



Thistle Dubh Enterprises
Travel & Concierge

Come Join Us on the Clan Forbes Tour August 22-27, 2022



Day 1 Monday August 22 – Arrive Aberdeen and Old Meldrum

Overnight at Meldrum House in Old Meldrum; breakfast on own; reception lunch at Castle Forbes and dinner included

Welcome to Aberdeen and the beginning of your immersion into the rich heritage of Clan Forbes and the Aberdeen Region. Over the next 6 days your expert tour guide Lord Sempill, direct descendent of the Forbes-Sempill family of Craigeivar, will take you on a journey of everything past and present Forbes!

You'll board your coach at 10:00 a.m. in central Aberdeen to head out to **Druminnor Castle**. The original Castle Forbes, this was the headquarters of the Lords Forbes of That Ilk for 500 years. Druminnor was often attacked, damaged and repaired. The castle was enlarged and then reduced as the fortunes of its owners waxed and waned. The current castle owner Alex Forbes, Clan Forbes Historian, will lead you through his home and recount the stories of the Forbes' famous feuds with Clan Gordon, including the infamous dinner that resulted in 20 Gordons stabbed to death.

From Druminnor, you will continue to **Castle Forbes**, the Seat of the Clan Chief. These estate lands were granted to Sir Alexander Forbes in 1411 for his part in the defeat of Donald of the Isles at the Battle of Harlaw. You will be treated to a reception and tour with Malcolm, 23rd Lord Forbes, Premier Lord of Scotland.

Check into your accommodation, Meldrum House for your two-night stay. Be sure to check out the many portraits in the hotel of members of both Clan Gordon and Clan Forbes.

Day 2 Tuesday August 23 – Castle Visits

Overnight at Meldrum House in Old Meldrum; breakfast included; lunch and dinner on own

After breakfast, your first stop will be **Tolquhon Castle**. Now in ruins, the castle was once one of the most beautiful castles in Scotland. Between 1584 and 1589, Sir William Forbes built the castle around the original defensive tower built around 1420. The grand showplace includes a gateway set with two semi-circular towers with gun loops, more for decoration than as a serious attempt at defense. After William Forbes' death his descendants continued to occupy Tolquhon until 1718. If there is enough interest, you may stop by the nearby Sir William's tomb, which is remarkably well preserved. The details include the Forbes coat of arms and two carved figures representing William Forbes and his wife Elizabeth Gordon.

You will continue to **Pitsligo Castle**, one of the nine ancient castles of the “Knuckle,” the promontory between Moray Firth and the North Sea. This was the home of the Forbes of Pitsligo for over three centuries. The Lords Pitsligo were partisans of the cause of “Bonnie Prince Charlie” to restore the deposed monarchy of the Stuarts over the Hanoverian William III and Mary I. After the 1746 Stuart defeat at Culloden, the crown seized the Pitsligo Estate, ransacked the castle, and declared Alexander, 4th Lord Forbes of Pitsligo, an outlaw.

You will stop for lunch (on your own) on your way to **Fyvie Castle**, with its amazing collections of antiquities, armor and lavish oil paintings of Fyvie Castle. This impressive turreted building was transformed by the Preston, Meldrum, Gordon and Forbes-Leith families over 800 years. Born in Aberdeen but becoming a steel magnate in the United States, Alexander Leith purchased the castle in 1889. Alexander adopted the additional name Forbes to his surname in memory of his mother, Mary Forbes of Ballogie. In 1984, his grandson, Sir Andrew Forbes-Leith, 3rd Baronet, sold Fyvie Castle and its contents to the National Trust for Scotland. Afterwards we head back to Meldrum House.

