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TAKING YOU BEYOND THE LANDSCAPE

Shetland Holidays: 6 Days Exploring Scotland's Northernmost Isles



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Highlights

- Experience life on the UK's northern edge, where wild coastlines, expansive horizons and deep-rooted island heritage come together to create Shetland's famously welcoming, off-the-beaten-track atmosphere.
- Get to know Shetland's food, wildlife and crofts through the people who live and breathe them, including a chef and a crofter. Meet Billy, who formed a bond with a wild otter – then they made a film about him.
- See puffins and other returning seabirds at Sumburgh Head from May to early August. Visit Britain's most northerly point – Hermaness National Nature Reserve, a dramatic cliff-top haven for thousands of seabirds.
- See for yourself why Shetland deserves UNESCO Global Geopark status as you stand on an extinct volcano, walk across dramatic coastal cliffs and stroll across shifting sands on St Ninian's Beach.
- Step back in time while marvelling at Mousa Broch (a perfectly preserved Iron Age tower), exploring Viking reconstructions, and following in the footsteps of a young schoolboy who unearthed ancient Pictish treasure beneath an old chapel.
- A 6-day guided tour of the Shetland Isles accompanied by an expert Scottish guide and local experts. Price includes 5 nights boutique accommodation, 5 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 5 dinners, all transport and entry fees. We organise everything! Group size maximum 12.



Day 1 - Welcome to Shetland's ancient shores

Explore Jarlshof, Sumburgh Head and St Ninian's Isle

Arrival and Pick Up in Lerwick

Your Shetland holiday begins in the dramatic southern reaches of the archipelago. We'll pick you up at 9am from the ferry terminal or the airport on the morning of Day One, or your accommodation, if you arrived a day earlier.

Jarlshof Archaeological Site Visit

Head to Jarlshof for a deep dive into the past; a layered archaeological site showcasing over 4,000 years of human habitation, from Bronze Age dwellings and Norse longhouses to a 16th-century laird's house.

Sumburgh Head Puffin Watching

Take in the sweeping views across Sumburgh Head, where puffins nest from spring to late summer. Here, the rocks tell stories of continental collision some 400 million years ago.

Snack Lunch at Hoswick Visitor Centre

Depart for a snack lunch at the Hoswick visitor centre.

Explore Hoswick Village

Explore the village's thriving artisan scene. Alternatively, strike out for a peaceful stroll along Hoswick's pebbled shore.

St Ninian's Isle Walk and Chapel Ruins

Head to St Ninian's Isle, connected to the mainland by the UK's largest active sand tombolo. Optional walk across the tombolo to see the ruins of a 12th-century chapel, where a schoolboy famously discovered glittering Pictish treasure in 1958.

Alder Lodge Guest House Lerwick

Stay at Alder Lodge Guest House in Lerwick, a traditional stone building dating from 1834, now a welcoming, family run guest house with 12 comfortable en-suite rooms.

Group Dinner in Lerwick Restaurant

Group dinner at a restaurant in Lerwick.



Discover Scalloway Museum, Castle, and Shetland Chef

Visit Scalloway Museum

Today we'll visit the excellent Scalloway Museum. Here, you'll hear the powerful story of the Shetland Bus – a secret World War II operation that ferried agents, refugees and supplies between Shetland and Nazi-occupied Norway, often in extreme conditions.

See the ruins of Scalloway Castle

There's also time to see the ruins of Scalloway Castle, a tower house with an eventful past.

Visit the home of Akshay Borges, 'The Shetland Chef'

We then return to Lerwick and visit the home of Akshay Borges, 'The Shetland Chef'. Akshay invites you into his kitchen where he will demonstrate a few of his favourite dishes using local ingredients and often traditional recipes, which you can sample. Hear about his life in Shetland and leave with recipes to try at home.

Alder Lodge Guest House

Hotel: Alder Lodge Guest House

Group dinner in Lerwick

Group dinner in Lerwick.



Day 3 - Mousa wildlife and Shetland museum private tour

Explore Mousa Broch and Shetland Museum

Boat trip and exploration of Mousa Island

After a later start today, we'll set sail for one of Shetland's finest gems: the atmospheric, uninhabited island of Mousa, where you can spend a couple of hours exploring with your local guide with our pack lunches in our rucksacks.

Visit Mousa Broch

You can't miss Mousa Broch standing tall on its shores. The best-preserved broch in Scotland is a 13-metre-tall, 2,000-year-old tower that has stood the test of time so well you can still climb the winding staircase to the top. It's even mentioned in the old Norse sagas – twice! The views from up here stretch far along the east coast of the South Mainland.

