



Southern Highlands & Islands

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Why Go?

From the rasping spout of a minke whale as it breaks the surface, to the 'krek-krek-krek' of a corncrake, Scotland's southern Highlands and Islands are filled with unusual wildlife experiences. You can spot otters tumbling in the kelp, watch sea eagles snatch fish from a lonely loch, and thrill to the sight of dolphins riding the bow wave of your boat. Here sea travel is as important as road and rail – dozens of ferries allow you to island-hop your way from the Firth of Clyde to Oban and beyond, via the whisky distilleries of Islay, the wild mountains of Jura and the scenic delights of diminutive Colonsay. The bustling town of Oban is the gateway to the isles – from the peaceful backwaters of Kerrera and Lismore to the dramatic coastal scenery of Mull and the wild, windswept beaches of Coll and Tiree.

Best Places to Eat »

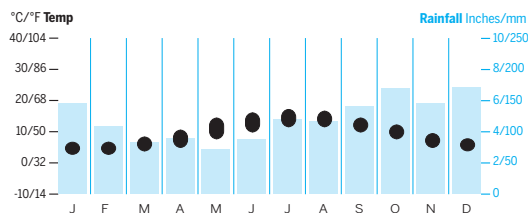
- » Café Fish (p93)
- » Colonsay Hotel (p89)
- » Argyll Hotel (p99)
- » Inver Cottage (p57)

Best Places to Stay

- » Highland Cottage Hotel (p93)
- » Achnadrish House (p94)
- » George Hotel (p68)
- » Roman Camp Hotel (p50)
- » Lochranza SYHA (p63)

When to Go

Oban



Late May Fèis Ilie: week-long celebration of traditional Scottish music and whisky.

June Roadsides and gardens are ablaze with colour with deep pink rhododendron blooms.

August Best month of the year for whale watching off the west coast.



Southern Highlands & Islands Highlights

- 1 Hike through the bluebell woods on the Bonnie banks of **Loch Lomond** (p44).
- 2 Stare in wonder at the magnificent marble-clad halls of **Mount Stuart** (p57).
- 3 Walk barefoot across the strand from Colonsay to Oronsay to visit the **medieval priory** (p88).
- 4 Ride a high-speed boat through surging water in the **Gulf of Corryvreckan** (p87).
- 5 Sit by a log fire in the **Port Charlotte Hotel** (p84), sampling some of Islay's finest single-malt whiskies.
- 6 Head out to watch the whales in the waters off the west coast of **Mull** (p90).
- 7 Blow away the cobwebs on the scenic, activity-packed **Isle of Arran** (p60).
- 8 Sample some of Europe's finest **seafood** in a waterside restaurant.
- 9 Marvel at the autumn colours reflected in the scenic lochs of **The Trossachs** (p44).