Day 3 Wednesday August 24 – Craigievar Castle & Speyside Cooperage & Whisky

Overnight at Dowans Hotel in Aberlour; breakfast included; lunch and dinner on own

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before we head out to the beautifully pink **Craigievar Castle** with its turrets, gargoyles and high corbelling said to be the inspiration for Walt Disney’s Cinderella Castle. The castle was completed in 1626 by William Forbes of Menie. From then it had been lived in by the Forbes and Forbes-Sempill family until gifted to the National Trust of Scotland in 1963. In the arched door to the round tower are preserved the carved initials of Sir Thomas Forbes, William Forbes' son. The interior boasts a collection of Forbes family portraits as well as a considerable quantity of Forbes furnishings dating to the 17th and 18th centuries.

After your visit, you’ll stop for lunch (on your own) at the Craigellachie Hotel in Aberlour. In the afternoon, you’ll visit the **Speyside Cooperage**, the only working cooperage in the UK where you can experience the ancient art of coopering. Enjoy the journey through the lifecycle of the cask, see the highly skilled coopers at work, and of course try it for yourself with their mini casks! Our final stop will be at The Glenlivet Distillery, the oldest legal distillery in the parish of Glenlivet. Founded in 1824 and has operated ever since with its only stop during World War II. Enjoy the story and samplings which starts with the water from Josie’s Well.

Check into your accommodation, Dowans Hotel in Aberlour, for your three-night stay.

Day 4 Thursday August 25 – Elgin, Culloden Battlefield & Culloden House

Overnight at Dowans Hotel in Aberlour; breakfast and afternoon tea included; lunch and dinner on own

Early start this morning at 8.30 a.m. with Elgin as our first stop. You can explore Elgin on your own with many enticing options. You may choose to visit the **Gordon MacPhail** retail shop and whisky room with a fantastic array of indulgent hand-finished chocolates, cheeses, and the Whisky Room with over 1,000 different single malts. You may decide to experience **Johnstons of Elgin** to learn how Vicuna is used to make cashmere. You may also be intrigued by **Elgin Cathedral**, “The Lantern of the North” and one of Scotland’s most imposing medieval buildings.

Your next stop will be the haunting **Battlefield of Culloden** with its Visitor Center with a fascinating Jacobite exhibition, immersive Living History Tour, Graves of the Clans, and Memorial Cairn erected in 1881 by Duncan Forbes of Culloden. You will stand on the field where the last battle fought on British soil took place on April 1746. In less than one hour the battle was over, as were the hopes of the Jacobite cause to restore the House of Stuart to the throne of Great Britain.

Afternoon tea is now ready for you at **Culloden House**. In 1625, “Grey” Duncan Forbes purchased the house from the Mackintosh Chief and there began the almost 300-year history of the Forbes Lairds of Culloden. In 1746, Culloden House was commandeered by Jacobite forces under the “Bonnie Prince Charlie,” Charles Edward Stuart, grandson of James II and VII. The estate was pillaged by the Jacobite forces before their devastating defeat in the 1746 Battle of Culloden. Enjoy a behind the scenes tour of the house before you head back to the Dowans Hotel in Aberlour.

Day 5 Friday August 26 – Inverness, Archives & Knockando Woolmill

Overnight at Dowans Hotel in Aberlour; breakfast included; lunch and dinner on own

After breakfast, you will head out early to Inverness, regarded as the capital of the Highlands and featured in the books and TV series *Outlander*. You will have a private tour of the **Highland Archive Centre** which maintains an array of Forbes family records and documents. You may choose to conduct your own ancestral research or explore Inverness on your own.

You will enjoy lunch on your own either in Inverness or at **Logie Steadings** in the beautiful Findhorn Valley. Logie Steadings is home to a select shopping village and visitor center which lies at the heart of the estate. The village includes artisan businesses, an acclaimed cafe and Logie House Gardens.

Our last stop is at **Knockando Woolen Mill**, first listed as a “Wauk Mill” in 1784 for a guided tour. Learn about the unique collection of Victorian machinery including their 1899 Docross loom. Knockando Woolmill has ensured the craft of carding, spinning and weaving with local wool has been passed down through generations. That heritage is represented in the tweeds, fresh contemporary designs and classic woolen blankets. You’ll return to the Dowans Hotel in Aberlour.

