

Best of Isle of Arran Guided Island Hopping Holiday

Trip style: Island hopping

Destination: 📍 Scottish Islands

Trip code: XAP07-LDW11

Grades: 1, 2, 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Arran has a circumference of just 56 miles and known as Scotland in miniature, home to majestic mountains, cracking coastline, ancient sites, plentiful wildlife and its own distillery. The hand-picked walks here will cover its range of scenery including the option to climb Goatfell for superb views across the island. A trip to nearby Holy Island includes a walk to the top of Mullach More – the island's highest point.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Visiting Brodick Castle and the spiritual Holy Isle
- Spotting early Christian and Pictish carvings on the walls of King's Cave
- Conquering Goatfell, the highest point on the island
- Experiencing mystical Machrie Moor and its 4000-year-old stone circle
- Spotting wildlife such as sea otters, golden eagles, and red squirrels
- Making use of the hotel's excellent spa facilities

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite rooms in our partner accommodation(s)
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided walks with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from walks where necessary

TRIP SUITABILITY

The Best of Isle of Arran Guided Island Hopping holiday is graded 3. Our walks on the island mostly follow well defined paths, although they are often very rough and rocky underfoot, with sections of steeper, loose terrain. The final walk of the holiday is optional and would be our grade 4. The climb to Goatfell is a sustained steep ascent with occasional sections on more rugged mountainous paths, at times the use of hands will be required. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant fitness required to join this holiday. Please be sure you can manage the daily mileage and ascent as listed. The walking day is normally 6-7 hours. It is important for your own enjoyment, and that of your fellow guests that you can maintain the pace. It makes a lot of sense to spend time getting some additional exercise before your holiday. We suggest that you try to fit in a number of longer walks, including some on hilly, rugged terrain. Other exercises such as cycling, jogging and swimming are also excellent for developing increased stamina.

Your fitness

Having a solid base of fitness before your holiday will ensure you've the best chance of completing the holiday and enjoying it to boot. Here's a few simple tips to help you get fit and ready for your challenge:

- Get out walking - whether the weather, get out there, and start building your fitness months before your holiday
- Build your distance gradually and get a number of 6-8hr hill days in
- Ideally, try and do two consecutive days training if possible
- Take the stairs every time
- Train on different terrain
- Train with your day pack and your walking boots too, to ensure they're well worn in before your holiday

- Other sports help improve your walking fitness too. The best ones are jogging, cycling, swimming, which will build your stamina, and yoga which will help strengthen your core and improve balance
- Time training will help ensure you enjoy your holiday to the max.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Settle into the holiday at the hotel's spa before meeting your HF Holidays Leader in the evening. You'll have the chance to meet the rest of your group as you find out what's in store over the next eight days, then enjoy your evening meal.

Day 2: From Lamlash to Brodick

Distance: 9 miles (15km) Ascent: 1,000ft (300m) An introduction to Arran's coast and country begins with a walk along the water's edge from Lamlash on the east coast to Brodick, the main village on the island. Along the way, you'll pass over the Clachland Hills and Glen Coy for panoramic views across the open bays. After the walk, you have free time to explore Brodick. Be sure to check out Brodick Castle for its manicured gardens or take in some history at the Isle of Arran Heritage Museum.

Day 3: Glen Rosa

Distance: 7 miles (11km) Ascent: 400ft (120m) Travel into the heart of the island where Arran's mountains and craggy peaks provide an idyllic setting for this guided walk. The contrasts of the island's landscapes come into focus with domineering sandstone mountains encircled by lush woodlands and fields at the edge. We may even spot herds of red deer too. We end the walk at Brodick Castle – if you didn't get the chance to visit on day two, you'll have the opportunity to look inside or enjoy the gardens.

Day 4: The Cock of Arran

Distance: 8.5 miles (13.5km) Ascent: 300ft (90m) Today we head north for Arran's characteristically wild land and coast, where the paths will be particularly rugged underfoot. Once upon a time this stretch once resembled a cockerel, giving it the name Cock of Arran. Yet the island's geological features are still a sight to behold with giant millipede tracks, Ossian's Cave, and Fairy Dell just a few of the places we'll walk by. Wild deer often come to graze on the grasslands, and if you keep an eye on the coast you may even spot dolphins and seals as they come up to the shore. We'll end the walk with a dram at the Lochranza distillery, Arran's first whisky distillery. Please note: The terrain on this walk is particularly rocky underfoot, care and surefootedness are required.

Day 5: Holy Isle

Distance: 4.5 miles (7km) Ascent: 1150ft (350m) Hop on a boat to visit Holy Isle, just off the coast of Arran, boasting an ancient spiritual heritage dating back to the 6th century. We visit the Tibetan Buddhist retreat for an introduction to the island's past and present then take on the summit of Mullach Mor, the highest point. The views over towards Arran are second to none, and a well-earned reward after the steep climb.

Day 6: Walking the West Coast

Distance: 6 miles (10km) Ascent: 400ft (120m) We focus our efforts today on walking Arran's west coast while taking in its history and legends. You'll have time to soak up the 4,000-year-old giant standing stones and Bronze Age burial

cairn at Machrie Moor, then continue on to King's Cave, the largest of Arran's sea caves. Legend has it that Robert the Bruce once sheltered here.

Day 7: Goatfell

Distance: 7.5 miles (12.5km) Ascent: 2,900ft (900m) Arran's highest peak, Goatfell, provides a fitting finale for your week of island exploration. Our most challenging walk climbs to the summit for unbeatable 360-degree views where you can take it all in, and even glimpse neighbouring Inner Hebridean islands too. If you'd prefer something less strenuous, then you're free to enjoy the spa facilities at the hotel or hop on the public bus and do a circuit of the island. Stop off at Blackwaterfoot or in the south of the island – there are plenty of possibilities.

Day 8: Departure Day

Time to say goodbye, we hope to see you again!
