

PILGRIMAGE TO SCOTLAND & THE SACRED ISLE OF IONA

June 13–23, 2024

ITINERARY*



JUNE 13 GATHERING IN GLASGOW, LARGEST CITY IN SCOTLAND

~**ARRIVE** morning or early afternoon to the Marriott Hotel at Glasgow International Airport.
~**IMPORTANT NOTE:** In order to arrive by the afternoon of June 13, most North American flights will need to depart the prior day (June 12).

~**HOTEL CHECK IN** is 4:00 PM (16:00); however, early arrivals can request an earlier check-in (depending on availability). In any case, the hotel will be happy to hold your luggage until a room is ready for occupancy.

~**GROUP RECEPTION & ORIENTATION FOR PILGRIMAGE**

Our Pilgrimage group will meet at 5pm for a welcome reception and orientation with an optional excursion to historic Glasgow for evening dinner.



JUNE 14 HIGHLIGHTS OF HISTORIC EDINBURGH, CAPITAL CITY OF SCOTLAND

~**A DAY TRIP** from Glasgow to Edinburgh. Although Scotland's largest cities are only 40 miles apart, our short drive to Edinburgh is the perfect way to experience the center of historic Scotland. Aptly called the "Athens of the North," a walk up the World Heritage Royal Mile to Edinburgh Castle is a rich experience of ancient Scottish culture and history.



*Particular dates & excursions are subject to change when conditions are beyond control of our tour group.

JUNE 15 A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME

~**A DAY TRIP** from our hotel in Glasgow to the stunning countryside of historic Stirling. We will step back into medieval times visiting Stirling Castle, a world-class landmark and one of the most important places – both historically and architecturally – in the whole of Scotland. Our afternoon will include a journey to Doune Castle, an amazing location whether you're a fan of Game of Thrones (site of Winterfell), the Outlander TV series or a history buff who loves to wander medieval Scottish castles which connects these places with great events in world history.



JUNE 16 NORTH TO SEASIDE RESORT TOWN OF OBAN

~**DEPART** Following the morning's breakfast we will leave for Oban on the Sea, nestled on the dramatic shores of Scotland's west coast and surrounded by miles of dramatic Scottish countryside, (Transportation options will be via train or coach depending on availability).

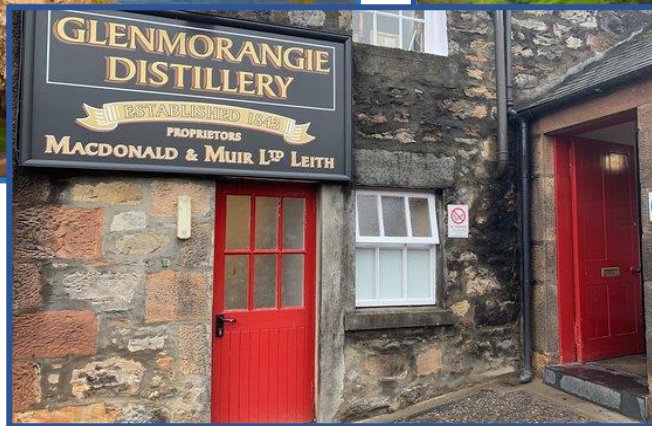
~**SIGHTS** Oban is the 'Gateway to the Isles,' and will be our home base for two nights. Also aptly called the seafood capital of the United Kingdom, Oban is a laid back vacation community that caters to world travelers.

~**LODGING** At the conveniently located Premier Inn in the center of old town, only a few minutes walk to the beach, local shopping and the McCraig's Tower.



JUNE 17 OPTIONAL DAY TRIP TO SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS & FABLED LOCH NESS

~2 CHOICES Take a down day for recharging, exploring & food sampling in Oban
OR Join a day excursion into the Scottish Highlands via the picturesque countryside of Loch Ness and Inverness with stops at classical distilleries to learn about the ancient art of making and sampling Scotch Whiskey . (Details to be announced based on availability & conditions).



