

# HOLIDAY

## *West Highland*

**FREE**

Your holiday starts here...

**Discover the  
West Highlands!**



YOUR AWARD  
WINNING\* FREE  
HOLIDAY GUIDE

\*Scottish Newspaper Publishing Association

**500,000  
readers**

Where to go • What to see • Where to eat • Where to stay  
Packed with tourist attractions, hotels, restaurants and  
events throughout the West Highlands and Islands



## CAIRNBAAN HOTEL

*and Restaurant on the Crinan Canal*

*Delightful Coaching Inn overlooking Lock 5 on the Crinan Canal.  
A wide range of menus, lovely rooms make this  
the perfect place to 'Watch the World go by'*



Rosette for food



Cairnbaan Hotel, By Lochgilphead, Argyll Call 01546 603668 Website: [www.cairnbaan.com](http://www.cairnbaan.com)



"...brings the best food yet to Oban."

Peter Irvine, Scotland the Best! 2006/2007

Award winning restaurant on Oban's main street serving fresh local fish, shellfish and Scottish meats.

Open for Light Lunches & Evening Meals  
12am - 2pm/5.30 - 9.30pm

**Coast**

104 George Street, Oban  
t.01631 569900 www.coastoban.co.uk



Small Team Excellence Award 2007



HOLIDAY Restaurant of the Year 2007



Silver Award Winner 2007

3 COURSE SPECIAL FOR £12 AVAILABLE LUNCH AND EARLY EVENING



Eating out is a pleasurable experience in the West Highlands

Your award-winning Holiday West Highland guide features some of the best places to stay and eat on the West Coast.

Ranging from hotel accommodation to self-catering, food fair to seafood, you will find somewhere to stay and eat at your next port of call.

Stop to enjoy an eating experience at Coast in Oban – claimed to be the best by Peter Irvine, The Barn in its lovely rural, quiet setting and the other hotels & inns to stay and to dine; cosy Whistlefield Inn on Cowal, friendly Galley of Lorne and Lochnell Arms both with beautiful views or stay at Ardvullin self catering on the shores of Loch Linnhe, something for everyone, covering some beautiful areas to explore.

**THE BARN**  
Bar and Restaurant

Lovely rural setting, minutes south of Oban off the Lochgilthead road.

We offer delicious homemade meals using fresh local produce efficiently served in a friendly relaxed atmosphere.

Our varied menu and daily specials have something to suit all tastes.

- Childrens menu until 8pm
- Roast Sunday lunches
- Outside area
- 2008 Good Beer Guide

Lerags, By Oban. Tel: 01631 571313

Great Tea & Coffee, Freshly made sandwiches, Paninis and more

**Coastcafe**

5 JOHN STREET, OBAN, PA34 5NS  
Tel 01631 569 901

Home comforts in relaxing surroundings  
Pretty, refurbished rooms  
20-bed bunkhouse

A popular, friendly bar with frequent live Scottish music at weekends  
Log fires, and a large selection of Malt Whisky and real ales

**The Whistlefield Inn**  
Loch Eck, Argyll, Scotland PA23 8SG  
Telephone: 01369 860440  
Email: whistlefield@btconnect.com  
www.whistlefield.com

**The Queens Hotel**

Introducing The Carvery on Sunday - served from 12.30pm until 4.30pm  
Also open for Lunches 12.00-2.00pm  
Evening Meals in The Lounge Bar 5.30pm-9.00pm and in The Glen Campa Restaurant 6.00pm-9.00pm  
Non Residents Very Welcome

Tel 01631 562505

**Bringing the taste of Scotland to you – naturally**

**The Original**

When only the original will do, come to the home of Loch Fyne and experience Highland hospitality at its best. The Oyster Bar and Farm Shop located at Cairndow at the head of Loch Fyne combine delicious food and breathtaking views with warmth and friendship every day of the week, all year round. Open from 9am every day, tel: 01499 600236 for Restaurant bookings or 01499 600483 for the Farm Shop.

www.lochfyne.com

**THE GALLEY OF LORNE INN**  
Ardfern • By Lochgilthead • Argyll • PA31 8QN  
T: 01852 500 284 • F: 01852 500 578  
E: enquiries@galleyoflorne.co.uk • www.galleyoflorne.co.uk

Andrew and Sarah Stanton, the proprietors of The Galley of Lorne Inn, Ardfern welcome you to this wonderful location on the Argyll coast

**17th Century Public Bar** • Full of character and friendly atmosphere. 50 malt whiskies and real ale  
**Lounge Bar** • Relax and unwind in our lounge bar where old meets new.  
**Restaurant** • The ideal location to wine and dine with outstanding views over Loch Craignish.  
**Menu** • New Restaurant, Bar and Children's menus for 2008.  
**Accommodation** • Our six bedrooms have been refurbished to a high standard and at the same time attract very competitive tariffs.  
**Functions** • Catering for up to 120 people, Weddings, Anniversaries, Birthday Parties, Special Events, Exhibitions, Meetings, Funerals and much more can all be held in our Function Room.

**Guest House**  
www.barriemore-hotel.co.uk

**The Barriemore**

Corran Esplanade Oban  
T: 01631 566356

**Lochnell Arms Hotel**  
North Connel, By Oban  
Tel: 01631 710408  
www.lochnellarms.co.uk  
enquiries@lochnellarms.co.uk

Sun Terrace Conservatory Restaurant

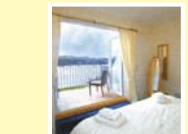
**Mon – Sat**  
Lunches 12 – 2.30pm  
High Tea 5 – 6pm  
Dinners 6 – 9.30pm

**Sundays**  
Sunday Carvery 12 – 4pm  
Dinners 6 – 9.30pm

**Mon – Fri**  
Senior Citizens Lunches 12 – 2.30



Take-away Menu also available



Balcony with seaview and seaview rooms overlooking the Falls of Lora available.

# Ceud Mile Failte — one hundred thousand welcomes

**W** E IN THE West Highlands offer you 'ceud mile failte' - one hundred thousand welcomes - to a land of rivers, lochs, glens and high mountains. Just as in any other year you will receive the warmest of welcomes to this unique part of the British Isles offering everything for culture vultures, sportsmen and women, children and tourists who just want to take it easy.

Any stay in the West Highlands is memorable - apart from its spectacular mountains and lochs scenery the area has award-winning restaurants, superb fresh food, varied accommodation including hotels, guesthouses, caravan parks, campsites, log cabins and hostels and fantastic night-life with ceilidhs and traditional music resounding throughout the night. And that's just for starters.

The West Highlands also specialises in outdoor life, with Lochaber and Fort William as the outdoor capital of the UK. Add to this fabulous views round every corner and you'll see why the West Highlands definitely have the 'wow' factor.

The West Highlands are wonderful to visit at any time of year though April and May offer the most settled weather. Visitors shouldn't be surprised to see tropical plants dotted about at any time of year. Despite us being on the edge of Europe the Gulf Stream passes by here, making for a temperate climate.



A hundred thousand welcomes from this friendly face.

## Bargains to be found on Lochgilphead High Street

THE people of Lochgilphead always know where to go to find a bargain...

Willie and Pat's on Lochgilphead's Argyll Street has been running successfully for 20 years and customers are never disappointed when they see the selection of items which are for sale and

wonderful prices.

Willie and Pat's sells a variety of top-quality seconds from a wide range of well known high street stores.

Some of the clothing, not all, they sell are seconds, but the quality is so good you would be hard pressed to tell.

The main differ-

ence between the clothing in the high street stores and Willie and Pat's is the savings of between 30 and 70 per cent!

### Browse

Pat says that it is always worth popping into the shop for a browse on your way past because you never know

what items they are going to have next.

From top-brand trainers to children's wear, from trendy clothing for men to a wide range of women's styles, there is guaranteed to be something to suit everyone.

If you see something in a high street shop which you like

it may be worth waiting and having a look in Willie and Pats because there is a good chance that they will have it in stock.

So, why travel to the city to buy clothes of a high standard when you can wander down Lochgilphead High Street.

### Glenview Guest House

Warm, comfortable accommodation, twin, double and family rooms some en-suite  
Tea/coffee facilities - TV lounge  
B&B from £25 per person  
Open all year - Private Parking  
Telephone: 01631 562267

## CAIRNBAAN HOTEL AND RESTAURANT ON THE CRINAN CANAL

Situated at Crinan Canal's Lock 5, approximately nine miles along, one

of Scotland's most famous canals, Cairnbaan Hotel is steeped in history.

Originally a Mid Argyll coaching inn, Cairnbaan Hotel was built at the same time as Crinan Canal, the famous waterway that has for centuries conveyed mariners in relative safety from the shelter of Loch Fyne to the foaming waters of the Atlantic Ocean.

Cairnbaan Hotel has become a special place to hundreds of people over the years and has many colourful

claims to fame.

Among its more famous guests have been The Princess Royal, Commodore Lawrence, ex-US president Bill Clinton and his wife Hilary, to name but a few.

### High Quality

A stylish and relaxing hostelry, Cairnbaan Hotel now boasts three stars and a rosette from the AA and is a member of Taste of Scotland.

The hotel is one of only 12 to be

granted the status of Scotland's Heritage Hotel.

Its attractive, modern restaurant specialises in the use of high quality local produce including locally caught scallops, langoustine and game.

There is also Bistro-style meals available in the relaxed and comfortable surroundings of the conservatory with daily specials adding to a mouth-watering menu.



Willie & Pat's - Willie & Pat's - Willie & Pat's - Willie & Pat's - Willie & Pat's

### TOP QUALITY CLOTHING

Top quality seconds and overmakes direct from factories which supply Britain's leading stores. e.g. M & S

Give us a visit for MEN'S, LADIES' CHILDREN'S Clothing and Footwear, Household Linens etc.

SAVE UP TO 70% on current store prices Stock changes constantly!

GET A BARGAIN ANYTIME DON'T WAIT FOR THE SALES

## Willie & Pat's

ARGYLL STREET, LOCHGILPHEAD (Established 1973)  
Tel: 01546 603794

Willie & Pat's - Willie & Pat's - Willie & Pat's - Willie & Pat's - Willie & Pat's

# OBAN - Gateway to the

**A**LTHOUGH famous as a holiday resort, with visitors returning year after year, the West Highlands' main town of Oban is also an important ferry port and the major retail and administration point for surrounding communities. It offers everything for the holiday-maker, with its shops, its 'bonnie bay', plenty of entertainment and activities and stunning views.

One of the first things to greet you will be the plaintive cries of the seagulls which float in the air above the bay.

Queen Victoria loved Oban (Gaelic for 'little bay'), deeming it 'one of the finest towns we have seen' and since the early 19th century the town has proved a popular holiday destination for Glasgow's Merchant City folk keen to take in the fresh sea air and recharge their batteries.

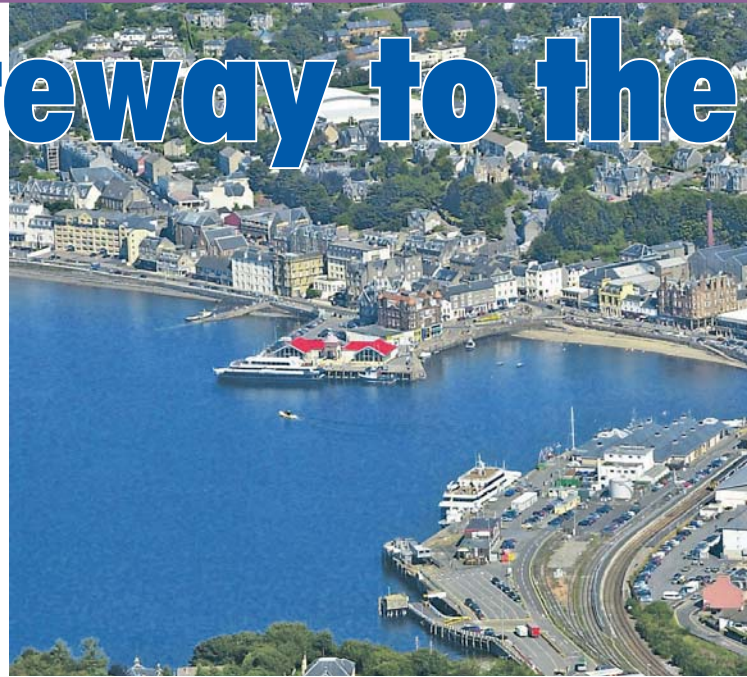
They came by steamship in those days and a fine sight these vessels must have been steaming into the bay.

Today it is easy to reach Oban by car, coach and train, making it a popular visitor destination, but it also serves an important role as the main town for its extensive hinterland, with its court, police station, auction mart and regional council headquarters.

It also has a fishing fleet and important port facilities for such things as lighthouses, coastguard operations and fisheries.

If you don't wish to do anything energetic - though there is still plenty for those who do - Oban can offer you a really relaxing time. Our hotels, guest houses, camping and caravan sites and hostel in and round the town offer all kinds of accommodation and facilities from the luxurious to the basic - whatever you are looking for Oban can supply it. Because

we have few of the chain stores found in most big towns and cities, the shops in Oban make for a more exciting purchasing experience because they are different and unusual. There is so much choice as well - delicatessen, a distillery, book-shops, a wealth of clothes shops and shoe shops, beauty parlours, souvenir and craft shops, galleries, outdoor activity retail outlets, and plenty of others which stock Highland memorabilia for you to



Oban is a popular resort for tourists visiting the Highlands

take home. All are within a short walking distance of each other.

One outlet well worth a visit is the Footwear Discount Centre at 11 John Street, a tiny lane just off George Street.

Footwear Discount Centre is open seven days a week during the summer so there is ample time for customers to work a visit into their schedule. The centre is famous for its quality footwear at bargain prices, so whatever the type of shoe you need there is something for you. Labels include Fly Flot, Hotter, Padders, Hush Puppies and Rieker, but there are many more and staff ensure that customers can shop in a relaxed atmosphere without any sales pressure to make it all the more enjoyable.

The Footwear Discount Centre has a staggering number of pairs of shoes on display on its two floors - 5,000 pairs to be exact. And the emphasis is definitely on self-selection which makes it easier for you to try and buy.

Self-catering holidaymakers will love

Oban as they can buy fresh local produce in our butcher and baker shops. We also have a choice of supermarkets, hardware stores, chemists and so on, so you'll never be short if you need to stock up.

The town's many gift shops have a plethora of goods to delight the eye. For a memorable experience visitors should definitely try Cranenburg Fine Arts, at Star Brae and Stevenson Street, which specialises in wonderful original works from the best contemporary Scottish and British artists. Solo and mixed exhibitions are held regularly throughout the year and it is a pleasure to browse all the works on display.

As well as works by artists such as Peter King, Helen Turner and Mary Davidson and there are also works of sculpture, glasswork and designer jewellery finely fabricated by the hands of local and international artists.

At the start of this year's season Cranenburg Fine Arts will be exhibiting works by

Ronnie Ford. It also has in stock prints by world-famous artist John Lowrie Morrison (Jolomo) who lives near Oban. Each October the gallery hosts an exhibition of this fine artist's work.

One of the most enjoyable things about Oban is the chance to sit and savour your surroundings. An ideal location is the bay area where you can sit and watch the Caledonian MacBrayne ferries with their striking red, black and white livery swishing in and out of the heading for the islands of Mull, Coll, Tiree, Lismore and Islay and further west to

**The Iona Shop**  
2 Queens Park Place  
OBAN, Argyll, Scotland  
Scottish Jewellery Specialists since 1947



Quality Scottish Jewellery and Gift Specialists, One of the largest selections of Ortak and Sheila Fleet Jewellery in Scotland



www.iona.co.uk

EXPERIENCE A  
**OBAN**  
DISTILLERY TOUR



Nestling beneath the steep cliff that overlooks Oban, one of Scotland's oldest sources of single malt whisky is but a stone's throw from the sea. Open all year round, limited availability during winter months, please contact for details...

Oban Distillery, Stafford St., Oban, Argyllshire.  
Tel: 01631 572004  
Fax: 01631 572011



**OPENING TIMES 2007**

**JANUARY**  
Closed

**FEBRUARY**  
Monday to Friday  
12.30pm - 4pm

**MARCH to EASTER**  
Monday to Friday  
10am - 5pm

**EASTER to JUNE**  
Monday to Saturday  
9.30am - 5pm

**JULY to SEPTEMBER**  
Monday to Friday  
9.30am - 7.30pm  
Saturday  
9.30am - 5pm  
Sunday  
12noon - 5pm

**OCTOBER**  
Monday to Saturday  
9.30am - 5pm

**NOVEMBER**  
Monday to Friday  
10am - 5pm

**DECEMBER**  
Monday to Friday  
12.30 - 4pm  
(until 20th December)  
**NEW YEAR**  
Closed



**SHOES DIRECT!**





**Lots of brands including**







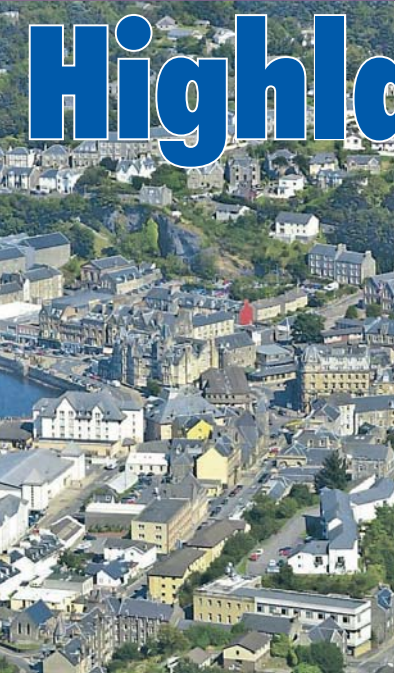
**Hush Puppies**

**SUMMER OPEN 7 DAYS**

**TELEPHONE 01631 563633**  
**11 John Street, Oban**

Famous for our quality footwear at bargain prices  
Over 5000 pairs on two floors of self selection display  
Come and browse around in a relaxed atmosphere with no sales pressure

# Highlands



dinner and you want to walk it off you could stroll up to McCaig's Tower overlooking the town and bay and offering magnificent views out to sea and glorious sunsets. The tower is a folly and was originally destined to be a museum to house statues of the family of wealthy banker John Stewart McCaig. However, his sister contested his will and the tower was never finished.

