

Orkney Archaeology Tours 2023 Brochure

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What we offer

We specialize in exclusive tours of Orkney, concentrating on the wonderful archaeology but also showing you as much as possible of our beautiful islands. We offer all-inclusive small group holidays and private tours with specialist archaeologist guides, staying at comfortable hotels serving good local food. There are no hidden extras on our tours – simply relax and unwind and let us take care of everything.

The maximum group size for our holidays is just eight people with all tours conducted in our own comfortable executive touring vehicle. With such a small group we can visit sites off the beaten track and you benefit from the personal touch. This makes our 'Orkney Adventure' holidays the ideal way to see the best of Orkney with a small party of like-minded travellers. We have a choice of twenty arrival dates for our group holidays from May until September, so we're sure to have something for you.

For early and late season breaks our private tours are ideal - these can be of any length, and at any time outside our group holiday dates (subject to availability).

About Us

We are the only holiday company in Orkney to be run by archaeologists. All of our tours are personally led by either Dr Caz Mamwell BSc MA PhD FSA Scot or by Dr Dave Lawrence BSc MSc PhD FSA Scot. You benefit from our local knowledge since (unlike the majority of operators who send tours to Orkney once or twice a year), we live and work in Orkney all year round, and have in depth knowledge of Orkney's archaeology, cultural traditions and history – as well as knowing all the best places to see seals, and who makes the best chocolate tiffin in Orkney! Both our tour leaders are accredited Orkney Tourist Guides, holding the Green Badge awarded by

the Scottish Tourist Guides Association. We have professional indemnity, public liability and tour operators' insurance and are fully compliant with the terms of Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018, whilst both our tour vehicle and tour leaders are appropriately licensed by the Orkney Islands Council.



Tour leader Dr Caz Mamwell BSc MA PhD FSA

Scot has worked in archaeology since graduating from the University of Bradford in 1985. She gained her MA (with distinction) in Archaeological Practice from University of the Highlands and Islands. Her PhD research on the Orcadian Bronze Age was undertaken through the University of Edinburgh, resulting in a thesis entitled '*It rained a lot and nothing much happened: Settlement and Society in Bronze Age Orkney*'.

Tour leader Dr Dave Lawrence BSc MSc PhD FSA Scot has worked in archaeology since graduating from the University of Bradford in 1985, where he returned to complete an MSc (with distinction) in Human Osteology and Palaeopathology (he also has an MSc in Marine Resource Management from Heriot Watt University). His PhD, also with the University of Bradford, was entitled '*Orkney's First Farmers: Reconstructing biographies from osteological analysis to gain insights into life and society in a Neolithic community on the edge of Atlantic Europe*'. Dave is also the osteoarchaeologist for ORCA – the Orkney Research Centre for Archaeology.

Both of our tour leaders have many years excavation experience including some of the major excavation projects in Orkney, such as Pool Bay and Tofts Ness, both in Sanday; the Knowe of Swandro in Rousay, and not forgetting the 'Neolithic Cathedral' at the Ness of Brodgar, along with commercial archaeology projects such as walkover surveys, watching briefs and evaluations.

Orkney's Sites and Attractions

[Orkney has spectacular archaeology](#): the world-famous Neolithic village of Skara Brae, Maeshowe chambered tomb and the amazing henge monuments of Brodgar and Stenness – all part of our World Heritage Site - are just the beginning. There are well over a thousand known archaeological sites, not to mention Orkney's many other attractions: abundant wildlife and birds, wildflowers in profusion, spectacular coastal scenery, tranquil inland lochs, traditional music, history and our unique island culture, with its strong Norse influences.

[Since Orkney is a group of islands](#), we don't restrict our holidays to just the Mainland (the largest island of the group). Some of the islands we visit are linked to each other by the Churchill barriers (built to protect the great naval harbour of Scapa Flow) whilst others are reached by modern vehicle and passenger ferries.

[On our 'Orkney Adventure' holidays](#) we take the short ferry ride to the islands of Rousay, with its amazing collection of Neolithic chambered tombs, and Hoy, with dramatic mountainous scenery and Britain's' only prehistoric rock cut tomb.

[Part of the fun of visiting the islands](#) is the short thirty-minute ferry ride through our sheltered waters, with opportunities for wildlife spotting from the boats. There are always seabirds and seals, but if you're exceptionally lucky you might see a porpoise or even an Orca.

If you take one of our [7-night 'Orkney Adventure' small group holidays](#) you will visit all of the sites and attractions described below.



The Orkney Mainland and linked South Isles

Barony Mill, Birsay: the last working water mill in Orkney – in winter a commercial mill, grinding traditional bere barley, oats and Orkney wheat, from May to September a visitor attraction.

Broch of Gurness: a 2000-year-old Iron Age settlement, the central tower still surrounded by its village.

Brough of Birsay: an island with Pictish and Norse settlement and monastery, accessible only at low tide.

Churchill Barriers: part of Scapa Flow's Second World War defences, four barriers now with roads linking Mainland Orkney to Burray and South Ronaldsay.