JUNE 18 FROM THE SCOTTISH MAINLAND TO THE HEBRIDES ISLE OF IONA

~TRAVEL DAY Following breakfast we will meet at the Oban boat docks and ferry to the Isle of Mull, passing dramatic scenery including the stunning and historic Dewart Castle. Once we have landed on Mull, our group will take a coach across the island's remarkable natural landscapes to reach the tiny port town of Fionnphort... where we will board a small local ferry that carries us across the channel to our destination on the Sacred Isle of Iona—of the Hebrides (lit. the islands of Brigid). Finally, we will arrive in time for dinner at our home for five days and four nights at the famous St. Columba Hotel.

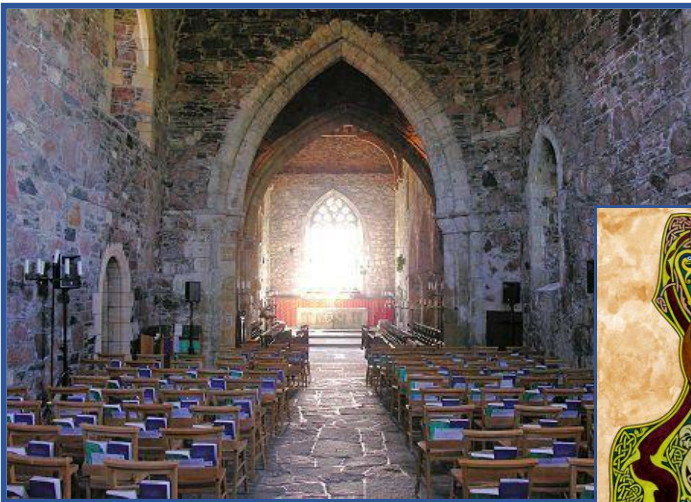


JUNE 19 WALKING IN THE 6TH CENTURY FOOTSTEPS OF ST. COLUMBA

~A DAY FOR ORIENTATION Following breakfast we will enjoy leisurely walks to some of Iona's one-of-a-kind historical and spiritual highlights including...

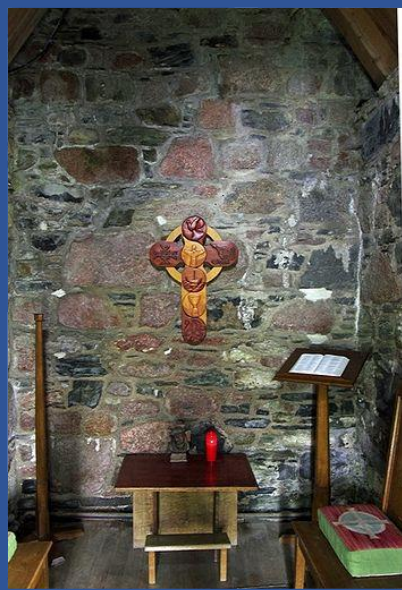
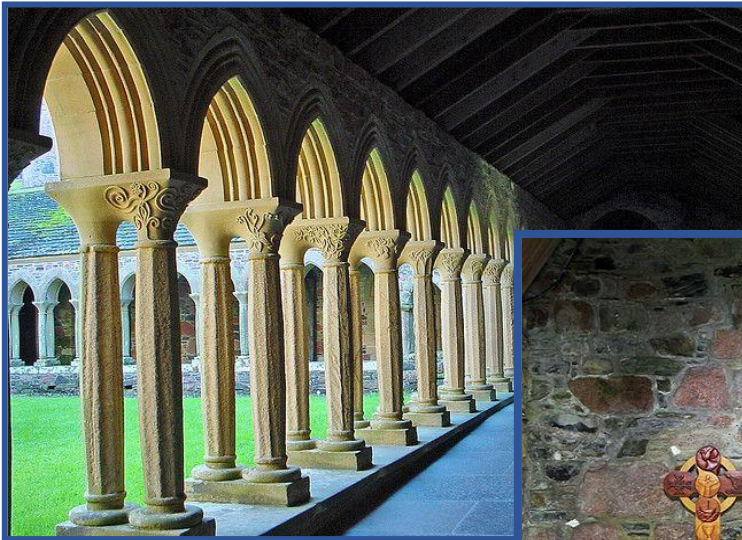
- ✓ Medieval pilgrim walk, high crosses and St. Columba Abbey with its renowned Wild Goose Community that attracts young adults from all over the world to integrate spirituality and environmental awareness
- ✓ Ancient Druid and early Christian sites including the ancient cemetery of the High Kings of Scotland
- ✓ White Strand beach (one of the most photographed beaches in the world)
- ✓ Dun I, highest point on Iona with remarkable views and connections to the lore of St. Brigid
- ✓ Columba's Bay with its unique, treasured green marble stones called 'mermaid tears'

