

Whether you go

island hopping on the Whisky Trail or golf each day, pack this Inside Scoop with your documents to help cut through any travelling fog.

travel: delighting in the spirit of adventure • a vacation from home to explore places that are not your home • knowing life is different, knowing this is a joy of travel • enjoying the journey, not just the destination • a privilege best used with patience, humour and curiosity • fun • coming home with great tales •

Think Layers!

Although you can certainly go to town in dressing up, this is a country for low heeled comfy walking shoes, rain jackets, sweaters and socks. Even in the cities, cobblestones and hills abound so first think of comfort. Layering clothes and adding a scarf is prudent (and chic).

Your Counsellor

Our knowledge and experience help turn dreams into first-rate vacations. Ask your counsellor about any details, including:

- advance seats and upgrades
- cancellation/interruption and medical insurance
- island hops to the Hebrides
- the best spots for hiking
- maps and information on area sites and specialties.

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Inside Scoop: SCOTLAND

Know before you go: travel isn't just your destination, it's also the journey

No matter the season, Scotland is a jewel of the United Kingdom.

Whether you're aiming for nature-filled family hikes or city culture, the country has it all. Some tips to help you get the best:

- Have a valid passport that will not expire six months before the end of your trip, www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport/index.asp.
- Currency is the pound £. Canadian credit cards and debit cards are generally accepted at banks and ATMs. For credit card security, log the dates you'll be away with your bank and credit card companies.
- The climate is much like Canada. Colder months are January and February while July and August are the warmest.
- For cell/phone card use, check with your provider (beware of roaming charges). Internet access is widely available.
- The electrical supply is 220-240v 50hz so bring a power converter/plug adapter.
- We strongly recommend LeGrow's Travel insurance, including cancellation/interruption and medical insurance.

Above all, travel with a positive attitude—having patience and a spirit of adventure will carry you through any experience!

Aahhhh Shortbread

Looking for some special gifts? You can't get much better than shortbread, available pretty much wherever you stop the car. While it might not make it home, there are many other offerings such as gorgeous pottery painted with the country's thistle, a CD of the Greatest Bagpipe Hits (no jokes please) or jars of specialty jam. For clothing, look for items made of Harris Tweed or take back a cut of cloth from a bolt, otherwise look for sweaters knit in the **Hebrides**. A gift to please the most difficult person to buy for? Haggis flavoured chocolate (you go first). If you aim to bring whisky home, be aware of exemption limits www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/bgb-rmf-eng.html such as on duty free alcohol and tobacco. Don't bring back fresh heather and so sad, no haggis.

Pack Strategically

The world is overrun with black bags: put coloured tape or ribbon on your luggage to spot it quickly. Put your name outside and inside and remove old tags. In carry-on, pack valuables such as jewellery; over-the-counter and prescription drugs in original containers with a list, dosage and your doctor's phone number and documents on medical conditions. Pack most liquids/lotions/gels in checked bags (inside plastic bags)—due to carry-on restrictions, the maximum size container is 100ml(3.4oz). All must fit in 1 clear/resealable plastic bag of no more than 1 litre (often at airport security). You may take baby formula, food or milk for a child under 2 years (0-24 months).

In carry-on pack pen/notebook, hand wipes, munchies (no fruit, meat or veg), cell phones, laptops, disposable razors, canes, umbrellas and nail clippers. Taking golf clubs? You must check those with your airline: for restrictions see www.catsa.gc.ca/home.

Getting Around

Aiming to drive? Just bring your Canadian driver's license. Before you go, see *Local Hero*, a terrific movie that shows a lovely rambling rural drive and Scotland's charms with just a few hindrances (pulling over on single lane roads to let oncoming traffic by, what happens when fog rolls in). Want gobsmacking views? Check. Fog? Check. Sheep? Checkcheckcheck. The point is to take your time and enjoy any drive, a car being a terrific way to see parts of the country you might not otherwise. As in England, drive on the left.

Bus, rail service and ferries connect some of the (almost 800!) islands. For one gorgeous trip, go to **Stornoway**—not the one Canadians know as the official residence of the federal Leader of the Opposition—but the town it was named after on the **Isle of Lewis**. Many flights connect the island as does a ferry (that accepts rental cars) sailing from **Ullapool**, www.stornoway-lewis.co.uk. **Tip:** rail travel is convenient also with great bus connections where trains don't go; a terrific way to see certain areas (and you might just be invited to dinner by locals). Ask your counsellor for information on ScotRail packages.

Your Airline

Sign up online for your airline(s) email or text flight notifications as your flight could be delayed (the plane might be flying in). Transport Canada advises, "Travellers should arrive at the airport earlier than usual, exercise patience and **contact their airline for further information on their flight(s).**" Airline staff are on duty some 3hrs prior: due to staffing and security, check-in closes 1hr before departure. If late, you're not entitled to board (or a refund). Unless booked ahead, seats are first-come first-served. Many airlines have reciprocal "code-shares," you have a ticket for one airline and fly on another's plane. **Check-in and carry-on baggage:** check with your airline as size/weight restrictions vary. **Entry & Departure:** Have your passport available; keep a separate photocopy of its ID page with other records or snap a cell phone photo.