Another good walk is up the town's Pulpit Hill which again offers outstanding sea views. Also, a brisk stroll along Esplanade to Oban's lovely war memorial is another popular evening excursion, offering views over to the island of Kerrera which shelters the town from the Atlantic weather. Oban is in a bowl so if you are walking uphill you are heading away from the town centre and if you are walking downhill you will eventually come to the water's edge.

Oban and its surrounding area offer plenty of entertainment throughout the year including several Highland Games where you can see competitions for Highland dancing and music played on the bagpipes, fiddle, Celtic harp and other instruments, as well as athletics and the ancient Celtic game of shinty - similar to Irish hurling. Each August the town stages The Argyllshire Gathering which offers the best in these events. The Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival also takes place here in May at various venues including the Corran Halls on the edge of town.

Corran Halls is the main concert venue for the town with plenty of shows, exhibitions, concerts and other events occurring throughout the year. In addition, the town's pubs and bars have live music at night especially in summer, so holidaymakers can enjoy a true flavour of Highland song, music and food. The Oban

Continued on Page 6

the romantic Outer Hebridean islands of Barra and South Uist, or heading into port. Not for nothing is Oban known as the 'Gateway to the Isles'. You'll also see small sailing boats and bigger charter vessels moored against the harbour walls while seafarers stock up at the town's shops. Don't be surprised if you see a tall ship gliding gracefully into Oban Bay or even a Nato or British warship moored there. Oban serves all kinds of ships and serves them well. Bigger cruise liners call in as well to give their passengers a chance to experience the delights of the town.

A choice of eating establishments in Oban makes choosing a meal very easy. There is everything from fast food outlets, bars and cafes to top-notch award-winning restaurants and hotels serving fresh locally-sourced produce including seafood for which the West Highlands are famous. Our selection of eateries includes Indian and Chinese, and many offer spectacular views across Oban Bay along with their breakfasts, lunches, dinners, snacks and afternoon teas.

Sometimes it's hard to keep children amused when it's raining and if the skies should happen to open during your stay there are plenty of places to keep them entertained.

One way to keep them happy and occupied in wet - or dry - weather is to visit Mitchell's Family Amusement Centre next to the cinema. Here you will find all the latest video games as well as more traditional amusements such as fruit machines. The centre also has pool tables, children's rides and driving machines.

This family-run business has been operating for 28 years. It also has a sweetie and ice cream shop in George Street, and if the kids need sustenance after their pool or video game there is Mitchell's Coffee House in Argyll Square whose mouth-watering selection of refreshments will easily satisfy their hunger pangs. The menu includes toasted sandwiches and filled baguettes and a range of coffees and tea as well as cold drinks. So if you're up for a latte with a tuna melt, Mitchell's is the place for you.

Night-time strolls in Oban can be full of romance and memory. Once you've had

Meals & Snacks  
Served all Day  
9am - 9pm



REGENT HOTEL

OBAN, ARGYLL

Corran Esplanade, Oban PA34 5PZ  
Opposite North Pier carpark  
Tel: 01631 562341  
Email: reservations.regent@ohiml.com

OUTSIDE  
EDGE

OUTDOOR SPORTS  
SPECIALISTS



Walking  
Camping  
Canoeing

Climbing  
Watersports  
Kites



OUTSIDE  
EDGE

6 Macgregor Court, Oban, Argyll PA34 4DJ  
Tel: 01631 566617 Fax: 01631 571117  
www.OutsideEdgeOban.com

## Kranenburg Fine Arts

Kranenburg Fine Arts specialise in original works from the best in Scottish and British contemporary art. They host a range of solo and mixed exhibitions throughout the year, in the unique and modern spaces of their Star Brae and Stevenson Street galleries. Artists include Peter King, Ronnie Ford, Gillian Goodheir, Helen Turner, Davy Brown, Mary Davidson, Pam Carter, Colin Bullock, Trisha Hardwick, Jack Morrocco and many more. Upcoming in October is their annual John Lowrie Morrison exhibition comprising three floors of his colourful paintings.



Also exhibited are sculpture, glass-work, and designer jewellery from local and international artists and bronze sculpture by Laurence Broderick

Open all year 9.30 a.m to 5.30 p.m  
Monday - Saturday and by appointment  
Website: www.kranenburgfineart.com  
E-mail: gallery@kranenburgfineart.com  
Star Brae and  
Stevenson Street  
Telephone 01631 562 303

Knipoch  
Motel  
By Oban, Argyll



Tel: 01852 316251  
Fax: 01852 316249  
www.knipochhotel.co.uk

Vintage & Classic Lorry Parade  
Saturday 27th September  
from 1pm - 5pm

Organised by Oban & Lorn Lions Club this special Charity Extravaganza is being staged to honour the memory of the late Tommy Owens, who was always at the forefront of many charitable endeavours in the community of Argyll and who founded Oban Express, now a huge employer locally.

Fun Fair and Rides, Music and a Running Commentary on all the vehicles - large and small as they parade through Station Square during the afternoon, culminating in the Grand Parade through the Square, along the Esplanade, along George Street and departing (and arriving) via Combie Street.

Everyone Welcome - Entry Free



Contemporary  
Celtic  
Restaurant and  
Rustic Bars

See our  
Live Celtic Music  
Calendar

Star Brae

60 George Street,  
Oban, Argyll PA34 5SD  
Tel: 01631 565078

Opening hours  
Sunday - Thursday 10am - 11pm  
Friday & Saturday 10am - Midnight



# OBAN - Gateway to the Highlands

Continued from Page 5

Times, the town's weekly newspaper, has a 'what's on' list of events each week. For children and adults Oban offers a cinema showing all the latest films, a leisure centre with a splash pool and a full-size swimming pool with flume, a climbing wall, a gym. Add to this an outdoor play park, soft play area, tennis courts and a five-a-side astro-turf park as well as badminton courts and squash courts and you've have more than enough to work off your surplus energy. And after all that exercise you can enjoy a relaxing sauna as well.

The town's War and Peace Museum is also a popular attraction. It has a huge display of nostalgic heirlooms and a dedicated and highly knowledgeable army of volunteers.

Outdoor activities are there for the taking - climbing, walking, cycling, boating, diving, canoeing, horse riding, fishing, sailing, skiing and much more.

Then there's the wildlife and plenty of it - deer, sea eagles, otters, seals, dolphins, whales and more.

Cuan Mor owner Paul Sloan is delighted with the way business has boomed since he bought the former Mondo in March 2007.

Paul has transformed the premises into a tasteful gastro pub, and the reclaimed Scottish materials and handcrafted work used in the refurbishment programme add a touch of class and tradition to the restaurant and bar.

There is currently one menu on offer for

the whole day, with 12 dishes to choose from. The menu will change with the seasons four times a year, and with each of the six main lunch dishes costing between £5.95 and £6.95, the freshly prepared food is affordable for diners of varying budgets. Families of all ages are welcome at Cuan Mor and a kid's menu is on offer, but the bar is strictly for over 21s only.

Opened from 10am when locals and tourists can take the opportunity to relax with coffee and accompaniments, Cuan Mor differs from most other restaurants in Oban as food is served right up until 10pm.

With beautiful French doors looking onto George Street and the stunning scene of the bay beyond, Cuan Mor is the perfect place to enjoy delicious food and first-class service.

Situated in a former bank building, this award-winning restaurant on Oban's main street is renowned for creative cooking and exceptional service.

In 2007, Coast Restaurant picked up two awards from Eat Scotland and was also awarded the Holiday West Highland Restaurant of the Year.

The relaxed and friendly environment offers a haven from Oban's hustle and bustle or infamous west coast weather. Enjoy watching the world go by with a light lunch or choose from the seasonal a la carte menu. A special 3 course menu for £12 is also available at lunchtime and early evening.

Husband and wife team Richard and Nicola Fowler opened Coast restaurant in 2004 and quickly became the locals' favourite. Richard's imaginative cooking uses the best of Oban landed fish, and shellfish along with locally sourced meat and game with vegetarian options also available.

The carefully selected and sensibly priced wine list draws on both old and new worlds and there's a good range of Scotland's most famous whiskies to choose from.

Coast Restaurant is open 7 days a week - Mon to Sat 12-2pm and 5.30-9pm and Sun 5.30-9.00pm.

If you're looking for just coffee or a light snack Coast-caffe a new venture for Richard and Nicola has opened round the corner on John Street. Eat in or take away there's a variety of freshly made sandwiches and snacks available.

And with a warm welcome and friendly service from Nicola and her team, you'll enjoy a delicious relaxed meal or snack in modern and comfortable surroundings. Coastcafe is open 7 days a week 9-4pm

Oban has one of the oldest distilleries in Scotland and you can have a guided tour with a wee dram at the end which will really put a spring in your step. Near to Oban are lots of attractions where visitors can enjoy a day out or just a morning or afternoon. Children will love the national seal rescue sanctuary.

In addition, there are historic castles with dark dungeons, a power station inside a mountain and lots of intriguing mysteries and legends whose trails you can follow.

A pleasant excursion is a visit to Ardrathatn Priory Gardens. The priory itself is Scotland's second oldest inhabited house and the seat of the last Gaelic-speaking Scottish parliament in 1308. Older still is Dunollie Castle, at the entrance to Oban Bay, with records showing it was captured as early as AD498 by the marauding Irish Loarn brothers from whom comes the name Lorn, still used today for the area surrounding Oban.

The castle guards the northern approach to Oban Bay. From their principle seats of Dunstaffnage and Dunollie castles, the Macdougalls, lords of Lorn and chiefs of the clan, exerted a major influence in Argyll as well as in the islands to the west. Their power ended early in the 14th cen-



Oban's North Pier with McCaig's Tower in the background

ture when the clan chose the losing side in the struggle for the Scottish throne.

Today, the name is known mainly for the MacDougall Collection, a vast array of artefacts of social history amassed by Miss Hope MacDougall, daughter, sister and aunt to three successive chiefs of the clan.

The vast collection include peat spades, a herring girl's kist, early vacuum cleaners, butter moulds and churns, the contents of a cobbler's shop, hand-loom weaving and textiles, an early post office and an unrivalled range of tools for working the land. This unique collection is accompanied by clear documentation as to the origin and owner of each item and the collector's own research and brings the history of the area alive.

There are plenty of hostelries round Oban set in tranquil glens or by the sides of lochs selling the area's finest of ales and whiskies as well as high quality meals using local produce.

All in all, Oban and its surrounding area have everything the visitor could want and more. There is so much to see and do that their attractions will call you back time after time as if by magic.

**When in Oban visit**  
**MITCHELL'S**  
**FAMILY AMUSEMENT CENTRE**  
 142 George Street, Oban (adjoining the cinema)

**POOL TABLES** **FRUIT MACHINES** **AMUSEMENT MACHINES**  
**ALL THE LATEST VIDEOGAMES** **KIDDIES' RIDES**

**Fun for all the family**

**THE CORRAN HALLS**  
 Argyll & Bute Council  
**The Esplanade, Oban, Argyll, PA34 5AB**  
**Box Office Telephone: 01631 567333**

**Dates for you Diary - Sept/Oct**

<b>SATURDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER</b> <b>One Night of Queen</b> 8pm Tickets £16.50 Reserved Seating	<b>FRIDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER</b> <b>The Drifters</b> Door 7.30pm Tickets £17.50 Reserved Seating
<b>FRIDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER</b> <b>Phil &amp; Aly</b> Scottish Tour 2008 8pm Tickets £15 Reserved Seating	<b>Friday 17th OCTOBER</b> <b>The Complete Stone Roses</b> Doors 7.30pm Tickets £18
<b>CORRAN HALLS BOX OFFICE FOR DETAILS - 01631 567333</b>	<b>SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER</b> Scottish Opera Presents <b>The Merry Widow</b> Tickets Adult £13 / Under 26's £5

**GEOFFREY (TAILOR)**  
 kiltmakers and weavers  
 Inc. **21stCenturyKilts**  
 "the timelessness of quality"

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- New Hire for Life™ service.
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**HOLIDAY WEST HIGHLAND**  
 is an  
**OBAN TIMES GROUP PUBLICATION**

To advertise telephone  
**SALLY 01631 568000**

# MULL AND IONA - so much to offer the visitor

**T**O VISIT Mull and Iona is to have, literally, a true taste of the West Highlands. With Iona being almost a stone's throw from the foot of Mull the two islands are inextricably linked. A visit to both will give you a detailed insight into early Celtic Christianity and local history and culture. Mull particularly is well-known for its local produce, including cheese, and its wildlife holidays.



The ferry at Fionnphort

Children will love Mull for it is here that the television series Balamory was set - at Tobermory. The ferry trip from Oban to Craignure, near Tobermory, doesn't take long. They'll be thrilled to be in Balamory with its gaily-coloured houses.

Tobermory also has plenty of bars, restaurants, cafes and hotels offering superb locally grown food. Any idea of dieting will go out of the window when you see the mouth-watering foods you can taste or buy. Mull and Iona are a foodie's paradise and calorie counting will simply be a 'waist' of time.

If you want to sample all that's best about the islands' foods you should visit at the end of summer when a food festival celebrates all that is good about Mull and Iona's produce - the cheeses, meats, seafood and bread are a gastronomic delight.

With its rugged high mountains, Mull is rapidly being recognised as one of the places to go for a wildlife holiday for there is much to be seen. Birds include the recently introduced white-tailed sea eagle. Other rare birds you could spot are mer-

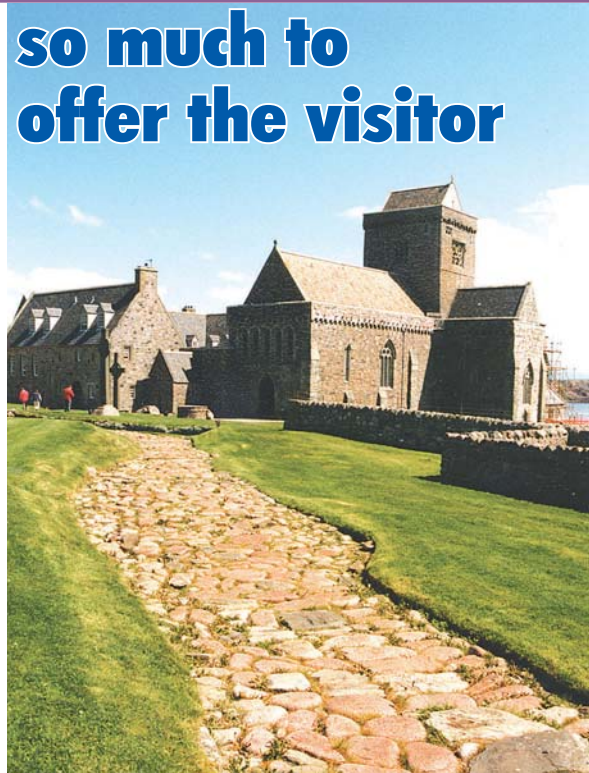
round their shores as well and if it's an all-round experience you want this year's festival of wildlife will be right up your alley.

The islands of Mull & Iona are internationally recognised as areas of outstanding scenery, biodiversity and geology, and are home to some of Scotland's leading wildlife tour operators. Countryside Rangers will lead visitors to see the chicks of world famous White Tailed Eagles of Mull. Experienced tour guides offer close encounters with otter, deer, golden eagles, whales and dolphins, as featured on the BBC programmes presented by Bill Oddie.

More recently the isles have also become known for the quality of produce on offer, from succulent seafood and award winning local cheese to smoked fish and hill reared lamb, showcased in the Taste of Mull & Iona Food Festival.

If this were not enough for the discerning visitor, Mull & Iona offer a varied programme of activities organised by the island's numerous arts, culture and heritage organisations. These include the unique Ionad Eachdraidh an Rois Mhuilich, and An Tobar.

A brand new comprehensive 'What's On' website at [www.wildisles.co.uk](http://www.wildisles.co.uk) lists all the activities and organisations involved with contact details and a new e-booking facility for many events.



Iona Abbey - at the heart of Celtic Christianity

Continued on Page 8

lins, hen harriers and 'incomers' such as the bee-eater. Wildlife abounds on Mull and Iona and for many events.

## THE CRAIGNURE INN

Isle of Mull, PA65 6AY  
Tel: 01680-812305  
Email: [craignureinn@btconnect.com](mailto:craignureinn@btconnect.com)  
[www.craignure-inn.co.uk](http://www.craignure-inn.co.uk)



Early 18th century Drovers Inn set just 200 yards from the main ferry terminal. Ideal and central location for exploring the beautiful and exciting Isle of Mull. Comfortable en-suite accommodation available. Warm and friendly bar serving great traditional home cooking every day from 12 noon till 9 pm with a good selection of malts, wines and beers.

Alex and Tiina and their staff welcome all

## Isle of Mull Hotel & Spa

With magnificent position overlooking the Sound of Mull, this hotel offers bedrooms and public areas with stunning views

Relax and escape from it all in the new 17 metre swimming pool and spa. Sauna, steamroom, outside hot tub, hardresser & beauty treatments. Lounge bar, whisky bar and restaurant, 86 bedrooms. Conference and meeting facilities are available.

