



Exploring the Highlands and Islands of Bonny Scotland

Isles, Castles, Glens, Weaving, Knitting, Whiskey, Sheepdogs and more...



Follow the Footsteps of Outlander's Jamie and Claire



Perfect for non-weaving companions with Options for Golf, Horseback Riding, Fishing, Walking, Photography & More...

October 8 - 24, 2019

"Uncommon Textile Journeys that Change Lives"

Meet Our Scottish Weaving Mentors...



Our weavings created with Louise Oppenheimer in 2016 (above)

Louise Oppenheimer

Louise studied fine art at Maidstone College of Art [1970-74]. Here her close relationship with weaving and wool was founded, a medium which has continued to inspire her throughout her artistic development.

In 1985 a move to Argyll saw her childhood dream of living in a landscape of exposed rock fulfilled and the rich and varied scenery of the area revealed subject matters that have never ceased to stimulate imagination in her work.

The vibrancy of her colors and textures stems from both a broad understanding of her surroundings and a close observation of the influence of seasons, weather and light. Drawing forms the backbone of Louise's creative process, however Louise's style of weaving is much more organic and unpredictable with finished pieces evolving quite differently from original sketches.

Louise's methods in both weaving and drawing determine a slow process, which allows for a wealth of detail and development of ideas as she creates. One weaving may take weeks or months to complete and this scope of work and solidity of the finished tapestry, are aspects she particularly enjoys.



Louise Martin

After completing a first class (Hons) degree in Constructed Textiles at Middlesex University, Louise attained a distinction in her MA in Applied Art at the University of Ulster. She combines exhibiting internationally; teaching; giving talks, was the former Head Weaver on the Unicorn Tapestry Project at Stirling Castle.

Louise has been teaching tapestry for twenty years, providing workshops for both individuals and groups such as The Embroiderers, Spinners, Weavers and Dyers, Turning Point Scotland, Primary and Secondary Schools and Art Centres. Techniques that Louise teaches include Forming Shapes, Coptic Techniques. Eccentric Weaving, Weaving a Design, Supplementary Warps and Mille Fleur.

"My tapestries are quiet and contemplative, often intimate in scale and deceptively simple. My reduced colour palette of creams and whites, enable me to showcase my technique, playing with warp settings and structure. Linens, silks, wools and cottons are woven to produce subtle, profoundly serene images. Inspiration is drawn from Coptic tapestries, mummified objects, cloth and paper fragments."





Tuesday, October 8 **Arrive Edinburgh, Scotland**

Today is the beginning of our journey through Scotland. Upon arrival in Edinburgh, you transfer on your own to our hotel. Located in the heart of the city and enjoying Edinburgh's most prestigious address, No. 1 Princes Street, The Balmoral is a historic landmark that first opened its doors in 1902. The five-star property even has its own grand clock tower. The Balmoral offers several dining options including fine dining, a more casual option, afternoon tea and The Scotch Bar offering over 400 varieties of Scottish Whiskey. The spa at the Balmoral features 5 treatment rooms to indulge your

senses after your travels. Once you are settled, you may opt to rest or explore Edinburgh on your own. In the evening, we will meet for a welcome "wee dram" of whiskey or glass of wine and an orientation to the trip. Including the eateries located within our charming hotel, Edinburgh has quite a variety of restaurants to choose from. These range from casual dining to a world class culinary experience. Overnight at The Balmoral Hotel. (No meals included)

<https://www.roccofortehotels.com/hotels-and-resorts/the-balmoral-hotel/>

Wed, October 9 **Edinburgh: The Royal Mile, Tartan Weaving Mill & Dovecot Tapestry Studios**

This morning we will enjoy a guided walking tour meandering along the Royal Mile between Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Palace (you may visit the interior of either landmark later on your own). Located on the Royal Mile is the Tartan Weaving Mill and Exhibition which occupies the building that used to be the Castle Hill reservoir. The mill exhibition shows the whole process involved in tartan production from shearing the sheep to making a kilt with working looms. You can even be photographed wearing full Highland dress!

