

## **An Epicurean Highland Adventure**

Join us aboard Royal Scotsman to unearth the delicious produce of the Scottish Highlands. On this exclusive three-night journey, experience the country's natural larder as you discover local gastronomic treats in the company of experts. From tutored wine and whisky tastings to seafood by the bay, a barbecue in the Cairngorms and dinner cooked on board by a trailblazing Michelin-starred chef, prepare to be beguiled by Scotland's gourmet gems.

### **Day One: Edinburgh – Keith**

Your culinary adventure on Royal Scotsman begins as the whistle blows. The train gathers speed through the magnificent beauty of Scotland's ancient, rugged landscapes and crosses the 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.

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.

Following a light afternoon tea, enjoy a guest appearance from exclusive wine merchants, L'Art du Vin, who specialise in organic and biodynamic wines made by artisan and ethical producers. Join them in the Observation Car for an exclusive tutored wine masterclass with genius food pairing tips and ideas.

Dinner is served as you approach Keith, the train's first stabling point. Our Chef's inventive menus use the finest local ingredients, such as wild halibut, hand-dived scallops and Aberdeen Angus beef. Chanterelles, wild garlic and bitter cress are foraged straight from Scotland's wild larder. There will also be the chance to meet some of the local producers who put all of their passion into bringing such high-quality ingredients to our plates.

Afterwards, you are invited to enjoy lively entertainment in the Observation Car. Musicians and performers join the train, blending sweet, slow Gaelic songs with lively folk melodies. With no more than 38 guests on board, expect kinship and hearty camaraderie, best celebrated over a local dram.

### **Day Two: Keith – Kyle of Lochalsh**

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

As you pass through Inverness, prepare your palate for an evocative exploration of the 'water of life'. Head to the Observation Car, where our Whisky Ambassador will talk you through an array of malts and give you a tutored tasting.

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.

During lunch, you will again have the opportunity to meet local artisan producers as you sample some of the finest culinary delights that Scotland has to offer.

On arrival in the picturesque village of Plockton, disembark for a boat trip to see the colony of wild seals and enjoy magnificent views across the bay to the Applecross Mountains. Returning to the harbour, a selection of fresh local seafood will be available for your delectation, along with a pint of local craft ale or a dram of Talisker from the nearby Isle of Skye distillery. Meet the brewers behind the ale and the experts involved in producing the hallowed single malt, which promises a taste of Skye in every sip.

Return to the train in nearby Kyle of Lochalsh and dress for a formal dinner, followed by coffee and liqueurs in the Observation Car.

### **Day Three: Kyle of Lochalsh – Aviemore – Dundee**

This morning, after breakfast, you travel the short distance by coach to 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.

Your hosts today are Ghillie Basan, writer, broadcaster, food anthropologist and one of Scotland's best-known Food Tourism Ambassadors, and her son Zeki Basan, the founder and head instructor of Highland Survival Skills.

Having spent her childhood in East Africa, Ghillie roamed the globe as a food and travel writer. She then settled in a remote part of the Cairngorms National Park, where she gradually turned a ruined croft into her home. With a Cordon Bleu Diploma and 50 books under her belt, she runs relaxed, hands-on cookery workshops at her home, as well as hosting whisky and food pairing experiences.

Born and raised in the Highlands, Zeki Basan is passionate about wild places and has featured in several BBC documentaries. He leads and teaches outdoor courses all over Scotland, as well as in Norway and Greenland. This morning, he will take you on a guided nature hike with a focus on foraging, storytelling, traditional craft and learning how our ancestors survived through the ages in the Caledonian Forest.

For lunch, you will be rewarded with a barbecue feast served against a breathtaking mountain backdrop. Here, Ghillie will share her inspiring story about how she came to live in the Cairngorms and was elected a Food Ambassador for Scotland. Join her by the fire for an insightful food and whisky pairing as she showcases the succulent seasonal produce of the Highlands.

At the end of your day, rejoin the train in Boat of Garten and set off for Dundee. The excitement isn't over: tonight, you will be served a sumptuous gala dinner prepared by the celebrated Scottish chef, Lorna McNee, to mark your last night on board. Lorna is widely considered one of the best chefs of her generation. Born and raised in Dallas, Scotland, she worked as a sous-chef at the renowned Restaurant Andrew Fairlie, at Gleneagles Hotel, was named National Scottish Chef of the Year in 2017 and won 2019's Great British Menu. She is currently Head Chef of Glasgow's Cail Bruich where, just five months after joining, she gained the restaurant a Michelin star in 2021. An incredible dining experience awaits! Afterwards, you may feel

inspired by our musicians to partake of some lively Scottish country dancing on the station platform, a fitting finale to your tour.

#### **Day Four: 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.*