Get Packing Checklist and General Planning & Packing Tips at www.maritimetravel.ca/inside-scoops

- ☐ Your sense of adventure & humour!

Fast Facts

- Many movies have been filmed here such as the Harry Potter films and *Skyfall*, a James Bond movie.
- The Scottish drink is spelled without an "e" as in is "whisky" while the Irish spelling is "whiskey."
- There are more golf courses per capita than anywhere else in the world
- Hogmanay is the Scottish word for the last day of the year, celebrating New Year's Eve (why not go for the next one?), singing Auld Lang Syne at midnight to celebrate the start of the New Year.
- Scotland's population is some 5.2 million people, in a land mass a bit larger than Panama.



Websites and emails in blue are hyperlinked; just click!

Canadians: Emergency? While an Honorary Consul is in Edinburgh, 0770 2359 916, canada.consul.edi@gmail.com, services are at The High Commission in London. Or contact Global Affairs (collect if needed) 613-996-8885, sos@international.gc.ca, <https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-assistance>.

While There...

Besides **Edinburgh** and **Glasgow**, see the coastal city of **Aberdeen**, historic **Stirling**, **Perth**, **Dundee** (think marmalade, a great gift to take home) and **Inverness**, capital of the Highlands. Would you be researching your genealogy? Ancestry itineraries follow family names by visiting castles, museums and battle sites with research in archive centres www.visitscotland.com/en-ca/see-do/itineraries/ancestry.

Tip: cell-based apps are increasingly being developed for areas and attractions to help you navigate.

Fine Food & Drink

The **Scottish Cheese Trail** welcomes you, <https://scottishfoodguide.com/places/cheesetrail> and you're never far from fish and chips; for good value head to a local pub.

Fancy a dram or a beer? Head to the **Malt Whisky Trail** for distillery tours, the Whisky Coast along the western part or the **Argyll & The Isles Whisky Trail** (yes, there is a lot of whisky) Ask your counsellor about booking tours. The **Real Ale Trail** (different from lager and traditional ales), links independent breweries: book a tour or a designated driver.

Aim to save a bit on meals? Many city restaurants offer lower priced meals from 5 to 7pm (also a great time to eat if travelling with kids and teens). Eating your main meal at lunch can also save money. Or have a picnic; check out supermarkets for a variety of sandwiches and salads at reasonable prices. Pubs—as suggested for fish and chips—offer well-priced meals, most pubs allowing kids during the day.

The country is a mecca if you like a scone or three. With jam and cream, scones are a fine precursor to a nap. Now haggis...if you haven't tried it, really, sampling is a must. You might not want to know what's in it (it's not vegetarian) but it can be a surprisingly comforting meal.

Golf, Golf and Golf

The indisputable home of golf, there are more than 550 courses, 9-hole and 18-hole, many hosting championships and tournaments. Whether you want ocean views, to lob a ball over a cliff (**tip:** leave it) or play on a classic inland, you can spend more than a year and a half on a different course (great reality tv!). www.visitscotland.com/en-ca/see-do/itineraries/golf

and Other Activities

Scotland is also known for salmon fishing, cycling, mountain biking, horseracing and, of course, rugby from a local pick up game to international and club level games. Most International matches are played at Murrayfield Stadium west of Edinburgh. For cultural pursuits, bonus—public museums are free. <https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/attractions/free>.

Glasgow has many free attractions; the **Gallery of Modern Art**, the **Glasgow Cathedral** www.glasgowcat.hdral.org.uk and **Scotland Street School**, now a museum (by Shields Road station) designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh www.crmsociety.com.

In **Edinburgh**, see the **National Museum of Scotland**, for a mix of culture, the natural world, science and fun www.nms.ac.uk/national-museum-of-scotland. The **National Galleries of Scotland** offer a free bus for visitors to the **Scottish National Gallery** and the **Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art** www.nationalgalleries.org.

Besides Scotland being home to Harry Potter's creator, Edinburgh hosts UNESCO's first **City of Literature**, a trail with literary attractions, some 50 bookshop and author sites www.cityofliterature.com.

The **Edinburgh Fringe** hosts hundreds of acts, <http://freefringe.org.uk>. Go underground to see the city frozen in the 17th century...kids and teens will love Mary King's Close, www.realmarykingsclose.com.

And, of course, **Edinburgh Castle** one of those must sees, for good reason; ask your counsellor about "Fast Track" admissions.

Our 24/7 Emergency Service

We constantly survey airlines, local tour companies and hotels to ensure they meet our customer service standards, so don't let a problem ruin your holiday. Nearly all issues can be handled quickly on site—first seek help from the venue's local staff. Otherwise, call our Emergency Travel Service at **1-888-551-1181**. Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable. Schedule changes can occur and airlines and tour operators have the right to change flight and/or tour times, alter, combine services or substitute accommodations. Your counsellor will work with you to ensure you receive information as soon as possible and ensure satisfaction. See your brochure and ticket terms and conditions.

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