Cuween Chambered Cairn: a 5000-year-old Neolithic tomb that, when opened in the 19th century, contained the remains of 24 dogs in addition to eight people.

Earl's Palace, Birsay: the 16th century palace built by Earl Robert Stewart.

Earl's and Bishop's Palaces, Kirkwall: the 12th century Bishop's palace, built for the cathedral's first bishop, and the early 17th century Earl's Palace.

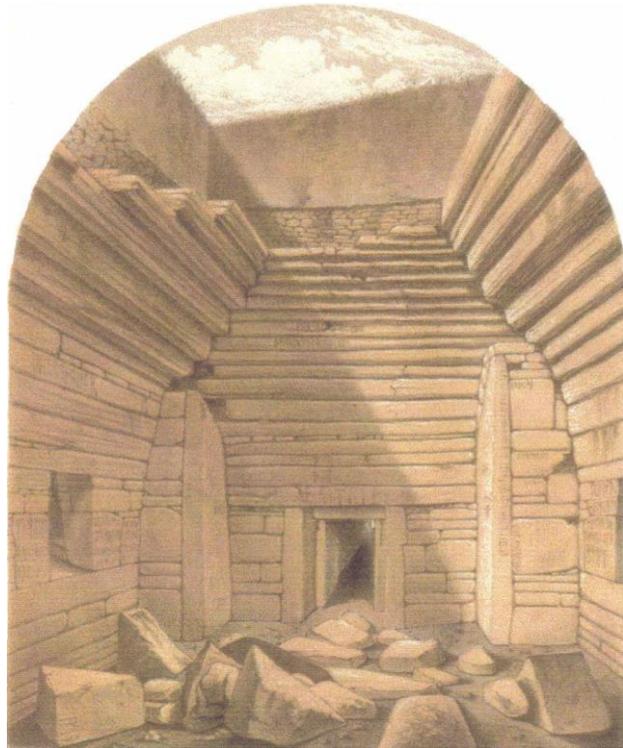
Earl's Bu, Orphir: remains of a 12th century Norse farmstead featured in the Orkneyinga Saga as the scene of a great Earl Paul's yuletide feast, which ended in a notorious murder.

Italian Chapel: the world famous 'miracle of camp 60', built with remarkable dedication from scavenged materials by Italian prisoners of war.

Kirbuster Farm Museum: the last surviving farmstead in Orkney to retain the traditional 'firehoose' with central hearth and fireback.

Kirkwall, Orkney's capital: the base for all our tours, with a pretty seafront ideal for evening strolls, a wide variety of shops selling local crafts, and a fine museum.

Maeshowe: the finest example of a Neolithic chambered tomb in Britain, complete with the largest collection of Norse runic inscriptions outside Scandinavia, and part of the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site.



Rennibister Earth-house: an Iron Age subterranean chamber, discovered by chance in 1926 when a threshing machine fell through its roof.

Round Kirk, Orphir: the remains of an early 12th century round church, featured in the Orkneyinga Saga.

St. Magnus' Cathedral: a magnificent 12th century sandstone cathedral, built by Earl Rognvald in honour of his martyred uncle St. Magnus.

Scapa Flow: the best natural harbour in Britain and the main base of the Royal Navy in both World Wars.

Skail House: an early 17th century laird's house, the home of William Watt, the discoverer of Skara Brae.

Skara Brae: the world famous 5000-year-old Neolithic village on the shores of the Atlantic, uncovered after a great storm, part of Orkney's World Heritage Site.

Stones of Stenness and the Ring of Brodgar: two magnificent 5000-year-old henge monuments, set between the lochs of Harray and Stenness and a major component of the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site.

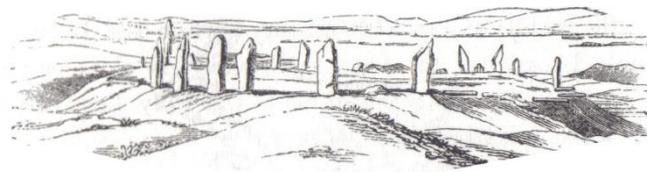
Stromness: charming small town with winding stone flagged streets, home to the Pier Arts Centre, renowned for its modern art collection, several other art galleries and a museum, together with shops selling a range of local crafts.

The Island of Hoy

Dwarfie Stane: an immense block of sandstone hollowed out using stone tools, possibly Britain's only rock cut Neolithic tomb, situated in a spectacular valley.

Lyness Naval Museum and Scapa Flow Visitor Centre: housed in the former Royal Naval pumping station with all the original equipment, this museum houses a fine collection of relics of Orkney's naval past, including relics from the German High Seas fleet, scuttled in Scapa Flow in June 1919. (N.B. This museum is currently undergoing renovations which are projected to be complete by 2023, however should this still be closed for renovations we will visit the scenic Rackwick Bay instead).

Martello Tower and Hackness Battery: built during the Napoleonic Wars to protect convoys assembling in Longhope Sound from attack by American and French privateers.



The Island of Rousay

Blackhammer Cairn: a 5000-year-old Neolithic tomb

Midhowe Broch: a fine example of an Iron Age settlement, looking out over Eynhallow Sound.

