House, a lovely Georgian House built in 1780 by the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Argyll and Dungallan Country House, the summer residence of the Duke of Argyll built in 1870. Both are only a few minutes' walk from the town center, boasting spectacular views over Oban Bay and the isles of Kerrera,



Lismore and Mull. Overnight at  
Overnight at The Manor House  
and Dungallan Country House.  
(B)

\*\*Please plan on being at the  
Radisson Blu Hotel by 9AM.



## Tuesday, October 29 Exploring Isle of Mull, Scotland's "Hidden Gem"

Today we'll take a 45-minute ferry ride to the extremely picturesque Isle of Mull, the second largest island of the Inner Hebrides and the 4th largest in all of Britain. The landscape features more than 300 miles of coastline, craggy mountains, cascading waterfalls and secluded glens. Its ever-changing landscape is home to moody lochs, quaint villages, hidden



beaches and has the reputation as the premier wildlife tourism destination in the UK. Whales, dolphins and seals ply the waters off the island while a myriad of deer, otters, sheep and highland cows freely roam the terrain. The Isle of Mull is also the best place in the UK to see white-tailed eagles, golden eagles and sea eagles and is earned the nickname "Eagle Island."

The main town of Mull is Tobermory, considered one of the prettiest towns in Scotland, was built as a fishing port in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The brightly painted buildings that line the main street create a picture-perfect postcard setting amid the wooded hills surrounding the bay. It even has its own distillery and the Rubha nan Gall lighthouse built in 1857. We'll

have some time to wander through this idyllic island village. We'll visit many of the sights and drink in the unique atmosphere of the island. One such visit will be Duart Castle, built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It was the ancient seat of Clan MacLean and is perched on the crags overlooking the Sound of Mull. Other castles on the island include 15<sup>th</sup> century Moy Castle, 13<sup>th</sup> century Aros Castle and Glengorm Castle dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We might also include the Viking village of Dervaig, Calgary Sculpture Trail, and Lochbuie Standing Stones just to name a few possibilities. We'll ferry back to the mainland and our cozy accommodations late in the day. Overnight at The Manor House and Dungallan Country House. (B)





## Wednesday, October 30 The Ancient Isle of Iona, “The Sacred Island”

Today we will visit the tiny Isle of Iona which is only 1.5 by 3 miles in size. We'll take the ferry once again to Mull where we catch a foot ferry from Fionnport for a 10-minute ride to Iona. While diminutive in stature, this little island packs a big historic punch. Iona is a holy island and home to the oldest and most sacred religious places in all of Western Europe. It has

attracted pilgrims since the 7<sup>th</sup> century and is often described as the birthplace of Christianity in Scotland. St. Columba and his companions traveled here from Ireland in AD 563 and founded Iona Abbey and Nunnery, one of the most important monasteries in the British Isles. This striking structure, built from Ross of Mull pink granite, is one of Scotland's most sacred and historic sites featuring Celtic crosses and cloister carvings. The early monks survived many Viking attacks in the early years. Thus, they removed many treasures from Iona to Ireland for safety. One of the most famous “rescues” was the “Book of Kells,” the beautifully illuminated manuscript created on Iona.

One does not need to be religious to appreciate the power of Iona. The following description perhaps puts its importance into another, equally compelling, light: “St Columba, who was given the island of Iona, brought the gift of literacy to our shores. This magic was every bit as powerful as an iron sword. The man who welded the pen could take the very words from the King's mouth and make them permanent in ink. Once a king's demands were written down, copied and circulated, that was the basis of a legal system, of contracts, of treaties. Literacy was power. The birth of literacy shaped the very way for the way our world today.”

©<https://www.thehappylands.co.uk/blog-1/2018/10/19/hidden-gems-isle-of-iona>

In addition to the spiritual and historic significance of Iona, its coastline is awe-inspiring with nine white shell/sand beaches. Its waters are an idyllic blue-green and the views out to sea are beyond stunning. Much like Mull, wildlife abounds here in the unspoiled habitat. Perhaps what many people remember most of Iona is the sense of peace and tranquility, perhaps different than any other part of Scotland. Overnight at The Manor House and Dungallan Country House. (B)

