



10
Year
Anniversary Trip

Cattara is thrilled to be celebrating our 10th anniversary this year! And we couldn't have done it without you, our loyal travelers, who have followed us (literally) to the far corners of the globe. We look forward to sharing many more fun and inspiring adventures with you in the years to come. Thank you!

Scotland: The West Highland Way & the Isle of Skye

September 10 -21, 2018 & September 24 – October 5, 2018 (12 days)

Join Cathy Ann Taylor for an exhilarating inn-to-inn hike along Scotland's West Highland Way, one of the country's most famous long-distance paths. Some 95 miles of rugged trails bring us through a spectacular highland landscape of sparkling lochs, velvety moors, and craggy mountains with views of Scotland's highest peaks. Iconic Loch Lomond, Rannoch Moor, and Glencoe, a dramatic glen of history, myth, and legend—they're all on this journey. After completing our trek, we head to the beautiful Isle of Skye for hikes among the rocky peaks of the Red and Black Cuillins. Along the way we overnight in cozy inns and hotels (many of them family-run), visit historic Eilean Donan Castle, and tour the Talisker whisky distillery for a taste of Scotland's most famous beverage. Our trip begins in Glasgow and ends in Edinburgh.

TRIP DETAILS

Moderate ▶ 9 days moderate hiking; 11 nights hotels and inns

ITINERARY

(You will need to leave the U.S. on Sept. 9 or 23 in order to arrive in Glasgow on Sept. 10 or 24.)

Day 1, Sept 10 or 24 ▶ Arrive in Glasgow

Arrive at the Glasgow airport, Scotland. You will be met and transferred to the Ibis Styles Hotel, a modern hotel in the heart of the city center. In the evening you will meet with your trip leader, Cathy Ann. Meals on your own.

Ibis Styles Hotel



Day 2, Sept. 11 or 25 ▶ The West Highland Way: Milngavie to Drymen

We meet our local guide at Glasgow's city center train station and board the train to the trailhead in Milngavie, on the outskirts of Glasgow. This is the start of our hike on the West Highland Way, and our trail, an important route in prehistoric times, brings us past some standing stones from the late Stone Age as well as Craigallian and Carbeth Lochs. We reach our first night's accommodation at the "wee" village of Drymen. Overnight at The Hawthorns, a family-run guesthouse that was originally built in 1873 by the Duke of Montrose. 11.8 miles hiking.

B,L,D...The Hawthorns

Day 3, Sept. 12 or 26 ▶ The West Highland Way: Drymen to Rowardennan

After tucking into a traditional Scottish breakfast, we leave Drymen, passing through Garadhban Forest, then taking a detour to climb Conic Hill. Although it's just less than 1,200 feet high, it offers wonderful views over Loch Lomond, one of Scotland's most beautiful and famous lakes. We then follow a trail along its eastern bank, taking in the scenery of yellow gorse and searching for birds, as we head to the tranquil setting of Rowardennan, located in a wonderfully scenic setting on the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond at the foot of Ben Lomond. Overnight at the Rowardennan Hotel, set right on the West Highland Way. 13.7 miles hiking.

B,L,D...Rowardennan Hotel

Day 4, Sept. 13 or 27 ▶ The West Highland Way: Rowardennan to Inverarnan

This remote section of the trail was once the haunt of Rob Roy McGregor, a Scottish outlaw turned folk hero, and takes us along the north-eastern section of Loch Lomond in his footsteps. We'll hike over some rough ground before the trail improves as we reach the settlement of Inverarnan.

Overnight at Beinglas Farm B&B, where we're ensured of a warm welcome. 14.3 miles hiking.

B,L,D...Beinglas Farm B&B

Day 5, Sept. 14 or 28 ▶ The West Highland Way: Inverarnan to Tyndrum

We now head into the Highlands, with the mountains seeming to stretch all the way to the sky. We hike through Glen Falloch, then turn north into Strath Fillan, with its wild landscapes and hardy

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plants. As we head toward Tyndrum, we savor views of Ben Lui rising in the west. Overnight at the family owned and operated Tyndrum Inn. 13.7 miles hiking.
B,L,D...Tyndrum Inn