Wildlife watching and picnic lunch on Mousa

As you eat your picnic lunch, watch for seals hauling themselves out on the shore and (until the end of July) storm petrels darting among the rocks – Mousa is also an RSPB reserve, home to one of Britain's largest breeding colonies of these remarkable birds.

Private highlights tour of Shetland Museum

Returning to Lerwick, we visit the Shetland museum in Lerwick and enjoy a private 'highlights' tour with one of the

team at the museum.

Busta House or St Magnus Bay Hotel

Late afternoon we head off to our hotel for the next three nights, with dinner in the hotel each evening.

Group dinner in the hotel

Group dinner in the hotel.



Day 4 - “The Ashy Headland” of Eshaness and visit to meet Billy the 'Otter man'

Walk Eshaness Cliffs, Visit Otter Man and Museums

Gentle walk along Eshaness cliffs

Set off for Eshaness in the morning for gentle walks and lovely views from the clifftops. We’ll journey west to the brooding headlands and ash-black lava-formed landscapes. It’s said to be the UK’s best example of a section through the flank of a volcano, and one of the best places in Shetland to understand the islands’ deep-time origins – but don’t worry, there’s no danger. The volcano was last active around 400 million years ago! Our day centres on a gentle, guided 4-mile walk along one of Shetland’s most spectacular coastlines. Expect sheer cliffs, sea stacks, blowholes and Britain’s largest sea cave. If luck is on our side, you might glimpse seals or even whales and dolphins bobbing in the surf below, too.

Pause at Eshaness Lighthouse

We’ll pause to admire Eshaness Lighthouse – the last of the lighthouses built in Scotland by the famed Stevenson family – and learn about its vital role in Shetland’s maritime history.

Visit Tangwick Haa Museum

We’ll then visit the Tangwick Haa Museum, a lovingly preserved 19th-century laird’s house, and, if time allows, call in at Hillswick Wildlife Sanctuary.

Visit Billy the 'Otter man'

Today will include a visit to the home of Billy, to hear from him how a wild otter turned his life around. And what followed was the making of a film. View the trailer here: ‘Billy and Molly: an Otter love story’ fame. An amazing true story.

Busta House

Hotel: Busta House

Group dinner

Group dinner.



Island-Hopping Adventure to Yell and Unst

Island-hopping adventure to Yell and Unst

Today we set off on an island-hopping adventure to Yell and Unst – a duo of islands steeped in fascinating folklore, geology and some of the most beautiful beaches in Shetland. We’re also here for the wildlife, including otters and vast colonies of seabirds.

Learn about Unst and Yell landscapes and coastlines

You’ll hear how the Unst and Yell landscapes and coastlines have been shaped by geological faults – large crustal breaks that shook the earth’s crust sideways. Small earthquakes still occur on these ancient faults, which can be linked back to mainland Scotland and the Great Glen, to the fault zone that hosts Loch Ness. Today, Unst is the UK’s northernmost inhabited island, but the 600 people who live here are just the latest in Shetland’s approximately 6,000-year-long human history.

Visit Viking longhouse and Unst Boat Haven

Get a glimpse into some of the daily lives of some of the island’s early settlers at the reconstructed Viking longhouse and boat at the Unst Boat Haven, home to a fascinating collection that tells the story of Unst’s seafaring heritage.

Experience Skidbladnir Viking ship reconstruction

At nearby Skidbladnir – a magnificent full-scale reconstruction inspired by ancient Norse sagas – you’ll experience a striking tribute to the island’s enduring connection with its Viking past and the spirit of exploration that still defines Shetland today.

Visit Hermaness National Nature Reserve

Afterwards, we'll feel fully in the present moment at Unst's dramatic Hermaness National Nature Reserve, where gannets, puffins and great skuas fill the skies above rugged cliffs.

Group dinner

Tonight's final group dinner offers a chance to swap memories, raise a glass and celebrate the many wonders seen – and stories made – over the past few days.

Busta House

Hotel: Busta House



Day 6 - A tour of Withyburn Croft and farewell

Withyburn Croft Tour and Farewell in Lerwick

Tour of Withyburn Croft

For your final half day, we head back south. If you've ever wondered what life on a remote croft is really like, this is your chance to find out. Crofter, Stacey, gives us a tour of Withyburn Croft, introducing us to Shetland ponies, ducks, chickens, sheep and friendly goats, while talking us through the history of crofting in Shetland.

Lunch at Withyburn Croft

You can continue to quiz Stacey over a wholesome lunch at the croft.

Return to Lerwick and Farewell

Then it's back to Lerwick for a final farewell, with transfers available to Sumburgh Airport in time for afternoon departures or the ferry terminal in Lerwick. The tour ends around 2pm, earlier drop-offs can be arranged. We'll part ways taking with us with unforgettable memories of ancient shores, lava cliffs, and the quiet magic of the Shetland Isles.