

# Hiking Scotland's North Highlands & Isle of Lewis

JULY 17-28, 2023 (12 DAYS | 15 GUESTS)  
WITH ARCHAEOLOGIST MARY MACLEOD RIVETT

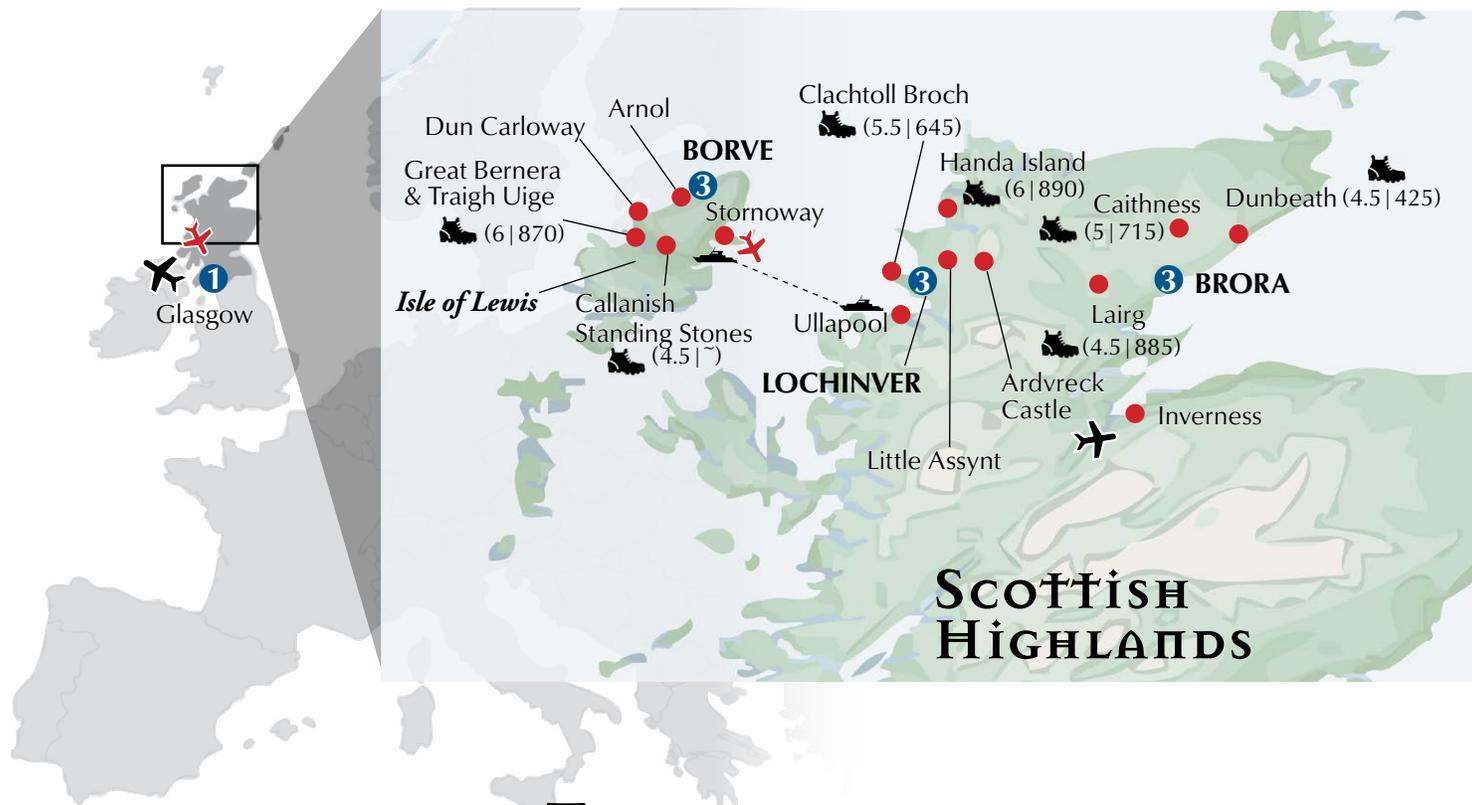


ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE  
OF AMERICA TOURS



This tour requires an elevated level of fitness.

