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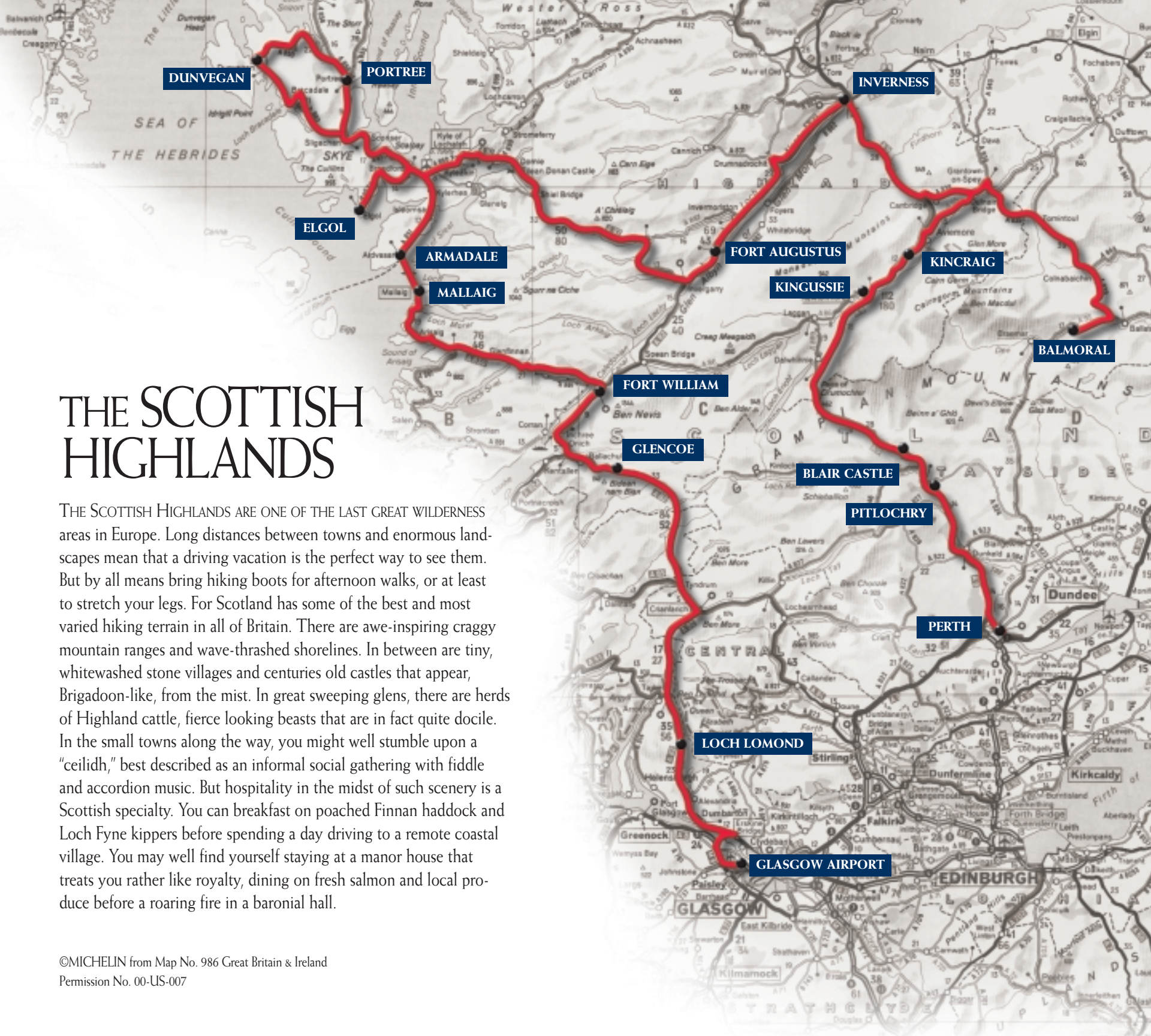


The Scottish Highlands



THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS ARE ONE OF THE LAST GREAT WILDERNESS areas in Europe. Long distances between towns and enormous landscapes mean that a driving vacation is the perfect way to see them. But by all means bring hiking boots for afternoon walks, or at least to stretch your legs. For Scotland has some of the best and most varied hiking terrain in all of Britain. There are awe-inspiring craggy mountain ranges and wave-thrashed shorelines. In between are tiny, whitewashed stone villages and centuries old castles that appear, Brigadoon-like, from the mist. In great sweeping glens, there are herds of Highland cattle, fierce looking beasts that are in fact quite docile. In the small towns along the way, you might well stumble upon a "ceilidh," best described as an informal social gathering with fiddle and accordion music. But hospitality in the midst of such scenery is a Scottish specialty. You can breakfast on poached Finnan haddock and Loch Fyne kippers before spending a day driving to a remote coastal village. You may well find yourself staying at a manor house that treats you rather like royalty, dining on fresh salmon and local produce before a roaring fire in a baronial hall.



THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

(Mileage is estimated from each preceding city or site. Before you begin your trip, please note. For space reasons, we could not provide the most detailed map with this brochure. We recommend the use of **Michelin Map No. 403 Scotland** in conjunction with this guide.)

