

# SCOTLAND'S CLASSIC SPLENDOURS

## 4 NIGHTS

Join us aboard Royal Scotsman to explore the legends and elements of Scotland in motion. Myths and tales of the landscape come alive as the spectacular scenery unfolds on a journey embracing romantic castles, captivating wildlife and time-honoured heritage.

### Day One: Edinburgh – Keith

Your journey on Royal Scotsman begins as the whistle blows. The train gathers speed through the magnificent beauty of Scotland's ancient, rugged landscapes. On board, elegant Edwardian interiors wrap you in the warmth of cashmere and tartan, allowing you to explore the land of the brave in the finest modern comforts.

Depart Edinburgh Waverley Station in the early afternoon and travel north, crossing the Firth of Forth by means of the magnificent Forth Railway Bridge. This is one of the oldest cantilever bridges to be built, designed by Benjamin Baker in the late 1880s and considered one of the greatest achievements of the Victorian Age.

Enjoy afternoon tea as you journey through the former Kingdom of Fife. The train follows the east coast, passing through Arbroath, Montrose and Aberdeen before arriving in the market town of Keith. Here, relax over dinner. Our Chef's inventive menus use the finest local



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ingredients, such as line-caught wild salmon, shetland Lobster and Aberdeen Angus beef. Chanterelles and wild garlic are foraged straight from Scotland's wild larder. Afterwards, you are invited to enjoy lively entertainment in the Observation Car.

## Day Two: Keith – Kyle of Lochalsh

Departing Keith this morning, the train travels west along the Moray Firth towards Inverness, capital of the Highlands.

Lunch is served on the way to Kyle of Lochalsh, on what is arguably the most scenic route in Britain. The line passes Loch Luichart and the Torridon Mountains, which geologists believe were formed before any life began. Travel onwards through Achnasheen, then commence the climb to the Luib summit and Achnashellach Forest before descending to Strathcarron, where you are invited to visit Attadale Gardens. This huge, 30,000-acre estate has been home to the Macpherson family since the 1950s. Explore the renowned Water Garden, Japanese Garden and Sunken Garden, among other glorious spaces. Later, enjoy some light refreshments with your hosts as they welcome you into their home, which was built over 250 years ago by the Mathesons. Later it was bought by the Schroder banking family, who collected rhododendrons and laid out garden paths.

Alternatively, stay on board the train to the picturesque village of Plockton, where you can take a boat trip to see the colony of wild seals and enjoy magnificent views across the bay to the Applecross Mountains. There is also a woodland walk to be discovered here and time afterwards to enjoy a traditional Highland welcome and a dram or two in the seafront Plockton Hotel.

Return to the train in nearby Kyle of Lochalsh, gateway to the mystical Isle of Skye. You are invited to dress for a formal dinner this evening, followed by coffee and liqueurs in the Observation Car.

## Day Three: Kyle of Lochalsh – Boat of Garten

Join your Royal Scotsman host for an invigorating early-morning walk over the bridge that links the mainland with the Isle of Skye, taking in the majestic mountain views in every direction.

Breakfast is served as the train leaves Kyle and retraces part of yesterday's route as far as Dingwall. Have your cameras ready for the enchanting views of Plockton. Across the bay to the left you will glimpse whitewashed cottages with fishing boats and yachts riding at anchor.

Arriving in Garve mid-morning, disembark to visit the charming, family-run Campbell's of Beaully retail emporium. This thriving gift and clothing shop specialises in tweeds, cashmere knitwear, ready-to-wear and made-to-measure garments, as well as stylish accessories and homeware. Entering the shop, which dates from 1858, is like stepping back in time as it's still adorned with original fittings and traditional work counters. The owners will greet you on arrival and tell you about their company before you enjoy time to browse and shop at leisure.

Alternatively, stretch your legs on a guided walk with a historic storyteller. A very short coach journey will take you to the start of the walk by an old military bridge. Wander through gentle, peaceful woodland and along a stretch of the Black Water as you retrace the steps of drovers who used to herd their cattle along this route. The road is also an old military road dating from the



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1760s. Your storyteller will bring history to life as you take a gentle stroll through the picturesque landscape. Afterwards, rejoin the train in Inverness.

Lunch is served as the train passes through Inverness en route to Carrbridge where you disembark for an afternoon visit to Ballindalloch Castle. Located in the heart of the Speyside whisky region, Ballindalloch enjoys a majestic setting, surrounded by hills with the Spey and Avon rivers running through the grounds. The romantic baronial castle, known as the 'Pearl of the North', is the much-loved family home of the Macpherson-Grants. The castle has extensive gardens and of particular interest is the rock garden and beautiful walled garden, redesigned in 1996 to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the castle. The family have adapted their castle through time into the elegant and comfortable working estate that we see today.

Return to the train at Boat of Garten on the private Strathspey Railway. After dinner, make your way to the Observation Car, where local musicians are waiting to entertain you.

#### **Day Four: Boat of Garten – Dundee**

After breakfast, travel the short distance by coach to the Rothiemurchus Estate, in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park. Rothiemurchus Forest is one of the largest and most important remnants of the native Caledonian pine forest, which used to cover most of Scotland. Choose from a number of activities, including fishing, clay pigeon shooting and an estate tour. Afterwards, your hosts warmly welcome you for refreshments in the hunting lodge. Learn about the fascinating history of the estate, which has been in the same family for over 400 years.

Return to the train in Kingussie and savour a leisurely lunch as you journey south through Blair Atholl and Pitlochry. On reaching Dunkeld, disembark for a private tour of Glamis Castle and its beautiful gardens. Seat of the Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne, Glamis was the childhood home of the late HM Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother. The multi-turreted, fairytale castle houses many treasures, including rich tapestries, furniture and priceless works of art. Steeped in legend and myth, its dramatic history embraces alleged murderers, monsters and gamblers, stories of whom may be revealed during an illuminating tour. Outside, stunning parkland beckons, including an Italian Garden, nature trail, pinetum and a four-acre walled garden.

As an alternative option, enjoy a visit to the Victorian town of Pitlochry and a tour of Blair Athol Distillery. A coach will take you from Dunkeld to Pitlochry, where you will have some free time to explore the scenic town. Surrounded by stunning scenery, with rich clan history, the town became famous in the 19th century after Queen Victoria visited. The arrival of the railway in 1863 further enhanced its popularity. Browse the local independent shops, have a drink in a local pub or take a walk along the river, taking in Pitlochry Dam and Pitlochry Fish ladder. There are fine views up the loch and down below the dam on the River Tummel. Finish your afternoon with a private tour and tasting at Blair Athol Distillery.

Return to the train in Perth and, as it makes its way to Dundee, prepare for a splendid gala dinner to mark your last night on board. After your celebratory feast, you may feel inspired by our musicians to join in with some lively Scottish country dancing on the station platform, a fitting finale to your tour.



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## Day Five: Dundee – Edinburgh

Breakfast is served as the train leaves Dundee and crosses the Tay Bridge into the former Kingdom of Fife. At Edinburgh, your journey's end, we bid you farewell and wish you safe onward travels.

Please note: Royal Scotsman operates within the constraints of the railway network. As such, timings, routes and associated itineraries are subject to change.


To find out more about this superb trip, or similar VIP trips, please contact:

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