~EVENING DINNER & REFLECTIONS Guests of the St. Columba enjoy its famous local, organic cuisine each evening and time afterwards in its Victorian Parlour for a drink and sharing impressions and experiences of the day.



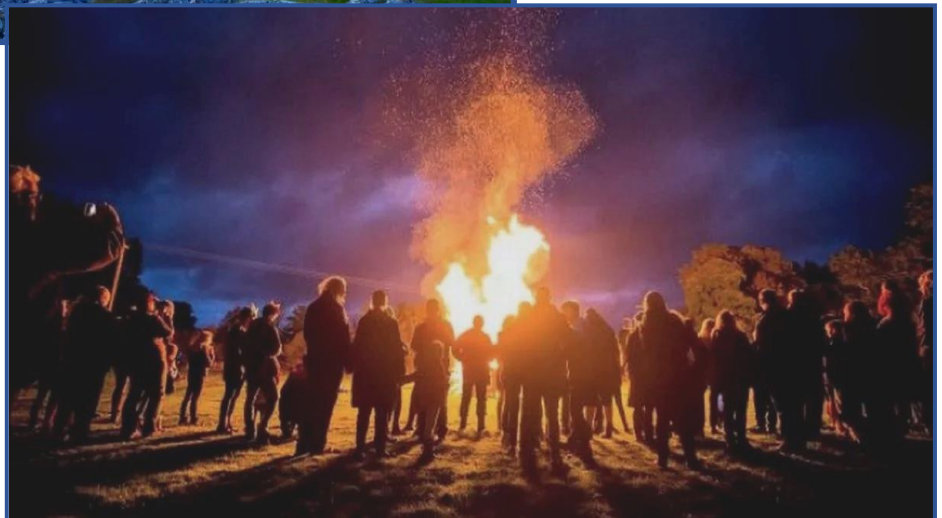
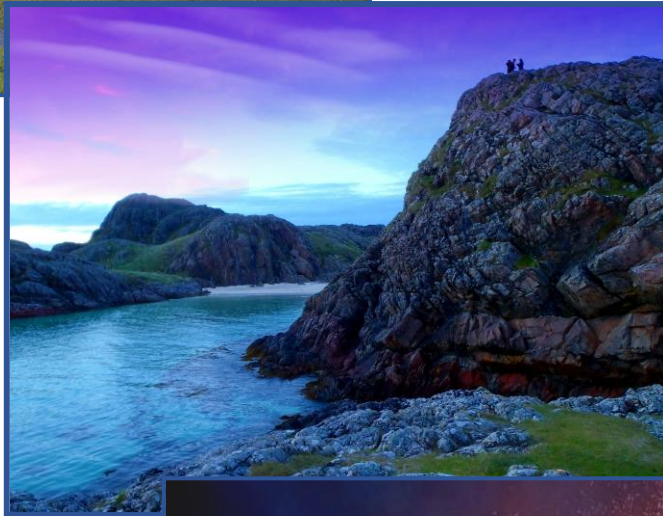
JUNE 20 PERSONAL PILGRIMAGE DAY

