

SCOTCH WHISKY TASTING TOUR - BTCBS

Day 1

Enjoy the views over Loch Lomond after departing Glasgow on your drive to the west of Scotland. Turn west from the loch shores for the climb to the Pass called the Rest and Be Thankful. Then it's a downhill journey to Loch Fyne – a long fjord-like sea-loch that you follow all the way to Tarbert in Kintyre for overnight.

Day 2

The Islay ferry leaves from Kennacraig, a few minutes' drive south of Tarbert. There are many ways to explore the island. The south end has Laphroaig, Lagavulin and Ardbeg. (The extraordinary carving of the early Christian monument, the Kildalton Cross is also nearby.) Bowmore and Bruichladdich are near the centre, with some wild beaches within easy reach.

Day 3

Continue your discovery of Islay by way of Kilchoman Distillery, a farm distillery opened only in 2005, towards the western side of the island. Distilleries such as Caol Ila and Bunnahabhain lie to the northeast, on the Sound of Jura, with a visitor centre at Finlaggan on the way that tells the story of Clan Donald, the Lords of the Isles. With so much to see, make sure you're on time for the ferry and return to Kennacraig/Tarbert! (Overnight)

Day 4

Drive north, enjoying the seaboard views all the way to Oban, with its own distillery. Continue north, crossing the Connel Bridge and the Ballachulish Bridge for overnight in Fort William. The town's Ben Nevis Distillery features The Legend of the Dew of Ben Nevis Visitor Centre.

Day 5

Take the main road north through the Great Glen, admiring the views of Ben Nevis just beyond Fort William. At Invergarry swing west for the journey among the magnificent mountains of Glen Shiel. Look out for the famous views of Eilean Donan Castle before reaching Kyle of Lochalsh and the Skye Bridge. Overnight on Skye at Broadford or Portree.

Day 6

The Talisker Distillery on the shore of Loch Harport is close by the little road that leads to Glenbrittle and offers some of Scotland's best mountain views. After the distillery visit retrace the route back to the Skye Bridge and head eastwards for Inverness. Overnight Inverness.

Day 7

From Inverness go east for Forres and the nearby Dallas Dhu preserved distillery. Then follow minor roads south-eastwards to reach the River Spey at Craigellachie, in the heart of 'Scotland's Malt Whisky Trail' to see the Speyside Cooperage. From there it is a short drive north to Elgin, noted not just for its handsome ruined cathedral but also its whisky shop, Gordon and MacPhail, in the town centre. Overnight Elgin.

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Day 8

Go south-east to Keith and the Strathisla Distillery. Then follow the River Spey upstream for Aviemore. Nearby, the A9 'the Highland Road' is joined for an easy southward journey to Pitlochry. This popular little Highland resort town features two distilleries: Edradour and Blair Athol. Overnight Pitlochry.

Day 9

Return to Edinburgh. The Scotch Whisky Experience features tutored tastings, guided tours and also has a restaurant featuring whisky (where possible!) in its fine dining menus.