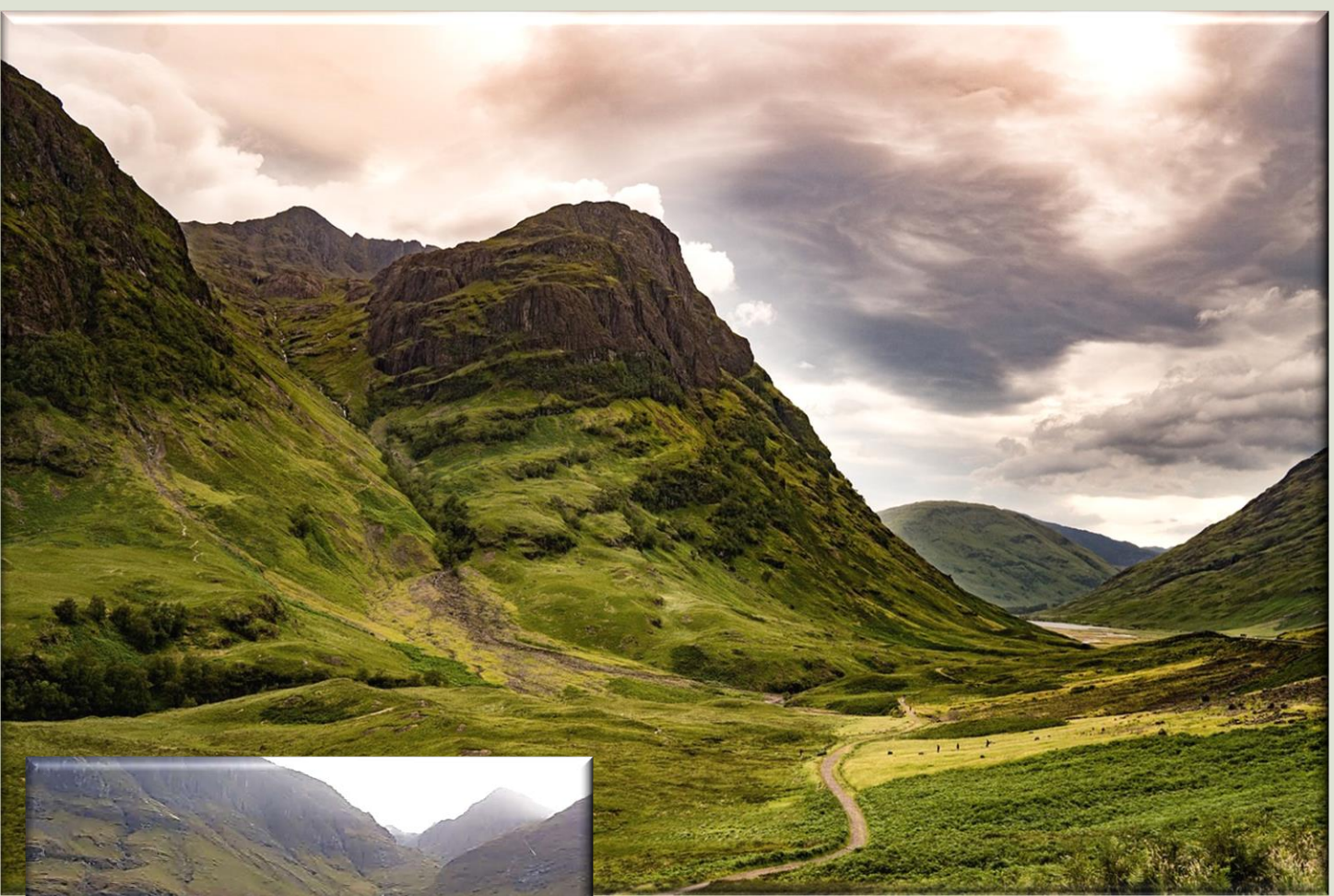


Photo: The house used in the James Bond Film "Skyfall"

## Thursday, October 31 Glencoe and on to the Isle of Skye

This morning, we travel north to the magnificent Isle of Skye. Our route today is beautiful and is recognized for its breathtaking, varied scenery skirting lochs, passing tiny villages, historic glens, and towering mountains. If the weather cooperates, we'll drive

through the moody scenery of Glencoe, home to the infamous massacre of the clan MacDonald. It is a stunning and eerie landscape. We'll also stop at the Glenfinnan Monument, a moving tribute to the people that died fighting for the Jacobite cause. If we're lucky, we might catch a glimpse of the "Hogwarts Express" steam train traversing the magical setting of Harry Potter's film location.

The Isle of Skye was voted the "4<sup>th</sup> Best Island in the World" by National Geographic Magazine. Skye is the largest and most northerly of the Inner Hebrides Islands. Sometimes referred to in Gaelic poetry and song as *Eilean a' Cheò* (The Misty Isle), Skye is renowned for its natural beauty, unspoiled landscape, history and wildlife. It is a rich tapestry of velvet moors, glistening lochs, towering sea cliffs and the Cuillins, a jagged mountain range.

