

July 23-31, 2023



Hiking and Exploring the Faroe Islands and the Scottish Highlands

Enjoy the remoteness of the Faroe Islands and the
warmth and charm of Scotland

Leader: Joe Thomas Trip #2306 Leader: Jay Sitkin

The Faroe's are like nowhere else on earth. Adrift in the north Atlantic, these 18 forgotten islands are thrashed by furious swells and subject to some of the most fickle weather on the planet; all of which is forgiven the moment you clap eyes on their primordial beauty. They may be little but nature works on a grand scale here and the elements are felt keenly.

In traditional Scottish geography, the Highlands refers to that part of Scotland north-west of the Highland Boundary Fault, which crosses mainland Scotland in a near-straight line from Helensburgh to Stonehaven.

The Highlands are often portrayed as a romantic part of Scotland. This is not at all strange given the stunning unspoiled nature with rugged mountains, deep blue lochs and empty glens where majestic Red Deer rule the hills and Eagles rule the skies. Due to the ever and fast changing weather, the Highlands have a mystical touch. One moment you see the hills, the next they are gone. Sunny spells and dark shadows move over the hills and the white snow capped mountains in winter give the Highlands a sparkling touch.

Come join us as we hike and enjoy the beauty of both for this 9 day journey.

OUR ITINERARY

(subject to change)

This trip has been rated 3.5 (out of 6) for difficulty. It is an easy to moderate hiking adventure with shorter distances and only small elevation gains. The trip is appropriate for beginner hikers and higher.

For more info, see <https://www.outdoors-activities/difficulty-ratings>

Day 1 - July 23– Arrive Edinburgh (-) **(You may have to leave the US on July 22 to arrive on the 23rd)**

Arrive Edinburgh and independently transfer to the Bruntsfield Hotel.

The Bruntsfield is a four-star hotel located 7 miles from Edinburgh airport. It can be accessed by taxi (approx. US\$40 per taxi). It is also possible to take the Airport Shuttle bus to the city centre, from where there is a bus to nearby Bruntsfield Place. For those arriving early, this will be a good opportunity to visit historic Edinburgh.



Overnight at the Bruntsfield Hotel, Edinburgh. Meals today to own account.

THE FAROES ISLANDS

Day 2 - July 24 - Fly to Faroe's (B, L)

Afternoon flight from Edinburgh to Vágar Airport, on the Faroe Islands. On arrival, meet with your guide and embark on a short sightseeing tour of the island of Vágar, including the twin villages of Bøur and Gásadalur. During the tour, we'll enjoy fabulous views of the fjords and the islets of Tindhólmur and Mykines, while a short walk from Gásadalur will take us to the Múlafossur waterfall.

After the tour, we continue to Tórshavn, capital of the Faroe Islands. overnight at Hotel Brandan in Tórshavn. Dinner this evening to own account.

Day 3 - July 25 – Vestmanna and Bøsdalafossur (B, L)

After breakfast, depart Tórshavn for Vestmanna, from where we embark on a boat trip to the Vestmanna Bird Cliff.

One of the Faroes' most popular attractions, the Vestmanna boat trip will take us along the coast, through narrow inlets and coastal grottoes carved by the Atlantic Ocean, to reach the 1,500-foot-high Vestmanna cliffs, where thousands of seabirds nest, including substantial colonies of puffin and kittewakes.



Following the tour, enjoy a soup and salad buffet at Fjørugráin in Vestmanna.

This afternoon, we take a 3-hour hike around Lake Sørvágsvatn to Bøsdalafossur, a coastal waterfall that flows from the lake into the Atlantic Ocean, and then up towards the Trælanipa Cliffs. This last section of the hike involves a bit of a climb, for which we're well-rewarded with dramatic coastal views! En route back to Tórshavn, we'll have the option to stop at Kvivik, a small village containing the foundations of two Viking buildings.

Evening at leisure in Tórshavn. Dinner this evening to own account.

Day 4 - July 26 – Streymoy and Eysturoy Islands (B, L)

Today we will explore the the Faroes' two largest islands, Streymoy and Eysturoy. Your first stop will be Saksun, a picturesque village with old grass thatched farmhouses surrounded by tall mountain peaks and a lagoon-like lake. We will take the time to explore the village and the sandy beach of the lake that leads out to the Atlantic Ocean.

Leaving Saksun, continue to Tjørnuvík, a costal village overlooking a beautiful beach, then on to eastern Eysturoy, before finally arriving at Gjógv after passing through Funningsfjørður and Funning. In Gjógv, enjoy a stroll through the village to the natural harbour before stopping for lunch at a local guesthouse.

In the afternoon, return to Tórshavn via Slættaratindur, the highest mountain on the Faroe Islands at 882m – there will be time for a stop at the foot of the mountain for pictures, and at a coastal viewpoint overlooking the freestanding rocks of Risin og Kellingin ("the Giant and the Hag"). Expect to arrive back in Tórshavn late afternoon.