Day 6, Sept. 15 or 29 ▶ The West Highland Way: Tyndrum to Glencoe

On this fantastic day of hiking, we pass through some of the finest scenery of the Highlands (as well as some famous old pubs and inns!). Our trail climbs up past Loch Tulla, then heads across the wilderness of Rannoch Moor to Glencoe. This is a long day of hiking but the terrain underfoot is good and there is not a lot of height gain. Once at our hotel, we can revive ourselves with a drink at the inn's atmospheric bar, which won the "pub of the year" award in 2016! Overnight at Clachaig Inn. 18.6 miles hiking.
B,L,D...Clachaig Inn

Day 7, Sept. 16 or 30 ▶ The West Highland Way: Glencoe to Kinlochleven

Today is a shorter day, but one of the most challenging, as we climb steeply over the Devil's Staircase (1,795'). At the summit, we are rewarded with great views of Glencoe and Loch Leven. Our descent brings us to the small village of Kinlochleven. Overnight at the charming, family-run Edencoille B&B in Kinlochleven. 8.7 miles hiking.
B,L,D...Edencoille B&B

Day 8, Sept. 17 or Oct. 1 ▶ The West Highland Way: Kinlochleven to Fort William

On our final day on the West Highland Way, we hike over a low pass at 900 feet and then, with views of Ben Nevis—the highest mountain in Scotland—we descend past old *shielings* (summer dwellings for shepherds) to Fort William. Overnight at Myrtle Bank Guest House, a Victorian-era villa set on the banks of Loch Linnhe in Fort William. 13.7 miles hiking.
B,L,D...Myrtle Bank Guest House

Day 9, Sept. 18 or Oct. 2 ▶ Eilean Donan Castle and the Isle of Skye

Today we head to the Isle of Skye, stopping along the way to visit Eilean Donan, a 13th century castle set on an island where three sea lochs meet. It's arguably one of Scotland's most iconic places and exudes the spirit of the turbulent past. Once on Skye, the largest island of the Inner Hebrides, we enjoy an easy afternoon hike. Overnight at The Pier Hotel, a 7-room hotel overlooking stunning Portree Harbour.
B,L,D...The Pier Hotel

Day 10, Sept. 19 or Oct. 3 ▶ Hiking on the Isle of Skye

The Isle of Skye offers wonderful hiking, with its rugged landscapes of mountains, lochs, and misty moors. After a full day hiking (with various options), we visit the Talisker Distillery, which produces a variety of premium whiskies, including the Isle of Skye's only single malt. We'll be sure to have a taste of this golden elixir, beloved by Scotland's countrymen. Overnight at hotel.
B,L,D...The Pier Hotel

Day 11, Sept. 20 or Oct. 4 ▶ Travel to Edinburgh

Our local guide will transfer us back to Fort William, from where we can take the train to Edinburgh. Overnight at Bruntsfield Hotel, a townhouse hotel just a short walk from the city center.
B...Bruntsfield Hotel

Day 12, Sept. 21 or Oct. 5 ▶ Depart

After breakfast, we transfer to the airport in Edinburgh and depart. We recommend extending your stay in this fascinating city.

B...

LAND COST

- \$5595 per person (7 members)
- \$5695 per person (6 members)
- \$5895 per person (5 members)
- \$700 single supplement

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations. A maximum of 2 single occupancy rooms are available.

*Should you choose to pay with credit card there will be a service charge of 3%, the fee we incur from the bank.

Note—Prices listed are subject to change. We are occasionally faced with unavoidable cost increases due to fuel increases, costs of services or currency fluctuations that we cannot absorb. We will, however, do everything we can to keep prices the same as published.

LAND COST INCLUDES...

- Expert leadership (including a local guide from Days 2-10)
- Accommodations in hotels and inns (based on double occupancy)
- Meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- One group airport transfer on Days 1 and 12
- Ground transportation on Days 9-11, and by train from Glasgow to Milngavie
- Sightseeing as noted (Eilean Donan Castle Tour, Talisker Whisky Distillery Tour)

LAND COST DOES NOT INCLUDE...