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GLASGOW AIRPORT The easiest way to access the Scottish Highlands and Islands from the U.S., you can stop off in Glasgow for the night or simply get in your car and head north.

35 Miles

LOCH LOMOND The largest single inland waterway in Britain, some 22 miles long and five miles wide, Loch Lomond is also much celebrated in song. The "Bonnie, Bonnie banks of Loch Lomond" are indeed bonnie (beautiful), with great views of the mountain Ben Lomond on the Eastern shore. Beyond sheer beauty, the Loch, which was formed during the ice age, has played a significant role in Scottish history. Loch Lomond was the waterway at the junction of three ancient kingdoms: Pictland, Strathclyde and Dalriada. There are more than 37 islands in the loch, some of which, like Inchmurrin, served as isolated retreats for early Christians.

73 Miles

GLENCOE This is Scotland's most famous "glen," a Scots Gaelic term that means valley. Surrounded by steep-sided mountains, it's darkly beautiful and is perhaps the most famous site in Scottish history. It was here, at the height of clan warfare, that the Macdonalds were defeated by

the Campbells in 1692. To make sure that you're aware of the history, there's often a lone, kilted piper playing some haunting notes on the bagpipe, which echoes throughout the glen. At the Glencoe Folk Museum, you can learn more about the area's tumultuous history.

20 Miles

FORT WILLIAM Lying beside Loch Linnhe, Fort William is surrounded by mountains, its streets full of serious hikers provisioning themselves at the numerous outdoor shops. For this is the heart of Scottish climbing country, and no mountain is more prized than nearby Ben Nevis, the highest peak in Britain at 4,406 feet. That may not seem high by Rocky Mountain standards, but it's actually quite a demanding climb, one made considerably more difficult by the unpredictable Scottish weather. Pause a while at Glen Nevis, which begins north of the town. It's quite beautiful, and parts of "Braveheart" were filmed here. Even if you don't plan to go hillwalking, stop at the West Highland Museum. It has a fascinating collection, including the secret portrait of Bonnie Prince Charlie, which can only be viewed thanks to a curved mirror.

46 Miles

MALLAIG "The Road to the Isles" leads here from Fort William. Before arriving in Mallaig, you'll come to the spectacular strand of beaches known as the Silver Sands of Morar. Mallaig itself is a classic Scottish fishing village, with lively pubs and restaurants. To get a glimpse below the sea without actually getting wet, stop at the Mallaig Marine World, which offers an array of local aquatic species. Then take the auto ferry to Skye, which allows today's motorist to "go over the sea to Skye," as Bonnie Prince Charlie did, albeit in considerably more comfort.

Ferry

ARMADALE

Located on the southern part of Skye, this tiny village welcomes the Mallaig ferry and plays host to the Clan Donald Centre, which is located in a restored part of Armadale Castle. Even for those who are not a blood relation of the Macdonalds, it's a fascinating glimpse into the Scottish clan system.

36 Miles

ELGOL Possibly the most scenic point on an island rich with scenic views, the view here towards Loch Coruisk in the Cuillin Mountains is terrific indeed, taking in the great craggy spine of peaks that runs along Skye. Bring the hiking boots and embark on a walk from here. Or stay by the beach with a picnic lunch, because this is a fine place to get a peek at otters, seals and porpoises.

41 Miles

PORTREE The main town of Skye, the name is derived from the Scots Gaelic "Port Rìgh" or King's harbor, a name it received after a visit in 1540 by King James V. For those who love piping, caber tossing and hammer throwing, note that Portree is where the Isle of Skye Highland Games are held in August. Portree is also a fine base for exploring the nearby hills, for a day hike up the Quirang, and for boat trips out to the sound of Raasay. Seals, porpoises and even eagles are commonly seen, and some boats make a point of exploring the sea caves as well. It was in Portree that Dr. Samuel Johnson and James Boswell stayed during their famous 18th century jaunt through the Hebrides. From that trip came Dr. Johnson's "A Journey Through the Western Isles" and Boswell's "Journal of a Tour through the Hebrides."



21 Miles

DUNVEGAN Dunvegan Castle, the seat of the Macleods of Skye, is one of the most magnificent edifices in Scotland. Dating back to the 13th century, it was restored in high style during the 19th century. But don't be put off by the rather plain exterior. Inside, there's a thought-provoking dungeon, a portrait of Dr. Johnson by

Joshua Reynolds and even a lock of Bonnie Prince Charlie's hair. Best of all is the famous Fairy Flag in the drawing room. This tattered, faded fragment of yellow silk dotted with red is said to be endowed with magical properties.

111 Miles

FORT AUGUSTUS People come to this city for one thing: glimpses of Nessie, the affectionate nickname for the Loch Ness Monster. The town sits at the foot of the 23 mile Loch Ness, whose deep, murky and cold waters are forever shrouded in mystery. For a closer look, arrange to take a cruise on Loch Ness from here. Tales of the monster really took flight in 1934, when the famous photograph of a dinosaur-like creature's neck emerging from the water was published. Underwater cameras and sonar have been deployed, but so far, nothing conclusive has emerged. For those who fail to see anything of Nessie, there's always a visit to the Clansman Centre, a good exhibition of traditional Highland culture. Fort Augustus is also the site of Highland gatherings four times yearly, in June, July, August and September. The contests feature the classic Highland pastimes: caber tossing, hammer throwing, falconry, sheep dog trials, traditional dancing and piping competitions.