Evening at leisure.



Day 5 - July 27 – Return Edinburgh; travel to the Scottish Highlands (B, D)

Morning at leisure to explore Tórshavn independently. Regroup at the hotel at approx. 11am for transfer to Vágar Airport for afternoon flight to Edinburgh (14:00-15:25).

THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

The group will be met on arrival at Edinburgh and transferred together north to Pitlochry, in Highland Perthshire. Dinner and overnight in a comfortable hotel in Pitlochry.

Day 6 - July 28–Hike Rob Roy Way from River Tay to Pitlochry (B, L)

A short transfer in the morning takes the group to the River Tay, where canoeists are often seen testing their skills on the rapids. Crossing a bridge over the river, we'll then continue to follow the Rob Roy Way back to Pitlochry, a scenic route through forest and hillsides. Depending on the preferences of the group, there are options to extend the route by taking in a small summit near the top of the trail.

On arrival back in Pitlochry, there will be time for a tour of one of the local distilleries before returning to the guesthouse for overnight.

Hike profile: 4.5 miles, 900 feet elevation gain (3 hours hiking, plus lunch and stops)



Day 7 - July 29– Hike Rob Roy Way from Glen Ogle to Balquhiddier (B, L)



A short transfer takes the group west into Loch Lomond National Park. At the top of a pass we begin hiking, again following the Rob Roy Way. Because the road crosses the pass, we start high so that the walk is primarily downhill. Part of the trail follows an old viaduct which formerly carried a railway through these glens.

Finish the hike near the village of Balquhiddier, where we can pay a visit to

a small churchyard housing the grave of Rob Roy MacGregor, namesake of the Rob Roy way. Then continue by vehicle to tonight's accommodation, which is located in the small village of Drymen.

Hike profile: 6 miles, 300 feet elevation gain (3 hours hiking, plus lunch and stops)



Day 8 - July 30 – Hike West Highland Way from Drymen to Conic Hill (B, L)

Starting directly from Drymen, we join the famous West Highland Way trekking route going northwards. There will be some short climbs today, as you leave the village of Drymen and trek up to Conic Hill, a small summit of 358m on the Highland Boundary Fault. An ascent of almost 500 feet takes us to its summit, from where we'll be greeted with dramatic views across Loch Lomond.



From Conic Hill, descend to the village of Balmaha for a celebratory pint of ale before making the 2-hour transfer back to Edinburgh.

In Edinburgh, dinner and overnight at the Bruntsfield Hotel

Hike profile: 6 miles, 1,000 feet elevation gain (4 hours hiking, plus lunch and stops)

Day 9 - July 31 – Depart Edinburgh (B)

Our itinerary ends this morning after breakfast. Check out at our leisure. To get to the airport, either take the tram or the hotel staff can arrange a taxi.





Joe has an avid interest in health and fitness which has paved his way to adventure travel. He has participated in bike trips through the Po Valley of Italy and the Camino de Santiago in Spain. After becoming an AMC leader, he has co-led 16 trips including Machu Picchu/Easter Island, Puglia, Italy, Patagonia, the Dolomites, Tanzania, Vietnam/Cambodia, India/Bhutan, Morocco, France, Spain, Portugal, Norway and Oman.

Jay, from Philadelphia, is a Delaware Valley hiking, biking, and backpacking leader and AMC Adventure Travel Assistant Leader. He has travelled throughout North & South America, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, and Western & Eastern Europe. Jay has lived in Israel, has had an extended stay in New Zealand. He has hiked, cycled, or backpacked in Patagonia, Croatia, in the Alps. Jay owned an outdoors shop in Blue Bell, PA, selling outdoor clothing and gear, and offered a wide variety of lessons in these activities. Over the years he has organized trips as varied as hiking the Tour Du Mont Blanc, touring Alaska, and to Machu Picchu. He has participated in long distance cycling activities such as the Tour of Colorado, MOOSA, and has backpacked and hiked Yellowstone and the Tetons, and the "W" in Patagonia.



TRIP COST: TRIP COST:

Total Trip Cost \$4790, (\$4890 non-members)
\$1800 due with application;
\$1800 due June 1, 2022
and \$1190 (\$1290 non-members)
due January 1, 2023.