Awarded 3 Stars by the AA and Visit Scotland

Xmas party nights are approaching soon, so why not try something different!

On Saturday 13th and Friday 19th December there will be great food, good music a great festive fun evening and accommodation only £20 per person bed and breakfast.

Celebrate the festive night out with a difference.

Also you have the use of our fantastic leisure facilities newly opened this year so the morning after have a soak in the hot tub overlooking the Sound of Mull or how about that special 'mud room treatment'

Xmas party night with a difference. We are only a 40 minute sail from Oban.



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C R E R A R  
HOTELS

Bob Walker  
General Manager  
Isle of Mull Hotel and Spa

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## Pennyghael Hotel

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email:- [pennyghaelhotel@gmail.com](mailto:pennyghaelhotel@gmail.com)

Come and join us at Pennyghael, the place to relax, and take advantage of our wonderful location on the shore of Loch Scridain. We offer comfortable hotel accommodation, great food and a warm welcome. A great base for bird watching, wildlife & walking holidays.

**Restaurant open to non-residents**

Please call 01681 704288 to secure your booking

# MULL AND IONA - so much

Continued from Page 7

to Torosay stately home. This 10 ¼ inch gauge line operates steam and diesel engines and allows you to take in breathtaking views across to the mainland as you're chugged along.

You'll see Ben Nevis; Britain's highest mountain, Glencoe, the island of Lismore, Ben Cruachan and the island's own Duart Castle, making it an unforgettable experience.

This really is a unique trip, equal to any similar one in Europe, with the railway climbing steep gradients through woodland, with primroses and rhododendrons lining the route.

The train can be chartered for large groups and there is limited accommodation for wheelchair users.

Once you arrive at Torosay you will see it is a fabulous Victorian house set in 12 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens and woodlands.

If you're a history buff a visit to Duart Castle should satisfy you. This 13th century seat of the Chief of Clan MacLean is



The impressive Duart Castle

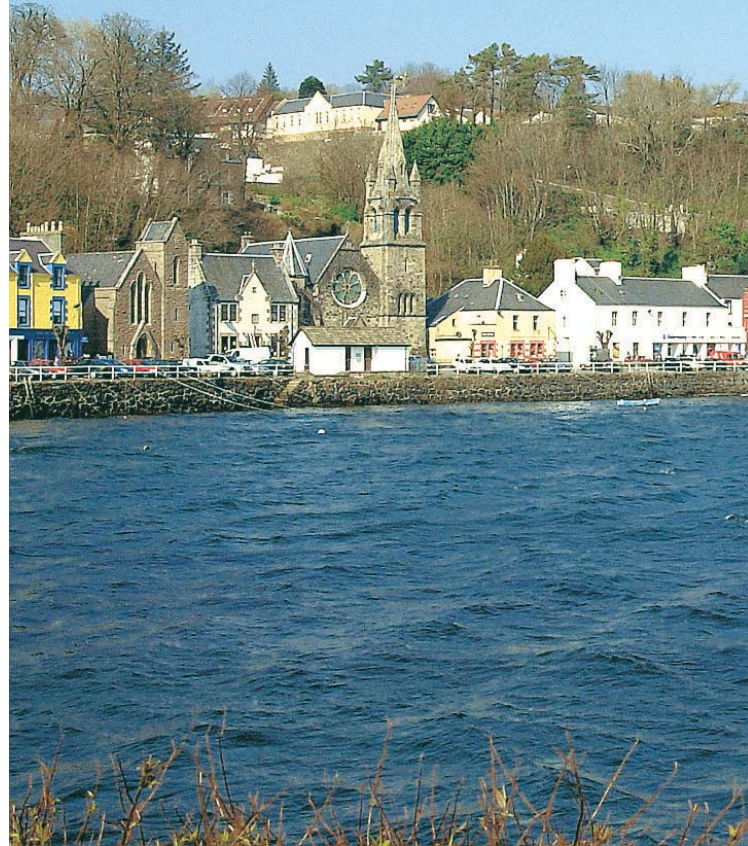
visited by people from all over the world. It has everything you could wish for: dark dungeons, exhibitions, state rooms and there's also a tearoom. You and the family can also play boules or do some kite-flying here.

An artist's mecca, Mull and Iona are also popular with craftsmen and women who've settled here inspired by the islands' beauty to create fine hand-crafted wares. There are plenty of retail outlets where you can find their goods.

A prestigious new arts and crafts complex has been created on the charismatic isle of Iona with the idea of providing a sustainable future for island businesses and boosting the economy.

Two years in the building, St Columba Steadings arts and crafts complex was conceived by local artist Mhairi Killin in partnership with The National Trust for Scotland. Mhairi's aim was to provide affordable, well-equipped workshop and retail premises in an ideal location for local artists and crafts people.

Working to exacting standards of renovation, given the location's proxim-



ity to one of Scotland's biggest tourist attractions, Iona Abbey, local stonemason Colin MacDougall has lovingly restored the ruined farm steadings. With internal features by Scottish artists the buildings

themselves are a beautiful addition to the architecture of the island.

Various organisations have helped with funding and offered vital support. They include Argyll and Islands Enterprise, The Highland Fund, The SJ Noble Trust and, through the auspices of The National Trust for Scotland, The Russell Trust.

## Island Encounter

Birdwatch & Wildlife Safaris  
Isle of Mull



One of the best days out in the UK.  
With a guide of 10 years experience.

To find eagles, otters, harriers, merlin, divers, peregrine, seals and deer etc. Average 48 species per trip, a little easy walking done. Binoculars available. Only £34 per person including lunch. Comfortable 8 seat vehicle.

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Not recommended for very young children



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Open to residents & non-residents for Scottish breakfasts, lunches, snacks & evening meals.

Why not make it a wee stop over in one of our 6 en-suite rooms."

Call Karl or Chris to book".

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## It pays to advertise in HOLIDAY WEST HIGHLAND

2006  
We placed advertisements in 3 issues of Holiday West Highland in 2006, with a 'cut out' token to hand in when visiting the Sea Life Sanctuary. These tokens generated over 1,700 new customers! We would recommend this guide and have placed ads in all 5 issues for 2007.

In 2007, the Holiday West Highland voucher collection generated 3,866 new customers for us! It is by far, our biggest redeemer of all advertising we do and I would absolutely urge other businesses to use this to promote their company for the best results.

Alex  
Manager, Sealife Sanctuary, Barmulloch

Dear Sally,  
Just to say how pleased we are with the back page advert layout in Holiday West this season. We feel that this particular position in the publication has maximised the effect of our advert for Argyll Charters.  
Many thanks.  
Regards  
Margaret Stevenson

Inveraray Jail have placed half page adverts in Holiday West Highland for five years, which we have found it to be an excellent media to reach our target market, bringing in new customers every year.  
Gavin Dick  
Manager



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Bed and Breakfast accommodation



**Ach-Na-Brae Cottages**  
Self Catering accommodation

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It pays to advertise in  
**HOLIDAY WEST HIGHLAND**



# to offer the visitor

A true taste of the West Highlands



Tobermory - the setting for the childrens' TV programme Balamory

More than ten percent of the island's population will benefit economically from the St Columba Steadings project by encouraging islanders to develop their creative and business skills. It offers an economically sustainable future for 11 micro businesses and has created a diverse and lively centre of activity on Iona.

The businesses are Mhairi's own, Aosdana, a craft co-operative of nine small businesses, Oran Creative Crafts and a

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The Island of Iona with the world-famous Abbey on the right of the photograph. Iona Abbey is at the forefront of Celtic Christianity

knitwear business, Issy on Iona. This exciting project will be a sure addition to the Iona visitor itinerary.

Aah, Iona ... ancient burial ground of Scottish kings and the cradle of Celtic Christianity in Scotland.

The island is dominated by its abbey and the story of St Columba who landed here from Ireland to bring Christianity to pagan Scotland. For such a tiny island Iona has a huge Christian reputation and is visited by tens of thousands of people each year.

As well as its religious side, Iona has plenty of bed and breakfast and hotel accommodation and shops selling paintings of local seascapes and landscapes, books and other items. With its air of spirituality and its interesting shops, Iona will draw you back time and again, as will the delights of Mull with its varied offerings for young and old.

Mull Theatre, based just outside Tobermory, is one of the top professional touring companies in Scotland, and has been producing high-quality and innovative theatre for more than 40 years. Each year, a selection of drama, comedy, children's shows and workshops from Mull Theatre can be found in venues all over Mull and Iona.

For 2008, Mull Theatre productions include:  
KATIE MORAG – a revival of the hugely successful musical play for children, based



Smile Please! This cheeky seagull hitches a ride on the Oban to Mull ferry

on the popular stories by Mairi Hedderwick

SWINDLE AND DEATH – a new black comedy by the award-winning playwright Peter Arnott

ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ACCORDIONIST – a co-production with Right Lines – the legendary comedy ceilidh murder mystery!

MACBETH – Mull Theatre's highly acclaimed version of the Scottish play (All shows are touring Scotland this year.)

To find out what's on and when, call Mull Theatre Box Office on 01688 302828, or visit [www.mulltheatre.com](http://www.mulltheatre.com).



Calgary Bay and Sands

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Isle of Mull



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Isle of Mull

Creating exciting drama,  
comedy & children's shows  
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[www.mulltheatre.com](http://www.mulltheatre.com)

# LOCHABER & GLENCOE

**B**EYOND Appin lies the district of Lochaber which is now widely regarded as the outdoor capital of the UK. Indeed, the facilities it offers the outdoor person really cannot be bettered in this country. With Fort William at the heart of this huge area, which takes in Glencoe, Kinlochleven, the Ardnamurchan peninsula, Britian's highest mountain and all the glory of stunningly beautiful lochs and glens, Lochaber will stay in your heart for ever.

Streams tumble down its mountainsides, waterfalls crash down from great heights. The 92-mile West Highland Way ends at Fort William and the 73-mile Great Glen Way to Inverness starts at the town.

From the central belt Rannoch Moor is the entrance to Lochaber through Glen Coe, one of the top ten sights in the world. Driving down the A82 along this looming, glooming glen, you gain a sense of its sad history with the infamous 1692 massacre. Home of the MacDonalds, descendants of the survivors of the massacre still live in Glencoe village which has a small but entrancing museum, a shop, post office and community hall.

From Glen Coe you can follow picturesque Loch Leven to its head at Kinlochleven. Once an important aluminium smelting village it is now a quiet community but busy with



A superb view from Ben Nevis, Britain's highest mountain. Photo: sillycatmedia.com

tourists in the summer as the West Highland Way passes through it and its amenities include pubs, shops and accommodation.

The village of Ballachulish, near Glen Coe, was once important for its slate quarrying. Now, like Kinlochleven, its industry is gone, but it is still an interesting place.

All along the A82 from Glen Coe you will find accommodation for all pockets. Near Inchree is Corran Ferry where you can take a short ferry trip across to Ardgour on the Ardnamurchan peninsula – a hidden gem of the West Highlands. But follow the A82 and you find yourself in Fort William which lies at the foot of Ben Nevis and on the shores of Loch Linnhe. Fort William has everything to show it is the outdoor capital of the UK. It has many outdoor clothing shops, pubs, bars and hotels, guesthouses and restaurants and places where you can hire outdoor equipment such as canoes and mountain bikes and skiing equipment.

A highlight is to take a gondola at Nevis Range and ascend hundreds of feet to Aonach Mor adjacent to Ben Nevis. This is a skiing area and also the home of mountain-biking championships, with superb runs where you can have a go.

Mountain-bike trails also run through the local forestry and make for a wonderful excursion if you fancy maintaining your fitness. Other sports facilities in the town include a swimming pool and gymnasium but more sedentary visitors can take a loch cruise. A walk up Glen Nevis, staggeringly

beautiful, with a stunning waterfall called Steall, is a must.

Don't forget that Lochaber is also Harry Potter country. Many scenes were filmed here and sights include the famous Glenfinnan viaduct on the Road to the Isles, Glen Coe where Hagrid's Hut was to be found and the Hogwarts Express.

Crannog Cruises offers visitors to Fort William a truly unique experience. The 90 minute cruise, sailing from the town pier in Fort William aboard Souter's Lass, gives visitors the opportunity of seeing common and grey seals, otters, porpoise, the occasional golden eagle and many other species of native wildlife.

Passengers will have numerous opportunities to photograph the astonishing local scenery including outstanding views of the southern face of Ben Nevis. The cruise is made all the more entertaining with the informative and anecdotal skipper's commentary.

Souter's Lass has a spacious bar and lounge serving a selection of hot and cold drinks and snacks and an all weather viewing deck, meaning that everything you need for a great trip is on board.

After the cruise, enjoy a meal at Crannog restaurant, also based on the town pier. Crannog's restaurant team are passionate about bringing guests the freshest tastes from the very waters you may have just cruised along, so you'll find a constantly changing menu that uses the best local

catches of the day.

Firm favourites like mussels and salmon might be joined by hand-dived scallops, local langoustines, halibut or monkfish; all cooked in a simple and classic way that lets the food speak for itself.

For those who prefer meat or vegetarian options, you'll find a range of perfect dishes, including regulars' favourite, prime Scottish Ribeye.

At Crannog, the delicious seafood is only part of the experience: the unrivalled views of Loch Linnhe's tranquil waters, attentive staff and warm ambience all add up to a perfect setting for a relaxed lunch or special dinner.

It's advisable to book ahead, for both cruises and the restaurant, especially at the weekend – Crannog's team will certainly give you a warm west Highland welcome!

The Moorings Hotel lies alongside the Caledonian Canal at the Famous Neptune's Staircase. With splendid Panoramic views of Ben Nevis and Aonach Mhor.

The Moorings Hotel offers comfort and style coupled with the Convenience of a Modern Hotel. Here you will receive a warm Highland Welcome from the friendly staff, who maintain the highest standards enhanced by the personal touch.

The hotel has benefited from an extensive upgrading of all facilities in recent times, along with the addition of 10 executive bedrooms, each with a superb outlook over the Canal and Mountains.

## NEVIS RANGE

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and for information on cruises call **01397 700714**

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# APPIN and LISMORE

The romantic and beautiful district of Appin lies between Loch Creran and Ballachulish on the A828 Connel Bridge to Ballachulish road. Bordered by mountains inland and seawards by Loch Linnhe it is steeped in history and is the ancestral land of Clan Stewart of Appin. The Stewarts fought for Prince Charles Edward Stuart at the Battle of Culloden in 1746 where 92 clansmen were killed or wounded out of 300. The clan gravestone can be seen in the old parish churchyard.

With its sheltered bays and idyllic scenery you'll want to return again and again to Appin with its pretty historic villages.

Further along the main road towards Ballachulish you will meet one of the loveliest views in Scotland.

Some say that the view of Castle Stalker (from the Gaelic 'stalcaire', meaning stalker or hunter), sitting firmly on its rocky base in a sheltered bay, is the finest in Scotland.

Built in the 13th century by the MacDougalls it has a turbulent and bloody history. Still in private hands, much restored and habitable once more, the castle is open on certain days depending on tides and the weather.

An infamous occurrence in Appin's history was the hanging in 1752 of James Stewart of Glen Duror for the murder of landowner and government official Colin Campbell, known as The Red Fox, of Glenure.

The chief suspect was in fact Alan Breck Stewart who afterwards could not be found. The allegedly innocent James was tried at Inveraray by a Campbell judge and jury and hanged at Ballachulish, where a plaque marks the location.

The former railway line from Oban to Ballachulish passes through Appin and must have been one of the most spectacular lines in the UK. You can still see the pretty station buildings along the line and they are still in use. One is a house, another a top hotel and restaurant but the station building at Creagan has been lovingly restored.

The green and fertile island of Lismore lies in Loch Linnhe in a natural amphitheatre of the highest mountains in Britain.

Long and narrow, Lismore is around 11 miles long by little over a mile wide, and its closeness to the mainland makes

The green and fertile island of Lismore lies in Loch Linnhe in a natural amphitheatre of the highest mountains in Britain.

Long and narrow, Lismore is around 11 miles long by little over a mile wide, and its closeness to the mainland makes it a perfect day out with a choice of two ferries which both land within easy reach of some of the best places to visit on the island.

It has the finest broch in Argyll and the largest Bronze Age cairn, and has produced an archaeological find of a massive bronze armllet so important that it has to be displayed at the National Museum of Scotland rather than in the Lismore Museum (although a replica can be seen there).

Lismore became a highly important centre for Iron Age peoples around 2000 years ago, and much later was chosen by the Celtic monk St Moluag, as the base for his mission to the Picts in the 6th century.

It reached another peak in the 13th century under the Chiefs of the Clan MacDougall who built two spectacularly sited castles on the west side. Later still, islanders turned its very rocks into a thriving industry producing lime; limekilns still dot the landscape.

The story of Lismore has been encapsulated in a new award-winning museum at Ionad Naomh Moluag, which was opened last year by the Comann Eachdraidh Lios Mòr (Lismore Historical Society). It lies close to many of the monuments and is the focal point for discovering the island.

The museum began with a project to reconstruct a thatched cottar's house, and this now stands alongside a truly 21st century building, which is an attraction and talking point in itself. It has a 'living' turf roof, geothermal heating and walls lined with sheep's wool.

Its displays, café and shop make a welcome stopping point, and on summer days the Lismore Café is busy with walkers and cyclists resting over excellent coffee and a slice of homemade cake or a delicious lunch made from local produce – often basking in sunshine on the veranda while rain clouds glower 20 miles



The ruins of Castle Coeffin on Lismore the medieval castle of the Chiefs of the Clan MacDougall

away over Ben Nevis.

