

Essence of Scotland

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Overview

The Highlights

- Private tour of Ballindalloch Castle
- Visit to Attadale Gardens, a 30,000-acre estate that includes the Water Garden, Japanese Garden and Sunken Garden
- Tour of historic Tomatin Distillery & whiskey tasting
- Highest levels of dining and service on-board
- Breathtaking views of the moors, mountains, lakes and sea

- Intimate setting with just 40 passengers total
- Inspiring musical events, blending sweet, slow Gaelic songs with lively folk melodies
- Before-dinner drinks in the cozy lounge car, all included

The Tour

The Essence of Scotland Tour aboard the [Belmond Royal Scotsman](#) takes you on an exploration of Scotland's rugged landscapes, historical towns, and picturesque villages. Experience the tranquility of Boat of Garten and the mystical allure of the Isle of Skye. Discover the secrets of Tomatin Distillery and Attadale Gardens, and explore historic Ballindalloch Castle.

Relish in the charm of Aviemore and Dundee before concluding your journey in Edinburgh.

Itinerary

Day 1: Edinburgh-Boat of Garten

The *Belmond Royal Scotsman* departs Edinburgh in the early afternoon, traveling north to the 'Fair City' of Perth while guests indulge in afternoon tea.

The train continues north through Dunkeld, Pitlochry and Blair Atholl before arriving in the village of Boat of Garten on the private Strathspey Railway.

An informal dinner is served on board, after which you are invited to the Observation Car to enjoy entertainment with a Scottish flavor.

Day 2: Boat of Garten-Kyle of Lochalsh

Departing Boat of Garten this morning, the train travels north 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, then commences the climb to the Luib summit and Achnashellach Forest, before descending to Strathcarron. Here, guests will disembark for a visit of Attadale Gardens, a 30,000-acre estate that includes a Water Garden, Japaenes Garden and Sunken Garden. Enjoy some light refreshments with your hosts as they welcome you into their home.

Alternatively, stay on the train until the picturesque village of Plockton, where you can take a boat trip to see a colony of wild seals and enjoy magnificent views across the bay to the

Applecross Mountains. Opt for a woodland walk, followed by a traditional Highland welcome and a dram or two in the seafront Plockton Hotel.

Return to the train in Kyle of Lochalsh, gateway to the mystical Isle of Skye, for overnight stabling. After dinner, make your way to the Observation Car, where local musicians are waiting to entertain you.

Day 3: Kyle of Lochalsh-Dundee

Leave Kyle and retrace part of yesterday's route to Inverness as you enjoy breakfast. There, disembark to uncover the secrets behind the historic Tomatin Distillery, including a tasting.

Alternatively, relax onboard as our Highland storyteller brings fables to life, regaling you with fascinating tales of the Jacobites and dramatic moments of the country's past.

After lunch on the train, disembark in Aviemore for an afternoon tour of Ballindalloch Castle. From the heart of the Speyside whisky region, the 'Pearl of the North' enjoys a majestic setting, surrounded by hills with the Spey and Avon rivers running through the grounds. Home of the Macpherson-Grant family, the baronial castle treasures a fine collection of 17th-century Spanish paintings, sumptuous dining room, splendid vaulted hallway and impressive library.

Rejoin the train in Aviemore early evening and, as it makes its way to Dundee, prepare for a final Gala dinner to toast your last night on board.

After your celebratory feast, you may feel inspired to take part in some lively Scottish country dancing on the station platform, a fitting finale to your tour.

Day 4: Dundee-Edinburgh

Breakfast is served as the train leaves Dundee and crosses the Tay Bridge into the former Kingdom of Fife on to Edinburgh, where your journey ends.

Dates & Prices

2025 Dates

April 11 - April 14

April 25 - April 28

May 2 - May 5

May 9 - May 12

May 23 - May 26

May 30 - June 2

June 13 - June 16

June 27 - June 30

July 24 - July 27

July 29 - August 1
August 15 - August 18
September 19 - September 22
October 17 - October 20
October 24 - October 27

Accommodation	Price	Deposit
Twin/Double	From £6,400	25%
Grand Suite	From £17,000	25%

Please note prices are in British pounds. View approximate exchange rates.

Prices are per person.

Pricing varies based on availability and date. Prices are subject to change daily. Contact us to confirm pricing and availability for your desired departure.

More

Scotch malt whisky lovers may prefer the [Scotch Malt Whisky Trail Tour](#).

The Society of IRT highly recommends extending your stay with our Virtuoso preferred hotel The Balmoral. We get special rates and amenities for our passengers there - and it's especially handy because it's right at the train station - just an escalator down to the tracks. We also have wonderful guides and drivers at our fingertips. Please inquire if you wish this concierge service.

Greater Savings on Longer Tours: Book the [Grand Western Scenic Wonders](#) (combines Classic and Western itineraries) and save!