Our accommodation for the next three nights is at the 4-star Cuillin Hills Hotel. Chosen for its stunning location, the hotel is set within fifteen acres of mature private grounds with a fantastic view over Portree Bay towards the majestic Cuillins Mountain Range. The Cuillin Hills Hotel offers one of the best vistas of any hotel on Skye. The stone-sided manor, formerly Armadale Lodge, was built in 1820's by the MacDonalds clan as a shooting lodge. The hotel features two restaurants specializing in locally sourced ingredients, traditional cuisine



and carefully chosen wines. The more formal of the two restaurants enjoys panoramic views across the bay. Overnight at Cuillin Hills Hotel. (B)

<http://www.cuillinhills-hotel-skye.co.uk>





## Friday - Saturday, November 1 - 2

### Exploring the Isle of Skye, Star of the Hebrides

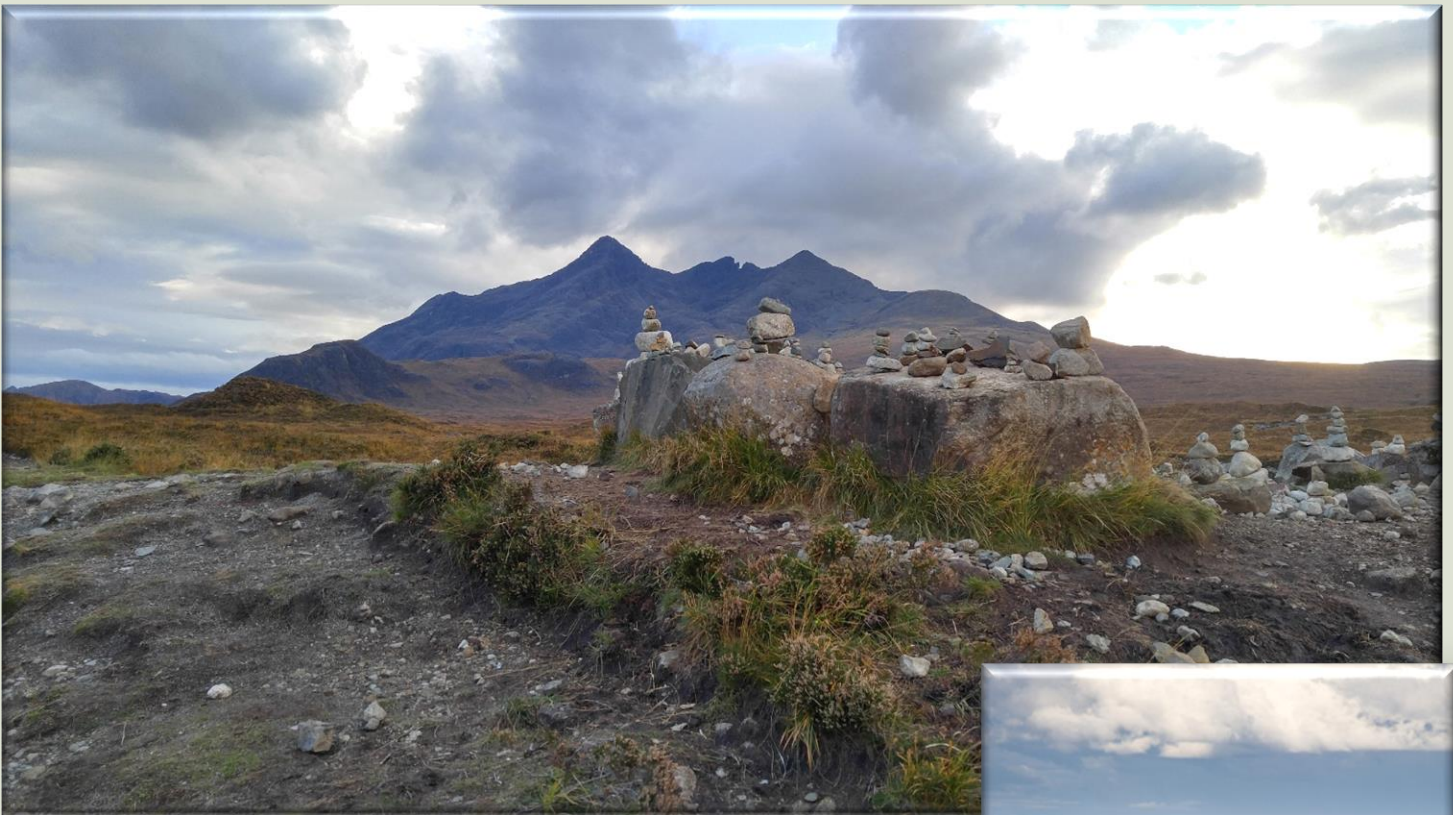
These two days will be spent exploring the many wonders of the 48-mile-long Isle of Skye. Meandering around the island, we will see castles, *duns* (hill forts), and *brochs* (prehistoric round stone towers). We will view Dunvegan Castle. Built on a rocky outcrop on the shores of Loch Dunvegan, it is the oldest continuously inhabited castle in Scotland and has been the ancestral home of the Chiefs of Clan MacLeod for 800 years (and still is!). Rising from the almost perpendicular edges of the rock, its massive grey towers are incredibly scenic against a background of mountains and islet-spangled sea.