International airfare to Glasgow and return from Edinburgh; individual transfers for early arrivals or late departures; trip insurance (we urge you purchase the optional trip insurance offered by Cattara, which includes trip cancellation insurance); meals not noted on the itinerary; train travel from Fort William to Edinburgh on Day 11; optional tipping to leader and local guide; excess baggage charges; airport taxes (if any); cost of medical immunizations; and items of a personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

TRIP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation25% of land cost
 120 days prior to departure25% of land cost
 90 days prior to departure.....Balance

CANCELLATION FEE SCHEDULE

From time of reservation

until 90 days prior to departure25% of land cost
89-60 days prior to departure.....50% of land cost
59 days or fewer prior to departure.....100% of land cost

EXPERT LEADERSHIP

Expert leadership is the key to every successful trip. Cattara attracts knowledgeable and gifted leaders who are passionate about guiding trips and truly enjoy sharing the experience with others. They understand the cultures and traditions they work in and are a fountain of information. In addition to making sure everything runs smoothly and safely, Cattara guides enhance your experience by being educators, companions, and the best of friends.

TRIP LEADER



Cathy Ann Taylor, a high altitude trekking guide for the last 28 years, will be leading his trip. Cathy Ann has trekked all over Nepal, Tibet, India and Bhutan, with well over 200 trips in the Himalayas (she still considers the Himalayas her “second home”)! She has also hiked extensively in the European Alps (Tour du Mont Blanc (5), The Haute Route, Gran Paradiso, and the Dolomites), the Georgian Caucasus, and South America (14 trips in Peru). A devout hiker and mountain biker, she leaves no trail undiscovered, and her passion for the mountains, caring nature, and boundless energy are renowned. Her experience, knowledge, positive attitude (she can find the good in anything!), and her wonderful rapport with the local staff will enhance your experience. With the help of caring and like-minded individuals she has been able to manage the sponsorship of nineteen remote village children, all of whom are in boarding school in Nepal or in Universities in the United States. She consistently gets rave reviews from members of her groups and has quite a following. Cathy Ann is active in the Breast Cancer Fund and has participated in sixteen expeditions, including Mount McKinley, Cho Oyu, Mount Fuji, Mount Shasta, and Mount Rainier, which helped increase awareness of breast cancer (she alone has raised over \$730,000 for the cause!). Cat’s new program, Sacred Treks to benefit the Breast Cancer Fund (Bhutan, Mont Blanc, Peru, Everest, Ladakh, Mustang, Georgian Caucasus, Sikkim, Dolomites, and Cordillera Blanca treks) has raised over \$735,000. She has also reached the summit of Ama Dablam (22,500') in Nepal and Argentina's Aconcagua (22,834'), the highest peak in South America. Cathy Ann received an honorable mention in *Hooked on the Outdoors* magazine's Outdoor Person of the Year Awards, and also received a letter of recognition for her fundraising and environmental work from former Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.

Craig McDonald, will be our local guide. Although Craig hails from Scotland’s Central Belt, his passion and love for Scottish history, mountains, and glens was destined to draw him to his ancestral homelands of the Highlands (after all, he *is* a McDonald!). His favorite spot is Ardnamurchan, a wild and remote peninsula with stunning peaks, a glorious coastline, and untrammeled miles of heather-clad trails, but he loves hillwalking, mountaineering, and biking all over Scotland. Craig’s idea of heaven is a “cracking” long day on foot or on bike exploring Scotland's beautiful scenery and fascinating history, followed by a good hearty dinner and some fun and laughter by a roaring fire—accompanied by a wee dram of whisky, of course!

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PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS

You should be an experienced hiker in good physical condition. This trip is rated moderate, as you will be hiking long distances each day, from 8-18 miles. The terrain is hilly with some steep slopes, boggy areas, and narrow trails in places with tree roots. There are also gravel roads and there is some tarmac walking. For physical preparation, we recommend regular cardiovascular exercise for one hour at least 4-5 times a week. We suggest stair climbing, running, and mountain biking on hills, squats, and lunges or elliptical or treadmill training in the gym. And, of course, the best way to train for a trek is to go hiking! We recommend you get out on the trails at least once a week. Wear your boots and daypack and pick some trails with hills so you can strengthen your leg muscles and build up your stamina. We believe other important pre-requisites are a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

You will need a passport, valid for at least six months beyond the date of completion of the trip. No visas are required for this trip. Note—it's a good idea to make a photocopy of the photo page of your passport and carry it separately from your passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, a photocopy will help the local consulate speed up authorization for replacement. Extra passport photos can also be helpful to have just in case.

AIR TRAVEL

Airfare is not included in the land cost of the trip. For air reservations, please contact the airlines directly, either by phone or via the Internet. Plan your arrival in Glasgow anytime on Day 1. Many travelers elect to use their "frequent flyer" miles when traveling, but please check with us before purchasing or obtaining your tickets. We need to verify your arrival and departure schedule and ensure we have enough participants to operate the trip. Note—Names on air tickets and passports must match!