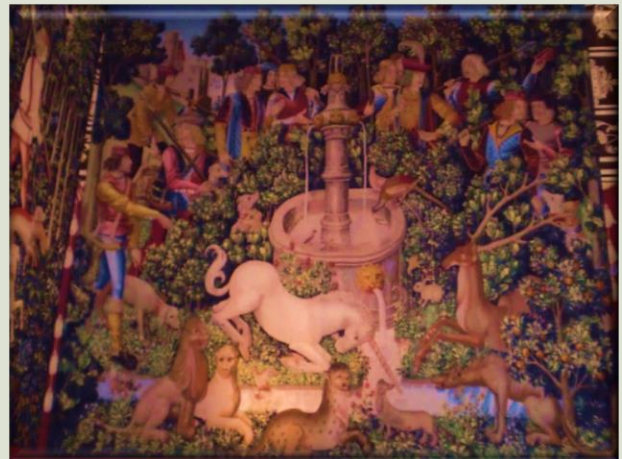


After an independent lunch on your own, for those that are interested, we will visit Dovecot Studios, a one hundred-year-old tapestry studio. Dovecot's first commission was for a series of tapestries at the home of the Marquess at Mount Stuart on the Island of Bute. Dovecot is known for its unique and highly creative collaboration between artist, weaver and commissioner. Each tapestry combines the ideals of all three creative minds. The weaver will then interpret, rather than simply translate, a design into textile. The rest of the afternoon and evening is yours to explore at your leisure. Dinner is on your own tonight. We will be happy to make dining recommendations. Overnight at The Balmoral Hotel. (B) <http://www.royal-mile.com/interest/tartanweavingmill.html>



Thursday, October 10 To Braveheart Country and the Lake of Menteith

This morning, we will drive in our private van approximately 1½ hours northeast into the remarkable scenery of Scotland's Central Highlands. This is Rob Roy and Braveheart Country (literally)! Our destination is Port of Menteith in Trossachs National Park. Nestled lakeside is our lovely hotel. The Lake of Menteith Hotel was originally a 19th Century Manse which has been fully refurbished. Dating from 1854, this beautiful hotel combines spectacular views with luxurious comfort and fine dining, embodying the spirit of a classic New England waterfront inn. The glorious views out over the lake and to the island and mountains beyond are broken only by diving osprey and other waterfowl. En route to the lake, we'll visit Stirling Castle which is the famous castle of the Stuart Kings. Here we can see the 'mille fleur' tapestries from the Middle Ages and the recent weavings that were part of the Unicorn Tapestry Project. Our weaving workshop instructor, Louise Martin, was Head Weaver on this impressive effort. The project was commissioned by Historic



Scotland in 2001 to restore the King's palace to its 1540's style. A team of 18 weavers from all over the world came together to reinterpret and weave the "Hunt of the Unicorn" tapestries. All seven on these tapestries are on display in the castle. We gather for a delicious group dinner tonight at the hotel. Overnight at Lake of Menteith Hotel. (B, D)

Read more about the Unicorn Project: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-33237947>

Friday - Saturday, October 11 & 12

Weaving Workshop with Louise Martin on the Shores of Lake of Menteith



Today, the weavers will begin a two-day weaving workshop with Louise Martin on the shore of Lake of Menteith. Inspired by our spectacular surroundings, we will spend two days with Louise Martin. Louise has been teaching tapestry for twenty years, providing workshops for both individuals and groups throughout the world. Loom Dancer Odysseys has been fortunate to work with Louise for the past six years in several

countries. (See Louise's bio on Page 2).

During our workshop, we will learn a variety of weaving techniques including a color study and blending, soumak, creating textures and combining single and double weave for a unique style.

