



Skara Brae, Orkney

# Shetland and Orkney The Northern Isles

1 – 9 September 2024

4 nights Shetland – 4 nights Orkney



Jon Baines  
tours



The Ring of Brodgar

**Travel to the northernmost reaches of the UK through spectacular landscapes. Discover history that encompasses Neolithic times, the Bronze and Iron Ages, the Picts and the Vikings, and continues into the modern day. This tour takes you to two of the farthest Scottish Isles, both dramatically beautiful and rich in history and culture, allowing you to experience both Shetland and Orkney in just over a week.**

Led by Jo Durrant, the tour gives a superb overview of these far-flung island neighbours, which share connections and history but retain

distinctive characters. Proceed at a relaxed pace with local guides in each island to discover history, archaeology, geography, geology and culture and enjoy the unique wildlife of the area, from puffins to Shetland ponies.

This tour is a wonderful opportunity to unite the magnificent islands of Shetland and Orkney. It coincides with the International Orkney Science Festival (5 – 11 September), which includes a range of talks, art, film screenings, live music and walks. There is the opportunity to extend, subject to availability.

## Tour Leader

Jo Durrant is the award-winning presenter of “Jo Durrant’s Beautiful Universe”. This is an independent arts & science podcast which won the Sir Arthur Clarke award for Space Achievement in the Media category in 2021.

She’s a highly respected and accomplished interviewer and chair, and a familiar face on stage at events like the Stroud Book Festival & Gloucester History Festival.

Jo worked as a presenter/producer/reporter for BBC radio for over 20 years but recently left to go freelance. During her career, she’s interviewed the likes of Brian May, Melanie C, Helen Sharman, Alan Bennett, Chris Hadfield and even Tim Peake (in space!). Jo is passionate about the cross section of arts and science



and wants everyone to feel welcome to the conversation.

In her spare time, she enjoys yoga, walking, travelling, reading, the theatre, visiting museums and has also been a volunteer at the John Moore Museum in Tewkesbury for 12 years.

## Local Guides

**Shetland guide:** Dr Deborah Lamb was a guide on the 2021 tour. Deborah has a Phd in Archaeology, is an experienced tour guide and a trustee for the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

**Orkney guide:** David Drewer is Chair of the Orkney Archaeological Society, with an

interest in Orkney literature, geology and the history of science. An experienced, qualified guide, David was also Deputy Headteacher of Kirkwall and a former Chair of Orkney Health Board.

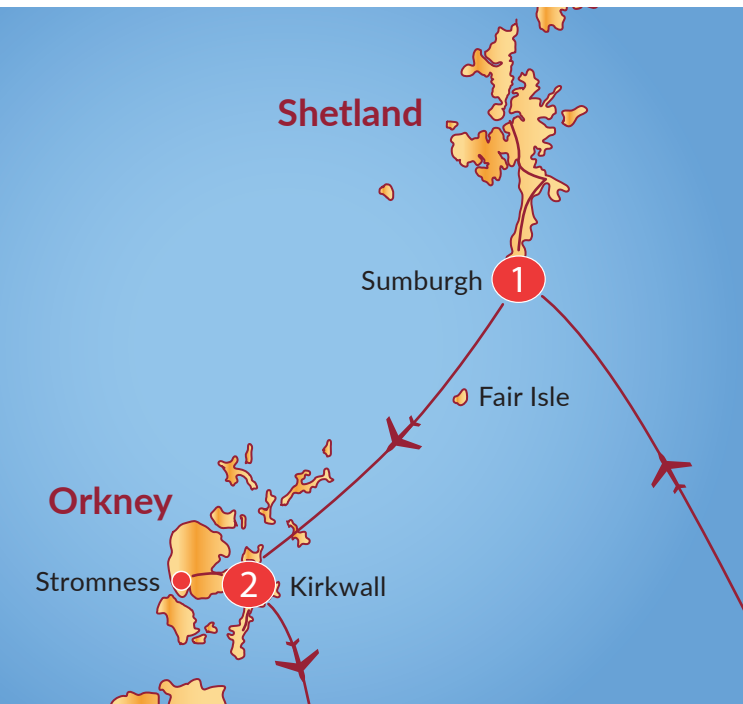
**“Deborah was excellent, informative and entertaining.”**

