

# Scotland

**25 May – 3 June 2019**

**from £1,800 per person**

## Itinerary

### Saturday 25 May 2019

On arrival at Edinburgh airport we will be met by our coach and local guide Julia Corden, before we make the short transfer to the centre of Edinburgh to enjoy an **orientation tour**.

Notable sights include the **Castle**, which sits on top of a rocky crag and dominates the city centre skyline; the **Royal Mile**, which leads down the hill from the castle past **St Giles Cathedral** and the controversial **Scottish Parliament building** to the **Palace of Holyroodhouse**, where Mary, Queen of Scots once lived and where Queen Elizabeth II still stays on her official visits to Edinburgh; **Princes Street**, the main shopping thoroughfare; and the New Town, with its sweeping terraces of elegant Georgian townhouses where notable Scots such as Robert Louis Stephenson once lived.



This evening we will enjoy a welcome dinner at our comfortable hotel in Edinburgh.

### Sunday 26 May 2019

This morning after breakfast we will travel to the south-west of Scotland to visit **two private gardens** our first being to **Cally Gardens**, a beautiful nursery and garden which has just recently re-opened under the new ownership of Kevin Hughes an amazing plantsman. Our second visit of the day will be to the newly built garden of past Presidents of the Scottish Rock Garden Club, **Drs Ian and Carole Bainbridge**. Their garden is full of treasures including an Alpine house, a woodland garden and a rock garden.

Following our visit we continue to our accommodation, at the **Woodland House Hotel**. All rooms are en-suite with television, direct-dial telephone, complimentary internet access and tea/coffee making facilities.

Dinner will be served in the evening.

### **Monday 27 May 2019**

Following breakfast we visit the world famous **Logan Botanic Garden**, which was started by the McDougall family who lived here for 800 years, and since 1969 it has been in the care of the Royal Botanic Garden at Edinburgh. Logan Botanic Garden is beautifully laid out with a host of spectacular plants, particularly in the walled garden with its fine terraces and well planned borders under an avenue of cabbage palms. The climate here is exceptionally mild and several different habitats provide conditions for a huge range of plants. Look out for the glass-house and its tropical plants.



We later travel towards Ayr where we will visit the private garden, **Burnside**. This young garden was started in 2006 and has a wide range of plants from trees to alpiners. Features include a 200 yard woodland border along the burn, herbaceous beds, screens, an ericaceous garden, three alpine houses, a large collection of alpine troughs and a pond.

Following our visit we continue to our comfortable accommodation at **Malin Court Hotel**, Turnberry. Dinner will be served in the evening.

### **Tuesday 28 May 2019**

This morning following breakfast we will travel north to visit **Glenarn**, reputedly one of the best woodland gardens in Scotland. Glenarn was originally planted by the Gibson brothers, and filled with rhododendrons and other plants collected by Kingdom-Ward, Ludlow and Sheriff on their expeditions to Tibet and China. The garden had been neglected for many years when Mike and Sue Thornley acquired it in 1983 and they have spent the last ten years or so gradually restoring it. The mild, damp location supports old plants of *Rhododendron tanastylum*, *arboreum* var. *nigagircum* and *Magnolia rostrata* to mention but a few, and all should be at their best at this time of year.



### **Tuesday 28 May 2019 (continued)**

Following our visit we will begin our journey towards Pitlochry with a stop off at Dunblane to visit the **private garden** of another Past President of the Scottish Rock Garden Club. The garden sits on an elevated site looking across to the mountains. There is an Alpine House, troughs and many beautiful borders with woodlands and alpines growing in them.

Following our visit we will continue to our comfortable accommodation at the **Fishers Hotel Pitlochry**.

Dinner will be served in the evening.

### **Wednesday 29 May 2019**

Following breakfast we travel to **Cluny House Gardens**, near Aberfeldy. Wandering through this wonderful wild woodland garden we will discover rare and exotic plants from around the world. The gardens feature trees and shrubs from America, New Zealand, Japan, China and Tibet, creating the unique atmosphere of a Himalayan woodland paradise. We'll also see Britain's widest conifer - a giant Wellingtonia, 11 metres in girth and over 130 years old.

This afternoon we visit the garden Julia and her team created, the **Explorer's Garden**. This important 'national landmark' garden enjoys panoramic views and pays tribute to over 14 plant collectors of Scottish descent. Here the collectors, the plants and the countries in which they were collected are reunited in the different garden areas. These collector and country of origin themes constantly recur and intertwine all through the garden in an innovative and imaginative way. The National Collection of Blue Meconopsis will be in full flower.



Dinner will be served at the hotel in the evening.

### **Thursday 30 May 2019**

This morning following breakfast we travel north to Aviemore, where we depart for a trip on the **Funicular Railway** that will take us to the top of Cairngorm Mountain for some fantastic views. We will then visit **Mountain Garden - Cairngorm Mountain**. The garden sits at 650m above sea level and is, we believe, one of the highest tended gardens in the UK. Located just above the Base Station at the Coire Cas car park it is home to some of the rarest plant species in the UK. Much of the original planting work was undertaken by local school children and overseen by the Cairngorm Rangers and since 2006 the garden has benefited greatly by the work from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh - Slavka and this year, Johnny. The garden showcases the plants found in the surrounding mountains and to see similar habitats you would have to travel over two thousand miles north to Arctic Norway.

We return to the hotel in time for dinner.

### **Friday 31 May 2019**

This morning following breakfast we begin our journey towards Perth where we stop to visit **Christie's Alpine Nursery**, near Kirriemuir, which specialises in alpines, bulbs and woodland plants as well as rare and unusual plants.