*Archaeology-focused tours for the curious to the connoisseur.*



- # Overnight stays
- Itinerary stops
- Flights
- In-program flight
- Hikes (miles | ascent in feet)  
(~ = limited ascent)
- Ferry

Cover: (top) Callanish Standing Stones © amritagrace; (bottom, clockwise from top center) Little Assynt, a puffin on Handa Island, a Highland cow, Dun Carloway, staircase inside Dun Carloway. © operator photos

Join archaeologist Mary MacLeod Rivett and a small group of like-minded travelers on this 12-day tour of Scotland’s remote north Highlands and the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. Mostly we will explore off the well-beaten Highland tourist trail, and along the way we will be treated to an abundance of archaeological and historical sites, striking scenery – including high cliffs, sea lochs, sandy and rocky bays, mountains, and glens – and, of course, excellent hiking.

Scotland’s long and varied history stretches back many thousands of years, and archaeological remains ranging from Neolithic cairns and stone circles to Iron Age brochs (ancient dry stone buildings unique to Scotland), medieval castles, and deserted clearance villages cover these landscapes. Seven of our touring days involve hikes of 4.5 to 6 miles per day, and we will rest and reflect in comfortable hotels that extend Highland warmth and hospitality.



© VisitScotland/Paul Tomkins

Grey Cairns of Camster, Caithness

# Archaeological Institute of America LECTURER & HOST

## Dr. Mary MacLeod Rivett

was born in London, England, to a Scottish-Canadian family. Her father's family was from Scotland's Outer Hebrides, and she spent a lot of time in the Hebrides as a child. Mary earned her B.A. from the University of Cambridge, and her M.A. from the University of York. She worked and studied in different parts of the world, including five years in Sweden, until she finished her Ph.D. at the University of Glasgow in 1999. Her publications include many articles on the archaeology of the Viking Age, and of the north of Scotland. Mary began her present job with Historic Environment Scotland after eight years as an archaeology lecturer at the University of the Highlands and Islands, and eleven years as the Regional Archaeologist for the Outer Hebrides. She lives between Edinburgh and the Outer Hebrides, where she and her husband, landscape painter Simon Rivett, have a family croft on the Isle of Lewis. Mary has been a popular and highly-rated lecturer on thirteen AIA tours since 2002.



This unique tour is more active than our usual land tours and features almost-daily hikes that are easy to moderate in difficulty. To fully enjoy and visit all the sites on this itinerary one should be in good walking condition and, obviously, enjoy walking!

Two minibuses, each with a local driver/guide, will accompany our group, which is limited to only fifteen guests. Our guides will explain in advance the difficulty of each day's walk(s) and, if you prefer, you can opt out of any walking excursion and be driven to the next stop; but, bear in mind that some sites can only be visited if you walk to them. The distance of and height climbed during each walk is estimated within the following itinerary and indicated on the map.