Midhowe Cairn: known as the great ship of the dead – the largest of Orkney’s Neolithic stalled cairns.

Taversøe Tuick Cairn: an unusual two storey burial mound, discovered in 1898 during the construction of a summer seat for the laird’s wife.

‘Orkney Adventure’ holiday itinerary

The itinerary below is for illustrative purposes and the running order will change to accommodate variables such as the changing tide times at the Brough of Birsay and events in St Magnus’ Cathedral, although you will of course visit all of the sites listed.

A welcome pack will be awaiting you on arrival at your hotel, containing a detailed day-to-day itinerary, useful local information, an Orkney map and a copy of the *‘Monuments of Orkney: A Visitor’s Guide’* by Caroline Wickham-Jones.

Saturday Day 1

Arrive at your hotel in time for dinner.

Sunday Day 2

Travel round Scapa Flow to the 12th century Earl’s Bu and Round Kirk, then onwards to the Neolithic village of Skara Brae, the laird’s house at Skail, the last working water mill in Orkney at the Barony Mills and the Broch of Gurness.

Monday Day 3

We take a short ferry ride across to the island of Hoy to visit the Hackness Martello Tower and Napoleonic battery, Lyness Naval Museum (or Rackwick Bay, should the museum still be closed for renovation) and the Dwarfie Stane.

Tuesday Day 4

Rennibister Earth-house, Cuween Cairn, the great chambered tomb of Maeshowe, followed by a visit to Stromness with its museum, art gallery and shops.

Wednesday Day 5

The Earl's and Bishop's Palaces in Kirkwall, St. Magnus' Cathedral, the Churchill Barriers, and the 'miracle of camp 60' the Italian Chapel, followed by a free afternoon in Kirkwall.

Thursday Day 6

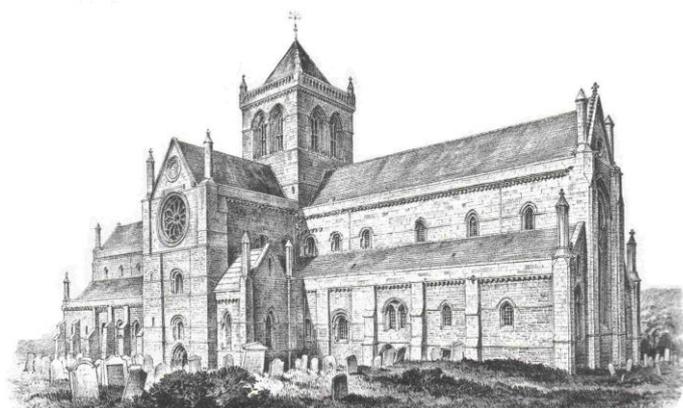
A ferry ride to the island of Rousay, for a day of spectacular tombs: Taversöe Tuick, Blackhammer cairn, Midhowe Cairn and Midhowe Broch, and also if we're lucky the chance to spot some seals.

Friday Day 7

The henge monuments of the Ring of Brodgar and Stones of Stenness, the Pictish and Norse settlement on the tidal island of the Brough of Birsay, the Earl's Palace Birsay and Kirbuster Farm Museum.

Saturday Day 8

Depart



Visit to Ongoing Excavations

There are often ongoing excavations in Orkney, the most famous of which is the excavation of the [Neolithic site of the Ness of Brodgar](#), situated between the Stones of Stenness and the Ring of Brodgar in the middle of the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site. If your chosen 'Orkney Adventure' holiday coincides with the dig season we will of course include a visit to the site as an extra in your holiday itinerary. The excavation usually takes place for around seven weeks in July and August, but whether each year's excavation will proceed and the excavation dates are not finally confirmed until much nearer the time, as they are subject to funding and fundraising is an ongoing process from year to year. We therefore cannot offer any guarantees that a particular holiday will include a visit to the Ness of Brodgar excavation. Please note that outside of the excavation season it is not possible to visit the dig site, since it is covered over to protect it until the following year.

[The Knowe of Swandro excavation in Rousay](#) may, subject to funding, take place from late June to early August, but again confirmation that the excavation will proceed and the excavation dates are not confirmed until around six months beforehand. This multi-period site, comprising a 5,000-year-old Neolithic chambered tomb and a large settlement occupied from around 1000BC to AD1200, consisting of Iron Age roundhouses and Pictish buildings, together with Viking and Norse remains including a Norse feasting hall, is being destroyed by coastal erosion.

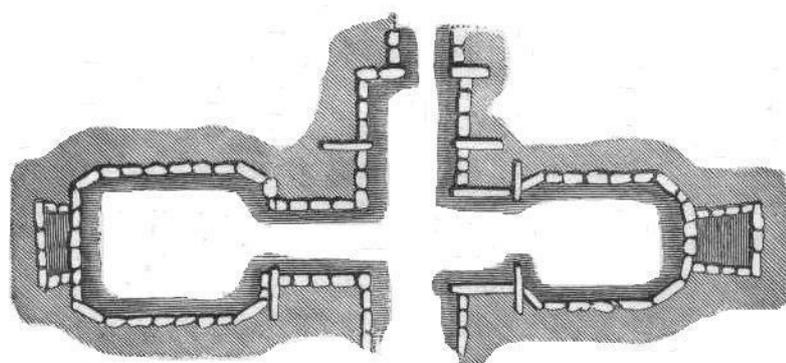
Swandro is a cause close to our hearts since our tour leaders are Trustees of [the Swandro-Orkney Coastal Archaeology Trust](#), a registered charity which helps to fund this and other excavations of coastally eroding sites in Orkney. We will visit this site as an extra to our Rousay itinerary if your chosen holiday coincides with the excavation season, but outside the excavation season the site is backfilled to provide some protection from the winter storms.