There are many ways of discovering the island, and these can be found in a new booklet of Lismore Heritage Trails produced by the museum.

Including maps, circular walks, heritage and nature notes. The Trails guide is an indispensable item in the rucksack.

The island website www.isleoflismore.com has a full list of accommodation, which ranges from bed and breakfast to some delightful holiday cottages.

## GETTING THERE

**Oban to Achnacroish (Caldeonian MacBrayne car ferry) 50 minutes.**

On a fine summer's day a trip on the 'Eigg' is a delightful journey with superb views to the islands of Kerrera and Mull, and good bird watching from the deck. If you are lucky you will see porpoise.

**Port Appin to Point (passenger ferry) - under 10 minutes.**

This ferry runs hourly through the day and into the evening during the season. Small and full of character, the ferry takes just 20 passengers and a staggering number of bikes, and will repeat the crossing if full.

## GETTING ABOUT

The museum and café are 2½ miles from Achnacroish and 3½ miles from Point, and the island is perfect for walking and cycling, with bike hire on the island (delivered to the ferry) and at Port Appin.

A post-bus meets the Oban boat in the morning and afternoon with the pick-up point at the Lismore shop.

There is also an island taxi service and a community minibus can be hired for special group trips.

This summer a pony and trap will occasionally meet the ferry from Port Appin and transport you at an old-fashioned pace along to the museum 3½ miles down the road.

## MUST SEE and MUST DO'S...

It all starts or finishes with **Ionad Naomh Moluag**, the Gaelic Heritage museum and reconstructed croft house, café, shop, library, family history resource ... wet weather refuge (not that it ever rains in Argyll)...

Make sure you have a copy of the **Heritage Trails** (available at the Oban Tourist Office, local shops, the museum, and at 'honesty boxes' at the Lismore piers).

**Tirfur Broch** – a well-preserved Iron Age monument from 2000 years ago.

**Castle Coeffin** – medieval castle of the Chiefs of Clan MacDougall.

**Cathedral Church of St Moluag** – sited halfway between the two ferries.

**Achanduin Castle** – the main MacDougall castle (more of a trek, but worth it).

**Port Ramsay** – a picturesque row of old cottages.

Lismore is a farming island. Give livestock a wide berth and keep your dogs on a lead – remember that cows with calves can be dangerous. Please close gates and take your litter home.



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Lovely Views  
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## Isle of Lismore GAELIC HERITAGE MUSEUM

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- LISMORE CAFÉ delicious soups and home baking
- GIFTSHOP local crafts and quality Scottish gifts

Open 7 days, 11am - 4 pm 15th March to 31st October

Seasonal opening at Christmas and New Year

Adults £3.00: Children (under 16) free

and

Walk or cycle Lismore with our new

**Heritage Trails**  **handbook**

Containing maps, circular routes, heritage and nature notes  
Available from Tourist Offices, Lismore museum and shop, and  
'honesty boxes' at the ferry piers.

*Don't pack your rucksack without it!*



Eat at the edge of Loch Creran  
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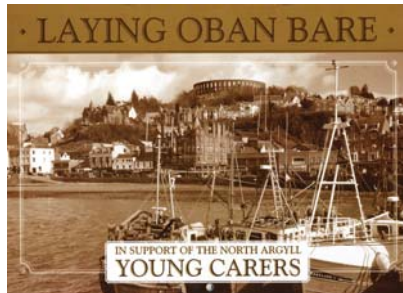
# Relax this AUTUMN

*Once the hustle and bustle of a busy summer is over, the tranquillity of a highland autumn takes over. With mountains covered in purple heather and autumn browns surrounding the still waters of the lochs, what better time to visit and relax on the west coast? Many hotels and guest houses remain open and welcome guests who seek a quieter, more peaceful break.*



## LAYING OBAN BARE

Young Carers have made a calendar, featuring the good people of Oban, discretely baring themselves, all in the name of charity! Young Carers desperately need funds to continue their good work helping children who provide a significant level of help and support to someone who cannot manage otherwise, due to ill health, frailty and disability. The added pressure to help and care around the house, can isolate the young person from society and from their peer group, also affect their schooling, missing out on their childhood. Young carers give respite, advice and advocate for these vulnerable children and run groups and one-to-one sessions.



The calendars are available from The Oban Times office, the Co-op, Alba, Atlantis Leisure and North Argyll Carers Centre for £5.99 each.

## AUTUMN AND WINTER BREAKS

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Oban Caledonian Hotel

Comfortable and modern, the bedrooms at The Oban Caledonian are ideal for short breaks, holidays or business travel. Rooms are themed as old style with rich colonial charm or cabin style with a fresh, nautical look. The informal Café Caledonian is relaxed by day and lively by night, with a relaxing brasserie ambience. At the comfortable bar you can choose from great malts or wines while you relax next to the inviting fire. The Restaurant Caledonian is one of the finest restaurants in Oban and Argyll



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# Go Wild on the West Coast



## Turus Mara

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From Ulva Ferry, Isle of Mull & Oban

The Treshnish Isles bird breeding season flaps to an end in August with auk chicks splashed down for their ocean future. Fulmars, kittiwakes and a few other species will teeter on precarious ledges for a week or two.

All the seabirds can be seen on the water throughout the year excepting puffins who mysteriously disappear to sea until next spring.

Atlantic Grey seal pups can be accessed in close proximity from the end of August

For outdoor wild-place fanatics visit the Islands of Ulva and Staffa as a day tour from Oban.

Large enough to get lost in, Ulva has tranquil woodland walks and wild untamed scenery.

Visitors can see otters, red deer, Common and Atlantic seals and many of the 123 bird species listed in The Visitors Guide to Ulva"

A one minute ferry back to Mull and board the Turus Mara vessel for Staffa. Time to walk in Fingal's Cave and explore much of the island before returning to Ulva Ferry for the scenic journey through Mull back to Craignure and the return ferry to Oban .

"Possibles" on the edge of the Atlantic, otters, whales, basking sharks, dolphins, orca and porpoises.



## About Mull Tours

Unique tours combining wildlife with visits to special places amid stunning scenery. Hear stories of Mull life past & present from a qualified guide. Benefit from David's 35 years' experience of living on the island. Spend a magical day with David seeking out the wildlife of this beautiful island - Golden Eagles, Sea Eagles, Otters, Red Deer, Seals and many others. Plus soak up the atmosphere of Mull, by seeing castles, standing stones, 400-year-old forests and ancient settlements.

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Why not visit our websites [www.aboutmull.co.uk](http://www.aboutmull.co.uk) and [www.aboutmullwildlife.co.uk](http://www.aboutmullwildlife.co.uk)



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Isle of Mull

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[www.mullponytrekking.co.uk](http://www.mullponytrekking.co.uk)



## Achnalarig Riding Stables

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Just one and a half miles from Argyll Square, Oban brings you to beautiful countryside and Achnalarig Riding Stables, which is an STRA approved RDA centre. Advance bookings are recommended for riding and trekking through lovely countryside or lessons available for all ages, in all-weather arena. Beginners are welcome, hats available. Fully licenced and insured centre. Please phone 01631 562745 for further details.



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# TAYNUILT & LOCH AWE - at

**T**HE pretty village of Taynuilt, near Oban, straddles the A85 amid glorious scenery at the foot of Ben Cruachan and on the shores of Loch Etive. Taynuilt is steeped in history and has links with Admiral Nelson, the Callander and Oban Railway and Bonawe quarry on the north shore of the loch.

The area is so interesting you could have a wonderful holiday without ever leaving it, but it is also an ideal base from which to tour the West Highlands.

Loch Etive is one of the loveliest lochs in the area. A sea loch, it is about 20 miles long and one of the best ways to appreciate it is to take a cruise along it surrounded on all sides by stunningly beautiful high mountains almost to the entrance to the world-famous Glencoe mountain range.

You can be assured of a warm and friendly welcome from the local staff at the Robin's Nest Tearoom. Using organic and locally sourced produce, freshly made scones, sandwiches and toasties are on offer along with a wide range of teas and excellent Italian coffee or choose from a mouthwatering selection of cakes and biscuits all made in the tearoom kitchen. From midday the homemade bread and soup provides a tasty snack lunch.

The village came to prominence with the nearby Bonawe Iron Furnace, built in 1753 by a Lake District partnership and which for 120 years processed iron ore from the Lake District using local charcoal. Bonawe

is the most complete charcoal-fuelled ironworks in Britain and a display there gives you an informed glimpse of the area's industrial heritage. The homes of the furnace masters and their workers can still be seen. Even the local woodlands still bear evidence, in the coppicing, of the 600 charcoal burners who worked here.

The furnace gave the village a certain strategic importance and it was included in a military road in 1756. In 1880 the Callander and Oban Railway arrived and Taynuilt is still on the rail route today. Visitors might think it odd to see a monument to Admiral

Nelson so far north but in fact this was the first monument built to him after the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 in which he was killed.

It was erected by the school in Main Street by furnace workers. It is believed iron from the furnace was used for naval shot in the battle. In 2005 local

people commemorated the 200th anniversary of Trafalgar with a naval ceremony.

Shops in Main Street include a butcher's, a grocery, a toy shop and an antiques shop. There is also an excellent old coaching inn which provides live entertainment during the summer season and a tea shop. Although the furnace helped to form the village you see today Taynuilt is in fact much older. In Muckkairn churchyard you will find gravestones and tombstones dating from the thirteenth century.

The nearby Inverawe Country Park makes for a superb family day out. Set in



Always a warm and friendly welcome at Robin's Nest Tearoom



The stunning beauty of Loch Awe

some of rural Argyll's most stunning scenery this historic estate has something for everyone including a range of walks lasting from 20 minutes to 2 hours, allowing ample opportunity to explore the beauty of the landscape. Nature trails are laid out so that if you are very quiet you might glimpse a roe and red deer, red squirrels, eagles, buzzards and even seals.

For something a little different the traditional smokehouse gives a stage-by-stage account of the history of fishing and preserving and smoking salmon, trout, eel and much, much more.

The history of the area and the estate and some of the infamous secrets of the wonderful Inverawe House are also highlighted.

Sample Inverawe's delicious products in their tearoom and shop where a warm welcome awaits together with a fine array of produce, home-baking and fresh soup and coffee.

Robert Campbell-Preston, owner of Inverawe Smokehouses, is looking forward to a busy summer. He said: 'It's great when the sun comes out and we can make the

most of the place - there is a real buzz.

This is a family business and visitors are warmly invited to explore the smokery and even try their hand at fishing.

'The River Awe and our four stocked lochs provide a great opportunity for trout and salmon fishing and we offer seasonal lessons to the less experienced.'

Three holiday cottages on the estate offer an ideal retreat for soaking up the landscape and taking full advantage of the activities.

Taynuilt has a nine-hole golf course and a sports field where football and shinty is played and the annual Taynuilt Highland Games are held towards the end of July. Beside the sports field is an enclosed astro-turf football surface which doubles as a tennis court. You can book it at the grocer's in Main Street.

A walk round the shores of the loch near the village is a pleasant occupation as the scenery is so beautiful.

A stroll in the Aird's Bay area is popular but if you fancy more of a climb Ben Cruachan, a Munro mountain, at 3,694ft (1,126m), will test your resolve. For the uninitiated a Munro is a Scottish mountain over 3,000ft of which there are 284 in the Highlands.



Muckkairn Churchyard can trace the Taynuilt's history back to the 1300s



The grandeur of Ben Cruachan as she proudly guards Taynuilt.

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# the foot of Ben Cruachan



the Hanoverian side in Jacobite times it was extended to include a barracks. The subjugation of the Highland clans led to the castle being abandoned at the end of the eighteenth century. It caught fire during a lightning strike although some think a vengeful McGregor was the culprit. It can be visited by road or by boat.

The loch was lowered in late Victorian times for a road to be built, exposing several ancient crannogs.

Record fish have been caught in Loch Awe including a brown trout weighing 30 pounds. It's claimed an even bigger one at 39.5lbs was caught in the nineteenth century.

The beautiful St Conan's Church makes an ideal setting for a wedding. The Lakes poet William Wordsworth and his sister, Dorothy, were greatly inspired by this area and it will surely inspire you.

There's a hollow mountain on the shores of Loch Awe. Huge turbines were built inside Ben Cruachan for a massive hydro-electric scheme and the great thing is that you can see them.

You can go right into the heart of this mountain, one mile inside, and see the turbines at work using the water from the loch.

There's a visitor centre at the power station with ample parking. You can see the waters tumbling through the Pass of Brander where they narrow and deepen before gushing through the barrage for the hydro-electric scheme.

Nearby Dalmally is an ancient village

and home to a large auction mart which makes for a fascinating day out, with farmers discussing the livestock and the auctioneer taking bids. The village also has one of the largest agricultural shows in the area, an important event for local cattle breeders.

At Dalmally is a memorial to the 'Robbie Burns' of Gaelic poetry, Duncan Ban MacIntyre, a shepherd of Glen Orchy, famous for his poems In Praise of Ben Dorain, Song of the Misty Corrie and others, who was around to chronicle the infamous Highland clearances. Dalmally also has a railway station where you can catch a train to Oban or Glasgow.

At Kilchrenan and Dalavich there are plenty of forest trails for cycling or walking. But it's the loch that is the star. Nearly 30 miles long, it's massive.

Kilchurn Castle is the gem of Loch Awe and another constantly photographed view.

On a fantastic location at the head of the loch, the castle was for 400 years a Campbell stronghold but is thought to have originally been in the hands of the McGregor clan. The Campbells being on



Highland Cattle graze peacefully in the summer sunshine

One of its tiny islands is the burial place of the Dukes of Argyll. On others you'll find traces of early settlements or where cattle were kept before being driven to market along the drover's roads.

In the old days it was easiest to travel by boat and ferries regularly plied the loch bring food, goods, coal and livestock. Boats can be hired today and there are also organized steamboat and other boat trips. What a way to see the loch in all its glory.

Both the River Awe and the River Orchy flow into the loch and are great for some

serious fishing as well as the loch.

Fabulous Glen Orchy with its tumbling river and waterfalls is a canoeist's delight. It's a quiet, almost hidden glen of great beauty and a wonderful place to while away a warm afternoon.

Glen Orchy, between Dalmally and Bridge of Orchy, is only twelve miles long. In 1792 there were ten settlements here with a total of 152 people but now there are only a handful of permanent residents. Many emigrated from here and there are at least three other Glen Orchys in the world.

**I**MAGINE being in Greater London with its many millions of workers and dwellers. Now think of an area of similar size in the West Highlands but with a population of only 800. Yes, you've got it, you're at Loch Awe. Imagine only 800 people in 610 square miles of glorious scenery dominated by Ben Cruachan and the loch itself. There couldn't be a greater contrast between the noise and pollution of a capital city and the pure West Highlands air at Loch Awe.

At the height of the season the population may treble but there still room for everyone. We at Holiday West Highland can be forgiven for using the words 'fabulous, magnificent, beautiful, entrancing, wonderful, incredible' and so on as the whole area is superlatively stunning. But all these are attributable to Loch Awe.

Centrally positioned in Argyll it's within easy reach from the Cowal peninsula, Inveraray, Lochgilphead and Oban and you'll have a drive through marvellous scenery whichever road you use. But for a stay here there are plenty of hotels, guest-houses, caravans, lodges and self-catering cottages all over the Loch Awe area at Dalmally, Ardanaseig, Bridge of Orchy and other places - something to suit all tastes and budgets. Handsome Victorian piles, country houses, modern hotels, Loch Awe has them all.

Kilchurn Castle is the gem of Loch Awe and another constantly photographed view.

On a fantastic location at the head of the loch, the castle was for 400 years a Campbell stronghold but is thought to have originally been in the hands of the McGregor clan. The Campbells being on



Interested visitors view the packing department at the Inverawe Country Park's Smokery

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# FALLS OF LORA - stunning

**W**HEREVER you go in the West Highlands you'll see lochs, some fast-flowing, some sleepy, all of them beautiful. At the village of Connel when the tide is right you will see the fantastic rapids known as the Falls of Lora where stunning Loch Etive meets the tidal flows of the sea. This is a sight to behold as the loch is higher than sea level and when the loch waters level with the sea it's a fine fast-flowing spectacle. Canoeists regard the falls as a great challenge and it's great watching them fight the flow.

Connel is at the mouth of Loch Etive and the home of one of the best-known landmarks in the West Highlands - the Connel Bridge. This cantilever bridge opened in 1903 and is a popular vantage point for watching the famous falls at high tide.

Connel itself grew in the late 1600s to service the ferry from here to North Connel long before the bridge was built. The nearby Connel airfield (actually at North Connel) was a Second World War airstrip which has now being completely renovated and restored to create an airfield which caters for scheduled flights.

The Lochnell Arms Hotel at North Connel, five miles from Oban, is an ideal base for touring the West Highlands. It's easy to reach - just head over the bridge from the Oban side, take the first left and it's 200 yards up the road on the left.

Its comfortable rooms look out over the falls and the mouth of Loch Etive and friendly staff make every effort to fulfil all your requirements.