## ITINERARY

(B)= Breakfast, (L)= Lunch, (D)= Dinner

### Monday, July 17, 2023: Depart home for Scotland

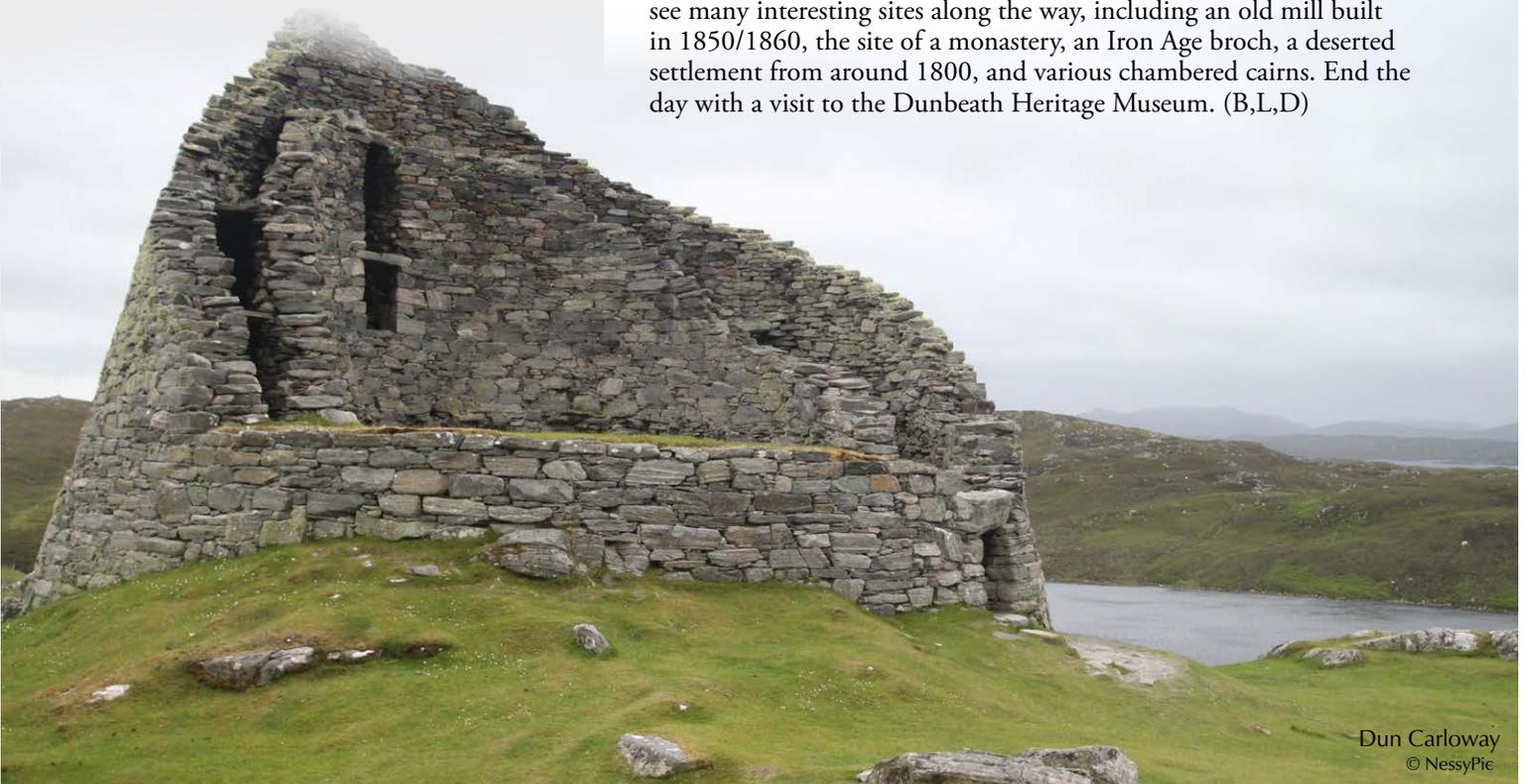
#### Tuesday, July 18: Inverness, Scotland | Brora | Welcome dinner

Upon arrival at Inverness Airport (INV), you will be met and transferred as a group, driving north along the east coast of Sutherland, to our hotel in Brora. Gather this evening for a welcome dinner. *Overnight at the 4-star [Royal Marine Hotel](#) for three nights.* (D)

#### Wednesday, July 19: Dunbeath | Brora

*4.5 miles and 425 feet of ascent* 🏔️

Travel further north to Dunbeath, in southeast Caithness, and hike into Dunbeath Strath along Dunbeath Water. The path runs along a gorge through fine woodland of lichen-encrusted downy birches, rowans, and hazels, before reaching open ground. We will see many interesting sites along the way, including an old mill built in 1850/1860, the site of a monastery, an Iron Age broch, a deserted settlement from around 1800, and various chambered cairns. End the day with a visit to the Dunbeath Heritage Museum. (B,L,D)



Dun Carloway  
© NessyPic



© operator

**Thursday, July 20: Caithness | Brora**

*Up to 5 miles, 715 feet of ascent* 🏔️

Drive even farther north into Caithness to explore the wealth of archaeological sites in this part of the north Highlands. Most of Caithness is now uninhabited, but the remains show that this area was highly populated in the past. There are a large number of Neolithic and Iron Age sites, including the Grey Cairns of Camster - two Neolithic tombs (a long cairn and a round cairn) built more than 5,000 years ago - and the Hill o'Many Stanes, consisting of about 200 small stones arranged in rows running down a low hill. They were placed about 4,000 years ago, possibly for gatherings and religious ceremonies. Large arrangements of stone rows like this are rare. (B,L,D)

**Friday, July 21: Lairg | Northwest Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark | Ardvreck Castle | Lochinver**