Holiday Accommodation

We use the [Ayre Hotel in Kirkwall, Orkney's capital](#), as the base for all our group holidays and private tours. This harbour front hotel has been recently renovated with a lift to all floors. We only use the best rooms in the hotel, and all rooms are en-suite with a choice of double or twin beds, whilst our single travellers benefit from single occupancy of a double room. You can relax in the evening over a hearty meal prepared using local Orkney produce.

On our holidays you are not restricted to the basic 'tour group menu'. Our guests instead have a completely free choice from the hotel's extensive à la carte menu, with fresh local produce such as hand-dived scallops, crab and salmon or of course a decent steak from one of our wonderful grass-fed beef cattle, followed perhaps by Orkney fudge cheesecake and Orkney ice cream. Please note we cannot be held responsible for any weight you may gain during your holiday with us!

[Special diets](#) can be catered for, but please remember to include any requirements you may have on your booking form, and in particular please give full details of any food allergies. Please also note that Orkney is a small and remote community with a resident population of only 22,500, whilst the islands we visit have populations in the low hundreds, and it would be unrealistic to expect the same wide range of speciality dietary options as in a large urban centre.



Health and Fitness

You must be reasonably fit and healthy to take part in one of our small group holidays. We regret that our group holidays are **not** suitable for people who are exceptionally unfit and/or seriously overweight or obese, wheelchair users, people on crutches, the registered blind or those with serious medical conditions. Whilst many of our guests are retirees of more mature years, our holidays are **not** leisurely coach tours with frequent opportunities to rest for extended periods.

Our guests need to be able to walk at a moderate pace and be able to cope with short hill walks and uneven terrain. Most sites are reached by a short walk of no more than around ten minutes, but we then guide our guests around the site, which can mean at some sites guests will be on their feet for around an hour without a chance to sit down.

The most strenuous day is in the island of Rousay, where all the sites are reached by climbing or descending steep hills. Entry to Maeshowe chambered tomb requires crouching for around 10 metres along the entrance passageway, whilst entry to Cuween cairn requires climbing a steep hill and then crawling (although we provide comfortable kneepads). Access to the Dwarfie Stane in Hoy requires a short walk uphill over rough terrain.

We can accept guests who may have difficulty with some aspects of our holidays e.g. crouching or crawling, provided that they are happy to miss out the sites that will cause them difficulties, and wait for the rest of the group in the tour vehicle. In Rousay, where the most strenuous sites are after lunch, we can leave less able guests in the lounge at the lunch venue, supplied with tea and coffee.

Having hip or knee replacements are not a problem provided that you have fully recovered from your surgery and have regained full fitness: we have had guests with double hip replacements who have coped very well. Please take the advice of your surgeon and physiotherapist regarding your fitness to undertake the holiday.

Age is not a barrier to undertaking one of our holidays provided that you are fit and healthy enough: our most senior guest to date was 86 years old, and did not experience any difficulties.

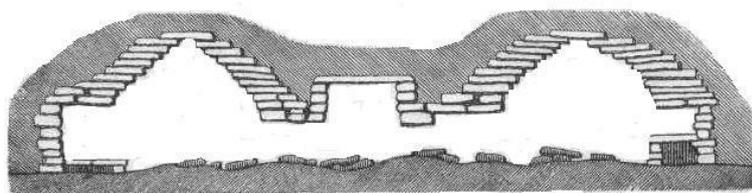
Since many of our guests book a year or more in advance, we are aware that health issues may arise in the interim, and for this reason it is essential that you take out adequate holiday insurance to cover you in case you need to cancel your holiday for medical reasons. Please do NOT take the holiday if your health will be an issue and always heed the advice of your doctor or other health professional regarding your fitness to travel.

If you have any reservations regarding your fitness, please **consult us in advance of booking**. We are happy to provide advice based on your individual circumstances. We do not wish to discourage guests who may be slightly less able, but we do want you to be able to safely enjoy your holiday with us.

We are happy to accommodate guests who may have limited mobility or medical issues on our private tours, since we can tailor the itinerary to meet your individual requirements. Please contact us to discuss your requirements.

Children under 18

We regret that our small group 'Orkney Adventure' holidays are for adults only, and we do not accept children or young people under the age of 18. We are happy to accommodate families with children on our private tours, where the itineraries may be varied to suit the interests of our younger guests.