~A Vacation from your Vacation Day Take in a leisurely breakfast and make space today for personal time to encounter the mystery and magic of Iona. Having an orientation on our small isle, make your own pilgrimage walk to one of its many sacred sites: *Cnoc na Engeln* (Hill of the Angels), ruins of the hauntingly beautiful ruins of the medieval nunnery, one of Iona's many beaches, the intimate resting place of St. Columba or a quiet corner in the spectacular medieval abbey complex. You may discover today why the Isle of Iona is herself a special *anam chara* (soul friend) for those who are willing to spend time in her silent beauty.



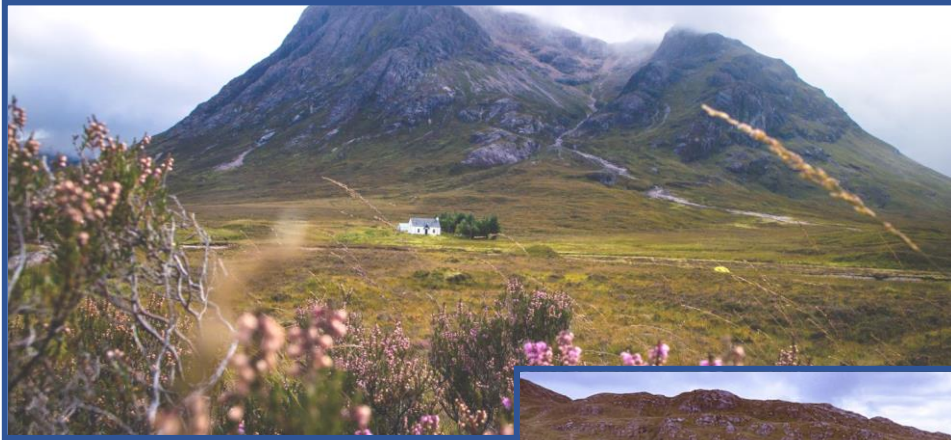
JUNE 21 CELEBRATE THE SUMMER SOLSTICE ON IONA!

~THE ARRIVAL OF THE CELTIC FESTIVAL OF BEALTANE Coincides for us on one of the world's "thin places"—geologically and spiritually. We will savor our last full day on Iona with a special opportunity to celebrate our pilgrimage experiences by lighting the traditional St. John's Fire and welcoming the first day of Summer when, in the far northern Hebrides of Scotland, the sun will barely set this night!



JUNE 22 BEGIN OUR RETURN TO GLASGOW AND HOME

~TRAVEL DAY We will reverse our travels from Iona, through Oban and back to Glasgow using ferries, coaches and possible rail travel for a portion of the trip. Our five hour trip takes us back through the islands and mountainous highlands. We will make several stops along the coast road from Oban to Glasgow--a photographer's dream. Our day will end back at the Marriott Glasgow Airport Hotel.



JUNE 23 PILGRIMAGE ENDS...

~INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS from the Glasgow International Airport beginning in the early morning connect with most European and North American destinations

A NOTE ABOUT MEALS ON OUR PILGRIMAGE

All dinners on Iona are included with the tour agreement.
All breakfasts throughout the pilgrimage are also included.

THE NATURE OF OUR PILGRIMAGE

The difference between travel and sacred travel is the difference between just site-seeing and feeding the soul. A pilgrimage can also be filled with fun, great company, wonderful food and drink, as well as special cultural encounters that are enhanced *because of* the pilgrimage experience. Sacred Art of Living pilgrimages include daily group orientation time interesting lessons in history and opportunities to encounter special sacred sites with rich cultural experiences. Richard Groves, who has been leading European Pilgrimages for more than twenty years will be the primary tour leader along with other local guides who will share the magic of Scotland from local perspectives!