Our next visit today is to **Glendoick Gardens**, which boasts a unique collection of plants collected by three generations of Coxes from their plant-hunting expeditions in China and the Himalaya. There is also a fine collection of Rhododendrons and Azaleas, Primula, Meconopsis, Kalmia and sorbus in the woodland garden, peat garden and nursery.



We will enjoy another **private garden** before continuing comfortable accommodation at the **Royal George Hotel** in Perth where dinner will be served in the evening.

### **Saturday 1 June 2019**

This morning after breakfast we will enjoy a visit to **Branklyn Gardens**, a haven of peace and colour. Begun in 1922, on a south-facing slope with acid soil, the garden represents a wonderful collection of small rhododendrons, maples, magnolias and woodland plants. Paths wind along the contours of the land bringing the visitor nose to nose with all kinds of distinguished plants, all beautifully grown.



This afternoon, we travel to the Kingdom of Fife and the **private garden** of Cyril Lafong. Cyril has won many best plants in shows than anyone (70 plus George Forrest Medals). His garden is exquisite with Alpine House, Bulb Frames, Cervice Garden and many superb plants.

Following this, we return to **Edinburgh** where dinner will be served at the hotel in the evening.

### **Sunday 2 June 2019**



This morning after breakfast we visit the **Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh**, one of the finest botanic gardens in the world. A pleasure for all the family, the Garden offers fantastic views of the capital's skyline, featuring Edinburgh Castle, and is located just a mile from the city centre. Visitors can discover its fascinating history, which dates back 300 years, learn about its plantings and walk around 70 acres of beautiful landscape.

The world-famous Rock Garden is a particular highlight. James McNab built the first rock garden at Inverleith in 1871 which comprised of numerous small, straight-sided compartments, each planted and distinctly labelled. In 1914 a new Rock Garden was completed using conglomerate rock from the Callander area in Perthshire, and red sandstone from Dumfries. Today there is approximately 5,000 species planted at any one time in the Rock Garden.

### **Sunday 2 June 2019 (continued)**

Visitors can also enjoy the serenity of the Chinese Hillside, or stroll amongst the awe-inspiring Giant Redwood trees in the Woodland Garden. Plus, there are fine artworks to view in the Garden's contemporary art gallery Inverleith House.

This afternoon is free to explore Edinburgh at leisure. Alternatively you may wish to visit **Gardening Scotland** with many of the exhibitors arriving directly from the Chelsea Flower Show. The show provides visitors with the largest collection of plants and exhibits in Scotland. (Entrance not included).

This evening we will enjoy a farewell dinner at the hotel.

### **Monday 3 June 2019**

At an agreed time the group will be transferred back to Edinburgh airport in time for the return flight (flights under own arrangement).

### **Included in the price**

- Nine nights' accommodation on a dinner, bed and breakfast basis: three nights at the Best Western Braid Hill Hotel, Edinburgh; one night at the Woodland House Hotel, Dumfries; one night at Malin Court Hotel, Ayrshire; three nights at the Fishers Hotel, Pitlochry and one night at the Royal George Hotel, Perth. All rooms have private facilities
- Comfortable coaching in Scotland
- Visit to the gardens of Glenarn and Cluny House, Logan Botanics, Explorers Garden, Branklyn, Cairngorm Mountain Garden, the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh along with a selection of private gardens. Journey on the Cairngorm funicular railway
- Services of Julia Corden from Explorers Garden as tour guide. Julia is the Manager of the Explorers Garden, a modern day plant hunter and international botanical guide. She is a NARGS member and has spoken to a number of NARGS chapters. She devotes some of her spare time to volunteer with The Scottish Rock Garden Club and is President Elect and becomes President of the SRGC this November. Her passion is the Blue Poppy of the Himalayas. Over the past decade she has visited the Himalayas many times and seen these impressive plants in the wild. The Explorers Garden holds a National Collection of Large Blue Meconopsis and holds 32 cultivars giving Explorers 90% of the blue poppy cultivars list

### **Not included (per person)**

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| • Single room supplement                | £280.00                   |
| • Pre-tour extension – Chelsea & Wisley | £560.00 (£40 single supp) |
| • Flights                               |                           |
| • Insurance                             |                           |
| • Ticket to Gardening Scotland          |                           |

# Pre-Tour Extension – RHS Chelsea Flower Show & Wisley Garden

**23 – 25 May 2019**

**from £560.00** (minimum 10 paying passengers)

## Itinerary

### Thursday 23 May 2019

Flights under own arrangement.

At an agreed time we will transfer to **RHS Garden Wisley**, which is where the Royal Horticultural Society shows the gardening public how it should be done. Here the highest standards of practical horticulture are deployed in the setting of a splendid old site rich in fine trees against a backdrop of other plants, all impeccably labelled. A guided tour is included here.

Later we continue to our comfortable hotel to the south of London. Dinner is served in the evening.

### Friday 24 May 2019

After breakfast this morning we depart for our full-day visit to the **RHS Chelsea Flower Show**, which holds a rare position as a great British tradition and an exciting source of inspiration and advice. One of the highlights of the show is the collection of over twenty full-sized show gardens. Inside the Great Marquee visitors have their senses ravished by the hundreds of floral displays, many of them incorporating new, rare and unusual plants. Other popular features here include flower arranging, floristry and garden design marquees, courtyard gardens, window boxes and hanging baskets. Lunch is included.

Dinner is served back at our hotel in the evening.

### Saturday 25 May 2019

We depart on a morning flight to Edinburgh to join up with the rest of the party in Scotland.

## Included in the price

- Two nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the Holiday Inn Farnborough (or similar)
- One way flight from London to Edinburgh
- Comfortable coaching throughout
- Full-day ticket for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show
- Entrance to and guided tour of the RHS Garden Wisley

## Not included (per person)

- Single room supplement                      £40.00