Day 6 Saturday August 27 – Lonach Gathering

Overnight at Chester Hotel in Aberdeen; breakfast, picnic lunch & dinner included

Check out early this morning from your Speyside retreat. Depending on your interest, you may decide to visit **Corgarff Castle** built in the mid-16th century by Forbes of Towie. This was the site of the tragic murder of Mistress Margaret Campbell Forbes and her daughters by Adam Gordon as related in the ballad “Edom o’ Gordon.” After the Jacobite risings of the 18th century, it was rebuilt as a barracks and once held a whisky distillery.

The rest of the day will be devoted to the Clan Forbes own **Lonach Highland Gathering and Games**, the friendliest Highland Games in Scotland. The Lonach Highland and Friendly Society was founded in 1823 by Sir Charles Forbes, 1st Baronet of Newe and Edinglassie (1773-1849). Lunch and refreshments will be provided. The Lonach Pipe Band sounds the Retreat around 5:30 p.m. and you will head to Aberdeen for your final night at the Chester Hotel.

NOTE: We are happy to arrange extensions to this tour for anyone wishing to stay longer in Scotland.

What Your Basic Tour Package Includes

- 6 nights twin or double room occupancy en-suite accommodation
- 6 breakfasts, 2 dinners, 1 lunch, and 1 afternoon tea
- Lonach Gathering entrance, picnic lunch + refreshments
- Entrance fees to castles in the itinerary: Druminnor, Forbes, Tolquhon, Pitsligo, Fyvie, Craigievar, Corgarff
- Private reception at Druminnor Castle with Clan Historian, Alex Forbes
- Private reception at Castle Forbes with Lord & Lady Forbes
- Private Glenlivet Distillery Tour & Tasting
- Speyside Cooperage experience
- Culloden Battlefield entrance
- Knockando Woolen Mill Private Tour
- Private visit to Archive Center Inverness
- Executive touring coach and driver for duration of the tour
- Professional Tour Guide, Lord Sempill, for the duration of the tour
- All relevant local taxes and VAT

Exclusions

- Health, trip cancellation/interruption or baggage insurance. All are strongly recommended.
- Passport & visa costs.
- Items of a personal nature (hotel extras, laundry, phone calls etc.). All guests are responsible for settling any such costs incurred before checking out of each hotel.
- Gratuities to the tour guides and drivers - are at each travelers' discretion.
- International flights
- Items not specifically mentioned above.

Package Prices (land only)

Minimum 10 room booking throughout tour & minimum 16 guests

£1764.00 per person double occupancy

£543.00 Single room occupancy supplement

NOTE: Should the number of rooms booked on this trip drop below 10, and if number of guests drops below 16 then Thistle Dubh Enterprises reserves the right to re-price this package and invoice each guest accordingly.

Hotels

This invoice is based upon use of the hotels stated above in this quote. In the event, that these or similar properties are not available, Thistle Dubh Enterprises reserves the right to re-price if necessary.

- **Chester Hotel**, 59-63 Queen's Rd, Aberdeen, Scotland - www.chester-hotel.com
- **Meldrum House**, Oldmeldrum, Inverurie, Scotland - www.meldrumhouse.com
- **Dowans Hotel**, Dowans Road, Aberlour, Scotland - www.dowanshotel.com

Thistle Dubh Enterprises Terms and Condition

RATES: All rates are subject to change until paid in full

PAYMENT: Deposit/full payment constitutes acceptance of itinerary and reservations on this quote, as well as consent to the terms and conditions listed herein. Final payment is due by May 20, 2022

PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

- Initial Deposit Amount: \$500 per person (non-refundable) Deposit Date: Immediately at booking – non-reundable
NOTE: Initial deposit is refundable until tour minimums are met (10 room bookings confirmed & 16 guests confirmed). Once minimums are met deposit is non-refundable.
- Second Deposit Amount: \$1,000 per person (non-refundable) Deposit Date: Dec 1, 2021
- Final Payment: Balance outstanding (non-refundable) Balance Date: May 20, 2022

Note: Thistle Dubh Enterprises may have to request full payment for certain items earlier than the scheduled dates, and you will be advised accordingly if this becomes necessary.

