GeoCultura

TAKING YOU BEYOND THE LANDSCAPE

Orkney Islands Tour: Wildlife, Vikings and Ancient Wonders



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Highlights

- Explore Orkney's many layers, from world-famous Neolithic monuments and Norse heritage to wartime history, wildlife and island life. Relax into an Orkney Islands tour designed to feel immersive rather than rushed.
- Stand among some of Northern Europe's most remarkable prehistoric monuments, including Skara Brae, the Ring of Brodgar, the Standing Stones of Stenness and Maeshowe, all part of the UNESCO Heart of Neolithic Orkney.
- Go beyond the usual history circuit and see the famous runic graffiti the Norse left inside Maeshowe – carved into a tomb that was already ancient when they arrived.
- You may spot puffins, guillemots and seal pups in late June or July, or migrant birds, grey seals, short-eared owls and hen harriers in August or September.
- A 6-day in depth guided tour of Orkney accompanied by an expert Scottish guide and local experts. Price includes 5 nights accommodation, 5 breakfasts, 3 dinners, all transport and entry fees. We organise everything! Group size maximum 12.



Day 1 - Welcome to Orkney! Travel from Inverness to Stromness and Kirkwall

Journey from Inverness to Orkney and Welcome Dinner

Meet your tour guide in Inverness

Meet your tour guide in Inverness this morning and travel north to Scrabster, where we board the daytime ferry to Stromness. Crossing the Pentland Firth is part of the adventure, with wide sea views and that growing sense of leaving mainland Scotland behind made even more memorable by your pre-booked tickets to the peaceful Magnus lounge, with complimentary snacks and drinks included.

Minibus from Inverness to Scrabster

Departure: Inverness | Destination: Scrabster

Travel by minibus from Inverness to Scrabster as the first leg of your journey to Orkney.

Ferry from Scrabster to Stromness

Departure: Scrabster | Destination: Stromness

Board the daytime ferry from Scrabster to Stromness, crossing the Pentland Firth with pre-booked Magnus lounge access including complimentary snacks and drinks.

Transfer from Stromness to Kirkwall

Departure: Stromness | Destination: Kirkwall

Continue from Stromness to Kirkwall, your base for the first part of the tour.

The Storehouse Restaurant with Rooms

Kirkwall

Stay at The Storehouse, a beautifully restored former herring and pork curing store in the heart of Kirkwall, transformed into a boutique hotel with eight individually designed en-suite rooms.

Group dinner at the hotel

Enjoy a relaxed welcome dinner with the group at the hotel.



Day 2 - UNESCO Heart of Neolithic Orkney: Skara Brae, the Ring of Brodgar, the Standing Stones of Stenness and Maeshowe

Explore Neolithic Monuments and Ancient Landscapes

Visit Skara Brae

We begin at Skara Brae, the remarkably preserved village of ten clustered houses, hidden beneath sand dunes for around 4,500 years until they were revealed by a storm in 1800.

Ring of Brodgar and Standing Stones of Stenness

We continue to the Ring of Brodgar and the Standing Stones of Stenness, where ancient stones rise from a landscape still alive with wildlife: in July, curlews call and skylarks sing overhead; later in the season, wildflower meadows hum with bees, including the rare great yellow bumblebee. Look out for harbour seals basking on the rocks in the Loch of Stenness, too.

Maeshowe Chambered Cairn

We end at Maeshowe, a great chambered cairn dating back to 2000BC. The stonework is so precise it has mostly stayed watertight for five millennia – preserving one of the world's largest collections of runic inscriptions, graffitied

here by Norse Vikings who broke into the cairn centuries after it was built.

The Storehouse Restaurant with Rooms

Kirkwall

You'll stay at The Storehouse for 28th June 2027 departure, a beautifully restored former herring and pork curing store in the heart of Kirkwall. Dating from around 1880, this characterful B-listed building has been thoughtfully transformed into a boutique hotel with eight individually designed en-suite rooms over two floors (with lift to all floors). Original features remain throughout, while the popular restaurant showcases seasonal Orkney produce in a relaxed setting.

Breakfast at The Storehouse

Breakfast included at The Storehouse.

Pre-booked entry to Skara Brae and Maeshowe.

Choose to eat at the hotel or a restaurant or pub in Kirkwall.



Day 3 - Westray's puffins, seabird cliffs and summer wildlife

Encounter Puffins and Wildlife on Westray

Ferry crossing to Westray

The ferry crossing is part of the experience, with good chances of spotting seabirds along the way and, if you are lucky, even dolphins or orcas, as well as fine views of the Old Man of Hoy.

Guided wildlife walk on Westray

On Westray, local Orcadian nature enthusiast and guide Megan will take us on a leisurely walk through flower-rich verges and open coastal landscapes, looking out for curlews and oystercatchers before our attention turns to a rock stack popular with breeding puffins.