32 Miles

INVERNESS On the Moray Firth, at the northern end of the Great Glen, Inverness is the center of the Highlands. The Inverness Museum and Art Gallery is worth a visit, as is the Castle Garrison Encounter at Inverness Castle. You might also consider a boat trip out onto the Moray Firth and have a lookout for bottlenose dolphins. In town itself, you'll find shops bursting with more sweaters, kilts and tartans than you can imagine existed.

86 Miles

BALMORAL Built as a private residence for Queen Victoria in 1855, the grounds and parts of the castle are open to visitors. Of interest to anyone who saw the film "Mrs. Brown" is a statue of the controversial John Brown, rather discretely tucked away.

65 Miles

KINCRAIG This village is a good base for exploring the surrounding Cairngorms, a wild mountain range that contains four of the five highest peaks in Britain. It is indeed one of the most rugged landscapes in the country, and suitable for fantastic hill walking. It's easy enough to walk across the moors purple with heather, along bubbling Highland burns, and spot such Arctic birds as the dotterel, the ptarmigan and the snow bunting. The Highland Wildlife Park, outside the village, is run by the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland.

7 Miles

KINGUSSIE The Highland Folk Museum is the finest of its kind in the country, a collection of historical buildings and carefully collected artifacts that reveal Highland life. There's a blackhouse from the Isle of Lewis & Harris, with demonstrations of spinning and wood carving. Nearby are the Ruthven Barracks, built in 1719, and one of four fortresses built after the first Jacobite rebellion of 1715. They were last used by troops anxiously awaiting the return of Bonnie Prince Charlie after the battle of Culloden in 1746. When they learned of his terrible defeat, they destroyed the barracks and fled to the hills.

38 Miles

BLAIR CASTLE The seat of the Duke of Atholl, this castle, which in part dates back to 1269, overlooks the River Garry. A piper pipes in visitors each day to the magnificent structure. Some 32 rooms are open to the public, revealing a cornucopia of armor, paintings, period furniture, china and deer antlers. It's a testimony to how the upper class lived in the Highlands. It's also the base of the Atholl Highlanders, the only remaining private army left in Britain.

5 Miles

PITLOCHRY For those who've yet to visit a distillery in Scotland, Pitlochry has two: Bell's Blair Athol Distillery and Edradour. The home of the Pitlochry Festival Theatre, you can see a different play every night of a given week from May to October.

27 Miles

PERTH Scone Palace is the primary attraction here, the home of the Earl and Countess on Mansfield. Dating back to 1580 but substantially rebuilt in 1804, it has a fine collection of French furniture, including Marie Antoinette's writing table.

HOTELS

Gleneagles. Where lovers of golf, fishing and equestrian sports congregate. Grand and rather palatial, you can learn falconry, sharpen off-road driving skills or just enjoy a luxurious stay. Auchterarder, Perthshire
Tel.: 01764-662231;
Fax: 01764-662134.
For reservations in the U.S.: 800-223-6800.

Cameron House. A luxury hotel and countryclub on the shores of Loch Lomond. Victorian-flavored surroundings, and Scottish-French cuisine on the menu. Loch Lomond. Tel.: 01389-755565;
Fax: 01389-759522.

Cuillin Hills Hotel. Set outside Portree, this gabled hotel has views over Portree Bay toward the Cuillin Hills. Bedrooms are individually decorated in bold floral patterns. Not surprisingly, the restaurant specializes in seafood. Portree, Isle of Skye; Tel.: 01478-612003; Fax: 01478-613092.

Arisaig House. A stone manor house set in parkland on the Highland coast. There are wood-paneled rooms, magnificent fireplaces and vaulted ceilings. Local produce, seafood and game are served at dinner. Beasdale by Arisaig, InvernessShire.
Tel: 44 01687 450622;
Fax: 44 01687 450626.
For reservations in the U.S. 800-735-2478.

Inverlochry Castle lies in the foothills of Ben Nevis. The setting is remarkable, the accommodations suitably palatial. Torlundy Fort William. Tel: 44 01397 702177;
Fax: 44 01397 702953.
For reservations in the U.S. 800-735-2478.

Airds Hotel is a former Ferry Inn dating from the early 18th century. The diningroom overlooks Loch Linnhe and the Morvern mountains, with cuisine prepared by Graeme Allen. Port Appin, Appin.
Tel: 44 01631 730236;
Fax: 44 01631 730535.

RESTAURANT

Kinloch Lodge. A few miles from Armadale, this country house hotel is run by Lord and Lady Macdonald. But it's the cooking of Lady Clare Macdonald, Scotland's best-known chef, that draws gourmands from all over Britain. Isleornsay, Isle of Skye; Tel: 01471-833333;
Fax: 01471-833277.



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