MEDICAL MATTERS

Please advise us of any pre-existing medical conditions that may affect your health on the trek (recent injuries or surgeries, chronic illnesses, etc.). We recommend you bring your own personal first-aid kit, pain killers, and allergy medicines if you are prone to allergic reactions (especially epipens if you are allergic to bee stings). Moleskin or Second Skin for blisters is also recommended, as well as Band-Aids and antibiotic ointment. Consult your doctor about bringing other medications, such as antibiotics like Cipro. The trip leader will also carry a basic kit for emergencies, but will not have any prescription medications.

MONEY MATTERS

You should bring enough money for any souvenirs you may buy, plus a few items like aperitifs, extra beverages, and the like (most of your meals are included in the cost of the trip). Depending on how much of a shopper you are, \$500 should be plenty for incidentals and souvenirs. You should bring an additional amount for gratuities to the leader, local guide, and driver. At least US \$350 per guest is recommended for the trip leader and at least \$100 - \$125 (77-100 British Pounds) per guest for the local guide and at least \$25-30 for the driver. You can present your gratuities to your leaders and driver individually.

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The currency of Scotland is the Pound Sterling. You will want to check the current rate of exchange just before traveling when planning how much cash to bring with you.

We suggest you withdraw money from an ATM in Glasgow before the trek begins, as there are few ATMs along the way while trekking. Some of the Inns and hotels will accept Visa and MasterCard. USD is not accepted along the way.

WEATHER & CLIMATE

The weather in the Scottish Highlands is notoriously unpredictable, so each day on the trail you need to be prepared for a variety of weather conditions. The Western Highlands are among the wettest and windiest places in Europe. For that reason you will carry your raingear and jacket in your daypack every day, even if the morning starts out bright and hot. Dressing in layers that can be adjusted to suit the prevailing conditions is highly recommended. Daytime temperatures in September for this area range from low of 47 degrees and high of 59 degrees and the average monthly precipitation is 6.1". As the old Scottish saying goes, "there's no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing!"

WHILE ON THE TRIP

Our accommodations are the best available nearest to the trails we take each day. Located in mountain or valley villages, they are generally small simple inns that accommodate hikers in the summer months, and closed during the winter. They have a homey atmosphere and serve delicious food that is reflective of the region. While comfortable, most of them do not sport all the amenities, such as hair dryers, internet access, and the like, and a couple of the inns feature rooms with shared baths (these are generally spotless, though!). We are confident you will enjoy the experience.

INCIDENTALS

Laundry: You will not really have time to have your laundry done during the hike. You can hand wash a few items and hang them to dry in your room. Synthetic, quick drying fabrics are best (see the equipment list).

Electricity: Scotland is on the 220V system. Sockets accept type G plugs, the three rectangular prong variety. If you are planning to use something like a hairdryer, electric shaver, camera battery, or phone charger, bring a converter and a selection of plug adapters (you can buy these in drugstores or travel specialty stores in the U.S.).

Time Zones: Scotland is on Greenwich Mean Time, five hours ahead of New York and eight hours ahead of California.

Communications: While we discourage the use of cell phones on our trip, we can't deny the fact that you may want to be in touch with your friends or family. Please be sensitive to the needs of others and use them in the privacy of your room. Contact your cell phone service about international coverage.

WHAT TO BRING: CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT LIST

Packing Notes

It's best to go as light as possible and take only the essentials. Excess baggage can be a burden, not only to you but to support personnel.

Always bring all irreplaceable items, such as camera, medications, important documentation, and trekking boots in your carryon luggage.

Luggage

- Duffel bag, large enough to hold your trekking clothes and gear. It should have a full-length zipper (for easy access). Wheeled duffels are OK to bring, but hard-shelled suitcases are not advisable (they are difficult to load compactly in the vans).
- Daypack with a capacity of about 2,000 - 2500 cubic inches, with a good padded waist belt. It can double as your carryon bag.*
- Spare roll-up duffel (optional). This is essential if you wish to bring home those great souvenirs! It should be lockable.

*Remember, you must carry your fleece jacket and rain gear with you every day on the trail, as well as your picnic lunch, 2 liters of water, sunscreen, warm hat, gloves, camera, and cover for daypack in case of rain.