The Isle of Skye is home to many wonderful artists including weavers, knitters, potters, silver smiths and painters. We will explore the many shops and studios of these gifted folks including:

**Skyeskyns:** This family run business creates the world-famous Highland hand-combed fleece, which is exclusive to Skyeskyns. We will be transported back in time to witness how real sheepskins are made using time-honored methods of leather making – one of the oldest crafts known to man.

**The Skye Shilasdaire Shop:** A unique shop specializing in the naturally dyed yarns produced by Shilasdaire, the Skye Yarn Company, as well as locally designed garments created by experienced hand knitters and KnitKits catering for all abilities. We will visit their Dyehouse Exhibition, which offers an insight into natural dyeing and shows the variety of dyestuffs, and the equipment used.





**Skye Weavers Workshop:** Situated in a croft house and stone barn in Glendale, north-west Skye, they weave their products on some rather unusual-looking equipment, an eclectic mix of bought and purpose-built weaving machinery including a bicycle pedaled loom.

**Teo's Handspun:** This shop features cashmere and baby-alpaca, shiny kid-mohair, merino, rustic gotland, and more unique and wild yarns, all hand-dyed. We will enjoy a spinning demonstration during our visit.



**Skye Silver:** Since 1974, Stewart John Wilson has been designing and producing exclusive Celtic, Scottish and modern designs in silver and gold available nowhere else.

**Duncan House:** Handcrafted Celtic jewelry and knives in Ancient Celtic knotwork and Pictish style. The hiking and walking on Skye is superb. There are literally hundreds of options from a stroll in the woods to a mountainous ascent. Skye also offers horseback riding, fishing and its own nine-hole golf course. There really is something for everyone on the Isle of Skye. Overnight at Cuillin Hills Hotel. (B, D one night)

A loom powered by a bicycle at Skye Weavers!



### **Sunday, November 3      Plockton, Eilean Donan Castle and Loch Ness**

Today we will travel via our private van to Inverness. Once again, there is much to see on the way. What trip to Scotland would be complete without driving along Loch Ness hoping to get a glimpse of Nessie? Further on, we will visit Eilean Donan Castle, one of the most iconic images in all of Scotland (photo above). First inhabited in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century, the castle is situated where three great sea lochs come together. The first fortified castle was built in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. We will spend some time lingering around this legendary fortress. After a delicious lunch in Plockton at an old inn by the sea, we carry on along the famous Loch Ness and finally arrive at the exquisite Georgian mansion, Culloden House. Situated on nearly 40 acres, guests are free to wander about the woodland and private gardens. This luxurious four-star hotel is an oasis of remarkable tranquility and majesty and is considered the most elegant country retreat in the area. The ancient house has quite a history! More than two centuries ago Bonnie Prince Charles used Culloden House as his lodging and battle headquarters the night prior to the fateful battle on Culloden Moor. Early on, various owners claimed Culloden as their home. These range from the family of the first Stuart King, Robert II, to the chieftain of the Macintosh clan. Today, you will experience legendary Highland hospitality and comfort. There is the opportunity to enjoy an exclusive whiskey tasting here to sample wee drams from the Highlands, the Lowlands and the Islands (extra cost). The



lovely restaurant's chef creates divine cuisine using local produce and local delicacies like Loch Fyne salmon, sweet Orkney crab, and Scotch beef fillet from the Highlands. Overnight at the Culloden House. (B)



