

Scottish Natural Heritage

Explore for a day

Ayrshire & Arran



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Ayrshire and Arran is a region of rich contrasts: fertile green lowland and wild rugged hills, soft sandy beaches and craggy cliffs, remote rural villages and bustling towns. From castles to coastline, Burns' birthplace to the landmarks which inspired his poetry, there's a wealth of history and heritage waiting to be explored, all within easy reach of Glasgow, central and south-west Scotland.

Accompanied by your own Viking storyteller, learn about Viking invasions and their influence on Scottish history. Go seal spotting on a boat trip around Ailsa Craig. Enjoy buzzards soaring overhead, and cormorants diving off the coastal cliffs as you cycle around Great Cumbrae. Unravel your family history through local archives and record centres. Sample malt whisky where it is made on the Isle of Arran. Watch falcon flying displays at Kelburn, or try star-gazing at the Scottish Dark Sky Observatory. Stretch your legs along part of the River Ayr Walk, keeping an eye out for otters along your way. Search for Kings Cave along Arran's west coast. Visit waterfalls and water mills. Travel through history as you explore stone circles, ruined abbeys, impressive castles, country houses, Scotland's Maritime Museum and the Museum of Ayrshire Life. Whatever your age or interests, there's something which will inspire you: the choice is yours.

This leaflet contains details of places you might like to visit and four suggested itineraries, including routes accessible by public transport or pedal power for those who prefer not to travel by car. Whichever route(s) you choose, each tour will introduce you to different aspects of the region, and promises a great day out in Ayrshire and Arran.

Symbol Key

	Parking		Information Centre
	Paths		Disabled Access
	Toilets		Wildlife watching
	Refreshments		Picnic Area

Admission free unless otherwise stated.

1 Ailsa Craig

The island of Ailsa Craig lies nine miles offshore in the Firth of Clyde, rising to 1,109 feet. Its dramatic sea cliffs are home to the third largest gannetry in the UK - comprising 36,000 pairs - with a supporting cast of guillemots, razorbills, black guillemots and increasing numbers of puffins. In the 16th century Ailsa Craig was a haven for Catholics during the Scottish Reformation. In more recent times blue hone granite was quarried here to make curling stones. The now uninhabited island is often referred to as Paddy's Milestone as it lies halfway between Glasgow and Belfast.

Ailsa Craig bird sanctuary is accessible only by boat. Tours run from Girvan and Campbeltown during summer.

Admission charge for boat tour

Grid reference: NX020998

www.rspb.org.uk



2 Crossraguel Abbey

Although now in ruins, Crossraguel Abbey is remarkably complete, including the monks' original benches and arched seat for the abbot in the chapter house, the original cloisters, church, and even the dovecot (pigeon tower). Wandering around the buildings, it's easy to appreciate the peace and spiritual glory enjoyed by the Cluniac monks who served here from the 13th to the 17th centuries. The name Crossraguel suggests that the abbey was built on a much more ancient holy site.

Admission charge

Open daily April-September 9.30am-5.30pm.

Grid reference: NS275083

Tel: 01655 883113

www.historic-scotland.gov.uk



3 Culzean Castle and Country Park

With its dramatic cliff top setting, Robert Adam architecture, fascinating history and beautiful surroundings, Culzean Castle is one of Scotland's most popular visitor attractions. Surrounded by Culzean Country Park, a 242 hectare estate encompassing lush woodland, landscaped gardens and rugged coastline, this 18th-century Scottish castle couldn't be better placed for a family day out. You could easily spend an entire day exploring the country park alone, but with so many treasure-filled rooms to see inside the castle, it's well worth enjoying both elements of this magnificent attraction.

Admission charge

Country Park & Walled Garden: open all year, daily

Castle: April-October, daily 10:30am-5pm

Visitor Centre: January-March Saturday & Sunday 11am-4pm;

April-October daily 10am-5:30pm; November-December Saturday & Sunday 11am-4pm.

Grid reference: NS232103

Tel: 0844 493 2149

www.nts.org.uk



4 Dunure Castle

Perched on a rocky promontory just south of Ayr, Dunure Castle dates back to around 1200 when the powerful Kennedy family built a stone fortress in this easily defensible location. As the family prospered, the castle expanded, enjoying many royal visitors until Dunure Castle was abandoned in favour of Culzean. Today the romantic ruins which stand guard over Dunure harbour offer spectacular views across the Firth of Clyde to Arran and the Mull of Kintyre.

Open all year.

