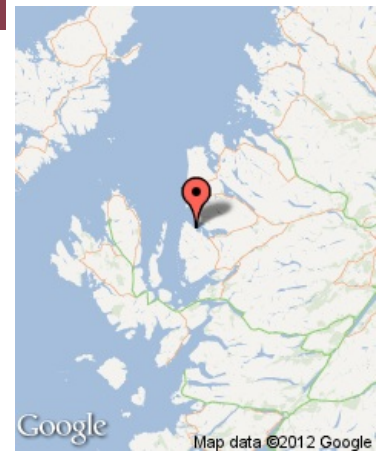


Learn Sea Kayaking in the Highlands



Highlights

Safe, fun, eco-friendly and super relaxing, sea kayaking has to be one of the best ways to explore a region. Learn Sea Kayaking in Scotland's spectacular northwest Highlands, the setting for this five-day course, the perfect introduction to this fantastic sport.

When the mile-thick ice sheets finally retreated from the north of Britain at the end of the Pleistocene epoch, they left in their wake a topography gnarled, fissured and pockmarked by violent glaciation. The result is some of the wildest country in Europe; mountain massifs, rift valleys, riven volcanoes and crinkle-cut islands are just some of the extraordinary features of the Scottish landscape. Unsurprising, then, that the country has become something of a mecca for adventure travel enthusiasts, with every imaginable pursuit on offer. So whether you surf or ski, sail or kayak, hike or bike, Scotland is bound to have something special for you. (There's also 12,000 years of history, some of Europe's finest architecture and the prized national drink (no, not Irn-Bru!), in case you're interested!)

Based at magical Loch Torridon in Scotland's wild northwest, this five-day course will equip you with the essential skills needed for full-scale kayak adventures! Starting on sheltered sea-lochs, you'll learn some basic kayaking strokes before heading out to sea to test your technique. Here you'll explore the stunning coastline, enjoy a picnic in a sandy bay and perhaps visit one of the nearby islands. You'll also paddle across Loch Shildaig to Shildaig Island, a National Trust site renowned for its bristling Scots Pines, heronry and seal population. Then at the end of the day you can retire to the loch-side bunkhouse, where hot showers, a hearty dinner and a warming dram of whisky await!

Is it for me?

This is without doubt one of the loveliest tours we've come across, a fantastic five days that can be enjoyed by almost anyone. You don't need any experience or equipment, nor do you have to be super fit; all that's needed is a love of the great outdoors and an open mind. This kayaking course is all about engaging with this spectacular landscape in a new way. The emphasis is on adventure and exploration, but also on peace, quiet and relaxation. Obviously if you prefer your water sports high-speed and petrol-powered you're going to find sea kayaking a bit mellow, but if you like the sound of a day spent exploring wooded coves, watching seals at play and sipping whisky 'round a wood stove then this might be right up your creek!

Accommodation

Unlike other kayak holidays in Scotland, which involve wild camping, accommodation for this tour is all indoors at a private loch-side bunkhouse. Here you'll find hot showers, comfy beds (eight in total, split between two dormitory rooms), wood burning stove and a host of other rustic mod cons – just what's needed at the end of hard day on water! Meals are prepared 'expedition-style', with everyone lending a hand in both preparation and cleaning up and your guide directing things. (Special dietary requirements can be accommodated with prior warning.) On three nights you'll head out to a local inn for dinner, giving you the chance to sample some of the region's highly praised seafood, meats and ales.

Itinerary

Prices from

475 GBP (5 days) per person

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Day 1: Sea Kayaking Instruction, Upper Loch Torridon

You will be met by your guide at Inverness Railway station from where you travel to the northwest Highlands. After settling in and a welcome from the guide, you will have your first experience of sea kayaking in the sheltered sea-loch of Upper Loch Torridon. Returning to the bunkhouse, you'll discuss your aims for the trip over dinner.

Day 2: Sea Kayaking Instruction, Upper Loch Torridon

After a relaxing breakfast, you will return to Upper Loch Torridon and launch the kayaks once again. Your guide will introduce you to new kayaking strokes before you set off on an exploration of this beautiful loch, perhaps venturing into Loch Shildaig, stopping for lunch in one of the sandy bays. Surrounded by the imposing Torridon mountains, you will develop your sea kayaking skills and gain confidence to allow a longer journey on the sea the following day.

Day 3: Sea Kayaking in Torridon or Applecross

Today you will build on your skills and enjoy a paddle, exploring some of the beautiful coastline or perhaps even visiting some of the islands which are located just off the coastline of the North West Highlands.

Day 4: Sea Kayaking in Applecross

Sea kayaking in Applecross is superb and on this journey you explore Loch Shildaig and Shildaig Island. Known for its beautiful Scots Pines, heronry and seal population, the island is protected by the National Trust for Scotland. You may paddle further along the north Applecross coast and kayak into Loch Torridon or to the remote Diabaig coastline before kayaking back to the pretty village of Shildaig. After a warm shower at the bunkhouse, you will visit the local pub for a hearty meal and to reflect on a superb day of sea kayaking.

Day 5: Sea Kayaking Journey, Applecross

The final day will see you embark on a sea kayaking journey in Loch Kishorn on the southern coast of Applecross. You will kayak across the bay to Kishorn Island with its seal colony, using your enhanced sea kayaking skills as you journey through this beautiful corner of Scotland. You'll kayak back to shore early afternoon, load up the kayaks and travel back to Inverness for the end of the sea kayaking course.

Details

Getting there

You will be met by your guide at Inverness Railway Station. You can get there by rail from Edinburgh, Glasgow or London.

Price includes

Accommodation, meals (all breakfasts and lunches, one dinner), equipment, training, transfers. Three dinners are not included.

Price details

During July & August, the price will be £499

Comfort level

Reasonably comfortable (Inns, B&Bs, luxury camping etc.)

Experience required

A reasonable interest is all that is needed