Mary Cunnah, participant on Shetland and Orkney 2021

Beautiful St Ninians, Shetland (credit Visit Scotland)



## 4 nights Shetland – 4 nights Orkney



### Day 1: Shetland (Sun, 1 Sept)

**D**

**Pm:** Arrive Sumburgh and transfer to charming Sumburgh Hotel. Pending arrival time, explore the dramatic local scenery.

**Eve:** Welcome dinner at the hotel.

### Day 2: Shetland (Mon, 2 Sept)

**B L**

**Am:** Short walk to Jarlshof, one of Europe's most important archaeological sites, with a history encompassing the Bronze and Iron ages, Pict settlements, the Vikings and the medieval period. Drive to Sumburgh Head Lighthouse, which has been in operation for 200 years, and an RSPB nature reserve high on the cliffs with spectacular views. Visit the Sumburgh Head Visitor Centre and learn about local wildlife, the history of the lighthouse, Shetland's maritime history and the WWII Radar Hut.

**Pm:** Drive to the visitor centre and have lunch at the café at Hoswick in Sandwick. Visit Rerwick Beach to spot seals and onto St Ninian's Isle before returning to the hotel.

### Day 3: Shetland (Tues, 3 Sept)

**B D**

**Am:** Drive to Lerwick, Shetland's capital and the only town on the archipelago. View the well preserved Clickimin Broch, incorporating a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age farmstead and Iron Age fort. Visit the Shetland Museum and Archives, which has a superb collection of exhibits. There is also the boat shed and hall, demonstrating a traditional style of boat building at the scenic Hay's Dock of Lerwick. Time at leisure.

**Pm:** Explore Lerwick on a short, guided tour, including Victoria Pier and the Shetland Textile Museum. Depart through the Tingwall Valley and hear about the Norse heritage of Tingwall and see Shetland ponies. Continue to Scalloway and learn about its integral part in the Shetland Bus operation; an undercover operation that took place in WWII. See the ruins of Scalloway Castle next to the Scalloway Museum, which has information on the history of the region, encompassing Neolithic settlers, Vikings Scots and up to WWII.

### Day 4: Shetland (Wed, 4 Sept)

**B L**

**Am:** Drive to the iconic Eshaness cliffs and lighthouse. Visit Tangwick Haa, a small museum inside an old haa (hall), which was once the home of the laird. The hall contains information on Shetland's unique and complex geology.

**Pm:** Drive to the lovely Busta House Hotel for lunch before continuing to Sumburgh via Shetland's only tree plantation.

### Day 5: Shetland / Orkney (Thur, 5 Sept)

**B D**

**Am:** At leisure with a late morning transfer to Sumburgh Airport. Fly to Orkney, an archipelago comprising approximately 70 islands with a rich Norse heritage.

**Pm:** Arrive in Kirkwall and transfer to the Ayre Hotel. Afternoon at leisure.

### Day 6: Orkney (Fri, 6 Sept)

B L

**Am:** Visit the famous Italian Chapel, a beautiful building constructed by Italian POWs in WWII, who were brought to Orkney in 1942 to build a giant causeway - today known as the Churchill Barriers - to seal off access to the vast naval base at Scapa Flow.

**Pm:** Visit the Burray Fossil and Heritage Centre with lunch at the Barrier View Café. Visit St Magnus Cathedral, see the Earl's Palace and the Orkney Museum paintings by Orcadian artist Stanley Cursiter, who was the Queen's Painter and Limner (official artist in Scotland). Option to visit the quirky Orkney Wireless Museum.