## Monday - Tuesday, November 4 - 5 Loch Ness and Culloden Battlefield

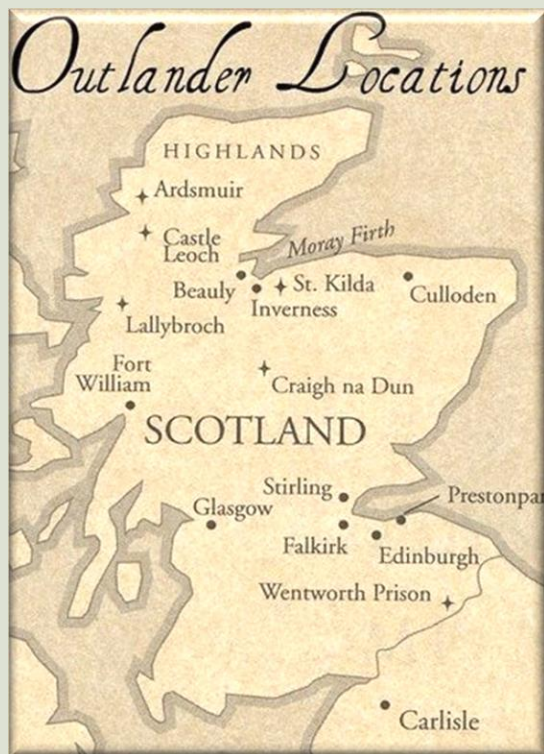
We have built in an extra day in this extraordinary setting to allow for a full immersion into the rich history of the area. During these two days, you can choose how you would like to spend your time. You can opt for an excursion to Culloden Battlefield, the historic site of the last hand-to-hand land battle fought on British soil. Here you can walk the

battlefield that has

been restored to as close as possible on that fateful day in April 1746 which changed the way of life for the Highlanders forever.

You will also have the chance to enjoy the breathtaking scenery of Loch Ness onboard the Jacobite Queen with entry to the romantic ruins of Urquhart Castle (both tours included). Or you can choose to visit other sites or participate in other activities nearby (additional cost). Cawdor Castle, considered the most romantic castle in the Highlands, is quite close. It has been the home to the thanes of Cawdor since the early 14<sup>th</sup> century and has been linked romantically to Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Tremendous golf and salmon fishing is also close by as is a variety of "shoots" that can be organized for grouse, partridge and duck. Of course, you can opt to explore Inverness or just relax on this gorgeous property and take advantage of a massage in your room. The choice is yours (these activities at an additional cost). Overnight at Culloden House Hotel. (B)





## Wednesday, November 6 Historic Woolen Mills, A Stone Circle & Legendary Hospitality

We carry on south today with our final destination in Pitlochry. First along the way, we have a very special stop in store at Clava Cairns. According to the *Outlander* books, Craich na Dun was a fictional stone circle where Claire was swept through a portal back in time to 17<sup>th</sup> century Scotland. Clava Cairns is thought to be the inspiration for this event and setting. The burial cairns here are over 4,000 years old. This is one of Scotland's most evocative stone circle sites.

Further along the way, we have a special visit arranged at Johnson's of Eligin Workshop, a 225-year-old mill, the only vertical mill in Scotland. Here we learn about their rich Scottish heritage and the entire process of the woolen mill from the dyeing and blending to the spinning and teasing. Our immersive visit highlights the family business in operation since 1797 and that has passed down their skills through generations to produce cashmere and merino wool products. We'll also visit Knockando Woolen Mill located in the Spey Valley where it has occupied the same site for over 230 years. Traditional tweeds and contemporary designs are woven here. The mill was first listed as the "Wauk Mill" in parish records from 1784. This mill has always been at the heart of the community as local farmers continue to bring their fleeces to be converted into knitting yarn and fabric.

Our lodging is at the Claymore Guest House which offers unique four-star accommodation in historic Pitlochry. While The Claymore is set in award-winning gardens with uninterrupted views of the Cluniemore Hills, it is conveniently situated on Pitlochry's main street making this lovely town easily accessible. Overnight at the The Claymore Guest House. (B)

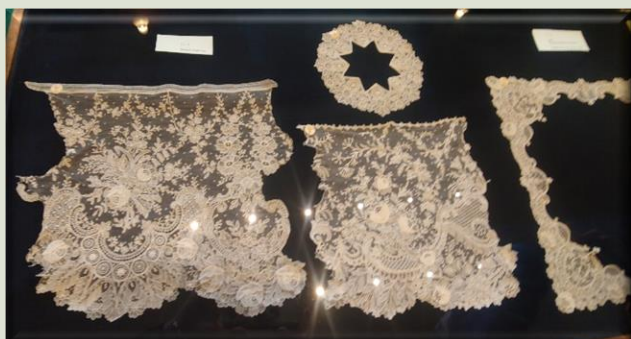




## Thursday – Friday, November 7 - 8 A Castle, Lace, Sheepdogs, and a Living Folk Museum

These two days will be spent exploring the area around Pitlochry with some time on your own to relax and enjoy this quaint town located in the Highlands and heart of Scotland. Here the lush countryside with gorgeous scenery, remarkably rich clan history, and great food makes it a memorable destination with many sights to see. We've added an extra day here to allow a more relaxed immersion into the magic.