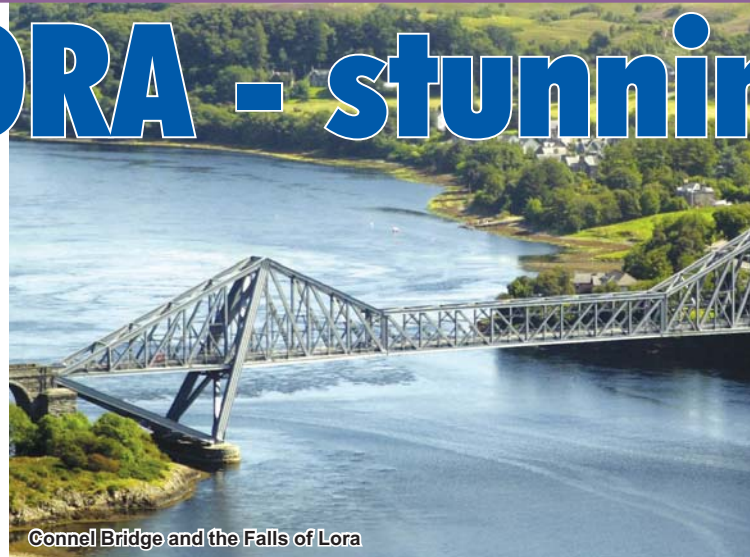
The Lochnell Arms Hotel prides itself on using local produce, much of it caught literally on its doorstep. It offers fresh mussels daily from Loch Etive and langoustines caught by local fisherman Gordon Lamb.

Divers collect its scallops off Mull and in addition it serves the finest Scotch beef as well as lamb which feeds on the slopes of Argyll. The hotel serves lunches and

high teas as well as dinners and on Sunday there's a popular carvery. Its two bars serve the finest Scotch whisky including many rare brands, as well as tea and coffee.

Your kids are not forgotten either and meals for the little ones include 'minnow' fish and chips and burger and chips. Its extensive menus also cater for vegetarians. Prices for main meals range from £7.25 to £14.95. The Lochnell Arms is totally non-smoking.

North Connel not only covers the left side of the main



Connel Bridge and the Falls of Lora

road to Fort William, it's also on the right along the narrow road to Bonawe quarry on the shores of Loch Etive.

This road takes you past historic Ardchattan Priory, founded in 1230 by Duncan McDougall for the Valliscaulian order of monks. Its gardens are open to the public between April and October. Back on the Fort William road and the next village is Benderloch. This pretty village lines both sides of the road and there are some really fine walks to be found here, both gentle strolls or the more arduous trek up Ben Lora whose summit offers spectacular views.

Ardmucknish Bay has a splendid long curved beach ideal for walking or exercising your dog. It's a perfect picnic place and is easily accessible from the village car park or by foot from the South Shian road. Along this road you'll find a true home from home at Tralee Bay Holiday Park.

This multi-award winning five-star holiday park offers luxury lodges and caravans among 26 acres of gorgeous woodland sweeping. Ardmucknish Bay and its long sweep of beach is just a short walk away for kids to play to their heart's content.

There's plenty to see round about but with the park's stunning location you may never want to leave it. Its three and four-star luxury lodges supply you with everything to make it a holiday haven. Verandahs let you enjoy the views while inside everything is superbly appointed and includes en suite showers, luxury bathrooms and central heating. The spacious two and three-bedroom top-of-the-range centrally-heated caravans are all 2007/2008

models - new for you for this year.

For sale 46 x 20 three bedroom luxury lodges from £150,000.

Kids will just love the park. Apart from the beach there's miniature golf, a duck pond and a children's play area. Barbecue equipment is available so Dad just needs to don his apron and get cracking - there are plenty of picnic tables for al fresco family meals. At Benderloch, just up the road, there's a store for all your catering needs, as well as a garage.

With its passion for conservation and the environment it's no wonder Tralee received The David Bellamy Award Gold Award for its efforts. Its five-star status was given by Scottish Holiday Parks. So with Tralee offering true gold-star status your holiday is bound to be golden too.

Wherever you see the 'Forestry Commission Scotland' sign, the woodland is yours to enjoy on foot, bike or horseback. At most sites, a carpark and waymarked trails will be easy to find, but there could also be picnic tables or a wildlife hide and you can be sure that we'll point out any places of interest, natural or historic.

You'll discover some of the best forests of Scotland in Argyll and the Islands. From the Isle of Mull to the Mull of Kintyre, from wave-tossed shore, through tranquil glen, over mountain slope. Wildlife abounds, from otter to eagle to dragonfly. And history beckons, amongst the ruins of Aoinneadh Mòr clearance township in Lochaline and the ancient woodlands of Glen Nant near Taynuilt, Lochaweside and Knapdale near Lochgilphead, which has stunning views of Jura and Scarba from its

trails. Visit Beinn Lora in Benderloch or Aros Park on Mull for wonderful coastal views, or stroll along the gentle lochside route accessible to all at Glencoe Lochan.

Cycle along mile after mile of quiet forest roads with better views around every corner or try the Achnabreck Fire Tower Trail, a compact, red and black-graded mountain bike trail


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The Park offers something for everyone with play area, Mini golf, fly fishing, nature walks and boat slipway. Set in breathtaking Highland countryside, the gateway to the Isles.

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# ng tidal rapids



the forests of mid and west Argyll and Kintyre, call 01546 602518 or email [west.argyll.fd@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:west.argyll.fd@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) or pick up a free leaflet from local Tourist Information Centres or shops or visit our website: [www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland)

The next village, Barcaldine, is set back from the present Fort William road and there are a lot of forestry walks nearby. You can park in the forest itself and simply set off. There are bike trails, too.

One place just outside Barcaldine you and your kids will adore is the famous Scottish SEA LIFE Sanctuary. Nestling in a mature spruce forest on the shores of beautiful Loch Creran the Scottish SEA LIFE Sanctuary enjoys one of the most picturesque settings in Britain and is home to some of the UK's most enchanting marine creatures. In crystal clear waters you can explore more than 30 fascinating natural marine habitats containing everything from octopus to sharks.

Their team of marine experts gives fascinating talks each day as well as feeding demonstrations. The experts may even let you hold some starfish and crabs!

Always present are two resident common seals - Lorne and Lora. The grace and elegance of these enchanting mammals can be viewed in our Underwater Seal Observatory. They also have a working Seal Hospital which takes in both breeds

of native seal – common and grey.

In addition to many marine animals in their aquarium, the Sanctuary also houses a North American Otter, Fígal who has now been at the Centre for six years.

Come rain or shine a visit to the West Coast of Scotland is not complete until you have been to the Scottish SEA LIFE Sanctuary. There's ample parking for cars and coaches and a shoreline restaurant and if you want to work off your kids' excess energy there are nature walks and trail walks throughout the sealife park as well. And to remind you of a wonderful day out there's a gift shop where you can buy sealife mementos and other presents.

Creagan Bridge, straddling Loch Creran, was installed in recent times to cut out a bendy, windy road round the loch but you should take some time out to go along this quiet track.

The head of the loch in Glen Creran is at the foot of some stunning mountain scenery. You might even spot a golden eagle gliding high above the peaks looking for food, even oystercatchers, seals and otters.

The area round Loch Creran is a Special Area of Conservation. It was the setting for Robert Louis Stevenson's novel Kidnapped. From here it's onward into the historic district of Appin to which a separate page is devoted in this edition of Holiday West Highlands.

near Lochgilphead – only for the intrepid mountain biker!

For more information about the forests of north Argyll, call 01631 566155 or email [lorne.district@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lorne.district@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

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# INVERARAY - ancient R

**I**T ISN'T often a town is on the move but that is just what happened with the Royal Burgh of Inveraray. The town was already 300 years old when the Duke of Argyll decided to build his principal seat, Inveraray Castle, on its site – so he simply moved the town to where it is today at its idyllic setting on Loch Fyne - that was in 1744.

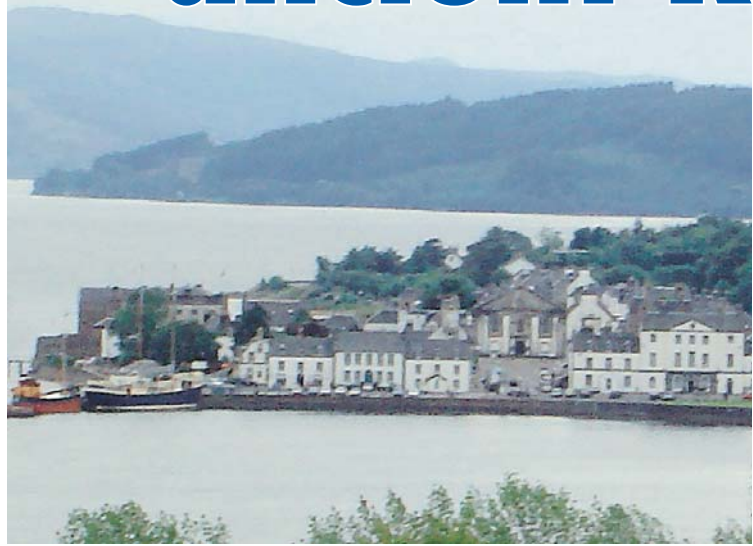
The town then became the administrative centre of Argyll with a courthouse and 43 pubs, obviously not the quiet location it is today. Inveraray is unrivalled in its location. It looks down Loch Fyne and across the mountains and moorland, which is why it attracts visitors in their tens of thousands each year.

The three-hundred-year-old courthouse and the nineteenth century Inveraray Jail are among the top attractions in Scotland and if you want to know what it feels like to be 'banged up' with no privileges then the jail can easily grant you your request. As well as being the duke's main seat, Inveraray Castle is open to the public from April to October and on display is a splendid array of family heirlooms and other artefacts which are well worth a look. The castle was designed by Sir John

Vanbrugh who was also the architect for Blenheim Palace and Castle Howard. It was planned for the second Duke of Argyll and incorporates influences from the baroque, palladian and gothic periods. Its castellated towers are mounted by spires and at the time of construction the castle was the first of its type and size to be built in a remote part of Scotland. Vanbrugh died six years after he first sketched the castle in 1720 for his basic design. It was Roger Morris and William Adam who oversaw the work and after they died Adam's sons completed the project in 1789 for the fifth duke.

Inveraray town enjoys a reputation of being one of the prettiest in Scotland and its shops offer all kinds of souvenirs including whisky and tartan. Its floral hanging baskets hung along its many lanes and roads in the summer add charm to the place and draw praise from visitors.

If you ever wondered what life was like in a nineteenth century prison then Inveraray can offer you that in a realistic fashion. Spending a day at Inveraray Jail, viewing a trial and then visiting the prison complex in the company of warders and prisoner guides in the uniforms of the day will really open your life to being 'banged up'.



The original Jail and Courthouse opened in 1820 and remained unchanged until 1843 when the Airing Yards were built to provide a secure place where prisoners could be exercised in the open air.

In 1848 the New Prison, or Men's Prison, was completed. This was a model prison for its day with 12 individual cells, a water closet on every floor, accommodation for warders, a store room and an indoor exer-

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# Royal Burgh of Argyll



Inveraray - on the shores of Loch Fyne

cise gallery. It was also well heated and lit by gas, a far cry from the dark and damp original prison building.

The Jail finally closed on the 30th of August 1889. By this time, in comparison with the larger city prisons, the smaller county jail was too expensive and inefficient to run.

The Courtroom was still used until 1954 when, despite local protests, the Sheriff Court was moved to Dunoon. The rarely used courthouse and empty prisons gradually fell into disrepair, but fortunately their significance as the finest 19th century county courthouse and prison in Scotland was recognised. An extensive restoration was undertaken and in May 1989, almost a hundred years exactly after the last prisoners departed, Inveraray Jail opened to the public.

Inveraray is not without its claim to fame for authorship. It was the home of well-known Scottish writer Neil Munro who created the Para Handy books and other stories. The illegitimate son of a kitchen maid at the castle, he spent

his early years in the town, using it and Loch Fyne as settings for his works.

As well as hotel and guesthouses in the area you could try the freedom of a caravan holiday. Argyll Caravan Park the longest running Park in Scotland situated near Inveraray. Managed by Jim McCulloch and Family and long term staff for Argyll Estates. The caravan park won VisitScotland's most coveted Award for Customer Care in 2006 with the judges commenting: 'the park appears to be wholly run for the sole purpose of providing a memorable and enjoyable experience for the thousands of families who use it each year'.

The warm and friendly service offered by the McCulloch family makes your stay here real value for money as they make every effort to ensure you are comfortable. The holiday homes have all the luxury expected today - smart bathrooms and shower rooms, top-quality, well-planned kitchens to make cooking easy, comfortable beds and quality furnishings everywhere - everything for a

perfect holiday. Set in an area of outstanding natural beauty, there are lots to see and do but even if you didn't want to go far the park is an ideal location for just strolling about. Superb wooden sculptures are dotted about the park and the caravans' beautifully kept gardens are a sight to behold.

Garden awards are presented each year by His Grace The Duke of Argyll and hard work is put in to be sure of receiving an award. There are also some wonderful walks as well as boating, pony trekking and golf, and with Inveraray and its attractions as well as the castle, Auchindrain Township museum and the magnificent gardens at Ardkinglass and Crarae all nearby, a stay at the park will be memorable for you.

In 1978, producing oysters from a west coast sea loch was viewed with as much scepticism as setting up a vineyard in Argyll might be viewed today. It took determination, quite a lot of luck and a superb location to make it happen. Today, Loch Fyne Oysters is one of the most successful companies in Scotland and just as committed to sharing the best products from our seas and shores with you - naturally.

Based at the head of one of the most beautiful lochs in Scotland, Loch Fyne Oysters has grown to include the original and lively Oyster Bar, an extensive Farm Shop brimming with Scottish seafood, meat and delicious local food and a personal Home Delivery service bringing the

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they are producing, where it comes from and getting it to the customers in the best condition possible.

Looking forward to 2008 and beyond, we hope to welcome more visitors to our home on Loch Fyne as people discover what this corner of Argyll has to offer. A new room at the Oyster Bar provides facilities for private dining, meetings and conferences and our menu is full of simple fresh food that will delight all.

As an employee run and owned company, we would be delighted for you to join us as we mark our special anniversary. Whether at The Oyster Bar, Farm Shop or online [www.lochfyne.com](http://www.lochfyne.com), it has always been a pleasure to share our passion with you.

and shrubs, rhododendrons, herbaceous plants, herbs, heathers and conservatory and indoor plants. You will also find quality gifts, including traditional craft items.

Continued on Page 20



Young dancers with their trophies face the camera during Inveraray Highland Games held each year in July

## INVERARAY CASTLE

Home of the Duke and Duchess of Argyll



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# INVERARAY -

## ancient Royal Burgh of Argyll

Continued from Page 19

The Tree Shop Cafe provides light refreshments, serving freshly made soup, filled rolls, salads, pies, quiches, homebaking, coffee, tea and soft drinks. All proceeds contribute to the running costs of the Garden.

The 25 acres which comprise Ardkinglas Woodland Garden are situated towards the north end of Loch

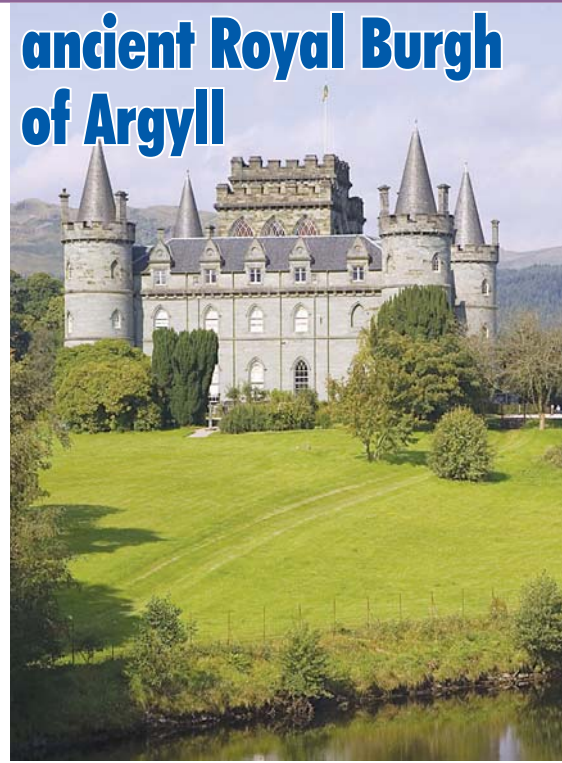
Fyne, near the village of Cairndow. Ardkinglas provides a unique growing environment, where location, climate and soil combine to create optimal conditions.

Following on from planting in the 18th Century, the mature conifer collection for which the garden is renowned was established around 1875.

The Victorian legacy ensures that presently Ardkinglas boasts many Champion Trees (the tallest or broadest of their species within the UK)



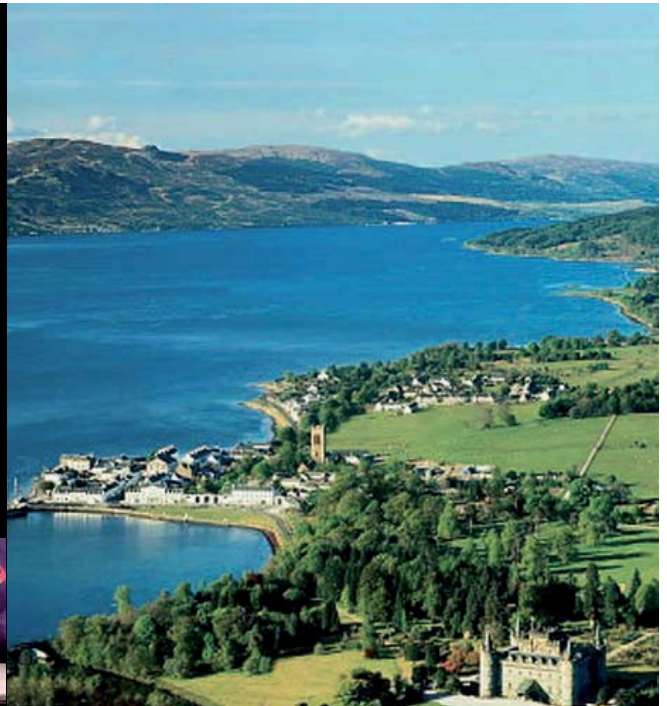
Inveraray Castle Gardens



Inveraray Castle - home of the Duke of Argyll

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# CALLANDER, KILLIN & KENMORE

**T**HE area between Tyndrum and Callander is known to be magnificent walking country, with two major long-distance walks passing through as well as a third which can be tackled in one day. And set amidst some of Scotland's most glorious mountain scenery you would be ideally placed to take advantage of all the activities on offer.