2023 'Orkney Adventure' holiday dates

Holiday (1) Arrive Saturday 29th April, depart Saturday 6th May 2023

Holiday (2) Arrive Saturday 6th May, depart Saturday 13th May 2023

Holiday (3) Arrive Saturday 13th May, depart Saturday 20th May 2023

Holiday (4) Arrive Saturday 20th May, depart Saturday 27th May 2023

Holiday (5) Arrive Saturday 27th May, depart Saturday 3rd June 2023

Holiday (6) Arrive Saturday 3rd June, depart Saturday 10th June 2023

Holiday (7) Arrive Saturday 10th June, depart Saturday 17th June 2023

Holiday (8) Arrive Saturday 17th June, depart Saturday 24th June 2023

Holiday (9) Arrive Saturday 24th June, depart Saturday 1st July 2023

Holiday (10) Arrive Saturday 1st July, depart Saturday 8th July 2023

Holiday (11) Arrive Saturday 8th July, depart Saturday 15th July 2023

Holiday (12) Arrive Saturday 15th July, depart Saturday 22nd July 2023

Holiday (13) Arrive Saturday 22nd July, depart Saturday 29th July 2023

Holiday (14) Arrive Saturday 29th July, depart Saturday 5th Aug 2023

Holiday (15) Arrive Saturday 5th Aug, depart Saturday 12th Aug 2023

Holiday (16) Arrive Saturday 12th Aug, depart Saturday 19th Aug 2023

Holiday (17) Arrive Saturday 19th Aug, depart Saturday 26th Aug 2023

Holiday (18) Arrive Saturday 26th Aug, depart Saturday 2nd Sept 2023

Holiday (19) Arrive Saturday 2nd Sept, depart Saturday 9th Sept 2023

Holiday (20) Arrive Saturday 9th Sept, depart Saturday 16th Sept 2023

2023 'Orkney Adventure' holiday price

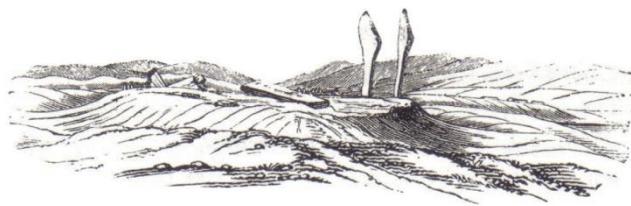
£1,895 per person, single supplement £300

Based on two sharing a large double or twin room, with the single supplement applicable for single occupancy of a double room.

Our holidays are all-inclusive with NO hidden extras. Prices include:

- High quality accommodation in the best rooms at the Ayre Hotel, Kirkwall.
- Breakfast and completely free choice from the à la carte dinner menu at the hotel from your arrival night onwards.
- Lunches whilst on tour, consisting of soup, sandwiches, cakes, tea and coffee at a local hotel or tea room.
- All entry fees to sites visited.
- All transport including ferry fares for island day trips.
- The services of your archaeologist driver-guide.

Our holidays do not include your travel to Orkney, hotel transfers or your hotel bar bill. Please refer to our booking conditions for full details.



Private all-inclusive tours

We offer our private tours at any time not already covered by one of our group holidays, which makes them ideal for an early or later season break. Please note that in 2023 this means at any time before the 29th of April and after the 16th of September.

We would suggest our [4-night, 3-day 'Orkney Insights' Tour](#) to give you a true flavour of our magical islands, whilst if you have a little more time our [6-night, 5-day 'Orkney Experience' Tour](#) includes the many delights of the islands of Hoy and Rousay.

[We offer private tours of any length](#) and we are happy to customise an itinerary if you have specific requirements, for example if you wish to include distillery visits, crafts or visits to some of our other islands, please contact us to discuss your tour.

[4-night, 3-day 'Orkney Insights' Itinerary](#)

[Day 1](#): arrive at your hotel in time for dinner.

[Day 2: Mainland Orkney](#) travel round Scapa Flow to the Earl's Bu and Round Kirk, Skara Brae, Skail House, Maeshowe Chambered Cairn, the Stones of Stenness and the Ring of Brodgar.

[Day 3: Mainland Orkney](#) Rennibister Earth-house, Cuween Cairn, the Churchill Barriers, the Italian Chapel and St. Magnus' Cathedral.

[Day 4: Mainland Orkney](#) visit the Broch of Gurness, Kirbuster Farm Museum, the Brough of Birsay, the Earl's Palace and the Barony Mill.

[Day 5](#): depart

[6-night, 5-day 'Orkney Experience' Itinerary](#)

[Day 1](#): arrive at your hotel in time for dinner.

[Day 2: Mainland Orkney](#) travel round Scapa Flow to the Earl's Bu and Round Kirk, Skara Brae, Skail House, Maeshowe Chambered Cairn, the Stones of Stenness and the Ring of Brodgar.

[Day 3: Island of Rousay](#) Midhowe cairn, Midhowe Broch, Taversoe Tuick cairn and Blackhammer cairn.

Day 4: Mainland Orkney Rennibister Earth-house, Cuween Cairn, the Churchill Barriers, the Italian Chapel and St. Magnus' Cathedral.