*Total of 4.5 miles and 885 feet of ascent* 🏔️

Depart Brora this morning and travel across the north Highlands to the west coast. Stop for a walk in Lairg, along the shores of Loch Shin, to a hilltop viewpoint with archaeological sites en route. This was prime farming land 3,500 years ago. Continue to the west, entering the Northwest Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark. Learn about the unique geology of this part of Scotland on a hike at Knockan Crag. Our last stop on the way to Lochinver is at the ruins of Ardvreck Castle, on the shores of Loch Assynt, dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. *Overnight at the 5-star [Inver Lodge Hotel](#) for three nights.* (B,L,D)

**Saturday, July 22: Handa Island | Little Assynt | Lochinver**

*Total of 6 miles and 890 feet of ascent* 🏔️

Handa Island is a short boat ride from the mainland. More than 100,000 seabirds breed on the island, including puffins, but its last 64 human residents were forced to leave the island for Nova Scotia following the potato famine in 1847. Our walk takes us past the remains of the village and old burial ground. This afternoon we take a very pleasant hike in Little Assynt, with great views of Assynt's distinctive mountains, lots of wild flowers, and many remains of old settlements including farmsteads, shieling huts, a corn mill, and field systems. (B,L,D)

**Sunday, July 23: Clachtoll Broch | River Inver | Lochinver**

*Total of 5.5 miles and 645 feet of ascent* 🏔️

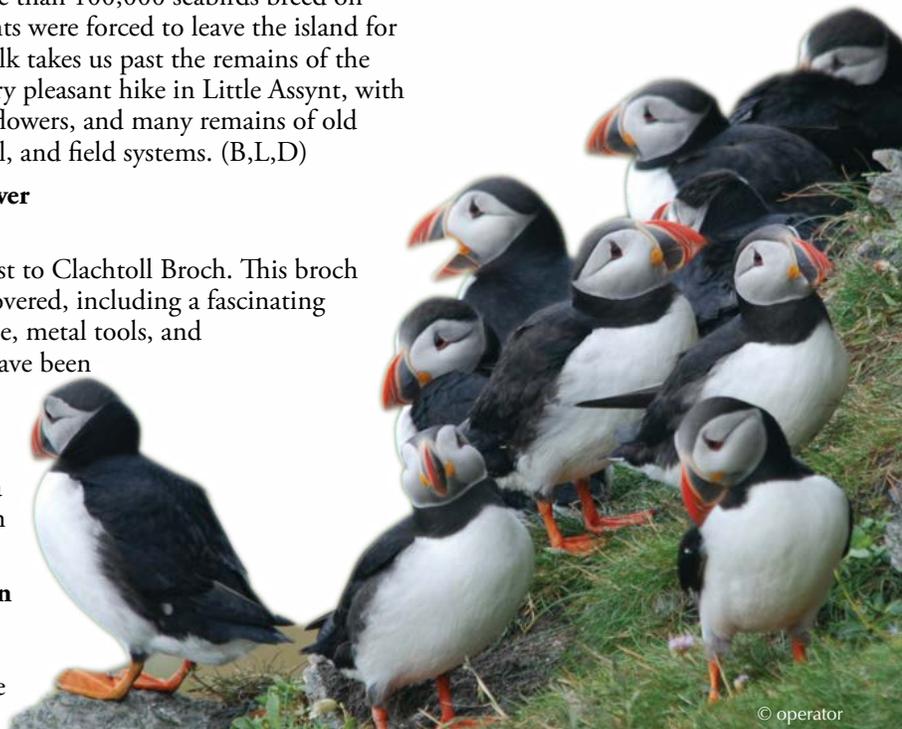
Today starts on Clachtoll Beach with a walk along the coast to Clachtoll Broch. This broch was excavated in 2017 and around 250 artifacts were discovered, including a fascinating range of decorated pottery, coarse stone tools, worked bone, metal tools, and ornaments. The end of occupation at Clachtoll seems to have been marked by a major fire. Radiocarbon dating suggests this was in the first century B.C. or early first century A.D. Back in Lochinver we hike up the beautifully wooded River Inver and on an old path across the moors, passing a cleared blackhouse village and enjoying amazing mountain views along the way. (B,L,D)

**Monday, July 24: Stornoway, Isle of Lewis: Museum nan Eilean, Harris Tweed weaver | Borve**

This morning we travel south to Ullapool to take the ferry across the Minch to Stornoway, on the Isle of Lewis, in the

