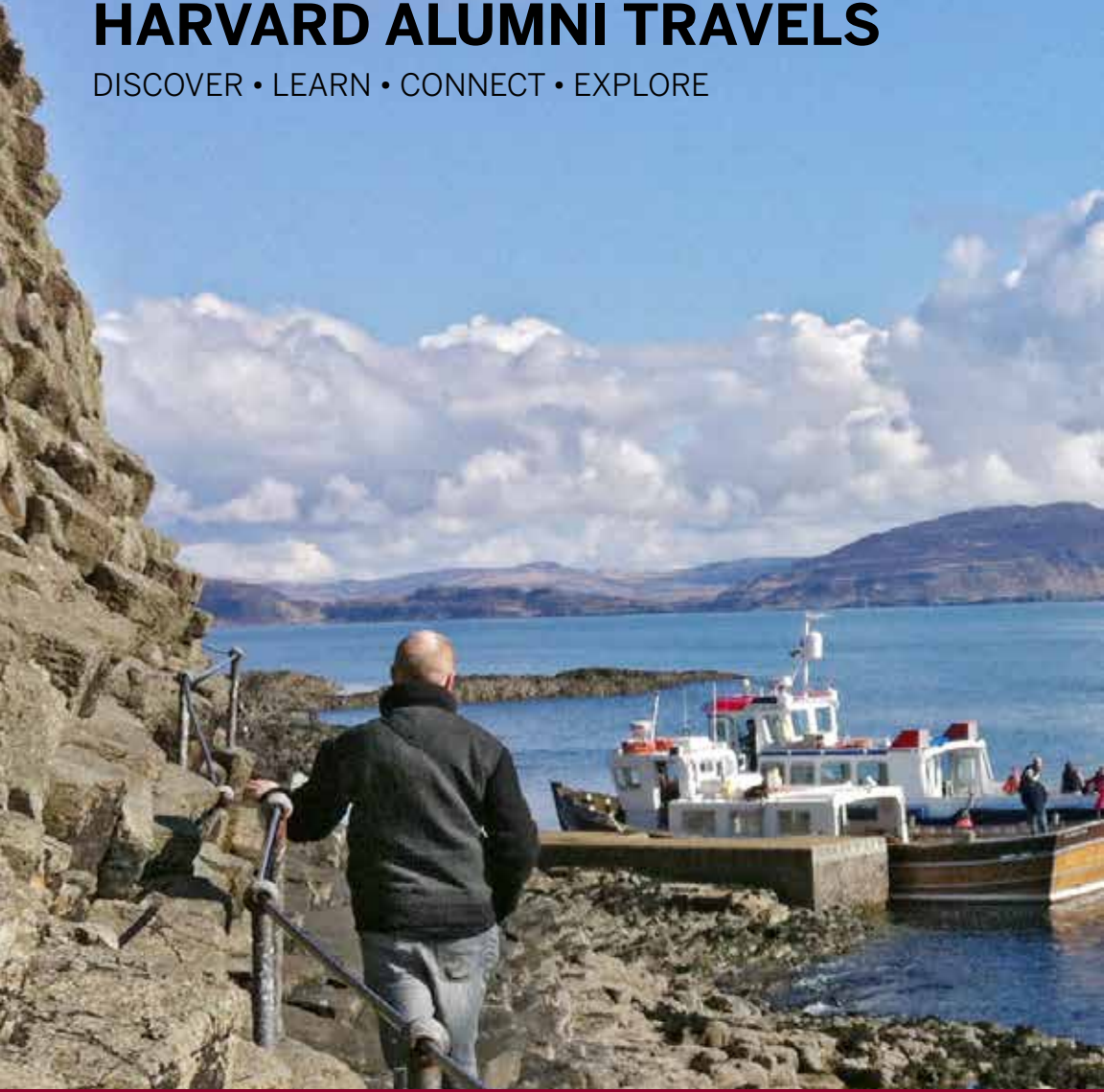


# 2024

## HARVARD ALUMNI TRAVELS

DISCOVER • LEARN • CONNECT • EXPLORE



### **SCOTLAND**

Hiking the islands of the Hebrides

June 1, 2024 - June 11, 2024





Tobermory, Isle of Mull (left) and Loch Coruisk, Isle of Skye (right). Cover: Isle of Staffa.

## Schedule by Day

B=Breakfast, L=Packed lunch, D=Dinner

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

### Depart U.S.

Depart the U.S. on independent flights to Scotland.

SUNDAY JUNE 2

### Arrive Glasgow - Tobermory, Mull (1)

Arrive in Glasgow around midday and drive from Glasgow to Oban for the ferry to Craignure on the Isle of Mull. We continue our journey to Tobermory, the 'capital' of Mull.

Overnight: Western Isles Hotel (L, D)

MONDAY, JUNE 3

### Mull: Dun Ara and Duart Castle (2)

Our first walk is one with great views, taking in the remains of an Iron Age dun (hill fort), an early medieval castle, a disused harbor, a depopulated settlement, and standing stones. We will then visit Duart Castle, the ancestral home of the Clan Maclean and for 400 years the base of their sea-born power.

Hiking distance: 3 miles. Height climbed: 300 ft.