Day 5: Island of Hoy Martello tower and Hackness Battery, the Dwarfie Stane and Lyness Visitor Centre or Rackwick Bay. This trip could include the spectacular scenic walk to the Old Man of Hoy sea stack, combined with either the Dwarfie Stane or the Lyness Visitor Centre.

Day 6: Mainland Orkney visit the Broch of Gurness, Kirbuster Farm Museum, the Brough of Birsay, the Earl's Palace and the Barony Mill.

Day 7: depart

2023 Private tour prices

Our private tours are all-inclusive with NO hidden extras. Prices include good quality accommodation at the Ayre Hotel, Kirkwall, breakfast and à la carte dinner at your hotel, lunch at a pub or similar on tour, all entry fees, all ferry fares for any island day trips, and the services of your archaeologist driver-guide. Please refer to our booking conditions for full details. Prices are based on two people sharing a double/twin room.

The single supplement for our private tours only applies if two or more people travelling together require separate double rooms for single occupancy.

The single traveller price applies if one person who is travelling alone requires a private tour. Single travellers are very welcome on our 'Orkney Adventure' small group holidays, where the single supplement only is applicable.

We do not put together groups for our private tours but you are welcome to put together your own group up to a maximum of 8 people. We offer a 10% discount if you are booking for 4 people, 15% discount for 5-6 people and 20% discount for 7-8 people.

- (1) 3 night/2 day tour: £1,095 per person, single supplement £120 (single traveller i.e. a private tour for one person: £1,795)
- (2) 4 night/3 day tour: £1,445 per person, single supplement £160 (single traveller i.e. a private tour for one person: £2,345) – *this is our 'Orkney Insights' tour as detailed above*
- (3) 5 night/4 day tour: £1,845 per person, single supplement £200 (single traveller i.e. a private tour for one person: £3,195) – *this option includes a day trip to either Rousay or Hoy*
- (4) 6 night/5 day tour: £2,245 per person, single supplement £240 (single traveller i.e. a private tour for one person: £3,745) *this is our 'Orkney Experience' tour as detailed above*

How to Book and Pay

Please ensure that you have read and accepted our booking conditions (see pages 21 and 22 below) before making a booking. We require a completed booking form and a non-refundable deposit of £400 per person to confirm your booking, with the balance payable 90 days before arrival. If you are booking less than 90 days before your arrival date the full amount is due on booking.

Please do not finalise your travel arrangements before we have confirmed your booking. If you contact us to confirm availability we will be happy to hold your booking for 10 days pending receipt of your completed booking form and deposit payment.

We will send you full details of payment methods including our bank details when you contact us with your initial enquiry, but these are summarised below.

For our UK clients: cheque or BACS transfer only. *We regret that we cannot accept credit card payments from UK clients.*

For all our Overseas clients: international bank transfer, international (pounds sterling) bank draft, or PayPal for our clients based outside of the EU/EEA. We apply a credit card surcharge to cover the PayPal transaction fees, full details will be sent on booking.

Travel Insurance: we strongly recommend that you take out insurance to cover you in the event that you have to cancel your holiday with us, for example if you are unable to travel due to illness or family emergency. You should ensure that your insurance covers you for any non-refundable elements of your travel such as air fares. Our overseas clients should also ensure that their insurance covers them in the event they require medical treatment or repatriation from the UK due to a medical emergency.

Getting to Orkney

Travel to Orkney is not included in the price of your holiday and we regret that, since we are not travel agents, we are unable to make travel arrangements on your behalf. We are however happy to answer your queries if you are experiencing difficulties resolving your travel arrangements. The following information is correct to the best of our knowledge but you should refer to the companies concerned for up-to-date information and to make your booking.

Arrival by air

The easiest way to get to Orkney is to fly and you should book your flights as soon as possible after we have confirmed your booking as the planes are very small and the cheaper seats sell out quickly. There are direct flights to Kirkwall from all Scottish airports, and these are operated by Loganair. Flights can be booked with Loganair at www.loganair.co.uk or via their codeshare partners, please see the Loganair website for details.

You may fly to Scotland with another airline then book onwards to Kirkwall with Loganair, but if you miss your connection your inbound airline has no responsibility for you, and you would have to pay for another flight to Kirkwall, so you should make sure your travel insurance will cover you for this.

If your luggage is not checked all the way through to Kirkwall you should allow plenty of time between flights. It will take a minimum of two hours (longer at busy periods) to collect and recheck your luggage and get back through security to board your onward flight. This is particularly true at Edinburgh and Glasgow which are large, busy airports where the Kirkwall flights usually arrive and leave from the gate that is furthest from the departure lounge. Please do not assume that your luggage will automatically be checked all the way through, ask when you check in. International travellers will also need to clear immigration before boarding a flight to Orkney as flights to Kirkwall are domestic only.

There are rail links to the main Scottish cities from elsewhere in the UK, and you may take a train followed by an onward flight to Orkney. The Edinburgh train/plane combination is a good option; the airport bus service departs from right outside Edinburgh Waverley train station. Aberdeen also has good train connections and frequent flights to Orkney, and there is an airport bus from the main city bus station.

