

SCOTLAND'S HIDDEN GEMS TOUR: 6 DAYS

DAY 1. Commence Glasgow with morning visit to **Pollock House**, a grand Edwardian house which provides a flavour of life at a Scottish country house at its best. Key features are the magnificent interiors and a superb art collection. The house is set amid formal and walled gardens. It also benefits from close proximity to the famous **Burrell Collection**. In the afternoon visit the nearby **Greenbank Garden**. This is a walled garden in the grounds of Greenbank House and has been designed to showcase new ideas and techniques for domestic gardeners.

DAY 2. Travel south for a visit to **Threave House, Garden and Estate**. Magnificent gardens, beautifully restored interiors, wildlife and walks. Excellent visitor facilities. In the afternoon visit **Broughton House and Garden** in the picturesque town of Kirkcubright on the Solway coast. A fine 18th century town house acquired in 1901 by the famous Scottish artist, E.A. Hornel. Interior house features have been restored. Also an enchanting garden sloping towards the River Dee. Back to Ayr via the Galloway Hills.

DAY 3. A morning visit to **Souter Johnnie's Cottage** with its association with Rabbin Burns. This was the home of the shoemaker immortalised in the poem Tam O'Shanter.

On to **Culzean Castle and Country Park**. Culzean is a romantic 18th century castle built by Robert Adam for David Kennedy, 10th Earl of Cassillis. This is one of Scotland's most stunning castles, benefiting from a dramatic location high above the Ayrshire cliffs. Offers a wonderful mix of architecture, gardens and wildlife.

DAY 4. All day visit to the island of Arran, often described as 'Scotland in Miniature'. Commence **with Brodick Castle, Garden & Country Park** which stretches from the shore to the highest peak on the island. Ancient seat of the Dukes of Hamilton, the castle has unique collections of paintings, antique furniture and precious objects. The gardens are famous for rhododendrons. Other places to visit include the famous prehistoric stone circles at **Machrie Moor** and the **whisky distillery** at Lochranza.

DAY 5. Charles Rennie Mackintosh's **Hill House** near Helensburgh. A famous creation and of great interest to visitors interested in stylish design and architecture. Mackintosh's elegance and invention still delight today, almost a century after his peak of activity. Then on to Oban via Loch Long and Iveraray.

DAY 6. Morning visits to **Arduaine Garden** and **Crarae Garden** both of which are packed with award-winning collections of rare plants, trees and shrubs, benefiting from the warm west coast currents. Arduaine emphasis is on the temperate world whilst Crarae will impress with superb examples of Acer, Sorbus and Eucalyptus.

Return to Glasgow via **Ben Lomond** (Loch Lomond) and **Geilston Garden**, the latter being a charming and intimate garden with beautiful displays of azaleas and herbaceous borders. There is also a woodland garden complete with waterfall, bridges over the Geilston Burn and mossy paths.