*“We loved Mary's leadership and comprehensive presentations. It was not only a full description of archaeological history of the area but a real look at what it's like to live there. She's great to be with, as were our guides.”*

- Dee, Florida



© operator



© operator

Outer Hebrides. On arrival visit the Museum nan Eilean, in a modern wing of the restored, mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century Lews Castle. The museum offers an interactive explanation of the history and culture of the Outer Hebrides alongside an exhibition of unique objects dating from prehistory to the present day, including six of the famous Lewis Chessmen. We then visit a Harris Tweed weaver, for whom weaving is a good means of earning a living at home, and check-in to our charming hotel in Borve. *Overnight at the 4-star [Borve Country House Hotel](#) for three nights.* (B,L,D)

**Tuesday, July 25: Callanish Standing Stones | Dun Carloway | Arnol | Loch Mor Bharabhais | Borve**

*Total of 4.5 miles, limited ascent* 🏔️

Begin the day with a visit to the magnificent, 5,000-year-old Standing Stones of Callanish (Calanais in Gaelic). The main stone complex contains around 50 stones, with a ring of large stones about 12 meters in diameter surrounding a huge monolith at its center and the remains of a chambered cairn. There are lines of stones running north, south, east, and west from the stone circle, and two other stone circles are nearby. Continue on to Dun Carloway, one of the best-preserved Iron Age brochs in western Scotland. The broch was probably built in the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., and radiocarbon dating shows that it was last occupied around A.D. 1300. This afternoon we visit the Arnol blackhouse. Once the home of a Hebridean crofting family and their animals, the thatched house is preserved almost as the family left it when they moved out in 1965. The double drystone walls, low profile, and insulating thatch made blackhouses well suited to the Hebridean climate. We end the day with a walk from Arnol across the moor to the stunning coastal Loch Mor Bharabhais. (B,L,D)

**Wednesday, July 26: Great Bernera: Bostadh, Breacleite, Traigh Uige | Farewell dinner**

*Total of 6 miles and 870 feet of ascent* 🏔️

Take a morning walk on the Isle of Great Bernera, connected to Lewis by a bridge, where in 1993 a severe storm cut away the dunes at Bostadh to reveal a series of stone structures projecting through the sand. The University of Edinburgh excavated the site in 1996 and found evidence of a Norse settlement and, underneath the Norse levels, a series of five, remarkably well-preserved, Pictish 'jelly baby' or 'figure eight' houses dating back to the 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. What is visible today is a reconstruction, as the excavated houses were reburied for preservation. Hike across the moor to the museum at Breacleite which displays finds from the excavation. Our final walk of the tour will be at Traigh Uige (Uig Sands), one of the most beautiful beaches in the Outer Hebrides. The famous Lewis Chessmen - a collection of 93 pieces dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century - were found here in the dunes in 1831. Walk across the sands to the historic Baile na Cille burial ground. Gather this evening for a farewell dinner at our hotel. (B,L,D)

**Thursday, July 27: Stornoway | Fly to Glasgow**

In the morning we travel to Stornoway for a one-hour group flight to Glasgow International Airport where, upon arrival, we transfer to our hotel. The balance of the day is at leisure to relax at the hotel or take a taxi and independently explore vibrant Glasgow. Lunch and dinner are on your own today. *Overnight at the 4-star [Holiday Inn Glasgow Airport hotel](#).* (B)

**Friday, July 28: Fly home**

Check out of the hotel this morning and walk the short distance to the main terminal of the Glasgow International airport (GLA) for independent flights homeward. (B)

## The AIA & AIA Tours

The Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) is the oldest and largest archaeological organization in North America. The AIA seeks to educate people of all ages about the significance of archaeological discovery. For more than a century the AIA has been dedicated to the encouragement and support of archaeological research and publication, and to the protection of the world's archaeological resources and cultural heritage. By traveling on an AIA Tour you directly support the AIA while personally gaining the benefit of the AIA's network of scholars and worldwide contacts.

Traigh Uige



© operator



## Accommodations

All hotels are ideally located and finest available.



