

GOTHIC IMAGE

Tours of Ancient Britain and Ireland

Sacred Scotland

23 July – 1 August 2024

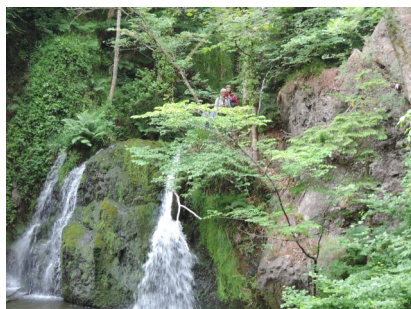
Tuesday 23 July

We rendezvous at **1pm** at *The Stag and Thistle Restaurant* situated at the far end of the main concourse of the terminal building at **Inverness airport**. Transfer to hotel followed by free time until a meeting prior to dinner to discuss the next morning's Druid ceremony. Our hotel is not far from Culloden Battlefield, so, for those who are interested, there is time to organise private transport to the site and Visitor Centre.

Overnight near Clava Cairns

Wednesday 24 July

We visit Clava Cairns, the site of an exceptionally well-preserved group of prehistoric burial cairns that were built about 4,000 years ago. Here we hold a Druid ceremony to honour the land, the ancestors and our journey together.



In the afternoon we drive to Rosemarkie on the Black Isle where we follow a stream through an enchanted wooded glen, with two beautiful waterfalls. The Fairy Glen was once the scene of a well-dressing ceremony, where the children of the village

decorated a pool, next to a spring, with flowers. This was said to ensure that the fairies kept the water supply clean.



Overnight near Clava Cairns

Thursday 25 July

Today we travel north up the rugged north-east coast of Scotland, to Thurso, overlooking the Pentland Firth, and take a boat to the Islands of Orkney. In this timeless place, where the quality of the light and the air are so special, we feel on the edge of the world. Orkney is

home to some of the best-preserved ancient sites in Europe - stone circles, earth houses, round barrows and prehistoric villages that reveal to us a simple but noble way of life in ancient times.

Overnight on Orkney.



Your tour hosts

Jamie George, Director of *Gothic Image Tours* and **Linda Marson**, Director of *Global Spiritual Studies*, share a passion for providing travel experiences that connect people to the spirit of place in a relaxed, supportive environment that opens them to exploring their full potential.



Jamie has been taking people on soul journeys through the ancient sacred sites and landscapes of Britain and Ireland since the mid 1980s.



Linda, a professional Tarot reader, author and video producer, has taken people on Tarot-guided journeys to Peru and in her homeland, Australia. A working partnership quickly formed after Linda joined Jamie's tours in England and Scotland in 2013.

Your tour guests

Guests on all our tours are practising Druids, often skilled in the bardic arts of music and storytelling.

Helen and Mark Woodsford-Dean live on



Mainland Orkney, where, through their company *Spiritual Orkney*, they offer a range of sacred and spiritual services to visitors, guests, seekers and pilgrims. Helen is an experienced archaeologist and teacher, as well as a published author.

Mark's background is a combination of Druidry and shamanism. Mark is qualified as an arborist, health care professional and archaeologist.

Kate and Corwen are musicians and instru-



ment makers who explore the sound world of our Ancestors. At a musical soiree at our hotel on Orkney, they will entertain us with

Viking, Saxon and Medieval music.

Jan Sutch Pickard storyteller — see p. 2.

Friday 26 July

Today we visit the windswept prehistoric village of Skara Brae by the Bay of Skail. We follow the path around the remains of this beautifully preserved 3000BC village with its sophisticated architecture and built-in stone furniture. From Skara Brae, we go to the great chamber of Maes Howe that receives the light of the setting sun at midwinter along its passage. We marvel at the exquisite stonework within the mound and view the runic art etched into the pillars of the chamber. In the afternoon there is time to explore the capital, Kirkwall, with its ancient paved streets, St Magnus Cathedral, craft shops and galleries. Musicians, Kate and Corwen, provide entertainment in the evening.
Overnight: Orkney.

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Saturday 27 July

We visit the neolithic stone circles of Stennes and the Ring of Brodgar, prehistoric sun and moon temples that are part of a sacred ritual landscape. The Ring of Brodgar sits within a natural amphitheatre of hills and is surrounded by a ditch, with 27 of the original 60 stones surviving today. It is possible that the inner path may be closed to allow the grass path to regenerate, but walking around the outside of the circle still allows you to experience the energy of the site.

Our local guides today are Helen and Mark Woodsford-Dean who give us the latest information on the archaeological excavations on the Ness of Brodgar, which show that these sites pre-date Stonehenge and Avebury.

Overnight: Orkney

Sunday 28 July

Today is a travel day. We leave our hotel early to take the ferry back to the mainland. Then we drive from the very north of mainland Scotland south to Oban on the west coast. Along the way we stop at a number of beautiful locations, including Loch Ness.