During these two days, others in the group may choose from a variety of activities including golf, horseback riding, fishing, cultural visits, etc. Just across the lake from our hotel lies an ancient Priory, built in 1238, on the Isle of Inchmahome. Here is where Mary Queen of Scots was sequestered for her safety. Overnights at Lake of Menteith Hotel. (B daily)

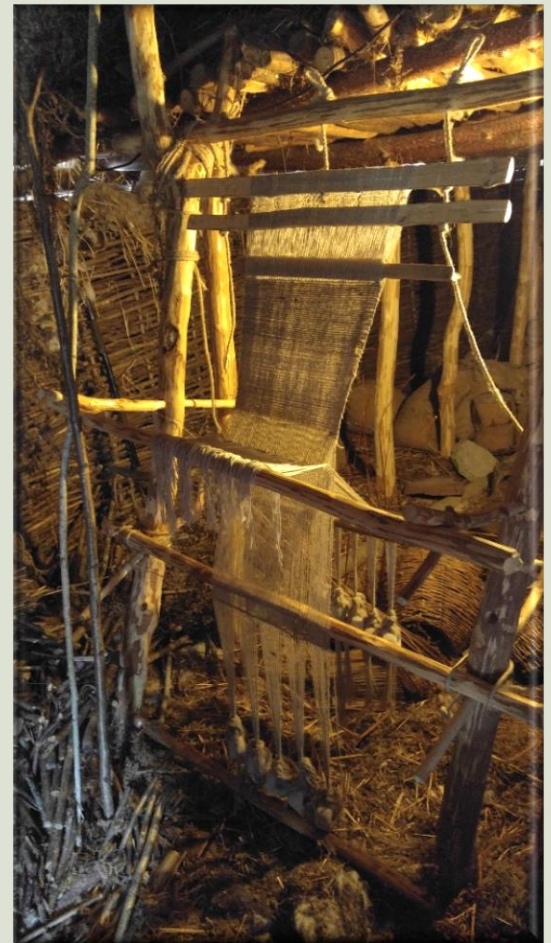


Top Photo: Lake of Menteith Hotel

Sunday, October 13

Into the Highlands of Outlander: Lochs, Whiskey, Cultural History and More

We have an extraordinary and full day today seeing the sights. We meander deeper into the Highlands in our private van with our final destination in Pitlochry. We travel 15 miles along beautiful, dark and mysterious Loch Tay. At 508 feet deep, Loch Tay is one of the deepest in Scotland and flanked by Ben Lawers Mountain which at 1,214 meters, is the highest mountain in the British Isles. Toward the north end, we visit the Scottish Crannog Centre. Here we step back 5,000 years in time when the local inhabitants built defensive homesteads, known as *crannogs*. More than 20 submerged crannogs have been discovered in the loch with one of the best-preserved examples at this location. We will visit



Scotland's only authentic recreation of an Iron Age loch dwelling.

We simply cannot travel through this scenic area without sampling some famous Scotch Whiskey along the way. Fortunately for us, the Highlands

is the biggest geographic region for this libation. We will have the chance to discover the history, traditions and trade secrets behind the production of world-famous Scotch Whiskey with a tour and tasting at Edradour, the smallest single-malt distillery in Scotland. Here we will enjoy a wee dram before heading to our accommodations for the next two nights in Pitlochry. Our lodging is nearby at the Pine Trees Hotel. Nestled within ten acres of gardens and woodland, this classic Scottish Country House Hotel offers unique four-star accommodation in historic Pitlochry. You can enjoy a stroll around the beautiful gardens which surround the hotel which are home to red squirrels and roe deer amid the pine trees. Overnight at the Pine Trees Hotel. (B,D)

Monday, October 14

Blair Castle and Pitlochry Area



The morning is at your leisure to relax or explore the quaint town of Pitlochry. In the afternoon, we'll visit Blair Castle which has a rich history dating back to 1269 and is considered one of Scotland's greatest historical castles and most highly rated sites. Its rich history takes us through Mary, Queen of Scots to the Civil War, and from the Act of Union to the Jacobite cause and the disaster of Culloden, and from the Isle of Man to Queen Victoria's love affair with the Scottish Highlands and the castle's presentation of colours to the Atholl Highlanders. The architecture is marvelous and represents many eras. Spread out over 30 rooms, the castle's collections provide a broad overview of Scottish life over the centuries. The grounds were laid out in the 18th century with a spectacular walled garden, the ruins of a kirk, a tranquil wooded grove, a gothic folly and a red deer park. The gardens also boast colorful resident peacocks and Highland cattle in nearby fields. We'll have plenty of time to tour around the castle and its beautiful grounds.