If you are not a member of the AMC, there is a guest fee of \$100. You may prefer to join the AMC. Membership is \$50 for an individual, \$75 for a family, and \$25 for juniors (under 30) and seniors (over 69). You can join on line at the AMC home page at

<http://www.outdoors.org/get-involved>

TRIP INCLUDES:

8 nights lodging; all breakfasts, most lunches and 6 dinners; English speaking local guides; all activities and tours listed; r/t airfare from Edinburgh and the Faroe's;
Med/Evac Travel insurance (this is not trip cancelation insurance)

(The trip fee that you pay to us includes coverage for emergency medical evacuation and assistance through Travel Insurance Services. This is not standard medical insurance or trip cancellation insurance. It will cover up to \$5,000 for accident expenses (and sickness expenses only for international trips) and up to \$200,000 for emergency evacuation and repatriation. Coverage only includes the dates of travel of the official AMC trip, so coverage for early arrival or trip extension is not included. This coverage includes access to a "Worldwide Assistance Center" that provides the support you or your family may need in a crisis, beyond what the AMC and/or the volunteer leaders may be able to provide. It will also document the incident should a claim need to be filed.)

TRIP DOES NOT INCLUDE: International Airfare (approximately \$1000).;

(While participant airfare is not included in the trip price, leaders may assist participants in making suitable reservations. At a minimum, participants will be told when and where they must join the group for the official

TRIP DOES NOT INCLUDE: Airfare of approximately \$1000 and airport transfers

The leaders build a trip based on an approximate 10% higher rate of exchange of the current rate. Foreign currencies such as the euro can fluctuate and we want to advise you that if the exchange rate moves higher than expected, we may have to come to you with a modest price increase. We try to avoid this by budgeting wisely; however, there is always the possibility of rate changes. Anyone who does not want to accept the price increase may withdraw from the trip with a full refund.

OUR GOALS

As leaders, our goals for the group are to have fun, utilize your skills, and savor a foreign culture at reasonable cost and in the company of other adventurers with similar interests.

We encourage your individual contributions, cooperation and good humor to enrich the group's experience.

We anticipate each participant's engagement as part of a group, and expect each to abide by the leaders' decisions and work towards the group having a good time. Be prepared to help your fellow riders/hikers and spend time with other participants on the trip. In doing so, you will help ensure each participant's maximum experience and enjoyment of the trip.

DISCLOSURES

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run on a nonprofit basis. Leaders are not compensated except for their travel and administrative costs associated with the trip. A program fee is assessed toward AMC Adventure Travel Excursion program and administrative expenses.

AMC MISSION

AMC Travel Trips are run in a manner supportive of and consistent with the conservation, recreation and educational principles and mission of the Club. Trip leaders encourage participant conduct consistent with Leave No Trace environmental and conservation principles and local regulations.

Cancellation Policy

The AMC Adventure Travel cancellation policy is based on the fact that your cancellation may not raise the cost to the other participants or to the leaders. Once you are notified the trip is declared to run as scheduled, the minimum cancellation fee is \$100.00. If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed instead, unless they can be applied toward another acceptable participant. Should the leaders be able to replace you, you may be charged a reduced penalty. This will generally not be determined until after the trip. Failure to make trip payment(s) in a timely manner will be considered a cancellation.

On rare occasions AMC Adventure Travel may need to cancel all or a portion of a trip due to force majeure [e.g. terrorism, local health conditions, natural disaster, changes in local regulatory environment, etc.] In the event of such a cancellation, your trip fee will be refunded less any trip expenses already incurred plus any non-cancellable future trip expenditures. AMC Adventure Travel is not responsible for additional expenses incurred by you in preparing for the trip (including non-refundable air tickets, visa fees, gear or medical expenses, etc).

Safety

As participant safety is a high priority for all AMC-sponsored events, procedures and policies have been developed to attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with volunteer leaders to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all. Participants should be aware that there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to adverse weather and environmental conditions, remote locations of our trips and camps, and transportation in vehicles, on foot, by boat, or on a bike. When you apply for acceptance onto a trip, please carefully read and sign the Adventure Travel Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks and Release and Indemnity Agreement and call if you have any questions.

LEADERS' EXPECTATIONS AND RIGHTS

When you participate in this activity, you should be in proper condition for the challenges outlined in this prospectus. You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety. Prior to your acceptance as a participant in this trip, you may be asked to discuss your capabilities and experience with us. We may also request references to confirm your fitness level and suitability for participating in trip activities.

This trip is designed so that everyone may experience our adventure in several Scandinavian countries and Russia through shared participation in activities and tasks in an organized group environment. AMC travelers are known for their cooperative efforts, and expectations are that all participants will be considerate of others sharing this AMC Adventure Travel experience.

It may happen on any trip that a trip member is or becomes unable to participate in one or more of the planned activities. Leaders in their sole judgment have the right and obligation to refuse participation in any activity to any group member for reasons of safety, whether it be of the group or of the individual. Illness, injury or lack of proper gear or fitness for a particular activity are examples of some conditions that might result in a participant's being unable to perform one or more activity. Leaders may try to find a substitute activity for the trip member, but this

For additional information, contact Joe at 203-755-5141 / thomasj73@sbcglobal.net or Dick at r.cable@sbcglobal.net