### Day 7: Orkney (Sat, 7 Sept)

B L

**Am:** Orkney's human history stretches back 6,000 years to its Neolithic origins, which are evident in a breathtaking landscape of ceremonial stone circles, tombs, prehistoric villages and many other ancient monuments. Visit Skara Brae, Skail House, the Ring of Brodgar and Maeshowe.

**Pm:** Lunch at the Standing Stones Hotel before visiting the Standing Stones of Stenness. Return to Kirkwall.

### Day 8: Orkney (Sun, 8 Sept)

B D

**Am:** Visit the Stromness Museum, which puts the history of Orkney into context. Visit the Pier Arts Centre, with work by artists such as Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson. The gallery extension won an architectural prize for best building in Scotland in 2007.

**Pm:** Visit Orkney Brewery for lunch (at client's expense). Scenic drive along the Scapa Flow, the home of the British fleet in both world wars, with stories of Orkney's key strategic role in those events. Take a tour of the Highland Park Distillery, the world's most northern whisky distillery.

**Eve:** Farewell dinner.

### Day 9: Orkney (Mon, 9 Sept)

B

**Am:** Depart Orkney after breakfast.

**All itineraries are subject to change according to local conditions.**



The dramatic cliffs of Eshaness, Shetland (credit Visit Scotland)



Orkney Ayre Hotel

## Hotels

### **Sumburgh Hotel (Shetland)**

Built in 1867, this former laird's home has an excellent location on the coast of southern Shetland, close to Lerwick. This welcoming hotel is full of charm. There is no lift at the hotel but portorage is included and we are holding a number of rooms on a lower floor reached by five steps. Please contact us to reserve one of these rooms.

### **Orkney Ayre Hotel, Orkney**

The Ayre Hotel is one of Orkney's finest hotels and is situated in the principal town of Kirkwall, overlooking Kirkwall harbour, where the ferries to the North Isles dock. The hotel is in a charming, whitewashed building with harbour views, clean and cosy rooms with good facilities and friendly service. The hotel has a lift and portorage is included.

### **How to get to Shetland and from Orkney**

There are flights to Sumburgh in Shetland and from Kirkwall in Orkney from many UK airports on Logan Air. Upon arrival there is a free transfer to the hotel (subject to availability). Please contact us for assistance in booking the Logan Air Flights.



Sumburgh Hotel Shetland



A lodberries (a hotel and houses built into the sea) in Lerwick (top); Monument to the Shetland Bus, Susi Richardson, 2021 Tour; Visit Skail House, Orkney's finest 17th century mansion; The Italian Chapel (credit Visit Scotland) (above)

The cost of the tour sharing a twin or double room \$3,304

The cost of the tour with a room to yourself is \$3,760

(Excluding international flights and departure transfers)

**The cost includes:**

- Eight nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms in medium grade hotels
- Tour leader (Jo Durrant)
- Porterage and tips
- Breakfast daily
- Lunch or dinner daily (as mentioned)
- All transport within tour, plus arrival transfer
- Flight from Shetland to Orkney
- A full programme of cultural visits and talks
- Specially arranged visits and specialist guides
- Admission fees throughout

**The cost excludes:**

- Travel to / from Shetland and Orkney and transfers (free transfer on arrival)
- All personal extras such as laundry and drinks and meals not mentioned
- All optional excursions, tours and visits
- Travel insurance

**Travelling to/from the islands:**

There are direct and indirect flights on Logan Air to Sumburgh in Shetland and from Kirkwall in Orkney from regional airports across the UK.

Mrs Humphrey's temporary hospital' plaque in Orkney



# About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

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Shetland ponies (credit Visit Scotland) (top); Jarshof, Shetland (credit Visit Scotland); Earl's Palace, Orkney (credit Visit Scotland); The Churchill Barriers, Orkney (credit Colin Keldie) (above)



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