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We will finish up our visit with a special tour of Lady Evelyn's Needlework and Embroidery collection in the castle. She was an avid embroiderer herself and created a coat of arms that took her 7 years to complete. We'll return to our hotel in the late afternoon. Overnight at Pine Trees Hotel. (B)

Tuesday, October 15

Further into the Highlands: Castles, Stone Circles, & Sheep Dogs

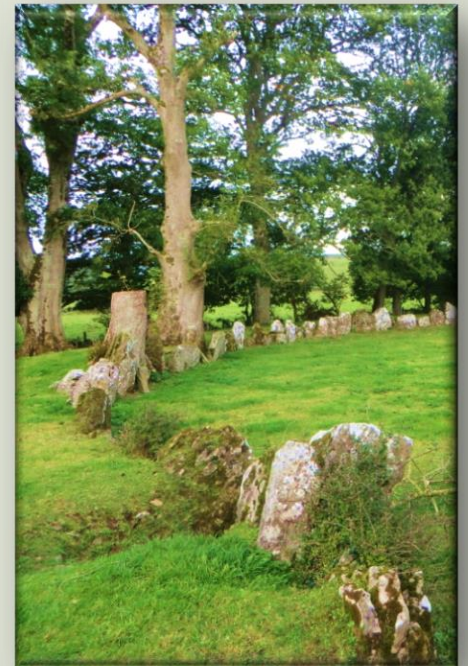


We continue north today with our destination near Inverness and Loch Ness.

In Kingussie, we may stop to visit the Highland Folk Museum where we can learn how our Scottish Highland ancestors lived, built their homes, tilled the soil and how they dressed. Next we have a real Highland treat! Surrounded by some of the most beautiful scenery in Scotland, we will be able to enjoy and participate in the traditional working day of a Highland Shepherd and his dogs. At Leault Farm with trainer Neil Ross, we will witness up to eight dogs working as a team maneuvering sheep through various

obstacles. It is quite a sight to see! You have the opportunity to help with the shearing if desired. If we're lucky, we might just get to feed a lamb with a bottle!

Before arriving at our destination in the late afternoon, we have a very special stop in store at Clava Cairns. According to the *Outlander* books, Craich na Dun was a fictional stone circle where Claire was swept through a portal back in time to 17th century Scotland. Clava Cairns is thought to be the inspiration for this event and setting and is one of Scotland's most evocative stone circle sites. The burial cairns here are over 4,000 years old.





Finally, we arrive at our accommodations for the next two nights, the exquisite Georgian mansion, Culloden House. Situated on nearly 40 acres, guests are free to wander about the woodland and private gardens. This luxurious four-star hotel is an oasis of remarkable tranquility and majesty and is considered the most elegant country retreat in the area. The ancient house has quite a history! More than two centuries ago Bonnie Prince Charles used Culloden House as his lodging and battle



headquarters the night prior to the fateful battle on Culloden Moor. Early on, various owners claimed Culloden as their home ranging from the family of the first Stuart King, Robert II, to the chieftain of the Macintosh clan. Today, you will experience legendary Highland hospitality and comfort.

There is the opportunity to enjoy an exclusive whiskey tasting here to sample drams from the Highlands, the Lowlands and the Islands (extra cost).

We gather for a group dinner tonight in the lovely restaurant where the chef creates divine cuisine using

local produce, Loch Fyne salmon, sweet Orkney crab, and Scotch beef fillet from the Highlands. Overnight at the Culloden House. (B,D)





Wednesday, October 16 Loch Ness or Culloden Battlefield

Today you can choose how you would like to spend your day. You can opt for an excursion to Culloden Battlefield, the historic site of the last land battle fought on British soil. Or you may wish to enjoy the breathtaking scenery of Loch Ness onboard the Jacobite Queen with entry to the romantic ruins of Urquhart Castle (both tours included). Or you can choose to visit some other sites or participate in other activities nearby (additional cost). Cawdor Castle, considered the most romantic castle in the Highlands, is quite close. It has been the home to the thanes of Cawdor since the early 14th century and has been linked romantically to Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The grounds accommodate five nature trails through beautiful woodland. The hotel can reserve time on any of thirty-three golf courses within an hour's drive of Culloden House including Championship courses such as Royal Dornoch, Nairn or the new Castle Stuart Links located just 2 miles from Culloden House. Tremendous salmon fishing is also close by as is a variety of "shoots" that can be organized for grouse, partridge and duck. Of course, you can opt to relax on this gorgeous property and take advantage of a massage in your room. The choice is yours (activities at an additional cost). Overnight at Culloden House Hotel. (B)