Overnight: Western Isles Hotel (B, L, D)

TUESDAY, JUNE 4

### Staffa and Iona (3)

Today we will visit two islands off the coast of Mull. The beautiful,

uninhabited island of Staffa is our first stop. Staffa is best known for its magnificent basalt columns. Their effect is most overwhelming at An Uamh Binn (musical cave) or, as it is more commonly known, Fingal's Cave. From Staffa we cruise to Iona, an enduring symbol of Christianity in Scotland. St Columba and his followers came here from Ireland in AD 563 and founded a monastery that became the heart of the early Scottish Church. St. Columba's fame attracted pilgrims to Iona from the 7th century to the present day.

Hiking distance: Short walks on both islands.

Overnight: Wester Isles Hotel (B, L, D)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5

### Mull - Isle of Skye (4)

We will take the ferry to Kilchoan, Ardnamurchan, and travel north along the 'Road to the Isles' to Mallaig, where we catch the ferry to Skye. This is a peaceful and remote part of the west Highlands, with high mountains and narrow lochs. We'll stop at the Prince's Cairn, on the shore of Loch nan Uamh (Loch of the Caves), where Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) boarded a French ship on 20 September 1746, leaving Scotland for good.

Hiking distance: Short walks to places of interest.

Overnight: Greshornish House (B, L, D)

THURSDAY, JUNE 6

### Skye: Oronsay and Talisker Distillery (5)

Today's walk will take us along a shingle tombolo to the tidal island of Oronsay. Oronsay is a Norse word for "tidal island." There are at least 20 Oronsays (or Ornsays) in the Hebrides. The island has impressive cliffs and, although it is now uninhabited, there are traces of habitation going back thousands of years, including an ancient fish trap along the causeway.

Our walk will be followed by a tour of the famous Talisker distillery.

Hiking distance: 4 miles. Height climbed: 300ft

Overnight: Greshornish House (B, L, D)

FRIDAY, JUNE 7

### Skye: Loch Coruisk and the Cuillin (6)

We will take a boat from Elgol across Loch Scavaig into the heart of the Cuillin mountains. On the way across we should see many seabirds, seals and perhaps even dolphins. Loch Coruisk, our destination, is ringed around by what is, without any doubt, Scotland's most rugged mountain range.

After the walk, we will sail back to Elgol, where the shore has good exposures of honeycomb weathering in Jurassic sandstones.

Hiking distance: 3 miles. Height climbed: 300 ft.

Overnight: Greshornish House (B, L, D)



Luskentyre Bay, Isle of Harris (top) and Calanais Standing Stones, Isle of Lewis (bottom).

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

### Skye: Trotternish Landslips and ferry to Isle of Harris (7)

We will have one last walk on the Trotternish peninsula before we board the ferry to the Isle of Harris. The peninsula has a long ridge that runs almost the full length of the peninsula, some 19 miles, and is one of the most magnificent landscapes in Britain. The Trotternish Ridge was formed by a great series of post-glacial large-scale landslides. Parts of it are still moving. The ridge contains two of Skye's most famous landmarks: the Old Man of Storr, an isolated rocky pinnacle in a spectacular, almost lunar, landscape, and the Quiraing, an area of dramatic and unusual rock formations.

We'll board the ferry for Tarbert on the Isle of Harris in the late afternoon.

Hiking distance: 5 miles. Height climbed: 300 ft.

Overnight: Harris Hotel (B, L, D)

SUNDAY, JUNE 9

### Harris: beaches and medieval chapel (8)

Harris boasts some of Britain's finest white sandy beaches. We

will explore a couple of these, and our walk will take us across machair, past dunes and a number of superb beaches to a medieval chapel.

Machair is fertile, well-drained grassland formed by sand being blown over the peat. It forms a unique habitat, rich in bird-life and meadow flowers in early summer.

We will also visit the 16th century St. Clement's Church in Rodel, with its fine stone carvings.

Hiking distance: 5 miles. Height climbed: 300 ft.

Overnight: Harris Hotel (B, L, D)

MONDAY, JUNE 10

### Lewis: Calanais Standing Stones and Dun Carloway (9)

We start the day with a visit to the Standing Stones of Calanais (Callanish). These ancient stones have an enigmatic, magical quality that never fails to move. The 5,000 years old main stone complex contains around 50 stones and there are two further stone circles nearby.

Our next stop is Dun Carloway, one of the best-preserved Iron Age Brochs in the west of Scotland, probably built some

time in the 1st century BC.

We will finish our journey along the western edge of Scotland with a visit to the Arnol blackhouses dating back to the 1600s. Blackhouses were generally built with double dry stone walls, packed with earth, and wooden rafters covered with thatch of straw or reed. There were no windows, no interior walls and no chimney. Smoke from the peat fires had to escape through the fabric of the building. People and animals shared the building.

Hiking distance: 4 miles. Height climbed: 250 ft.

Overnight: Harris Hotel (B, L, D)

TUESDAY, JUNE 11

### Harris - Stornoway - Glasgow

In the morning we will visit the Harris Tweed Shop for a weaving demonstration. We then travel to Stornoway and visit Museum nan Eilean, which has significant loans from the National Museums Scotland and the British Museum, including the world-famous Lewis Chessmen. We will then transfer to the airport for a one-hour flight back to Glasgow.

(B)