Grid reference: NS252158



5 Dumfries House

Hidden doors behind tapestries, a love message etched by diamond ring onto a window, a smelly ghost and one of the world's most extensive collections of 18th century British furniture (much of it by Thomas Chippendale) all offer hints into the romantic history of Dumfries House. Intent on attracting a suitable wife, William Dalrymple, the 5th Earl of Dumfries, filled it full of fine furnishings and beautiful artworks. The house was saved for the nation in 2007 by HRH The Prince of Wales and is now rated as one of Britain's best heritage treasures.

Admission charge

Open March-October Sunday-Friday, tours from 11 am, last admission 3.30pm. November-February Saturday and Sunday only, tours at 12.15 pm and 1.45 pm.

Grid reference: NS541203

Tel: 01290 421742 / 01290 429900

www.dumfries-house.org.uk



6 Robert Burns Birthplace Museum

Robert Burns Birthplace Museum offers a truly unique encounter with Scotland's favourite son. Set among 10 acres of the poet's cherished Alloway countryside, the museum comprises the famous Burns Cottage where the poet was born, the historic landmarks where he set his greatest work, the elegant monument and gardens created in his honour and a modern museum housing the world's most important collection of his life and works.

Admission charge

Open January-March, daily 10am-5pm; April-September, daily 10am-5.30pm; October-December, daily 10am-5pm; Closed 25, 26 December & 1,2 January.

Grid reference: NS334185

Tel: 0844 493 2601

www.burnsmuseum.org.uk

www.nts.org.uk



7 Souter Johnnie's Cottage

See Scottish literature come to life in this 18th century thatched cottage in the heart of Kirkoswald. The former home of cobbler or souter – John Davidson, the real life Souter Johnnie immortalised in the Robert Burns poem Tam o' Shanter. It features a thatched tavern in the garden, complete with life-sized sandstone statues of the poem's main characters. The house also offers a taste of how the Davidson family would have lived and worked. There is a small collection of Robert Burns memorabilia.

Admission charge

Open April-September, Friday-Tuesday 11.30am-5pm.

Grid reference: NS239075

Tel: 0844 493 2147

www.nts.org.uk



8 Burns House Museum

Original manuscripts, letters and poems and interactive exhibitions make this dynamic, lively museum an authentic Burns experience. Situated in the cobbled back streets of Mauchline, where Burns lived and worked from 1784-1788, arguably the most formative years of his life. An opportunity to find out about some of his many vivid characters around the town who Burns knew and who feature in his poetry, enjoy listening to poetry readings sitting in the snug and have a go at recording your own poems!

Open all year Tuesday-Saturday 10am-4pm. Closed public holidays.

Grid reference: NS498272

Tel: 01563 554902

www.visiteastayrshire.gov.uk



9 River Ayr Way

Officially opened in 2006, the River Ayr Way was Scotland's first source to sea long distance path, starting at Glenbuck and finishing at Ayr some 44 miles downstream. Passing through some of Ayrshire's most beautiful countryside and is steeped in history and links to many famous Scottish figures. The route also has a wide range of habitats and associated wildlife, including otters, badgers and hen harriers. The exceptional quality of the River Ayr Way has been recognised in its designation as one of Scotland's Great Trails.

Open year round, but check the website for any sections temporarily closed for health and safety reasons or during maintenance/improvements.

www.riverayrway.org



10 Isle of Arran Heritage Museum

This fascinating museum brings to life Arran's archaeology, geology, culture, craft and social history over many centuries. You can look around the Victorian cottage and kitchen, or learn more about Arran's seafaring traditions from days of sail to the latest car ferry, including a model replica of a Viking ship. Marvel at the forges, bellows and tools in the smiddy, left just as they were when work stopped in the 1960s. Don't be deceived by the museum's small exterior: there's something of interest for everyone.

Admission charge

Open March-September daily 10am – 4pm.

Grid reference: NS008467

Tel: 01770 302636

www.arranmuseum.co.uk



11 Brodick Castle and Country Park

This quintessential Victorian 'Highland' estate is dramatically set against the backdrop of Goatfell mountain. The grand red sandstone Scottish baronial style castle has stunning views over Brodick Bay to the Firth of Clyde. The grounds are worthy of a visit alone – from the W.A. Nesfield influenced landscaped gardens to the woodland trails, wildlife ponds and waterfalls. There is plenty to explore outdoors in Britain's only island country park. Brodick Castle is renowned for its impressive collections of period furniture, silverware, porcelain, paintings and sporting trophies.