Culloden Battlefield Cottage



Thursday, October 17

To the Isle of Skye: Loch Ness, Plockton and Eilean Donan Castle

Today we will travel via our private van to the Isle of Skye in the Western Highlands. Once again, there is much to see on the way. What trip to Scotland would be complete without driving along Loch Ness hoping to get a glimpse of Nessie? Further on, we will visit Eilean Donan Castle, one of the most iconic images of all of Scotland (photo above). First inhabited in the 6th Century, the castle is situated where three great sea lochs come together. The first fortified castle was built in the mid-13th century. We will spend some time lingering in this legendary fortress. After a delicious lunch in Plockton in an old inn by the sea, we carry on and cross the land bridge to the Isle of Skye. This incredible island was voted the “4th Best Island in the World” by



National Geographic Magazine. Skye is the largest and most northerly of the Inner Hebrides Islands. Sometimes referred to in Gaelic poetry and song as *Eilean a' Cheò* (The Misty Isle), Skye is renowned for its natural beauty, unspoiled landscape, history and wildlife. It is a rich tapestry of velvet moors, glistening lochs, towering sea cliffs and the Cuillins, a jagged mountain range.

Our accommodations for the next three nights are at the 4-star Cuillin Hills Hotel. Chosen for its stunning location, set within fifteen acres of mature private grounds with a fantastic



The view from our hotel on Skye

view over Portree Bay towards the majestic Cuillin Mountain Range, Cuillin Hills Hotel offers one of the best views from any hotel on Skye. The stone-sided manor, formerly Armadale Lodge, was built in 1820's by the MacDonalds clan as a shooting lodge. The hotel features two restaurants specializing in locally sourced ingredients, traditional cuisine and carefully chosen wines. The more formal of the two restaurants enjoys panoramic views across the bay. We'll gather for a group dinner tonight in this elegant restaurant. Overnight at Cuillin Hills Hotel. (B,D) <http://www.cuillinhills-hotel-skye.co.uk>



Friday - Saturday, October 18 - 19
Exploring the Isle of Skye, Star of the Hebrides



These two days will be spent exploring the many wonders of the 48 mile-long Isle of Skye. Meandering around the island, we will see castles, *duns* (hill forts), and *brochs* (prehistoric round stone towers). We will view Dunvegan Castle. Built on a rocky outcrop on the shores of Loch Dunvegan, it is the oldest continuously inhabited castle in Scotland and has been the ancestral home of the Chiefs of Clan MacLeod for 800 years (and still is!). Rising from the almost perpendicular edges of the rock, its massive grey towers are incredibly scenic against a background of mountains and islet-spangled sea.

The Isle of Skye is home to many wonderful artists including weavers, knitters, potters, silver smiths and painters. We will explore the many shops and studios of these gifted folks including:

Skyeskyns: This family run business creates the world famous Highland hand-combed fleece, which is exclusive to Skyeskyns. We will be transported back in time to witness how real sheepskins are made using time-honored methods of leather making – one of the oldest crafts known to man.

The Skye Shilasdaire Shop: A unique shop specializing in the naturally dyed yarns produced by Shilasdaire, the Skye Yarn Company, as well as locally designed garments created by experienced hand knitters and KnitKits catering for all abilities. We will visit their Dyehouse Exhibition which offers an insight into



natural dyeing and shows the variety of dyestuffs, and the equipment used.

Skye Weavers Workshop: Situated in a croft house and stone barn in Glendale, north-west Skye, they weave their products on some rather unusual-looking equipment, an eclectic mix of bought and purpose-built weaving machinery including a bicycle pedaled loom.

