

# ST. KILDA - NOT ISOLATED ANY MORE



An Outer Hebrides island, St. Kilda, now attracts positive attention, as opposed to the negativity of the past. Tourists are beginning to discover the natural beauty of possibly the remotest part of the British Isles.

It used to be the focal point of many jokes about being a remote place, which nobody ever wished to visit. St. Kilda in the Scottish Outer Hebrides was often comparable to 'outer Mongolia' in terms of being the ultimate back of beyond and symbol of isolation.

Indeed, it was only in 1930 that the last 36 inhabitants of St. Kilda had to rely upon a government evacuation to escape after problems with the surrounding masses of water. This did little but to devastate the island's reputation even more.

However, there is another side to St. Kilda, which many people often forget, or do not know about at all. This is that **it is one of the world's rare examples of a heritage site attached to culture and nature at the same time**. It is also **Europe's most important seabird colony**, being the home to an array of a number of rare species, which are available for viewing around the coast. Similarly, the island is the home to a unique species of mouse and an equally unique wren. This goes some way to explaining why more and more visitors are flocking to the Outer Hebrides.

Indeed, the figures for recent years have been breaking records for the area. A record **24 cruise ships have already been booked for this year**. It is expected that bird lovers will be amongst the arrivals. Whereas 3000 annual visits used to be the record, according to the main tourist organisation in the region that figure is expected to exceed 5000 by the end of the year.

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