For this area is part of Lomond and Trossachs National Park. Many holidaymakers tend to pass through en route to all points north and west, to the islands and towns such as Oban and Fort William, but they miss a lot by not stopping off here and enjoying the sights.

The famous West Highland Way passes through here as does the Coast to Coast Walk from Oban to St Andrews in Fife.

Continuing along the A85 from Crianlarich takes you into scenic, fertile Glen Dochart, through forestry to Lix Toll from where you can turn off into the village of Killin at the foot of Loch Tay.

Killin is a charming place, very popular with visitors with its pubs, restaurants,

guest houses and shops. Here are also the famous Falls of Dochart, a spectacular show of rushing, gushing white water which tumbles over a series of slabs which, when the water is low, you

can sit on and enjoy a picnic lunch.

Killin is at the centre of an area known as Breadalbane and the Breadalbane Folklore Museum at St Fillan's Mill offers a detailed history of the area and its people.

Visitors arriving during the Easter weekend at Breadalbane Folklore Centre, in the Highland village of Killin, can admire the skill of the storyteller and the craft of the wool-spinner, with special presentations marking the re-opening of the attraction for the 2008 holiday season.

On Easter Saturday and Sunday Enid Sutherland will be demonstrating the art of wool-spinning, while on Easter Monday a different type of yarn-spinning will be taking place as local historian Scotty Wilson will be entertaining visitors with his tales of Celtic culture and Highland clans, as well as revealing some of the hidden secrets of Breadalbane - Scotland's 'High Country'.

From mid-June onwards Scotty will be at the Centre on Fridays and Mondays to present 'Living Legends' - his talks on Highland life which have been appreciated and enjoyed by thousands of visitors.

"It is these aspects of local culture and history which visitors to Killin find so interesting", Joyce Webb, the Centre's manager, remarked. "These presentations provide a memorable insight into these traditions - live and interactive!"

The Exhibition Galleries at Bread-

albane Folklore Centre (with displays on local history, clan culture, and the life of St. Fillan), are open every day throughout the Summer.

Over 107 years since first setting sail in The Trossachs, the world-famous steamship Sir Walter Scott is once again welcoming holidaymakers and visitors who come to enjoy a very special experience - cruising on the beautiful waters of Loch Katrine, taking travellers to Stronachlachar, dropping off cyclists who want to return by the idyllic lochside road, before sailing back around Factor's Island to Trossachs Pier.

Leaving Killin and continuing on the A85 you come into Glen Ogle, again, fine walking country. Here is the Rob Roy Way which stretches from Callander to the head of Glen Ogle and takes in part of the former Oban to Callander Railway.

The walk winds through glens and mountain passes as well as forestry tracks via the pretty village of Strathyre, taking in the Falls of Leny, Loch Lubnaig, Balquidder, where Rob Roy is buried, and Lochearnhead. The walk can be done in a day and offers spectacular views on lochs and mountains including Loch Earn and Ben Ledi.

But who was Rob Roy MacGregor? Well, he was a member of Clan MacGregor, a ferocious clan claiming to trace its ancestry

back to Gregor, son of the Scottish king Alpin who flourished around AD787. Their lands were taken over by the Earls of Argyll and Breadalbane who did everything they could to wipe out the clan, turning them into fierce enemies.

Callander has a tourist centre devoted to this folk hero, his Jacobite leanings and the MacGregor clan. A visit to his grave at Balquidder is well worth the trip.

From Glen Ogle the A85 takes you through Lochearnhead on to the A84 and into Strathyre on the shore of Loch Lubnaig. Despite being small, the village has developed a good reputation for outdoor pursuits including water sports. There's an annual hill race and the famous Munros of Ben Vorlich and Stuc a Chroin make for exhilarating and challenging walking.

The hub of the Trossachs mountain area is Callander, flanked by the River Teith and dominated by the highest mountain, Ben Ledi. The town grew to prominence with the Oban and



The famous Falls of Dochart at Killin

Callander Railway and is now a hugely popular tourist centre for holidaymakers and day-trippers.

Here you'll find plenty to see and do. You can stroll in The Meadows by the river and look for all kinds of birds including kingfishers and animals including wild mink. There canoeing and sailing nearby as well.

There are loads of summer activities including children's events - try the town square where outdoor activities take place. When the weather's not so good these are transferred to the McLaren Leisure Centre. Callander itself is a charming town with many interesting, quirky shops.

They include picture galleries, a chocolate shop, clothes shops, plenty of outdoor stores, woollen mill outlets as well as bakeries, butchers and other retailers you'd expect to find in a regional centre. Callander was also the location for the original TV series *Dr Finlay's Casebook* starring Andrew Cruikshank, Bill Simpson and Barbara Mullen, and which ran for nine years from 1962 to 1971

If you're hungry there's plenty of choice of eating places in Callander, from top hotels to cafes and chippies. Accommodation is varied and includes hotels, guest houses and camping and caravan sites.

There are plenty of outdoor activities in and round Callander including sailing, fishing, cycling, walking and horse-riding. After a day in the great outdoors you can enjoy a relaxing drink in the town's pubs and hotels, many of which offer live Celtic and Scottish music in the evenings. Also

about eight miles from the town, on the Lake of Menteith, are the ruins of the thirteenth century Inchmahome Priory on an island in the lake.



Callander

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# MELFORT - an area of outstanding natural beauty

Enjoyed the hustle and bustle of Oban? Then take your car and drive down the A816 for the next 20 minutes. Now come and enjoy the tranquility of the magic of Melfort. When you drive into the village of Kilmelford the first thing you see is The Cuilfail Hotel.

The Cuilfail is a real Scottish gem, charming, with authentically traditional food, and offering fifteen different kinds of single malt whiskies, in what was once a Drovers Inn. The majority of the hotel was built during the Victorian era and one can still find some fascinating old photos. The name Cuilfail (pronounced 'cool-fail') in Gaelic appropriately means 'Sheltered Corner' and is run by Jack and Lourda MacDonald.

A half mile south of Kilmelford, take the right turn, sign posted 1½ miles to Melfort Pier, and follow the loch shore on the single track road, over the wee Oude river bridge, then immediately left and a ¼ mile further you arrive at Melfort Pier & Harbour.

Arriving by water? Arrive at the Kilmelford Yacht Haven for any repair or winter storage for your boat.

On the shores of Melfort Village at Melfort Pier, you will find the Melfort Mermaid Restaurant, with fabulous views from its panoramic windows, with fresh



Melfort Pier

cooked local food and all day service, or just enjoy a cup of the best brewed coffee in Argyll, with scones or short bread. It is open 7 days a week, with plenty of parking, and 100% disabled friendly. Children of all ages very welcome, with a playground and beaches.

The sixteen holiday homes located around the harbour, are fully equipped to the highest standards and can be rented by the night. There are twenty moorings available just off shore if you wish to visit by boat, with a floating arrival dock alongside the ancient Pier, with under-cover dinghy storage inside the harbour.

Melfort Pier, built 180 years ago, is located in the centre of the *Magic of Melfort*, an area of outstanding natural beauty, and is ideally situated for those who wish to explore the hills on foot, or the surrounding coast and islands by boat.

There are many miles of excellent walks, some of which provide the opportunity for wild life spotting, from the brown eagle to grey heron, gold finches, robins and deer, with stunning views over the surrounding countryside, and many locations for shore side sea fishing.

If you wish to enjoy the area by boat, then a short drive on down the A816 brings you to Craobh Haven, (pronounced 'croove') the base for Farsain Cruises. The skipper will take you on a special trip along the shores of Jura, Scarbe, Luig, the Garvellachs, and one of the largest whirlpools in the world at the Corrywreckan.

The Appaloosa stables, also located at Craobh and open all year, offer group, private or lunge lessons, natural ground training, and schooling on the all weather arena round pen, with gymnastic jumping lane or over outlying cross country jumps. Peaceful hacks or day-rides with cameras and picnic bags. Rides might include a vis-

it to local shrub gardens, to village Inns, rounding up hill cattle or simply splashing along the sea shore.

Round the day off with a visit to Ard-uaine Gardens, open from 9.30 a.m. till sunset. It is set in an area of outstanding natural beauty and historical interest. Disabled friendly and plenty of free parking.

To find out more about the *Magic of Melfort*, read the ads and check out the web sites. It is a pet friendly area, great hill walking, lots of wildlife, good fishing and good hospitality. [www.cuilfail.com](http://www.cuilfail.com) [www.aboutscotland.com/argyll/appaloosa.html](http://www.aboutscotland.com/argyll/appaloosa.html) and [www.w](http://www.w)

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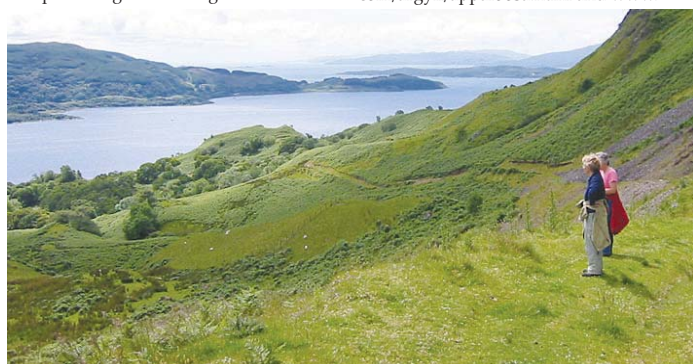
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A stunning view over Loch Melfort  
Photo: Willie Wilson

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# EASDALE

**A** LITTLE south of the West Highlands hub of Oban lies a small chain of islands in an idyllic location. Their neat white-washed cottages present an attractive picture and film-makers have raved over their location for years.

These are the slate islands of Luing, Seil and Easdale and for a time they thrummed with industry as their workers strove to roof the world.

With the slate islands looking out to the Atlantic and truly beautiful views of the mountains of Mull, you'll see West Highlands scenery at its very best. No wonder that you might get a feeling of déjà vu if you visit for the first time because several films have been made here.

The conservation island of Easdale stood in for Camusfearna in Ring of Bright Water, Ellenabeich featured in The Bridal Path as does much of Argyll and the Donald Sutherland Second World War spy thriller Eye of the Needle was also filmed here.

Slate quarrying on Easdale ceased on a commercial basis in 1911 and you can find out about the history of the industry at the island's fascinating museum.

You get the same feeling about the island. You can walk round it in minutes but you'd miss an awful lot if you did. Once you've stepped off the wee ferry from Ellenabeich after your three-minute crossing you'll see the marvellous spanning new village hall, worth a visit in itself. Walking

round the island you'll come across all kinds of wildlife and wild flowers as well as spectacular views at every turn. Some of the quarries are water-filled and attract water birds. And once you've seen everything you can refresh yourself at the island's bar and restaurant.

You can reach the islands by the Bridge over the Atlantic, actually the Clachan Bridge, completed in 1793 to a design by Thomas Telford. It's probably one of the most photographed in Scotland.

When you come on to Seil Island over the only bridge in the world that crosses the Atlantic you'll marvel at the creative works of the late C John Taylor, poet, artist and composer at Ellenabeich.

There's also the picturesque Isle of Seil Golf Club at Balvicar. Enjoy the magic of the 'Islands of Beauty' where you will see nature's flowers in profusion, glimpse seals, otters and - if you are lucky - watch the dolphins at play! Journey back to a different time in the ancient slate-mining village of Ellenabeich - home to Highland Arts Exhibition and Twelve Isle Putting Green.

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- Free colour reproduction of a C John painting
- Complimentary tea or coffee for all visitors

See also the sister exhibitions at Luss village on the banks of lovely Loch Lomond, or at Inveraray, ancient capital of Argyll whose beautiful castle is home to the Duke of Argyll. Visit our showroom at Callander in the heart of Rob Roy MacGregor country or at Oban, Gateway to

the Islands. All our showrooms offer a wide range of gifts to suit all tastes and pockets.



The picturesque village of Ellenabeich

You'll be enchanted with your visit to the slate islands with their pretty quarries and wildflowers. The fertile island of Luing is no different, though it's a lot smaller being six miles long. It's easily reachable by ferry over the short Cuan Sound and once you're on island soil you can hire a bike and cycle round this enchanting place packed with industrial heritage and fascinating wildlife.

There are cottages and caravans to be hired and with a shop and post office you don't need to leave it to stock up. It's an ideal base from which to explore the West Highlands.

Summer turns to autumn then winter, the wildlife breeding season may be over yet there is much still to view on sea and land. Minke whales will remain hopefully till the end of September but porpoise and seals remain resident throughout the year.

Bottlenose dolphins are frequently spotted during the winter months as they forage for food. On the islands the red deer rut will commence and this is a fine spectacle

Seafari's Corryvreckan Wildlife tour aboard open boats remains the firm favourite and offers the best opportunity to see a variety of wildlife.

There is a comprehensive commen-

tary from our qualified guide. This tour culminates at the World's Third Largest Whirlpool. For those who specifically wish to see the whirlpool in full action why not try one of the Whirlpool Specials - trips specifically designed and timed to coincide with the best of the tides.

Seafari Adventures have a new cabin RIB which provides both comfortable seating inside and an open deck wildlife viewing platform.

Iona and its famous Abbey are just 75 minutes away and Colonsay with its grey seal colonies (grey seals pup in September) is even closer. If you just require a water taxi service we are more than happy to help.

Seafari Adventures are open all year with limited winter sailings between November and January. Full information is available from the ticket office Tel 01852 300003 or visit the website www.seafari.co.uk



Sea.fari's new boat Celtic Voyager will cut the travel time from Easdale to Iona to 75 minutes

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See also the Exhibition at Luss Village, on the banks of lovely Loch Lomond - or at Inveraray, ancient capital of Argyll - or visit our showroom at Callander in the heart of Rob Roy MacGregor's country.

We offer a wide range of gifts to suit all tastes and all pockets - come and browse in our Aladdin's Cave!

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WILD SCOTLAND

Scottish Seafari Adventures

# MID ARGYLL - the epicentre of an ancient nation

**M**ID-ARGYLL was once the important epicentre of an ancient nation whose influence helped to make Scotland what it is today. Irish and Celtic warriors from the 5th and 6th centuries found their way to Mid-Argyll where they took over the fortified rocky outcrop of Dunadd in Kilmartin Glen, displacing or assimilating with the people already there.

Set in an ideal location to explore Mid-Argyll is The Galley of Lorne Hotel at Ardferrn, on the B8002, just off the main road from Oban to Lochgilphead.

Set in an ideal location to explore Mid-Argyll is The Galley of Lorne Hotel at Ardferrn, on the B8002, just off the main road from Oban to Lochgilphead. Ardferrn is a haven for yachting and artists who know a good hotel when they see it. It is also the gateway to Craignish Point with spectacular views across to Jura, Scarba and Mull, not forgetting the amazing Corryvreckan Whirlpools and

the abundance of wildlife in this area.

This 17<sup>th</sup> century former drover's inn was taken over by Andrew and Sarah Stanton who want to make your stay as memorable as possible.

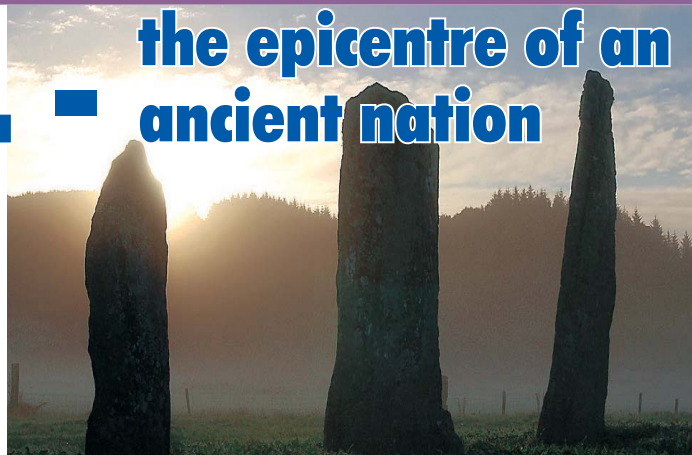
Since they arrived, the hotel has undergone a huge refurbishment programme with six new-look en suite bedrooms tastefully and comfortably furnished and a redecorated public bar and reception area. With its roaring open fire and attractive surroundings the public bar, the oldest part of the hotel dating from 1680, is a great place to eat and drink and chat with the locals.

For dining or a wedding reception, anniversary or corporate function, the hotel's lochside dining room simply can't be beaten. Its massive picture window offers breathtaking views across to Loch Craignish. It's romantic and its menu rivals any top restaurant in Oban. The dining room can seat 120 and if required a large marquee in the hotel grounds can cater for larger numbers. Andrew and Sarah will happily find you any services you need for your wedding including a Highland piper, florist or ceilidh band, all of whom can be found locally.

The Galley of Lorne Hotel is just half an hour's drive from Oban and a few minutes by car from world-famous Kilmartin Glen with all its links with Scotland's ancient past. The hotel is also only two hours by car from Glasgow. The village of Ardferrn itself offers horse riding, cycling, walking and golf and crafts are also available. These can also be found elsewhere in Mid-Argyll as well as climbing, sailing, fishing, mountain biking and woodland walking.

Nearby is Craobh Haven village and marina which offers stunning views of the islands of Shuna, Seil and Luing as well as Jura and Mull.