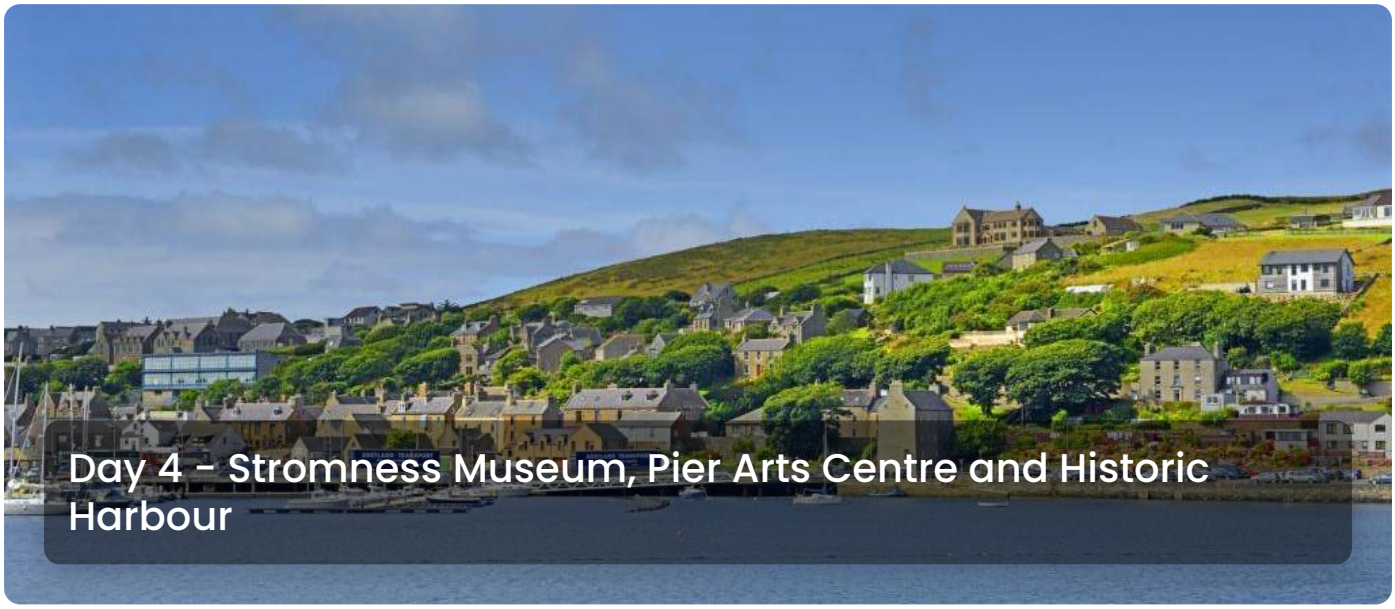
Puffin watching at rock stack

Here, we spend time watching puffins at close range as they peep from burrows, wheel over the sea and gather on

the rocks below.

Experience Orkney's summer wildlife

Expect an unhurried, joyful and memorable day, shaped by gentle observations, local knowledge and the chance to experience Orkney's summer wildlife without disturbing it.



Day 4 - Stromness Museum, Pier Arts Centre and Historic Harbour

Explore Stromness's Maritime Heritage and Art

Explore Stromness Harbour and Town

Today we spend time in Stromness, a smaller, quieter town than Kirkwall, where Orkney's maritime past still feels close to the surface. Its narrow main street winds along the harbour, lined with stone houses, private piers and slipways – reminders of the town's centuries of trade, herring fishing and seafaring life. As we explore, look out for eider ducks and black guillemots on the water, and for butterflies and bees in sheltered gardens.

Visit Stromness Museum

Stromness Museum (Scotland's oldest independent museum), founded in 1837 and still run by the Orkney Natural History Society is where the islands' links to whaling, Arctic exploration and natural history come vividly to life.

Visit Pier Arts Centre

The Pier Arts Centre is home to an outstanding collection of 20th-century British art, including works by Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson.

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Breakfast at The Storehouse

Breakfast included at The Storehouse.

Visits to Stromness Museum and/or the Pier Arts Centre.

Choose to eat at the hotel or a restaurant or pub in Kirkwall.



Day 5 - Wartime Orkney: Scapa Flow, Churchill Barriers and Italian Chapel

Discover Orkney's Wartime Heritage and Landmarks

Explore Scapa Flow and Wartime Orkney

Today we explore Orkney's wartime story, centred on the vast natural harbour of Scapa Flow. Guarding the northern approaches to Britain, this stretch of water played a critical role in both World Wars, serving as a major base for the Royal Navy fleet.

Drive across Churchill Barriers

We drive across these impressive causeways and visit the Italian Chapel, built by the prisoners of war who helped construct the Churchill Barriers and now one of Orkney's most moving and unexpected landmarks.

Visit the Italian Chapel

Visit the Italian Chapel, built by prisoners of war during World War II, now one of Orkney's most moving and unexpected landmarks.

The Storehouse Restaurant with Rooms

Kirkwall

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Breakfast at The Storehouse

Breakfast included at The Storehouse.

Group dinner in the hotel

Group dinner in the hotel.

Guided visits around Scapa Flow and the Italian Chapel.



Day 6 - Return home: from Orkney to Inverness via Stromness and Scrabster

Ferry Crossing and Road Transfer to Inverness

Breakfast

Breakfast.

Ferry from Stromness to Scrabster

Departure: Stromness | Destination: Scrabster

Travel by ferry from Stromness to Scrabster, offering one last chance to take in Orkney's cliffs, sea and ever-changing light. It's where you'll get the best views of the Old Man of Hoy, spot seabirds including gannets, fulmars and bonxies (great skuas) and, if you're lucky, maybe even dolphins or orcas.

Road transfer to Inverness

Departure: Scrabster | Destination: Inverness

Continue by road from Scrabster to Inverness, arriving by later afternoon to end the tour.