Three nights at the 4-star [Royal Marine Hotel](#) in Brora



Three nights at the 5-star [Inver Lodge Hotel](#) in Lochinver



Three nights at the 4-star [Borve Country House Hotel](#) in Borve



One night at the 4-star [Holiday Inn Glasgow Airport](#) hotel in Glasgow

*“The sites were great and hiking to them in the spectacular land was great. Mary Rivett was so knowledgeable and her overall humor and warm hospitality added a huge dimension to the experience which was complemented by both guides and especially the tour manager’s excellent daily organizing and flexibility.”*

-Barbara, California

## What to Expect

This is a good introduction to hiking in Scotland for people with basic fitness, combining hiking and visits to archaeological sites. Daily walking distances will not exceed 6 miles, with varying amounts of ascent, and we do not expect to hike for longer than four hours at a time. Most hiking will be on paths, tracks, or quiet roads, although the surfaces can be wet and rough. There will be some steep sections along the way, but no climbs greater than 890 feet, even in total. The actual itinerary is subject to variables such as the abilities and interests of the group and the weather conditions. The local guides know the area very well, and an easier alternative hike is possible on most days.

All participants will be required to follow safety/sanitization protocols set forth by Sponsors/Operator, local staff, and host country laws. If the tour manager decides that a participant cannot participate in a hike or visit a site safely or in a timely manner, their judgment will be final. Where possible, an alternate activity may be suggested; additional costs may apply. If you have any questions about your ability to participate, we suggest that you visit your personal physician with this brochure in hand and discuss whether or not this program is appropriate for you.

Lunches will be packed and eaten (mostly outside) at appropriate points during excursions/hikes. There will be two local guides with the group, and a minibus for those who choose to skip a walk/hike. Hotels have been chosen for their excellent locations and generous comfort. Average daytime temperatures at the time of our visit may range from the high 50s to the high 60s F, with a fair chance of some precipitation and an average breeze of 12 mph.

*Complete pre-departure details, including up-to-date COVID-related protocols, will be sent to participants.*



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Inverness



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Blackhouse Village

## Tour Prices Per Person (10 Nights)

Double Occupancy (10 to 15 participants).....\$7,395

Single Supplement.....\$1,195

Single room supplement will be charged when requested or required (limited availability). With fewer than 10 participants, a small group surcharge may be added.

## Prices Include:

- Leadership of **AIA lecturer/host Mary MacLeod Rivett** and services of **professional, local guides/tour manager**
- **Group airport transfer** on arrival date
- **In-program flight** from Stornoway to Glasgow on last day of tour
- Surface transportation by **air-conditioned minibuses**, with filtered water provided
- **Ticketing for ferries and smaller boat rides** as per itinerary
- **Ten nights' accommodations** in ideally-located hotels as per the itinerary
- **Most meals**, as indicated in the itinerary, including welcome and farewell dinners with drinks
- **All excursions and entrance fees** as per the itinerary
- **All gratuities** to tour manager, driver/guides, hotel and restaurant staff, and porters
- **Baggage handling** at hotels (one bag per person)
- **Comprehensive pre-departure information**, including a suggested reading/media guide, travel guide, and packing list

**Prices Do Not Include:** Airfare from/to home; passport and visa fees; all airport fees and departure taxes; private airport transfers; cost of personal, trip cancellation, and baggage insurance; transportation of excess baggage; personal tips; items of a personal nature, such as laundry, medical expenses, taxi, telephone, and fax charges; meals or alcoholic or other beverages (except as noted); deviations from scheduled tour; other items not listed as included.

**Payments:** A deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour and is payable by Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or check made payable to "EOS-Passenger Account-AIA ScotlandHighlands7/23." Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure and must be by check, ACH transfer, or wire transfer only; credit cards are not accepted for final payment. By submitting your deposit you are bound by the terms and conditions delineated throughout this brochure or elsewhere published.

**Participant Cancellation Fees:** All requests by participants for cancellations must be received in writing by AIA Tours. Cancellations received at least 180 days prior to departure (January 18, 2023) are fully refunded. Cancellations received between 179 and 90 days prior to departure are refunded less a cancellation fee of \$250 per person. Cancellations received between 89 and 61 days prior to departure are subject to a cancellation fee equal to 50% of the tour cost. Cancellations received 60 days or less prior to departure are subject to a cancellation fee of 100% of the tour cost. *For this and other reasons, participants are strongly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance. Information will be provided with confirmation of receipt of your deposit.*

**Note:** Prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect at the time of publication and are subject to change prior to departure. Substantial changes in tariffs, exchange rates, the price of fuel, services, and labor may increase the cost of arrangements significantly, and we reserve the right to alter our prices.