[Arrival by ferry](#)

Orkney is served by three ferry companies departing from ferry terminals in Caithness and Aberdeen.

[Serco Northlink Ferries](#) tel: 0845 6000449 www.northlinkferries.co.uk

Serco Northlink operate two to three return sailings daily from Scrabster (near Thurso) to Stromness and the crossing takes 90 minutes. If you are travelling as a foot passenger there are bus links between Scrabster and Inverness operated by Stagecoach www.stagecoachbus.com with online booking via www.citylink.co.uk. There is a very limited train service to Thurso station: see www.scotrail.co.uk but

please note you will probably need to book a taxi to take you to Scrabster as there is limited public transport from the train station to the ferry terminal. On arrival in Stromness there is a regular public bus service to Kirkwall departing from outside the ferry terminal.

Serco Northlink also sail from both Aberdeen and Lerwick (Shetland) to Kirkwall but this is NOT a daily service (there is a daily service from Aberdeen to Shetland but the ferry does not always call in to Kirkwall). The Aberdeen ferry arrives in Kirkwall late at night, around 11pm; the return sailing from Kirkwall to Aberdeen is overnight, departing around 11.45pm. There are north boats on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday and south boats on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. If you are travelling as a foot passenger there are good public transport links to Aberdeen via both rail www.scotrail.co.uk and bus www.citylink.co.uk.

Pentland Ferries Ltd tel:01856 831226 www.pentlandferries.co.uk

Pentland Ferries operate three return sailings daily from Gill's Bay (near Thurso) to St Margaret's Hope, South Ronaldsay and the crossing takes around one hour. If you are bringing your car across then Pentland Ferries is the cheaper option. For foot passengers there is a bus link between St Margaret's Hope and Kirkwall via the X1 service operated by Stagecoach. Please visit www.stagecoachbus.com for departure times.

If you are travelling as a foot passenger Stagecoach www.stagecoachbus.com operate bus links between Gills Bay and Inverness with online booking via www.citylink.co.uk.

John O' Groats Ferries: tel: 01955 611353 <http://www.jogferry.co.uk>

John O' Groats ferries (foot passengers only) operate a daily return service via a bus/ferry/bus connection from Inverness bus station to Kirkwall bus station from the 1st of June until the 31st of August, which may be booked online via their own

website. Please note that although the ferry operates in May and September, it does so without the bus connection to Inverness, although the Kirkwall bus connection remains.

Extra Nights in the Hotel

If you require extra nights in the Ayre Hotel before or after your tour please let us know as soon as possible and we will, subject to availability, make the necessary booking for you to ensure that you have the same room throughout your stay. You can pay the hotel for these nights direct when you are here, but please note that if you cancel your holiday at short notice you may remain liable to pay the hotel for these extra nights, so you should ensure that your travel insurance covers you in this eventuality.

Contact Us

[We very much prefer](#) to correspond via email, and we always reply within 24 hours, often sooner. If you do not receive a response from us within 24 hours, then we did not receive your email - please resend.

E-mail:

info@orktours.co.uk

Website:

www.orktours.co.uk

Address:

Orkney Archaeology Tours, Bayview, Birsay, Orkney, KW17 2LR

Telephone:

01856 721450

Booking Conditions and Booking Form

Please read these carefully as bookings with Orkney Archaeology Tours are accepted only in accordance with the conditions below. When you make a booking with us you are deemed to have accepted these conditions. ***In particular please note what is and is not included in your holiday with us.*** N. B. in the following 'holiday' should be read to mean 'holiday or private tour'.

1 PAYMENTS FOR YOUR HOLIDAY: a booking must be made in writing using our booking form, and include a non-returnable deposit of **£400** per person. If you are booking less than 90 days before your holiday, full payment will be necessary immediately. We will send you a confirmation of your booking, at which point the contract between us comes into existence. You have undertaken to pay for the holiday you have booked and we have undertaken to provide you with the holiday we describe in the brochure. Your contract with us shall be subject to Scottish Law. If you make a booking on behalf of others as well as yourself, we shall take it that you have the authority of each of those other people to enter into that contract and that you and they have agreed to be jointly and severally liable to us. If we are unable to accept your booking, we will return your payment to you immediately. Payment of the balance is due 90 days before arrival, and we will invoice you for this approximately one week beforehand. We reserve the right to cancel any booking for which full payment has not been received 90 days before arrival, and to levy cancellation charges as set out in clause 2 below.

2 CANCELLATION BY YOU: if you cancel your booking, we must be informed by telephone, letter or e-mail immediately. The cancellation only takes effect from the date at which the notification reaches us, and the following cancellation penalties apply:

Up to 90 days before arrival date: Loss of Deposit

89 – 69 days before arrival date: Loss of 40% of total holiday price

68 – 48 days before arrival date: Loss of 50% of total holiday price

47 – 35 days before arrival date: Loss of 60% of total holiday price

From 34 days before arrival date onwards: Loss of 100% of total holiday price

4 CHANGES: subject to availability you may change your holiday dates up to 90 days before arrival. If we do not have availability to make the change you require then you may either cancel your holiday, in which case our standard cancellation terms apply, or substitute another person to take your holiday as booked at any time up to your arrival date.