We will visit Blair Castle which has a rich history dating back to 1269 and is considered one of Scotland's greatest historical castles and most highly rated sites. Its rich history takes us through Mary, Queen of Scots to the Civil War, and from the Act of Union to the Jacobite cause and the disaster of Culloden, and from



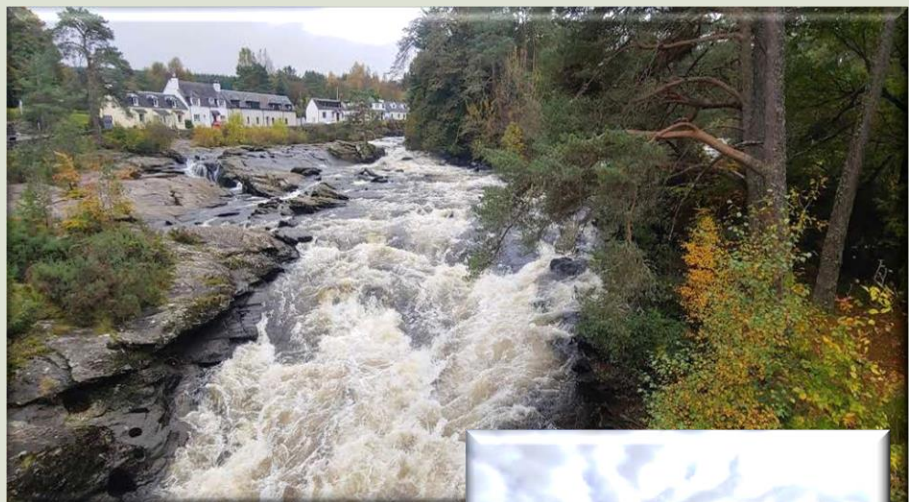
the Isle of Man to Queen Victoria's love affair with the Scottish Highlands and the castle's presentation of colours to the Atholl Highlanders. The architecture is marvelous and represents many eras. Spread out over 30 rooms, the castle's collections provide a broad overview of Scottish life over the centuries. The grounds were laid out in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with a spectacular walled garden, the ruins of a kirk, a tranquil wooded grove, a gothic folly and a red deer park. The gardens also boast colorful resident peacocks and



Highland cattle in nearby fields. beautiful grounds. We will finish up our visit with a special tour of Lady Evelyn's Needlework and Embroidery collection in the castle. She was an avid embroiderer herself and created a coat of arms that took her 7 years to complete.

We will also enjoy a special visit to the Highland Folk Museum in Kingussie, Britain's first open air museum. Here we step back in time to experience learn how our Scottish Highland ancestors lived, built their homes, tilled the soil and how they dressed from the 1700's to the 1950's.

Next, we have a real Highland treat! Surrounded by some of the most beautiful scenery in Scotland, we will be able to enjoy and participate in the traditional working day of a Highland Shepherd and his dogs. At Leault Farm with trainer Neil Ross, we will witness up to eight dogs working as a team maneuvering sheep through various obstacles. It is quite a sight to see! You have the opportunity to help with the shearing if desired. If we're lucky, we might just get to feed a lamb with a bottle! Overnight at The Claymore Guesthouse (B daily)