Clothing Notes

You should be prepared for very unpredictable weather. Bring comfortable clothing that will protect you from cold and possibly wet weather. Synthetic fabrics (such as polypropylene, capilene, or wool) are the most effective barriers against the cold. They provide the best insulation, are light in weight, wick away perspiration, and dry quickly if wet. (Cotton garments are not good in cold or wet mountain conditions.)

When layering, your innermost layer should be a synthetic T-shirt or long underwear. The middle layer can be a synthetic turtleneck or wool shirt, and pants. The outermost layer should be a synthetic fleece jacket, and/or a good quality wind/rain jacket and rain pants.

We haven't included quantities for each item listed. Use your own judgment, based on the expected weather conditions, your personal needs, and the overall weight restrictions for your luggage.

Underwear

- Regular underwear. Synthetics are easier to wash and dry.
- Thermal underwear (lightweight), top and bottom.

Socks

- Casual socks (synthetic for easy washing and drying) that are suitable for your walking (not hiking) shoes.
- Light or Mid-weight hiking socks (synthetic or wool/synthetic).
- Synthetic or silk sock liners—optional. Some people wear sock liners to help prevent blisters, and some wear the same pair of hiking socks for three days in a row and achieve the same result.

Shirts

- Long-sleeved, synthetic or wool shirt.
- Short-sleeved synthetic T-shirts.
- One heavier-weight fleece top (you can throw it on if it suddenly gets chilly).
- Shirts for non-hiking activities.

Pants

- Full-length synthetic hiking pants or synthetic sweat pants. The kind that zip off to create shorts are good. Pants made of cotton are not recommended.
- Hiking shorts in case of warmer days.
- Casual pants or skirts for non-hiking activities.

Outerwear

- Medium-weight jacket of synthetic fabric, such as fleece.
- Rain/wind parka (must fit over bulky clothing).
- Rain/wind pants, preferably with full-length side zipper (must fit over your other pants).
- Gloves or mittens (wool or fleece).
- Waterproof daypack cover.
- Gaiters (optional)—these protect your lower legs from wet grass and are great for those warm-weather days when you want to keep your pants dry without having to wear rain pants.

Head Gear

- Sun hat with wide brim, preferably with a chin strap to keep it from blowing off, or baseball cap.
- Fleece or wool hat
- Fleece or synthetic neck gaiter (such as a buff).
- Bandana - A generally useful item—it will keep your neck from getting sunburned and can double as a hand towel in the field.

Footwear

Please break new boots in well before the trip.

- Medium-weight hiking boots with padded ankle, good arch support, and lug sole for traction. Your hiking boots must be waterproofed, well broken in, and suitable for prolonged walking on wet and rocky terrain. Running shoes are not appropriate for the trails you will encounter on this trip.
- Comfortable walking shoes to wear while in towns.

Other Items

- Water bottles, 1 or 1.5 quart capacity. Make sure they are leak-proof. Bring 2 and mark them with your name or initials as several people may have the same bottle.
- Hiking poles—highly recommended. These are essential to relieve the impact on your knees during long days; they are also useful for crossing over uneven ground and streams. Practice with them before the trip.
- Toiletry kit—soap, toothbrush, etc.
- Purell hand sanitizer for quick hand washing and hygiene (a must!).
- Toilet paper and a Ziploc bag (for stops along the trail).
- Personal medical kit, including blister protection, insect repellent.
- Ace bandage or brace if you're prone to sore knees or ankles.
- Sunglasses (100% UVA/UVB protected).
- Spare pair of prescription glasses, prescription sunglasses, or contact lenses.
- Sunscreen lotion and lip balm of SPF 25 or higher.
- Small padlocks or combination locks for your duffels.
- Heavyweight plastic garbage bag to help keep the contents of your daypack dry during hikes.
- Headlamp.

Optional Travel Accessories

- Camera and plenty of memory cards, and extra batteries.
- Plug adaptor.
- Repair kit with needle, thread, and safety pins.
- Pair of compact binoculars.
- Swiss Army-type pocket knife.
- Powdered electrolyte mixes for your water.
- Midge/Mosquito net for your head (midges should be gone this time of year).
- Your favorite trail snacks or supplements, especially if you have dietary restrictions.
- Reading and writing material.
- Whistle (most newer backpacks have them built in on the chest strap).
- Sit upon for the trail (seat pad).

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