5 CANCELLATION BY US We do not operate a minimum numbers policy on our holidays and therefore will not cancel your holiday for this reason. If we have to cancel your holiday for any other reason we will refund your full payment. **N.B. we are not legally responsible for any consequential loss you may suffer if we have to cancel your holiday** e.g. travel expenses etc. and you should ensure you have adequate travel insurance to cover this eventuality.

6 HOLIDAY ITINERARY: We will do our very best to visit all the sites and attractions we have promised you in your holiday itinerary but we are not liable if exceptional circumstances outside of our control prevent this. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to, industrial action, technical problems with transport, unscheduled site closure, severe weather conditions etc.

7 INCLUDED IN YOUR HOLIDAY: all meals, accommodation, entry fees and travel as part of the tour are included in your holiday. Meals consist of breakfast and à la carte dinner at your hotel from your arrival night onwards, with soup, sandwiches, cakes, tea and coffee lunches whilst on tour. Bottled water is provided in the tour vehicle. All accommodation is en-suite and non-smoking with a lift to all floors.

8 NOT INCLUDED IN YOUR HOLIDAY: travel to and from Orkney and to and from your hotel on arrival and departure is not included in your holiday. Drinks except water are not included i.e. you are responsible for your own hotel bar bill. Hotel extras, such as laundry, phone calls and additional food to that detailed in clause 5 above, are not included.

9 INSURANCE: we carry tour operators' professional indemnity and public liability insurance as required by UK law. We strongly recommend that you take out appropriate travel and holiday cancellation insurance in respect of your holiday with us.

9 COMPLAINTS: any complaints relating to your holiday must be reported to us immediately, and we will do our best to resolve the problem. If you are still dissatisfied you must put your complaint in writing to us no later than 30 days after departure.

10 DIETARY REQUIREMENTS: please inform us of your dietary requirements particularly any food allergies you may have at the time of booking. We will notify the lunch venues and hotel of your requirements but please note you must also take care to check with the hotel staff that any menu choices you make are safe for you to eat.

11 HEALTH AND FITNESS: you must be reasonably fit and healthy to take part in one of our tours, which involve some walking, sometimes over rough terrain, whilst entry to some sites entails crouching or crawling. **Please refer to the detailed information in our brochure regarding health and fitness requirements.** We can accept no liability for your inability to take full part in your holiday due to health or fitness issues.

12 ASSISTANCE DOGS: we welcome registered assistance dogs, please let us know on booking if you will be accompanied by yours, and if you would like suitable dog food or bedding to be available. We regret that we do not allow pet dogs on our tours.

13 PACKAGE TRAVEL AND LINKED TRAVEL REGULATIONS 2018: The combination of travel services offered to you is a package within the meaning of the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations. Therefore, you will benefit from all EU rights applying to packages. Orkney Archaeology Tours will be fully responsible for the proper performance of the package as a whole. Additionally, as required by law, Orkney Archaeology Tours has protection in place to refund your payments and, where transport is included in the package, to ensure your repatriation in the event that they become insolvent. More information on key rights under the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018 may be found by [clicking here](#).

14 PRICE INCREASES: We will not increase the price of your tour due to our suppliers increasing their costs or rising fuel prices but will bear those increased costs ourselves. The price you will pay for your holiday is the price agreed on booking and detailed in your booking confirmation.

ORKNEY ARCHAEOLOGY TOURS 2023 BOOKING FORM

TOUR DATES:

7-night 'Orkney Adventure' holiday	Arrive Sat:	Depart Sat:
Private tour	Arrive:	Depart:

Names and rooms required. Double occupancy rooms may be either a twin room (two large single beds) or a double room (one large bed). Single occupancy are double rooms for single occupancy with single supplement.

First name	Surname	Twin room	Double room	Single Occupancy

Address of person making the booking:	Tel:(eve)
	Tel:(day)
	Mobile:
	Email:

Dietary requirements/medical conditions/any other requests: Please give details e.g. **Vegetarians:** do you eat fish, eggs and dairy? **Gluten free:** do you eat gluten free bread? **No Dairy:** which (if any) non-dairy milk do you require, and do you need it for tea/coffee or just for cereals? **Food Allergies:** please tell us how serious your allergy is (e.g. is cross-contamination a problem, do you go into anaphylactic shock etc.). **Foods you do not eat** (e.g. for religious reasons or because you dislike them). **If you have any other allergies/medical conditions that may cause an issue for you please give details.**

DEPOSIT PAYMENT: A non-returnable deposit of **£400** per person is due on booking. **Please refer to our brochure and the 'Payment Methods' information we emailed you when you first contacted us for details of how to make your deposit payment.** If you have not already contacted us we will email you a copy on receipt of your booking form.

Declaration: I confirm that I have read the booking conditions as contained in the 2023 Orkney Archaeology Tours brochure and accept them on behalf of myself and all other persons included in this booking.

Signed:..... Date.....

Print name:.....

Orkney Archaeology Tours, Bayview, Birsay, Orkney, KW17 2LR VAT Reg. No. 107 1132 67