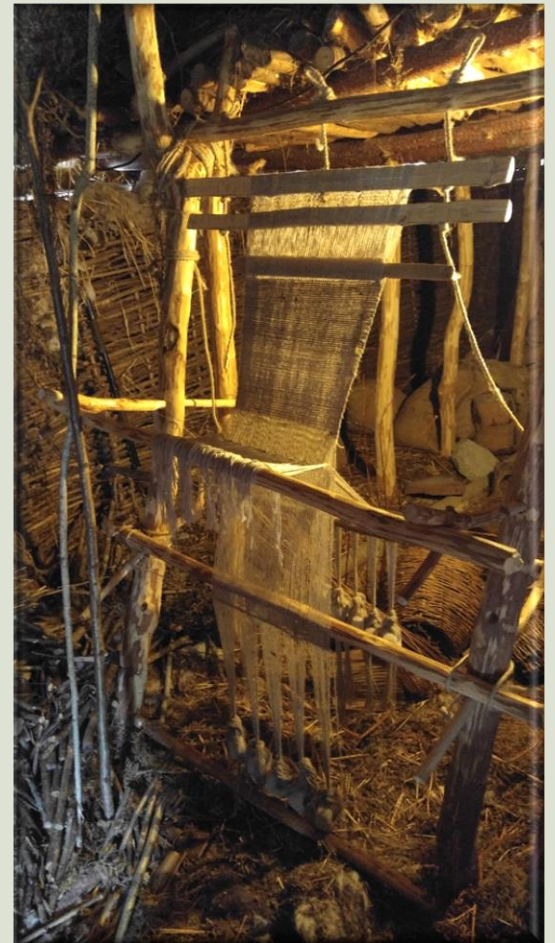


Saturday, November 9

To Braveheart Country

## Lochs, Whiskey, Cultural History and More

We have an extraordinary and full day today seeing the sights headed for "Braveheart Country." In our private van, we'll travel 15 miles along beautiful, dark and mysterious Loch Tay. At 508 feet deep, Loch Tay is one of the deepest in Scotland and flanked by Ben Lawers Mountain which at 1,214 meters, is the highest mountain in the British Isles. Toward the north end, we visit the Scottish Crannog Centre. Here we step back 5,000 years in time when the local inhabitants built defensive homesteads, known as *crannogs*. More than 20 submerged crannogs have been discovered in the loch with one of the best-preserved examples at this location. We will visit Scotland's only authentic re-creation of an Iron Age loch dwelling.



We simply cannot travel through this scenic area without sampling some famous Scotch Whiskey along the way. Fortunately for us, the Highlands is the biggest geographic region for this libation. We will have the chance to

discover the history, traditions and trade secrets behind the production of world-famous Scotch Whiskey with a tour and tasting at a local distillery. Our destination is Port of Menteith in Trossachs National Park. Nestled by the lakeside is our lovely hotel, the Lake of Menteith Hotel, which was originally a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Manse which has been fully refurbished. Dating from 1854, this beautiful hotel combines spectacular views with luxurious comfort and fine dining, embodying the spirit of a classic New England waterfront inn. The glorious views out over the lake and to the island and mountains beyond are broken only by diving osprey and other waterfowl. Overnight at Lake of Menteith Hotel. (B)



**Sunday – Tuesday, November 10 - 12**

## **Weaving Workshop with Fiona Hutchinson on the Shores of Lake of Menteith**

Today, the weavers will begin a three-day weaving workshop with Fiona Hutchinson, tapestry and textile artist, on the shores of Lake of Menteith. Inspired by our spectacular surroundings, we will spend these three days indulging our creative side with fiber. Fiona, our mentor, is a teaching fellow in tapestry weaving and stitched textiles for Edinburgh University and also operates workshops for Dovecot Studio, West Dean and Weavers Bazaar in Scotland. She is also a founding member of STAR (Scottish and Tapestry Artist Regrouped) and ETF (European Tapestry Forum). In addition, Fiona is an active Professional Member of the SSA (Society of Scottish Artist) and member of VAS (Visual Arts Scotland). We are indeed so lucky to work with her! (See Fiona's bio on Page 2).



During our workshop, we will learn a variety of weaving techniques inspired by the sea with an exploration of surface and structure of tapestry. We'll explore weaving with supplementary warps, whipping and twisting the warps to create exciting 3D designs. (Don't worry, no prior weaving experience is necessary!). We'll also have some time to explore around the hotel, including an ancient Priory, built in 1238, on the Isle of Inchmahome right across the lake from our hotel. Here is where Mary Queen of Scots was sequestered for her safety. Overnights at Lake of Menteith Hotel. (B and D daily)