Teo's Handspun: This shop features cashmere and baby-alpaca, shiny kid-mohair, merino, rustic gotland, and more unique and wild yarns, all hand-dyed. We will enjoy a spinning demonstration during our visit.

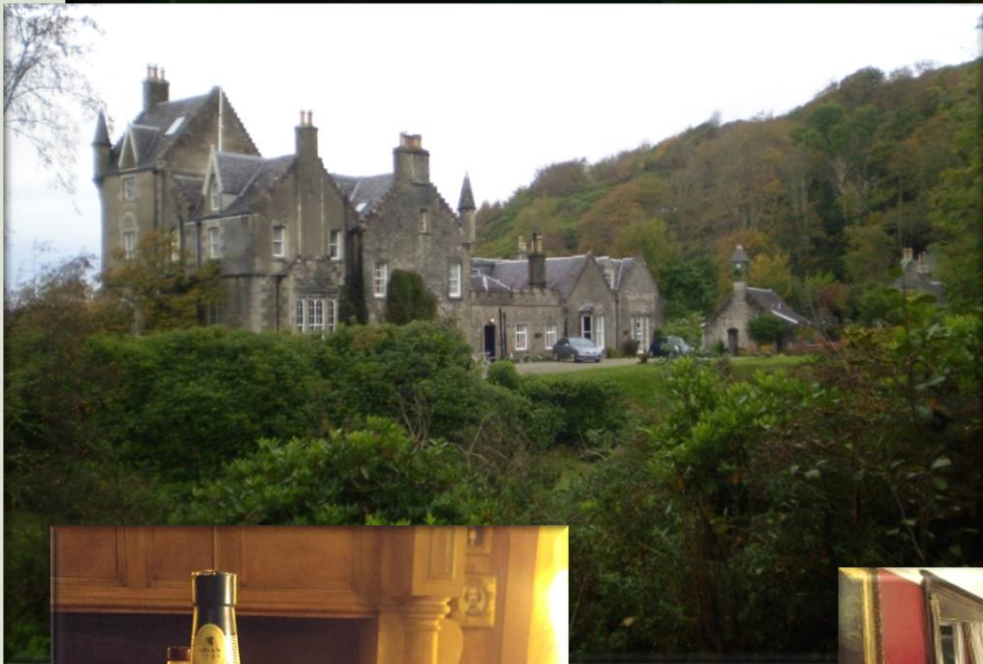
Skye Silver: Since 1974, Stewart John Wilson has been designing and producing exclusive Celtic, Scottish and modern designs in silver and gold available nowhere else.

Duncan House: Handcrafted Celtic jewelry and knives in Ancient Celtic knotwork and Pictish style.



The hiking and walking on Skye is superb. There are literally hundreds of options from a stroll in the woods to a mountainous ascent. Skye also offers horseback riding, fishing and its own nine hole golf course. There really is something for everyone on the Isle of Skye. Overnight at Cuillin Hills Hotel. (B, D one night)

A loom powered by a bicycle at Skye Weavers!



Sunday, October 20 To Argyll & Our Castle

This morning we travel back to the mainland. Our route today is beautiful and is recognized for its breathtaking, varied scenery skirting lochs, passing tiny villages, historic glens, and towering mountains. Ultimately, we arrive at our private accommodations in a Scottish seaside castle. We have



this paradise all to ourselves! This 4,000 acre estate stands upon the west coast of the Craignish Peninsula. Originally a 16th

century Tower House, Lunga House is castellated, turreted and set on green lawns amidst tangled woodland. The estate has been in the MacDougal family for over 300 years and feels as if you are staying in a private home with their eclectic furnishings, not a hotel. The countryside here is some of the most beautiful, least discovered in Scotland. The views of the sea are vast and stunning with a completely wild, craggy coast that is indented for ten miles. Overnight at Lunga House. (B,D)



Monday - Tuesday, October 21 - 22 Weaving Workshop and Exploring Argyll



Magnificent weaving by Louise Oppenhemier

Lunga's own well, blessed by St. Fillan and thus magically able to withstand the severest of droughts), Viking burials with ruined castles, chapels and ancient graveyards. The gentle wilderness also provides the chance to simply relax, wander through the woods or take a short walk down to the sea. Overnight at Lunga House. (B,L daily, 1D)



These two days will be spent in a weaving workshop with renowned tapestry weaver, Louise Oppenheimer. (See Louise's bio on Page 2).