Admission charge

Castle open: April & October daily 11am-3pm; May-September daily 11am-4pm; Country Park open all year, daily.

Grid reference: NS015378

Tel: 0844 493 2152

www.nts.org.uk



12 Isle of Arran Distillery

Picturesque Lochranza is the location of the island's first legal distillery for over 150 years. Until the 19th century, Arran was renowned for its Malt Whisky, often made illicitly, and known locally as "Arran Water". Enjoy an interesting and informative visit to the distillery, where you can see production of the Arran Malt. You'll learn about whisky making from professionally trained guides, enjoying the spectacular exhibition set around a thirty-foot indoor waterfall and experience a little bit of history in the making.

Admission charge

Open all year. Check in advance for tour times.

Grid reference: NR942497

Tel: 01770 830264

www.arranwhisky.com



13 Machrie Moor

The Isle of Arran has many stone circles and standing stones dating from the Neolithic period and the early Bronze Age. The finest collection of circles can be found on Machrie Moor, on the west of the island. The whole moorland is littered with the remains of early man, from hut circles to chambered cairns and solitary standing stones. The focus of the site is upon six stone circles of varying structure, concentrated in a small area of the moorland. Some of the stones are over 5 metres high!

Grid reference: NR906325



14 Kings Cave

Arran's history is linked with the very earliest Scottish people, the Picts. They have left their marks at King's Cave, in the form of some rare writing on the wall. King's Cave is also said to be the legendary spot where Robert the Bruce, dejected and battle weary, was inspired by the tenacity of a small spider as it painstakingly spun its web. The Bruce went on to win many battles following this episode. The cave is a short walk along the beach just north of Blackwaterfoot.

Grid reference: NR884309

15 Glenashdale Falls

One of Arran's most beautiful landmarks, Glenashdale Falls, lies at the end of a particularly scenic woodland walk (2.75 miles; 1.5-2hrs). There are two starting points to the path, both in Whiting Bay. Along the way there are several viewpoints looking out towards the falls, which are a magnificent sight when the burn is in full spate. Not far away on the northern side of the glen, there is an Iron Age fort. The path is straightforward, although wet weather may make it muddy in places.

Grid reference: NS028250

16 Vikingar!

Experience the Viking adventure first hand as storytellers guide you through 500 years of Viking history, brought to life through sight, sound and smell. Take your seat for an amazing 20 minute 5-screen film presentation following one Viking family through generations of turmoil, battle and adventure until the Battle of Largs in 1263. Finally, enter the Viking Hall of Knowledge where multi-media technology and exhibitions continue the 'Saga of the Vikings in Scotland'. With adjacent leisure facilities an ideal day out for the kids!

Admission charge

Open daily March-October; February and November Saturday/Sunday only; closed December and January; times vary, please check before travelling.

Grid reference: NS203600

Tel: 01475 689777

www.kaleisure.com



17 Garrison House & Museum

The Museum of the Cumbraes provides a fascinating insight into Cumbrae's colourful history, from 4,000 year old stone coffins (cists) unearthed locally to modern-day life. Glimpses into the past are offered through the eyes of the fishermen, smugglers, lighthouse keepers, sailors and soldiers, scientists and tourists who have all shaped the islands' history. The museum is housed within Garrison House, a historic landmark building, now a community hub.

Admission charge

Open all year: Saturday 10am-4pm, Sunday 11am-4pm, Monday-Friday 9am- 4.30pm.

Grid reference: NS164550

Tel: 01475 531381 / 01294 464174

www.garrisonhousecumbrae.org.uk



18 Cathedral of the Isles

Surrounded by formal gardens and woodland at the edge of Millport, the Cathedral of the Isles is easily missed but as Britain's smallest cathedral and the tallest building on the Isle of Cumbrae, it is well worth a visit. Built in 1851 as a theological college for the Scottish Episcopal Church, in its early days the cathedral was seen as a "new Iona". Today it is famed for its music as much as its architecture, boasting a grand piano, the "Cumbrae" harpsichord and several restored pianos.

Admission charge

Open all year. Morning prayer 8.30am. Evening prayer 5.45pm.

Grid reference: NS165552

Tel: 01475 530353

19 Kelburn Castle and Estate

Dramatic walks, breathtaking gardens and many features of historical interest await visitors at Kelburn Castle and Estate. The Kelburn Glen with its waterfalls and deep gorges is regarded as one of Scotland's most beautiful woodlands and leads to spectacular views over the islands of the Firth of Clyde. The Secret Forest, a crocodile swamp and an amazing adventure course make Kelburn Country Centre one of Scotland's most thrilling days out for kids.