Lord of the Isles Restaurant and Bar at Craobh Haven provides some of the



Some of the standing stones near Kilmartin. Photo Kilmartin House Museum

best meals in a wonderful atmosphere.

Argyll Trail riding holidays at Brenfield Farm, Ardrishaig, have hacks, treks, family picnic rides, pub rides, beach gallops, daily riding or residential holidays. Disabled riders welcome. Qualified instruction to suit all ages and abilities. A great day out - clay pigeon shooting is available all year round for groups or families.

Kilmartin village sits in the centre of Kilmartin Glen where there are ancient monuments such as burial cairns, rock carvings and standing stones, as well as Dunadd, capital of Dalriada until 850AD.

The village of Kilmartin has a hotel and shops and the important Kilmartin House Museum where Argyll's ancient past comes alive.

People have lived in the glen for thousands of years, gradually shaping the extraordinary landscape you see today.

There are over 150 prehistoric sites and monuments within six miles of Kilmartin Village - come and explore enigmatic standing stones, five thousand-year-old rock carvings, burial cairns and Dunadd, fortress of the earliest Scots Kings.

Experience their auto-visual show, see ancient artefacts and learn more about the people who created them in this internationally acclaimed award-

winning museum. Adults and children can take part in one of the activities or workshops which focus on a variety of traditional skills, crafts and art, and permaculture.

There are also special exhibitions throughout the year.

Visitors can also sample the delights of the award-winning cafe/restaurant and browse the book shop which also sells local crafts and gifts.

The Giving Tree in Craobh Haven has been re-opened after a 2 year absence!

The newly refurbished coffee and tea shop has been transformed into a bright and airy friendly meeting place, offering freshly ground coffee, a selection of fine teas and an ever changing selection of delicious and unusual home baked cakes!

Some of the more unknown guest coffeee's will be periodically hosted at the Giving Tree, from unusual locations such as Yemen, Rwanda and Nicaragua.

The Giving Tree will be stocking a selection of postcards, greeting cards, arts and crafts, including the very collectable Tain Pottery and unusual tea bag art items from South Africa, along with a carefully selected range of handicrafts from Scottish crafters.

Fine art paintings will be initially displayed from local Craobh Haven artists, Clare McNiven, Alison Lyons and Andy McIlvrde and thereafter The Giving Tree will also be available to local artists for exhibitions or groups to hold meetings.

Open daily from 9am to 5pm and located at 1 The Green, Craobh Haven, Argyll Tel: 01852 500300

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# KINTYRE -

**I**F IT'S tranquillity you're after away from the bright lights and hustle and bustle the Kintyre Peninsula offers all the peace and quiet you need. This lovely 40-mile long stretch of land, no more than ten miles wide at any one place, is an agricultural and fishing heartland and the only sounds you'll hear will be from cattle, sheep or tractors.

Along with its farms and picturesque fishing villages are quiet roads leading to lochs, glens, sandy beaches, hills and forests and plenty of archaeological and historical interest to satisfy any holidaymaker.

Your trip to Kintyre begins at Tarbert to which the peninsula is joined by a narrow isthmus. This is a busy fishing village which is also dependent on tourism.

Tarbert has one of the loveliest

natural harbours in Scotland and so is a 'yachtie' haven. It is also Scotland's oldest burgh although its history is pre-Viking.

At Tayinloan, not far from Tarbert, you can take a short ferry trip to the fascinating little island of Gigha, bought by the islanders some years ago from the owner.

The islanders now have lots of flourishing enterprises and provide you with a warm welcome.

They host various events throughout the year including a music festival which is very popular. The superb gardens at Achamore House are well worth a visit and there is overnight accommodation if you want to return to the mainland the next day.

Several pretty nearby mainland villages offer plenty of choice in the form of restaurants, woodland walks, fantastic beaches and abundant wildlife. Muassdale and Glenbarr are two and Glenbarr Abbey, an 18th century gothic mansion, is open to the public, as are its gardens.

Not far from the main community of Campbeltown is the world-famous Machrihanish golf course, reputed to have one of the finest, if not the finest, first hole in the entire world. Many celebrities have played here and if you take a turn you might spot a Hollywood star or two. Well, Hugh Grant and Greg Norman are two, for starters! They loved it.

Unique craft shops in the village of Carradale make it well worth stopping here, as well as its glorious beach, outdoor activities and chal-

lenging nine-hole golf course.

Last year a new walk, the Kintyre Way which stretches from Tarbert to Southend near Campbeltown was launched. The 142-km (89 miles) walk criss-crosses the peninsula and a trek along it is a great way to take in the landscape and all it offers. If you're into hiking or even gently rambling along this walk could be for you.

There are plenty of places to obtain accommodation and supplies and the walk can be completed in a week.

The Mull of Kintyre was made famous by former Beatle Sir Paul McCartney with his record of that name. Sir Paul still has a home on the peninsula and a statue to his late wife Linda can be seen in Campbeltown.

The Mull itself has far-reaching views across the sea to the north coast of Ireland and on good clear days

from the cliff tops it's said you can even see cars travelling along its roads. Also at the Mull is a lighthouse completed in 1788. Rebuilt in the 1820 it was automated 11 years ago.

Campbeltown itself on the loch of that name is a small but pretty town with hotels and guesthouses to suit all pock-

ets and palates. Several craft shops have been established in the centre. If it's activity you want you can have a swim or gym session at the town's fantastic new leisure centre Aqualorium.

Campbeltown is another royal burgh, founded in 1607, and grew because of its surroundings. In Victorian times it was an important fishing port and the landing of herring here contributed to its wealth at that time. Local red sandstone was used to construct its handsome buildings and it had a coal industry for several centuries.

The Machrihanish Light Railway, known as the 'wee train', carried passengers to local hotels and the famous golf course at Machrihanish until it closed in 1931.

Whisky was what really put the town on the map. At one time it had 24 whisky distilleries and wealthy distillery owners built fine houses in the town which can be seen today. Now there are only two distilleries, Springbank and Glen Gyle.

Apart from Machrihanish there are two other golf courses within a few miles of Campbeltown. One of the town's best-known attractions is the



The busy main street in Campbeltown

## Argyll's agricultural and fishing heartland



The picturesque fishing village of Tarbert

cave painting of the Crucifixion by Archibald MacKinnon on Davaar Island, reached by a causeway at low tide.

The town's secondary school now maintains it. Campbeltown does have a bloody history with a massacre at Dunaverty Castle in 1647 when the remnant of the MacDonald army was slaughtered by Covenanters under General George Leslie after it had surrendered. However, little now remains of the castle.

Bloodthirstiness apart, for a quiet, leisurely holiday in a scenic, tranquil setting the Kintyre Peninsula will surely live up to your expectations.

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**Gigha Hotel**, Isle of Gigha  
[www.gigha.org.uk](http://www.gigha.org.uk)

A warm welcome awaits you at our community-owned hotel, only 3 miles off the coast of Kintyre. One premier suite, 11 en-suite rooms, 6 holiday cottages and some of the freshest seafood in Argyll - simply Gigha!

hotel@gigha.org.uk    01583 505254

# GLORIOUS GARDENS of Argyll and Bute



Kilmory Woodland Garden

**A**RGYLL, an area renowned for its breathtaking mountain scenery, beautiful coastline and picturesque islands, is also home to some of the most spectacular gardens Scotland has to offer.

From informal woodland retreats to large-scale examples of 18<sup>th</sup> century design, the Glorious Gardens of Argyll and Bute celebrate the region's rich and varied botanical history.

Each garden has its own individual characteristics and charm. Some of the gardens have been planted in a natural setting while others were specifically designed in a more formal manner. Several were planted as a foil to his-

toric buildings, while others have exceptional plant collections.

With 21 member gardens covering an area from Cardross in Dumbaron to Morvern, by Argyll, as well as the islands of Gigha, Seil, Bute, Mull, Colonsay and Jura, there will always be at least one garden within easy reach of visitors to the area.

Atlantic weather systems tend to dominate the local climate, with high rainfall and westerly winds being the factors which have influenced most Argyll gardeners over the generations.

Most of the Glorious Gardens can be found in coastal or inland areas where the moist, westerly airstreams and the North Atlantic Drift have a moderating influence on temperatures. These provide ideal conditions for many plants from temperate parts of the world such as the Sino-Himalayan region, South America and southern Australasia.

However, high winds mean that shelter is essential for coastal gardens and where this is not provided naturally, gardeners have had to create it, hence the reason for walled gardens at several sites.

Plant collectors from Victorian times to the present day have brought back seed and plants to the gardens of Argyll including the Giant Redwood (*Sequoiaadendron giganteum*) and numerous species of rhododendron.

Each Argyll garden is individual. Some are mainly level with smooth paths, while others are steep and rocky. Facilities also vary from garden to garden but each will do their best to provide access to visitors of every age, interest and ability.

Many of the gardens are open throughout the year. Details of each garden and information on special events, both in the gardens and in the local area over the year, can be found on the Glorious Gardens of Argyll and Bute website at [www.gardens-of-argyll.co.uk](http://www.gardens-of-argyll.co.uk)

The 21 gardens in the group are: Achamore Gardens, Isle of Gigha; An Cala, Isle of Seil; Angus Garden, Taynuilt; Ardchattan Priory Garden, Oban; Ardenraig Garden, Isle of Bute; Ardkinglas Woodland Garden, Cairndow; Ardmaddy Castle Garden, by Oban; Ardtornish Garden, Morvern by Argyll; Arduaine Garden, by Oban; Ascoghall Fernery and Garden, Isle of Bute; Benmore Botanic Garden, near Dunoon; Colonsay House Garden, Isle of Colonsay; Crae Garden, Minard, Inverary; Geilston Garden, Cardross, Dumbaron; Glenarn, Rhu, Helensburgh; Jura House Garden, Isle of Jura; Kilmory Woodland Park, Lochgilphead; Kinlochlaich House Garden, Appin; Linn Botanic Garden, Helensburgh; Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute; Torosay



Ardenraig Garden, Rothesay, Isle of Bute



Torosay Castle Gardens, Isle of Mull



The South Walled Garden at Achamore, Isle of Gigha



Benmore Botanic Garden, Dunoon

**Kilmory Woodland Garden**  
Lochgilphead  
Argyll  
PA31 8RT  
Tel: 01546 602127  
Web: [www.gardens-of-argyll.co.uk](http://www.gardens-of-argyll.co.uk)

Within the attractive grounds of Kilmory Castle, lies Kilmory Woodland Park. William J Hooker, Professor of Botany at the University of Glasgow and later Director of Kew Gardens, is reputed to have laid out the grounds about the year 1830 and to have provided many of the exotic shrubs and plants that flourished there. The garden still retains many rare trees and shrubs, including fine rhododendrons. Kilmory Woodland Park offers a network of woodland walks linking picnic areas, bird hide, superb viewpoints and archaeological sites.

Visit the community-owned  
**Achamore Gardens**  
Isle of Gigha  
Tel: 01583 505275  
e-mail: [gardens@gigha.org.uk](mailto:gardens@gigha.org.uk)  
Website: [www.gigha.org.uk](http://www.gigha.org.uk)

A short ferry sail from the Kintyre mainland, the Isle of Gigha is host to the magnificent 40-acre mature woodland gardens. The gardens are a glorious tapestry of camellias, azaleas and various sub-tropical shrubs as well as many unique species of rhododendron. In addition to the above, the gardens comprise lovely walks amongst mature woodland. The gardens are open year round from dawn until dusk. Guided Tours are available by arrangement



Ardtornish Garden Photo: Ian Lamb

**Ardtornish Garden**  
MORVERN  
ARGYLL  
PA34 5UZ  
Tel: 01967 421288  
Web: [www.ardtornish.co.uk](http://www.ardtornish.co.uk)

The Ardtornish Garden at the head of Loch Aline is designed to complement the natural flora by introducing plants from all round the world. There is a great variety of shapes and colours at different times of the year. In June come and see the hybrid rhododendrons and deciduous azaleas. In July and August the white of eucryphia and hoheria take the lead. Extremes of colour are kept for autumn. There are 25 acres to explore, along winding paths, and stunning views round every corner. Ardtornish will keep your interest for hours. Come for an hour or two or rent one of the self-catering units

## Benmore Botanic Garden

*Magnificent Mountainside Garden*



"Benmore is one of the most powerful gardens I have seen and is a place of vital mystery and enchantment"  
The Washington Post

Café | Shop | Plant sales | Courtyard Gallery | Guided Walks | Open daily from 10am, 1 Mar-31 Oct.

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**Ardencraig Garden**  
Ardenraig Lane  
High Craigmore  
Rothesay  
Isle of Bute PA20 9EZ  
Telephone:  
01700 504644

The existing gardens originally formed part of the larger layout designed by Perry Cane for the owners of Ardenraig House. The walled garden was acquired by Rothesay Town Council in 1970, and latterly by Argyll and Bute Council, and has been developed to create a propagation, education and show garden. Extensive bedding and avaria displays contain some of the best cultivars available. A number of avaries housing a range of foreign bird species have been built to create further interest.

**TOROSAY CASTLE AND GARDENS**  
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Isle of Mull,  
Argyll,  
PA65 6AY  
Telephone  
01680 812421  
web:  
[www.torosay.com](http://www.torosay.com)

A visit to Torosay Castle and Gardens set on the magnificent Island of Mull is an experience not to be missed. We welcome you to a place whose beauty we hope to preserve for future generations, and we invite you to share in its delights with us. Gardens open all year round; daylight hours in winter, 9 a.m. - 7 p.m., summer. 1½ miles south of Craignure by road, footpath or narrow gauge railway

### Glencruitten Golf Club, Oban

18 holes

Tel: (01631) 564604 [www.obangolf.com](http://www.obangolf.com)  
All Day Opening - Fully Stocked Shop  
Fees: Day ticket, Mon-Fri £25; Sat or Sun £30

Visitors, juniors and non-members are made very welcome at this James Braid designed course. The most enjoyable golfing experience in Scotland, Glencruitten Golf Club is situated near the centre of Oban. The clubhouse has full catering, shower and locker facilities. Club and trolley hire available.



Scenic splendour is par for the course at Traigh Golf Club

### Taynuilt Golf Club

9 holes

Telephone: (01866) 822429  
Secretary: Michael Urwin  
Fees: Day Ticket  
Adults £15 per day, Juniors £7.50

Taynuilt Golf Club is an undulating parkland course with unrivalled views of Loch Etive and surrounding mountains. For further facilities, visit Taynuilt Village. Everyone welcome.

[www.taynuiltgolfclub.co.uk](http://www.taynuiltgolfclub.co.uk)

### Lochgilphhead Golf Club

9 holes

Telephone: (01546) 602340/602916  
Clubhouse Fees: £15 day ticket  
£5 Juniors

A picturesque golf course set in the hills of Mid Argyll. This varied parkland course is a good test of golf and makes for a great day out. Visitors most welcome, with no booking for weekdays. There are some weekend restrictions. Our friendly clubhouse has changing facilities, trolley hire and a licensed bar selling snacks.

### Traigh Golf Club

9 holes

Telephone: (01225) 863255  
(clubhouse)  
Rates: £16 per day  
Juniors half price

Probably the most beautifully sited nine-hole golf course in the world (par 34, sss 65) – according to a recent newspaper report. Six miles south of Mallaig, two miles north of Arisaig and one mile from the main A830 road. Clubhouse—tea and soft drinks. Clubs available for hire. Visitors always welcome.

### Inveraray Golf Club

9 holes

Telephone: (01499) 302116  
George Morrison  
Fees: Adult, day ticket £15  
Juniors, day ticket £5

Inveraray Golf Course, a par 70 over 5598 yards, was opened in June 1993 by the 12th Duke of Argyll. The course is situated about one mile south of the town on the A83. It is signposted from both directions. It is a testing course with spectacular views of Loch Fyne and surrounding countryside.

### 12 Isles Putting Green at Highland Arts Exhibition

12 holes Par 24

Telephone: (01852) 300273  
Fees: Adults £2, Juniors £1  
Family Ticket £5

This new Family Attraction 12-hole Putting Green is at Highland Arts Exhibition, Isle of Seil. If you can beat the par of the course you win a bottle of 14-year-old Oban whisky! Bring this advert for a FREE ROUND!

### Isle of Seil Golf Club

9 holes

Telephone:  
(01852) 300347  
Fees:  
Adults (day) £12

A picturesque nine-hole course (1996) with water hazards and play around Balvicar Bay and former site quarries. Scenic views over Seil Sound and surrounding hills. Tickets available from Balvicar Stores or the clubhouse.

### Machrihanish Golf Club

18 and 9 holes

Telephone: (01586) 810213 Fax: (01586) 810221  
Fees: 18-hole course, round (Sunday-Friday) £50  
Day (Sunday-Friday) £80; Saturday (per round) £60  
Saturday (day) £90  
Nine-hole course Day (18 holes, Sunday-Saturday) £12

Machrihanish Golf Club is well known throughout the world as a first class natural links course. The outward nine holes follow the hills and hollows among the sand dunes bordering the Atlantic. Machrihanish is a friendly club which welcomes visitors from across the globe.