Top Photo: Lake of Menteith Hotel



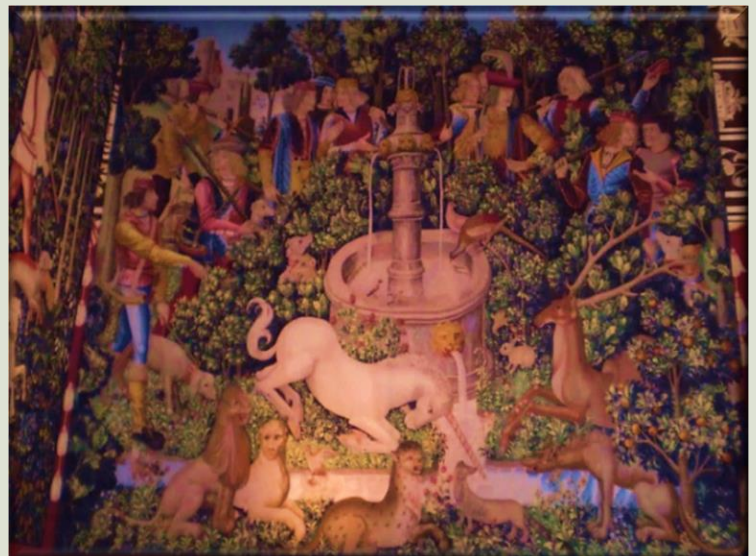


## Wednesday November 13 To Edinburgh and Stirling Castle

En route to Edinburgh, we'll visit Stirling Castle which is the famous castle of the Stuart Kings. Here we can see the 'mille fleur' tapestries from the Middle Ages and the recent weavings that were part of the Unicorn Tapestry Project. The project was commissioned by Historic Scotland in 2001 to restore the King's palace to its 1540's style. A team of 18 weavers from all over the world came together to reinterpret and weave the "Hunt of the Unicorn" tapestries. All seven of these tapestries are on display in the castle.

We'll arrive back in Edinburgh in the early evening and can gather for a farewell dinner to reminisce about our wonderful sojourn through Scotland (optional, at an extra cost). Overnight at Radisson Blu Hotel. (B)

Read more about the Unicorn Project: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-33237947>



## Thursday, November 14

### Flights Home

This morning, you will transfer on your own to the airport for your flights home. (No meals included)



The Faerie Glen on Isle of Skye

As with all true adventures, these itineraries are subject to change without notice based on a variety of factors. Although Loom Dancer Weaving Odysseys will do our best to adhere to the scheduled itinerary, we are all at the mercy of Mother Nature and varying weather conditions. As is the case with all true adventures, your itinerary should be considered an approximation of activities only. The itinerary or accommodations may be changed subject to unexpected and worthwhile opportunities, weather, group desires, and circumstances beyond our control, etc. Loom Dancer Weaving Odysseys and its guides reserve the right to alter the itinerary without prior notice. Also please be aware that any voluntary changes on your part to your itinerary while in Scotland will be made at your own expense.

## Land Costs Include:

- 17 Nights/18 Days in luxury 4 and 5- Star unique accommodations based on double occupancy (all individually atmospheric - no large impersonal chain hotels!). Single accommodations available at additional cost
- Breakfasts daily
- 3 Days of exclusive weaving workshops with a master Scottish Tapestry Artist
- Private van and local expert guide
- Full Scottish breakfast daily
- Private visits and demonstrations with talented knitters, weavers, spinners, jewelers and textile designers
- Admission fees for included tours and activities with visits to castles, distilleries, museums, mills, etc.



### Loom Dancer Weaving Odysseys

does not believe in large group, bargain or "ordinary" tours. Instead, we strive to immerse the discerning and adventurous traveler into the wondrous world of global fiber arts with quality cultural encounters. Our typical group size is typically 12 - 16 participants to allow for a more hands-on, intimate travel experience.

We invite you to join us;  
be a creative traveler, not a tourist.



## Land Costs Exclude:

- Any air transportation or airport transfers
- Meals not designated on the itinerary
- Any activities such as golf, horseback riding, fishing and any others not specifically included in the itinerary are at an additional cost and any item not specifically included in your program including all snacks, extra personal beverages & bottled water, etc. other than during designated meals, alcoholic beverages
- Excess baggage fees, laundry, phone calls, internet and any other items of a personal nature not specifically indicated
- Tips for your guide, drivers, hotel porters and other service staff
- Additional insurance of any kind

**Cost:** \$6,995 Per Person Based on Double Occupancy\*\*

\*\*For those wishing single accommodations, there is a supplement. As the hotels in our itinerary charge the same amount for a room whether there are one or two occupants, the **Single Supplement of \$2,165** is unavoidably rather steep. We offer this rate at our cost.

\$6,745 for non-fiber arts companions

(Activities such as golf, horseback riding, fishing and any other activity not included in the itinerary are at an additional cost, but we will be happy to help with the arrangements).

**Save Your Spot!**

**Please call our office for details or questions!**

**800-369-3033 (US only) ~ 970-728-6743**