Overnight in Oban.

Monday 29 July

We take the ferry to the island of Mull and thence to the sacred island of Iona. Here is an island of dreams - a place that, as Fiona Macleod described, "None can understand who do not see it through its pagan light, its Christian light, its singular blending of paganism and romance and spiritual beauty". Jamie leads an optional walk to the Bay at the Back of the Ocean.

Overnight on Iona.

Tuesday 30 July

Free day on Iona. There are many sites to visit in this timeless land, mainly Christian, such as the 12th century Abbey, St Columba's Chapel, Oran's Chapel and the 12th century Nunnery. But the treasures of the island are to be found in the enchanted places where nature shows herself slowly and shyly to the curious pilgrim.

Overnight on Iona.



Tour guest — Jan Sutch Pickard

Jan is a storyteller and published poet. She grew up listening to family legends from two



grandmothers, while both parents relished and recited poetry. Her repertoire includes stories of Saint Columba to tales of the Clearances and traditional tales of Iona where she lived and worked for six years, including as Warden of the Abbey.

Jan joins us on our last night on Iona.



Wednesday 31 July

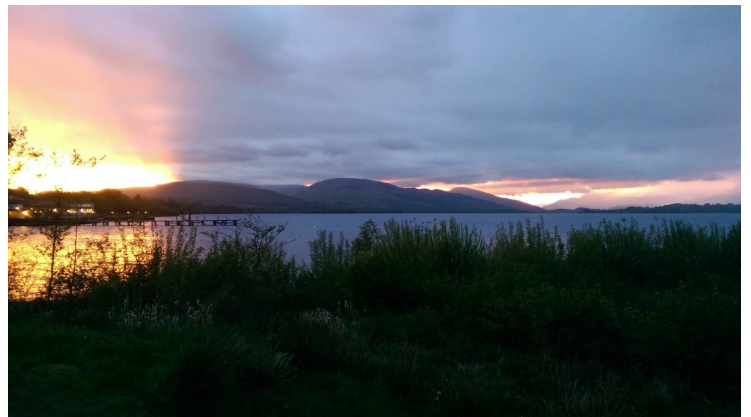
In the morning we travel to Dumbarton near Loch Lomond for our last night. En route we stop at Kilmartin Valley to visit Temple Wood stone circle and cairns. Here we hold a closing ceremony to celebrate our time together on the tour.

Overnight in Dumbarton



Thursday 1 August

After breakfast we depart for Glasgow Airport for international, domestic flights and transfers. We arrive by 9am in time for flight departures from **midday** onwards.



The Gothic Image approach

We always spend a good amount of time at each site so that you benefit fully from the ambience and subtle magic of the experience. Ours are not 'now you see it - now you don't' tours. Our focus is on experiencing the 'spirit of place' and the peculiar enchantment that each site offers, and learning something from it.

We visit inspiring locations where the ancient spirits of each place still reside. In addition, some of you will be returning to the homes of your ancestors. This can raise spiritual and emotional issues. On our tours we seek to build a supportive atmosphere, and your fellow travellers tend to be of a supportive and understanding disposition. At different sites that we visit, you will be given opportunity for reflection and peace. This inner dimension is what makes our tours especially memorable - a pilgrimage and nourishment for the soul.

The pace is not rushed. There are some areas where we climb steps or hills, but otherwise each site is easily accessible and within walking distance from the coach. Nevertheless, you will get some physical exercise! We reserve the right to vary the itinerary as necessary, to provide the best possible experience under the circumstances prevailing at the time.

Cost

Early bird: £2,850 per person twin share . To qualify for this price, you must book and pay your deposit by **31 December 2023**.

Full price: £2,950 per person, twin share (from 1 January 2024)

Single supplement: £550 per person. Single rooms are few and on a first come first served basis.

Deposit: £500, payable upon booking

Final payment is due by **22 May 2024**.

Price includes:

- fully escorted tour throughout
- quality, comfortable accommodation.
- coach travel
- full English breakfasts **and** dinners each day
- entrance fees
- guide fees, taxes and gratuities (excl. driver) .

Not included:

- international airfares and travel insurance
- gratuities for the coach driver
- lunch and services not specified.

Payment options

Payment is in UK pounds sterling only. This can be done online through PayPal using a debit or credit card (with **OR** without a PayPal account).

Cancellation policy

If you cancel your booking by **21 May 2024**, your deposit minus a £75 administration fee will be refunded. If you cancel after that date, your full tour payment can only be refunded if you find someone to take your place.

If *Gothic Image* cancels a tour due to insufficient numbers, your deposit will be refunded in full. If cancellation is due to a pandemic or event beyond our control, we reserve the right to offer alternative arrangements.

We **strongly** recommend that you take out travel insurance to cover unforeseen circumstances that could lead to you cancelling your place on the tour.