### Dunaverly Golf Club

18 holes

Telephone: (01586) 830677  
Mon - Fri £20 per round. Day Ticket £28  
Sat - Sun £24 per round. Day Ticket £32  
Weekly Ticket £85. 2 Week Ticket £120  
[www.dunaverlygolfclub.com](http://www.dunaverlygolfclub.com)

The golf club is situated by the village of Southend in a glorious setting on the south coast of the Kintyre Peninsula. The course is fine Par 66 18 hole natural links extending to 4,799 yards. Spectacular views over the landscape - Sanda Island to the south, Ailsa Craig and Ayrshire to the east and Northern Ireland to the south west, will add to the golfer's enjoyment of this challenging and well-maintained course

### Gigha Golf Course

Isle of Gigha

Telephone: 01583 505242  
Rates: £10 per day per round  
(£5 juniors under 16)

Nine hole parkland golf course with panoramic views of Kintyre and Knapdale. A ideal location for the keen or occasional golfer. A perfect accompaniment to incorporate into your day on the Isle of Gigha

### Dalmally Golf Club

9 holes

Telephone: (01838) 200487/411/619  
Secretary: Robert Johnston  
Fees: £12 per day  
Juniors £6 per day

Dalmally is a flat parkland course bounded by the River Orchy. Our clubhouse is open from 10am-3pm weekdays and 10am-5pm weekends. Changing rooms and toilet facilities available at all times. Visitors are welcome at all times.

### Fort William Golf Club

18 Holes

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# ISLE OF BUTE - a favourite holiday destination

At the tiny ferry stage at Colintraive the Isle of Bute look's just a stone's throw away and to cross over to it takes five minutes. To land on Bute is to enter a magical island lying sheltered in the Clyde estuary.

Another ferry at Wemyss Bay between Gourrock and Largs takes about 30 minutes to arrive at Bute's main community of Rothesay. The town, a royal burgh, is a firm favourite with holidaymakers with its castle, shops and its very fine, ornate Victorian architecture. Its classic Victorian seafront façade, pier and promenade are especially fine. Rothesay also has a castle and plenty of accommodation together with restaurants and cafes.

The Gulf Stream ensures Bute has a mild climate and you can see tropical plants and palm trees in many places.

Bute has been occupied by man for more than 5,500 years and if you explore the island you'll find standing stones and cists and even a vitrified fort at Dunagoil Bay. Bute Museum in Stuart Street, Rothesay displays many of the island's ancient artefacts. There are early Christian sites dedicated to St Ninian and St Blaine, mis-



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sonaries who settled here to spread the Christian word.

The island is also the ancestral home of the Stuart kings of Scotland and an important legacy of this is the castle at Rothesay. Built of circular design it withstood many attempts to sack it. The English took it at one time but Robert the Bruce recaptured it in 1311, only for it to be destroyed

by Oliver Cromwell in 1659 and finally burned by the Duke of Argyll. However, it has been substantially restored in the last 120 years. Mount Stuart was built to replace the castle.

Each year Bute holds a jazz festival, Highland Games, agricultural show, concerts and art festivals. For other activities there are plenty of coastal walks, horse

riding and there are three golf courses with some of the finest views in Scotland.

You can cycle in peace along the island's almost deserted roads and find fine sandy beaches and legacies of the island's past. An abundance of seafood round the island means its restaurants can offer top quality food. Also the island is renowned for the taste and quality of its beef and lamb.

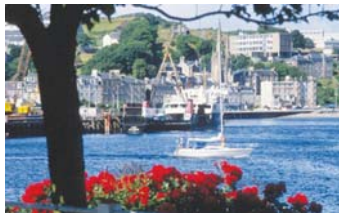


Sunset at Craigmore

Thanks to Phillip Kirkham for the photographs used on this page



Rothesay Castle



Rothesay Harbour. Photo: Scottish Viewpoint



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# Road to the Misty Isle

**P**ASSING 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

**W**aternish 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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# ISLAY & JURA - wild and w

**S**o many tempting treats await visitors to these glittering island gems that it's difficult to know where to begin. Rich in heritage, Islay and Jura offer game fishing, sea angling, bird-watching, deer-spotting, walking, climbing or just trailing your bare feet through soft sandy beaches.

You'll return home invigorated, refreshed and with a deep sense of ancient history that will stay with you for many years. And we've yet to mention the whisky... Not for nothing is Islay known as the Queen of the Hebrides. It's the most southern of the west coast islands known as the Inner Hebrides and its beauty draws visitors back year after year. Islay and Jura are the least discovered of the islands yet their place in Scottish history is important, with links with early Christianity and the Lord of the Isles.

Covering 600 square kilometres and with a population of 3,000, Islay is easy to reach. Transport links are good by



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road, ferry and air. The island has its own airport at Glenegedale with flights to Glasgow. Ports Ellen and Askaig have regular ferry services from West Loch Tarbert on the Argyll mainland. A ferry also runs from Port Askaig to Feolin on Jura, with a new fast ferry from Jura to the mainland; sea Safari.

Islay is rich in wildlife and a mecca for birdwatchers as well as a huge draw for sea anglers and game fishermen/women.

The Oa RSPB reserve near Port Ellen has a rugged coastline and open moorland. They have guided walks on which you may be lucky enough to see a rare chough or golden eagle! The nearest self-catering, open all year, to the RSPB is Coillabus Cottage, The Oa. Visit [www.islay-cottage.co.uk](http://www.islay-cottage.co.uk). Please contact: Mrs Hector Ross, 35 Madera Street, Edinburgh, EH6 4AJ. Tel: 0131 553 1911 now taking bookings for Autumn

The Port Charlotte Hotel has been completely restored to provide the discerning guest with high-class modern facilities in the original delightful Victorian surroundings.

Port Charlotte is an attractive conservation village built from whitewashed stone around 1830, on the west shore of Loch Indaal.

A large comfortable conservatory opens out into the garden, which in turn leads down to a sandy beach.

The residents' lounge and public bar feature open fires where guests can unwind with convivial company.

Most bedrooms enjoy lovely sea views and all are tastefully decorated, furnished with antiques and well equipped with the luxuries you would expect and more. The central theme of the restaurant is local

produce, freshly prepared to order and served in elegant surroundings.

The dinner menu is a la carte and changes regularly - you can expect beef and lamb from local farms to feature, or game from the nearby island estates.

Also frequently on the menu are scallops, lobsters and prawns, fresh from the Islay fishing fleet. Quality vegetarian meals are always available, as are a selection of fine wines from around the world.

The public bar serves excellent bar lunches and evening bar meals and has over 120 of the finest Islay malt whiskies in the world for you to sample.

The Port Charlotte Hotel is recommended in the Michelin and Good Food Guide and highly rated in The Best of Scotland Guide. The hotel is also a must for lovers of Scottish art and traditional music.

From the garden you can walk down to the sandy beach from where you can explore the myriad of rock pools or take a stroll around the bay to the lighthouse.

Man first settled on Islay 10,000 years ago. At its height, its population was 15,000 - difficult to imagine today - but the Highland clearances caused thousands of island folk to emigrate mainly to the Carolinas, Australia and Ontario. Hebridean islanders' roots are very strong and the descendants of those forced to emigrate to remain alive, return to Islay to trace their genealogy and learn about the history of the land of their forefathers.

Islay malt whisky is world famous, Ardbeg, Lagavullin, Laphroaig, distilled in



Bowmore Harbour, Isle of Islay

the south of the island, with their strong peaty flavour; Bruichladdich, Bowmore, Bunahabhainn and Caol Ila, are subtler in taste but no less palatable.

Islay's whisky industry is 200 years old. If you fancy a taste of these wonderful spirits a tour of any of these distilleries is not to be passed up - there's nothing like a 'wee dram' to warm the cockles of your heart.

Kilchoman Distillery, (pronounced Kilmoman) established in 2005, is a farm distillery and the first to be built on Islay for 124 years. Kilchoman gives everyone the opportunity to see all that is best in the grass-roots traditions of malt whisky distilling - from barley to bottle.

Kilchoman is the smallest distilleries on Islay with an annual production of 90 to 100,000 litres of alcohol per year.

Kilchoman is one of only six distilleries that carry out traditional floor maltings, but the key difference at Kilchoman is that the barley is grown on the farm at the distillery, whereas other distilleries purchase barley from around the country.

When mature Kilchoman single malt will be bottled at the distillery.

Bottling will take place during 2011 from selected fresh and refill bourbon casks at 46%vol without chill-filtration or added colour.

New Spirit, their one year old spirit, is in a typical Islay style with peating levels of 50ppm of phenols. The 'new spirit' has been well received by experts and enthusiasts world wide.

Islay is a 'twitchers' paradise with birdwatchers whooping on the island to set up their binoculars to look for that elusive 'rara avis'. Principally the island is a haven for oystercatchers, cormorants,

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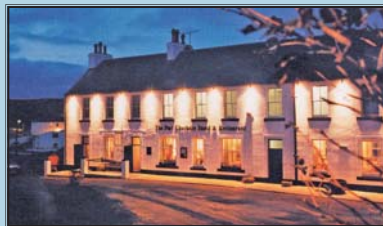
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Day trips do have their appeal. Value for time and money, one supposes. Three distilleries in one day - and on foot or perhaps cycling. "The Bothy Cycle Centre" in Port Ellen repairs, sells and hires bikes. You will find it at 91 Lennox Street - just off the main street. Tel: 01496 302391. With ample cycles and three distilleries within three miles many people use cycles to get to all three distilleries in one day. And indulge in some of the best food in Islay at the Old Kilm restaurant at Ardbeg.

An early start at Kennacraig (south of Tarbert, Kintyre) and the ferry arrives at Port Ellen at 9.20 in the morning! Beyond Ardbeg is a paradise for wild life watchers. Three species of deer and grey and common seals bask on the rocks and islets. In the heart of deer country is the Kildalton Cross carved 1200 years ago and in remarkable, if not perfect, undamaged condition.

The ferry departs Port Ellen at 1800 and returns you to Kennacraig. Cars may be left there for the day. But, to do justice for your time spent travelling, do consider a stopover. There is a dozen or more B&Bs, two hotels with a third one rebuilt and reopening in early 2009. Also some of the forty self catering units consider short stay lets. And all Islay has much more to offer the visitor whether it be whisky, wild life, walking or just enjoying the warm welcome. Check sailings with CalMac timetables for there are variations during the week and with the time of year.

It is good to note that the rainfall in the south of Islay is minimal for the Hebrides. The gulf stream ensures that Islay (Ile - the green isle) remains green throughout the winter. The golf course is playable almost all the time. THEN there's Islay Mist, but one can drink that!

Port Ellen leaflets provide all the information you need - pick one up at ferry terminals and in shops. There is a Jazz Festival in September and a book festival in Port Ellen in July.

To hear the red deer stags roaring during the rut come in September or early October. To see and hear the multitude of geese that winter here come between October and March. To see the choughs come any time. To hear the corncrake calling the best time is late May.



# Wonderful gems of the Hebrides



choughs and hen harriers as well as a variety of wading birds and birds of prey.

An enormous colony of barnacle geese flies in each October to take advantage of rich feeding grounds through the winter before another mammoth flight.

Islay's climate is a temperate one because the Gulf stream passes its shores, making it a fertile island, ideal for birds to stopover for a time to rest and feed.

Go for some game fishing on Islay if you like casting for a brown trout or two. The island offers some of the finest brown trout fishing in Europe. Five years ago a top European fishing competition was held on five of Islay's lochs, so the word has certainly got round. Fishing on its rivers and lochs is managed by the islands estates, which also maintain the banks. Sea angling is also popular especially round the many shipwrecks lying beneath Islay's coastal waters.

Although many of Islay's churches are now ruins they are definitely worth visiting as they are of considerable historical interest. Kildalton, has one of a local blue stone. There are also some prehistoric cupstones at Kilchoman church, Kilchiaran church and other places. Kilharrow round church at Bowmore serves the community and was built in 1767. It contains artefacts connected with Bowmore-born Reverend Donald Caskie, known as the Tartan Pimpernel for his exploits in helping more than 2,000 prisoners-of-war to escape from occupied France in the second world war.

Islay's near neighbour is Jura, just five minutes away by ferry. Jura offers long, white, sandy beaches, caves and cliffs along its 115 mile coastline as well as the famous Paps of Jura mountains which rise to 2,600ft. like Islay, Jura is another of the west coast's secrets. It has a

population of around 200 people and over 5,000 deer and is rich in both history and wildlife. Associations with Columba and the Lord of the Isles are just two of its attractions; otters frolic in its waters, seals bask on its rocks, and you can spot anything up to 100 species of bird. Many rare plants grow on Jura as well as on Islay. The view from the top of the Paps is awe-inspiring and stretch away to other Hebridean islands basking in the distant sea and Northern Ireland.

For those seeking a gentler form of exercise Jura's bus service offers tours from Feolin in the south to Ardlussa in the north.

Jura's heritage is a reflection of Islay's. Flints and fragments of flints can still be found washed down to Lussa bay by the River Lussa. There are Bronze Age cairns, circles, hut circles and cupstones. There are eight standing stone sites, thought to have been used to read the stars or as calendars. The tallest is Camus an Staca, 150 yards off the road at Ardfin. Iron Age forts and duns abound on the south east coast and form a chain of signalling stations. The principal fort is An Dunan near Lowlandsman's bay.

The Highland clearances saw many Jura people leaving for the New World, particularly North Carolina. The 1840s potato famine in which millions of Irish people starved to death also affected Jura and Islay and resulted in more emigration to Canada, America and Australia.

In 1946 the author George Orwell wrote his famous novel '1984' on the island, where he was known as Eric Blair. He lived at Barnhill, a remote farmhouse in the north, and loved being there because he was 'un-gettable' to use his own word. *Islay of Jura - not so remote now!*

The new passenger service from Tayvallich into Craighouse launched on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2008 after almost four years work by the Isle of Jura Initiative at the Edge programme. The twelve-passenger vessel has already had a modest positive impact on both Tayvallich and Jura local economies. The service will open up the island to far easier access to visitors coming direct from mainland Argyll.

The vessel, operated by Islay Sea Safari, is based at Craighouse on Jura and runs to Tayvallich on sheltered Loch Sween on the west coast of mainland Argyll's Kintyre peninsula.

- Two return services a day, six days a week - No service on Tuesdays.
- Mondays and Fridays see departures from Craighouse at 0700 and 1700 with departures from Tayvallich at 1000 and 1815.
- Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays see departures from Craighouse at 0845 and 1515; with departures from Tayvallich at 1000 and 1630
- Sundays see departures from Craighouse at 0915 and 1700; with departures from Tayvallich at 1030 and 1815.

The isle of Jura offers breathtaking scenery, wildlife walks, delicious food at the Jura Hotel, Jura Distillery tours, colourful walled Jura Garden walks & tea tent, camping and a well stocked local store. Visit [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk) for further timetable information or visit your nearest tourist information centre and pick up a brochure. Jura Initiative at the Edge wishes to express its gratitude to all its funders and supporters.

Highland hospitality is legendary but in the old days people were so poor they could not offer travellers much, so a law was passed setting up 'change houses' or inns with moderate charges. One of these is Corran House, near Krockrome, another is the Jura Hotel at Craighouse.

The name Jura means 'island of deer' and

could not be more aptly named as the deer outnumber the islanders by 25:1.

Ron Steenvoorden from the Netherlands has created wonderful websites for Islay & Jura; visit [www.islayinfo.com](http://www.islayinfo.com) and [www.jurainfo.com](http://www.jurainfo.com) to learn all about the islands on these beautiful websites, created with the love he feels for the islands. Also available is a blog site he has developed <http://blog.islayinfo.com> for news and reading/posting comments. He has kindly provided all the fabulous photographs you see on this Islay Jura feature.

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## KILCHOMAN ISLAY'S FARM DISTILLERY



Kilchoman Distillery offers the visitor the chance to visit the smallest, newest Distillery on the island and is one of only six distilleries that carry's out traditional floor maltings, but the key difference at Kilchoman is that the barley is grown on the farm at the distillery.

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Craobh Haven, Lochgilphead, Argyll  
 Tel: 01852 500 632

Email: appaloosaholidays@talk21.com  
 Web: www.aboutscotland.com/argyll/appaloosa.html

Between Oban & Lochgilphead  
 Approved B.H.S. Western & Natural Horsemanship taught.  
 Nearby Sailing.

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4 John Street, Oban **01631 570470**  
 www.richardchildsphotography.co.uk

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 Short hacks, day rides, beach gallops & pub rides

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Superb wildlife watching cruises from Oban. 1 hour or longer cruises/private charters  
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 Tel: 01631 563387

## Mull of Kintyre SEATOURS



Fast, safe boat trips to see wildlife round Sanda Island, Ailsa Craig, Arran and Northern Ireland.

We operate from Campbeltown harbour.

Call 0870 720 0609  
 or email info@mull-of-kintyre.co.uk  
 for bookings and information.  
 www.mull-of-kintyre.co.uk

## Argyll Caravan Park

Inveraray  
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 info@argyllcaravanpark.com



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 email: billyronald@btconnect.com  
 website: www.saulmore.com

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OBAN

Traditional Music Every Night!

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Highland Music Shows  
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The Skipinnish Information Centre, George St, Oban Tel: 01631 569 599

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1 hour trips & private charter from the centre of Oban!!

## Atlantis LEISURE

Atlantis Leisure, Dalriach Road, Oban  
 Tel: 01631 566800  
 www.atlantisleisure.co.uk

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We offer a great swimming experience for all. A flume and splash pool for the kids, Aqua aerobics and sauna.



### Gym

Our well equipped bodogym has all the equipment to have a great work out. We have qualified instructors on hand to help you with all your fitness needs.



### Soft Play Area

We have a well equipped soft play centre for the under 5's. you can enjoy a starbucks coffee whilst the kids play in a safe environment.



### Cafe

We proudly Brew STARBUCKS COFFEE

Our cafe is geared to sell healthy eating options and we have recently added starbucks coffee and home made pizzas to the menu.



### 50+ Sessions

Our 50+ morning on Wednesdays includes swimming, a gentle circuit based exercise class, gym, badminton, Tai Chi, Sauna and Razer Ball.



For more info about all we offer and prices please log onto  
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