Louise reflects, "My inspiration comes from the landscape of Argyll on the west coast of Scotland. Here I live and work in Kilmartin Glen with Dunadd, the seat of Scotland's earliest kings, many standing stones, rock carvings and imposing burial tombs, a short distance away. Weather through the seasons, water, rocky shorelines and ever-changing light lead me to weave designs which show their roots in nature but can be read by the viewer as abstract patterns or a translation of place and its essence." Fortunate to have Louise share her varied techniques with us, we will each complete a small tapestry piece inspired by our own adventure in Scotland.

For the non-weavers, the local area offers many riches as the peninsula and its vicinity are crammed with a prodigious mass of standing stones, cup and ring marks, Celtic wells (including



Wednesday October 23

To Edinburgh:

In the late afternoon, we will return to the now familiar Balmoral Hotel in Edinburgh. For those that would like to, we can gather for a farewell dinner in this vibrant city (not included). Overnight at The Balmoral. (B)

Thursday, October 24

Flights Home

This morning, you will transfer on your own to the airport for your flights home. (No meals included)



The Faerie Glen on Isle of Skye

As with all true adventures, these itineraries are subject to change without notice based on a variety of factors. Although Loom Dancer Weaving Odysseys will do our best to adhere to the scheduled itinerary, we are all at the mercy of Mother Nature and varying weather conditions. As is the case with all true adventures, your itinerary should be considered an approximation of activities only. The itinerary or accommodations may be changed subject to unexpected and worthwhile opportunities, weather, group desires, and circumstances beyond our control, etc. Loom Dancer Weaving Odysseys and its guides reserve the right to alter the itinerary without prior notice. Also please be aware that any voluntary changes on your part to your itinerary while in Scotland will be made at your own expense.

Land Costs Include:

- 16 Nights/17 Days in luxury 4 and 5- Star unique accommodations based on double occupancy (all individually atmospheric - no large impersonal chain hotels!). Single accommodations available at additional cost
- 7 Gourmet Dinners from fine chefs featuring local produce and seafood, Highland beef and traditional cuisine and breakfasts daily
- 4 Days of exclusive weaving workshops with two master Scottish Tapestry Artists
- Private van and local expert guide
- Full Scottish breakfast daily
- Private visits and demonstrations with talented knitters, weavers, spinners, jewelers and textile designers
- Admission fees for included tours and activities with visits to castles, distilleries, museums, mills, etc.



Loom Dancer Weaving Odysseys

does not believe in large group, bargain or "ordinary" tours. Instead, we strive to immerse the discerning and adventurous traveler into the wondrous world of global fiber arts with quality cultural encounters. Our typical group size is typically 12 - 16 participants to allow for a more hands-on, intimate travel experience.

We invite you to join us;
be a creative traveler, not a tourist.



Land Costs Exclude:

- Any air transportation or airport transfers
- Meals not designated on the itinerary
- Any activities such as golf, horseback riding, fishing and any others not specifically included in the itinerary are at an additional cost and any item not specifically included in your program including all snacks, extra personal beverages & bottled water, etc. other than during designated meals, alcoholic beverages
- Excess baggage fees, laundry, phone calls, internet and any other items of a personal nature not specifically indicated
- Tips for your guide, drivers, hotel porters and other service staff
- Additional insurance of any kind

Cost: \$5,495 Per Person Based on Double Occupancy**

**For those wishing single accommodations, there is a supplement. As most of the hotels in our itinerary charge the same amount for a room whether there are one or two occupants, the Single Supplement of \$1,795 is unavoidably rather steep. We offer this rate at our cost.

\$5,295 for non-fiber arts companions

(Activities such as golf, horseback riding, fishing and any other activity not included in the itinerary are at an additional cost, but we will be happy to help with the arrangements).

Save Your Spot!

Please call our office for details or questions!

800-369-3033 (US only) ~ 970-728-6743