Prices, itinerary, accommodations, and leader are subject to change. Prices quoted are based on group participation and no refunds will be made for any part of the program in which you choose not to participate. It is understood that refunds cannot be made to participants who do not complete the tour for whatever reason.

Due to space limitations, this is abbreviated information. Complete terms and conditions will be sent upon confirmation or upon request, and can be viewed online at [www.iaatours.org](http://www.iaatours.org).

## Flights & Transfers

Airfare from home to Inverness Airport (INV) and from Glasgow International Airport (GLA) to home is not included. On the arrival date (July 18<sup>th</sup>), guests will be transferred as a group (time TBD) from the airport to start the tour. Once you have received your final payment invoice, you should book your flights. If you are considering booking your flights before this time, please contact our office first. Your flight itinerary must be provided to our office prior to departure. *We do not accept liability for cancellation penalties related to domestic or international airline tickets.*

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**For questions, and to reserve your space, please contact AIA Tours at:**

**800-748-6262 | Toll: 603-756-2884 | Fax: 603-756-2922 | [aia@studytours.org](mailto:aia@studytours.org) | [www.iaatours.org](http://www.iaatours.org)**

P.O. Box 938, 47 Main Street, Suite One, Walpole, NH 03608



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# Hiking Scotland's North Highlands & Isle of Lewis



Assynt

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*"We had researched well over 20 companies and individual tours before selecting this one from AIA. We don't think we could have made a better selection."*

- James & Linda, Michigan

**JULY 17-28, 2023** (12 DAYS | 15 GUESTS)  
 WITH ARCHAEOLOGIST MARY MACLEOD RIVETT

Bostadh, Isle of Lewis

# Hiking Scotland's North Highlands & Isle of Lewis

**JULY 17-28, 2023**  
 (12 DAYS | 15 GUESTS) WITH ARCHAEOLOGIST  
 MARY MACLEOD RIVETT



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To fill out an online reservation form, [click here](#). Or, print and mail or fax this form to the address below.

RESERVATION FORM



ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE  
OF AMERICA TOURS

HIKING SCOTLAND'S NORTH  
HIGHLANDS & ISLE OF LEWIS

July 17-28, 2023 (12 days | 15 guests)  
with archaeologist Mary MacLeod Rivett

To hold your reservation for seven days while this form and your deposit are in the mail, please contact us at 800-748-6262 or [aia@studytours.org](mailto:aia@studytours.org).

Name 1  
(as it appears on passport)

Name 2  
(as it appears on passport)

Address

City State Zip

Phone (home) Phone (cell)

Email(s)

I/We have read the 'What to Expect' section and am/are physically able to participate fully on the program.

Are you traveling with any other parties on this program? Yes, \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me/us information on the companion tour *Hiking Scotland's Orkney & Shetland Islands* (July 31-August 10, 2023)

How did you hear about this tour?  eNewsletter  mailing  website  friends/family  other \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCOMMODATIONS:**  
(Accommodation preferences are not guaranteed.)

Double (one bed)  Twin (two beds)  Single

I will be sharing with: \_\_\_\_\_

Share-please assign a roommate (not guaranteed).

Please share my contact information with potential roommate(s).

**RESERVATIONS & PAYMENT:**

A deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to confirm a reservation. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure. Please note that credit cards are not accepted for final payment. You will receive an invoice for final payment. All prices and payments are in US dollars.

**DEPOSIT TYPE (please check one):**

Check payable to: EOS Passenger Account-AIA ScotlandHighlands7/23  Visa  Master Card  American Express  Already paid by phone

CC#

Exp. Date 3- or 4-Digit Code

Name on Card

Please complete this reservation form, choose/enclose your method of deposit, and sign the release statement.  
Submit via email, mail, or fax to:

**AIA Tours - P.O. Box 938, Walpole, NH 03608-0938**

**Fax: 603-756-2922 • Email: [aia@studytours.org](mailto:aia@studytours.org)**

By signing this form, you are acknowledging that you have read and agree to all Terms & Conditions delineated throughout.

Signature (participant #1) Date

Signature (participant #2) Date

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