Admission charge

Fully open April-October; Only grounds open in Winter.

Grid reference: NS217567

Tel: 01475 568 685

www.kelburnestate.com



20 Dalgarnen Mill - Museum of Country Life & Costume

Nestling in a hidden valley by the River Garnock in the village of Dalgarnen, are restored mill buildings housing The Museum of Ayrshire Country Life and Costume. The museum offers the visitor a chance to step into the past, experience the sight and sound of the water wheel and the machinery of a Victorian grain mill. The granaries spread over three floors have exhibitions which tell the story of the rural community over the last century, their work, pastimes, dress and life.

Admission charge

Open all year (closed on Mondays); Easter to October Tuesday-Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 11am-5pm; October-Easter same times, but 4pm closing time Saturday and Sunday.

Grid reference: NS296458

Tel: 01294 552448

www.dalgarvenmill.org.uk



21 Scottish Maritime Museum, Irvine

If your interests are in aspects of ship building or the way in which ordinary people interacted with the sea, then the Scottish Maritime Museum should be your first port of call. The museum's Irvine site holds a nationally recognised collection, encompassing a variety of historic ships, artefacts, shipbuilding machinery, and fascinating personal items. Many of these exhibits can be found inside the Linthouse Building, an impressive Grade A listed, 19th-century historic building known as the Linthouse Engine Shop 'Cathedral of Engineering'.

Admission charge

Open 1 March-22 December, 10am-5pm with seasonal events in the Boatshop.

Grid reference: NS313384

Tel: 01294 278283

www.scottishmaritimemuseum.org



22



22 Dean Castle & Country Park

Dean Castle Country Park is a fantastic free day out. Covering over 200 acres, the country park includes beautiful woodland walks, an adventure playground, urban farm, visitor centre, tearoom and shop. The fantastic 14th century castle houses a world class collection, including historic weapons, armour and musical instruments. You can explore the park using scenic paths and trails - each season brings with it ever changing plants and wildlife that you might spy along the way.

Open all year.

Grid reference: NS437393

Tel: 01563 554734

www.eastayrshireleisure.com



23



23 Burns Monument Centre

Set within Kilmarnock's beautiful Kay Park, this custom-built centre brings together under one roof an unrivalled resource for family and local history researchers. A wealth of photographs, maps, local newspapers, books, minutes, official and unofficial records offer a unique opportunity to explore local and national heritage. It offers the ability to unravel the stories behind the development of families, businesses and local communities. Dedicated trained staff are on hand to help visitors from all around the world make the most of the rich archives.

Open all year Tuesday - Saturday 9.15am - 4.30pm.

Grid reference: NS438382

Tel: 01563 576695

www.burnsmonumentcentre.co.uk





24 Dick Institute

Opened in 1901, the Dick Institute is one of the most important cultural venues in south-west Scotland, boasting the largest museum and gallery space in Ayrshire. It features a programme of nationally important exhibitions, permanent displays of the museum's diverse collections and innovative work by contemporary artists, film makers and young people from the area. Previous major exhibitions at the Dick Institute have included Miffy, Quentin Blake, Wallace and Gromit, Cutting Edge, Radical Nature and Bill Viola.

Open Tuesday to Saturday, 11am-5pm. Closed Sundays, Mondays and Public Holidays.

Grid reference: NS432377

Tel: 01563 554343

www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk



25 The Scottish Dark Skies Observatory

The Scottish Dark Sky Observatory is one of only eight gold tier dark skies parks in the world. It boasts some of the darkest skies in the UK yet is only around 45 minutes south of Glasgow. The roll-off roof observatory, dome-housed telescope, viewing deck and activity room and a programme of special events are all designed to inspire visitors about the wonder of the universe. Amateur astronomers are welcome to set up their own equipment. Talks and tuition are available on request.

Admission charge

Open evenings all year Monday-Saturday, pre-booking essential.

Grid reference: NS473023

Tel: 01292 551118

www.scottishdarkskyobservatory.co.uk



Itinerary 1

Castles, coast and culture

From wildlife watching to world-famous collections of furniture, stunning coastal scenery, dramatic cliffs and sandy beaches to castles, a ruined abbey and impressive historic houses, this tour includes something of interest to everyone. Starting off with a boat trip to one of Europe's most important seabird colonies, the route leads you up the coast of South Ayrshire to Crossraguel Abbey, former home of the monks who historically owned Ailsa Craig. Then it's back to the coast to visit two impressive castles, before heading inland to finish at a Palladian stately home, one of Britain's best kept heritage secrets.

