

Northern Highlands & Islands

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Best Places to Eat

- Albannach (p366)
- → Three Chimneys (p385)
- Côte du Nord (p362)
- → Captain's Galley (p361)
- → Waterside (p374)

Best Places to Sleep

- → The Torridon (p372)
- → Pennyland House (p360)
- → Mey House (p359)
- Craigvar (p352)
- → Hillstone Lodge (p384)

Why Go?

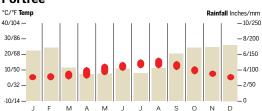
Scotland's vast and melancholy soul is here: an epic land with a stark beauty that indelibly imprints the hearts of those who journey through the mist and mountains, rock and heather. Long, sun-blessed summer evenings are the pay-off for so many days of horizontal rain. It's simply magical.

Stone tells stories throughout. The chambered cairns of Caithness and structures of the Western Isles are testament to the skills of prehistoric builders; cragtop castles and broken walls of abandoned crofts tell of the Highlands' turbulent history.

Outdoors is the place to be, whatever the weather; there's nothing like comparing windburn or mud-ruined boots over a well-deserved dram by the crackling fire of a Highland pub. The landscape lends itself to activity, from woodland strolls to thrilling mountain-bike descents, from sea-kayaking to Munro-bagging, from beachcombing to birdwatching. Best are the locals, big-hearted and straight-talking; make it your business to get to know them.

When to Go

Portree



Jun Long evenings bathe achingly sublime landscapes in dreamy light. Jul The Hebridean Celtic Festival is a top time to experience the culture of the Outer Hebrides. Sep Less busy than summer, the midges have gone and temperatures are (maybe!) still OK.

Northern Highlands & Islands Highlights

- North Coast 500 (p360) Driving one of Europe's most spectacularly scenic road trips.
- 2 Ullapool (p367) Gorging on fresh, succulent seafood in this delightful town with its picture-perfect harbour.
- 3 Harris (p391) Dipping your toes in the water at some of the world's most beautiful beaches in the Western Isles.
- Q Cuillin Hills (p381) Shouldering the challenge of these hills, with their rugged silhouettes brooding over the skyscape of Skye.
- **5** Far Northwest (p349) Picking your jaw up off the floor as you marvel at the epic Highland scenery.
- 6 Cape Wrath (p364) Taking the trip out to Britain's gloriously remote northwestern shoulder.
- **7 Plockton** (p373) Relaxing in a postcard-pretty village where the Highlands meet the Caribbean.
- 3 Skye (p377) Launching yourself in a sea kayak to explore the otter-rich waters around the Isle of Skye.

