

Road to the Misty Isle

PASSING through Lochaber, with its fabulous braes, high mountains and huge areas of wilderness, you might think you've seen all there is to see of the magnificent west Highlands, but you'd be wrong.

If you continue north along the A82 Inverness road to Invergarry and then north west along the A87 towards the Isle of Skye you will find an area of such unimaginable beauty you'll catch your breath at the sights that meet you round every corner.

At the small village of Invergarry is the A82/A87 junction where you can either turn right for Inverness or left for the Isle of Skye and all points north west. Shiel Bridge is an ideal base from which to tour the immediate area, visit Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, a couple of hours' drive away, or go over to the island of Skye or further up the north west coast beyond Kyle of Lochalsh to Plockton and Applecross.

A single-track road from Shiel Bridge takes you round to the Glenelg peninsula via the Mam Ratagan Pass. Glenelg is a charming village and if you still want to go 'over the sea to Skye' by boat rather than the Skye Bridge you can do so from here with a small vehicle ferry which in summer plies the short distance between Glenelg and Kylerhea on Skye.

Heading once more on the A87 towards Kyle of Lochalsh you will find yourself at



Eilean Donan Castle.

loch and accessible by foot over a stone bridge. one of the most photographed, if not the most photographed locations in the whole of Scotland. Skirting the shores of Loch Duich, suddenly you come across the ancient stronghold that is Eilean Donan Castle, sitting on a rocky outcrop into the



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loch and accessible by foot over a stone bridge.

Heading towards Kyle of Lochalsh (Kyle) you'll spot the famous Skye Bridge, built to replace the short ferry crossing to Kyleakin on Skye.

Don't just bypass Kyle, though. It gives you the chance to stretch your legs and gaze over to Skye from its bustling harbour from where larger ferries sailed to Stornoway in the Western Isles before roll-on/roll-off ferries arrived and moved the main ferry port to Ullapool further up the coast.

The railway from Inverness terminates here and in summer you can enjoy a steam train journey up through Achnasheen

and glorious Glen Carron to the Highlands capital - an unforgettable trip. Near to Kyle is Balmacara Estate, run by the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) - a fine example of a Highlands crofting estate. The land has been in use for thousands of years.

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The Magic of Waternish

Waternish magic begins with the Fairy Bridge and the first spellbinding panorama of Loch Bay, Dunvegan Head and beyond to the Outer Isles.

Though it boasts the oldest inn on Skye, Waternish is an example of how tourism can develop the local modern economies of the remoter crofting areas and today over 40 businesses offer first-rate services to the many visitors throughout the year who discover the delights of this unforgettable part of the island.

Top-quality accommodation and hospitality facilities make this spectacular peninsula the perfect place for exploring the rich history and wildlife of the area, as well as the wide range of activities and visitor attractions on offer.

Most establishments are either available all year round or advertise their winter opening arrangements and times separately.

Historic Stein Inn and the celebrated Lochbay Seafood Restaurant anchor numerous bed-and-breakfast and self catering facilities. Of the five four-star visitor attractions on the island, two are found in Waternish: Skyeskyns, Scotland's unique exhibition sheepskins tannery and Shilasdair wool dyehouse are both high profile attractions. Add to these two potteries, four art galleries and printmaker's studios, knitwear and pyrography craft shops, a blacksmith, a weaver and more and you have a very full day.



The picture postcard village of Stein, Waternish, Isle of Skye

The picturesque fishing village of Stein, originally designed by Thomas Telford - with its diving centre, boat trips, upgraded jetty and car-park, moorings and conservation area - is an ideal and developing maritime centre too. This unspoilt village in its idyllic shore-side setting is living architectural history and the hub of this thriving, dynamic community.

As well as having one of the finest concentrations of quality crafts and businesses on Skye, Waternish is indeed rich in history and legend. Before leaving the area, visitors can walk forestry or coastal trails, see legendary Annat's temple, the Cat Cairn, Trumpan Church, the ancient fort of Dun Hallin or trek to the lighthouse at dramatic Waternish Point. And if all that's too much for a day out visitors can stay a week and explore all north Skye from this strategic and enchanting peninsula.

Skyeskyns, the Scotland's traditional exhibition tannery established 1983 in Waternish, Isle of Skye, is widely recognised as a manufacturer and supplier not only

of natural sheepskins but also of specialist sheepskins and related products. Many of the leading interior designers are customers and have featured Skyeskyns in the national media.

Today, visitors are transported back in time to witness the time-honoured methods of leather-making. Whilst the re-conditioned machinery is what one might have found in a 1920's tannery, state-of-the-art leather technology produces fully machine washable leather.

A free guided workshop tour offers the chance to learn how leather is made, to see not only the tanner's traditional implements: the beam, paddles, racks, buffing wheel, combs and ironing machine; but also hand-finishing processes which exploit the differing density and textures of the fleeces. Having understood how a sheepskin is made and how to look after it, the refurbished showroom offers the chance to browse what must be the widest selection of sheepskins anywhere. Look out for the new line in exotic mosaics!



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