

THE MYTHICAL SKYE



The Scottish folk often prides itself in its specific and very unique traditions and habits. The Scots like to emphasize their history and worship the great personas who elevated their country and put it on the map of Europe. The rough character of the true Scotland appeals to many tourists who want to fully experience its uniqueness. The ideal place which represents the core of 'Scottishness' itself are the Hebride islands, an archipelago located off the northwest coast of Scotland.

The biggest island which also attracts most visitors is the Island of Skye. However, the majority of tourists also travel to Harris, Lewis or Lochalsh. Skye, originally meaning "cloud" is very much worth its name. The rare beauty of abrupt cliffs and striking fjords, or heaving hills leaves one completely breathless. In the 1800s, the population reached some 30,000, however, as sheep breeding proved to be the most effective source of income, many locals were forced by the clan chiefs to leave their lands. Thus, only 8,000 inhabitants remain.

There are several operators offering their experienced guides to the visitors. Most also offer appealing packages, which include not only trekking around several islands, but also experiencing the Scottish ancestry.

Visiting the Eileen Donan castle, a restored 12th century fortress is an absolute must. There are also several museums documenting the Scottish culture in both Skye and Lochalsh. The Museum of the Isles at Armadale Castle in Lochalsh is a very good choice.

Those wishing to observe the way of life from historical perspective should visit the Museum of Island Life at Kilmuir. The attractive working studios here will demonstrate the process of weaving or stone carving. Furthermore, tourists get a chance to see a blade smith, knitter or even a jeweler at work. Families with children may follow the footsteps of dinosaurs or a very popular toy museum.

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