METHOD OF PAYMENT: Cheque or bank transfers are accepted. Returned checks will carry a \$50 redeposit fee with no exceptions.

DEPOSITS: A deposit of \$500.00 per person is required by date above to activate a booking. Thistle Dubh Enterprises reserves the right to treat any booking as canceled by you if not paid in full.

EXCHANGE RATES: U.S. dollar prices should be considered estimates until final booking. Prices are quoted in Great Britain Pounds. In the event of a dramatic change in the value of the US dollar/GB Pound, Thistle Dubh Enterprises reserves the right to implement a surcharge if necessary. Everything possible will be done to avoid this situation.

CHANGES/CANCELLATION: If you change the land portion of the trip after the initial deposit is received, a revision fee of \$25.00 per person will be charged. Total cancellation fees are dependent upon the type of components purchased.

- \$500.00 per person non-refundable upon receipt of initial deposit
- The second deposit of \$1,000.00 becomes non-refundable March 1, 2020
- 100% of trip cost becomes non-refundable 90 days prior to travel.

PASSPORT/VISA/HEALTH: Passengers are responsible for obtaining a valid passport and any necessary visa and health documentation required by the country/countries they wish to visit.

BAGGAGE: Please check with the airline prior to departure, but at this time 1 checked piece of baggage weighing less than 50lbs is permitted. While individual carrier policies vary, many will charge for a second piece of checked baggage or may not allow it at all. Thistle Dubh Enterprises recommends 1 piece of checked luggage and 1 carry on per person.

TAXES: The quoted prices above include all known US and UK government taxes applicable at this time. In the event that additional taxes are introduced by governing bodies or existing taxes increased, it will be necessary for Thistle Dubh Enterprises to pass on such additional charges to you.

CANCELLATIONS: All cancellations must be received in writing or Email to info@thistledubh.net. NO SHOWS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE. Total amount forfeited 90 days prior to travel.

INSURANCE: Each traveler is strongly suggested to purchase travel insurance. If you do not have a provider, Thistle Dubh would be happy to provide recommendations.

DISCLAIMER: Thistle Dubh Enterprises shall not be responsible for any injuries, damages, or losses caused to any traveler in connection with terrorist activities, social or labor unrest, mechanical or construction failures or difficulties, diseases, Covid 19, local laws, climatic conditions, abnormal conditions or developments, or any other actions, omissions, or conditions outside the travel agent's control. Traveler assumes complete and full responsibility for, and hereby releases the agent from, any duty of checking and verifying any and all passport, visa, vaccination, Covid vaccination cards, or other entry requirements of each destination, and all safety and security conditions of such destinations, during the length of the proposed travel.

For information concerning possible dangers at international destinations, contact the Travel Advisory Section of the

U. S. State Department, (888) 407-4747, or access - http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html

For medical information, call the U. S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), (877) 394-8747 or log on to – <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

By embarking upon his/her travel, the traveler voluntarily assumes all risks involved in such travel, whether expected or unexpected. Traveler is hereby warned of the above risks as well as possible travel industry bankruptcies and medical and climatic disruptions, and the possibility traveler may be unable to travel as scheduled because of personal emergency. Traveler is advised to obtain appropriate insurance coverage against these risks. Traveler's retention of tickets, reservations, or bookings after issuance shall constitute consent to the above and an agreement on his/her part to convey the contents hereto to his/her travel companions or group members.

NOTE: We will continue to monitor restrictions, protocols, procedures etc. as we roll forward and keep you updated.

Helpful websites – www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

<https://www.visitscotland.com/about/practical-information/covid-19-recovery-phases/>