Ailsa Craig (1)

Trips around Ailsa Craig leave from Girvan, which is on the A77 trunk road between Ayr and Stranraer. The harbour is just off the A77, on the south side of the Water of Girvan. While you are on the boat across to Ailsa Craig, look out for grey and common seals, porpoises and occasional basking sharks.

Crossraguel Abbey (2)

Back on dry land, rejoin the A77 and head north, crossing straight over the roundabout. Admire the views across to Ailsa Craig and Arran as you continue north on the A77, turning inland at Turnberry, still on the A77. Mid-way between Kirkoswald and Maybole you will find Crossraguel Abbey on your right.

Culzean Castle (3)

From Crossraguel Abbey, head south again on the A77 for 2 miles. In the village of Kirkoswald, turn right on Balvaird Road. After approximately 1 mile, turn right at the t-junction with the A719, heading north. After 0.8 miles turn sharp left, following signs to Culzean Castle.

Dunure Castle (4)

Retrace your route onto Silver Avenue. After 0.3 miles turn left, then second right, continuing for 0.7 miles until you join the A719 at Culzean Castle Camping and Caravan Club site. Turn left, heading north on the A719. At Pennynglen keep left to stay on the A719, and continue north for 3.5 miles. Turn left

Dumfries House (5)

Turn left as you exit Kennedy Park, heading north-east through Dunure on Station Road for approximately 1 mile. At the junction with the Ayr Road, turn left on the A719, heading north for approximately 4 miles. At the roundabout, take the third exit onto Longhill Avenue. After 0.9 miles, turn left on the B7024, crossing over the River Doon. After 0.2 miles turn right down Murdoch's Lone, past Robert Burns Birthplace Museum. At the roundabout take the second exit onto Doonholm Road. Turn left onto the A77. Continue on A77, straight through Bankfield roundabout then at next roundabout – Holmston Roundabout, take the third exit onto the A70. Continue east towards Cumnock for approximately 12 miles, going straight over one roundabout, through Coylton and past Ochiltree. Dumfries House is clearly signed to the north of the A70 (at approximately 2.4 miles past Ochiltree).

Itinerary 2

Inspired by Burns

Few would argue that Robert Burns is Scotland's best loved poet. His national pride, quick wit and egalitarianism have in many ways become synonymous with the Scottish character. This tour encourages you to follow in the footsteps of the immortal Bard, from his birthplace to historic landmarks which featured in his work, taking in two museums dedicated to different parts of his life and various other inspiring attractions.

Kirkoswald is where Burns was sent to study maths and astronomy at the age of 17, before he became too distracted by the girl next door. Not that Burns wasted his time at Kirkoswald. His claim to have made greater progress "in the knowledge of mankind" than astronomy during his time at Kirkoswald is borne out by Burns having immortalised in his poems some of the people he met, including John Davidson, the real-life Souter Johnnie, whose cottage this tour visits.

Walking part of the River Ayr Way in the afternoon offers the chance to appreciate more of Burns' Ayrshire homeland. There's further opportunity to admire yon bonnie banks and braes heading south into the hills above Loch Doon. At the Scottish Dark Sky Observatory at Craigengillan Estate you can gaze in awe at the stars above. Who knows, perhaps all you have seen on this tour may inspire you to put pen to paper and become the next great poet.

Robert Burns Birthplace Museum (6)

The starting point for this tour, the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, is in the village of Alloway on the southern outskirts of the town of Ayr. Alloway is 10 miles south of Glasgow Prestwick International Airport, and lies directly on National Cycle Route 7 and various public transport routes. The two main sites at the museum are connected by the Poet's Path, a pedestrian walkway.

Souter Johnnie's Cottage (7)

From Alloway, follow the A77 south to Kirkoswald. Souter Johnnie's cottage is on the left as you go through the village.

Burns House Museum (8)

From Kirkoswald, head north again on the A77 back towards Ayr, continuing straight over two roundabouts. After 14 miles, at the third roundabout (Whitletts roundabout), take the fourth exit onto the B743. Go straight over the next roundabout, and then at the junction with the A76 turn left, and first left again onto Castle Street. The Burns House Museum is on the right. While you're in Mauchline, take the opportunity to visit the National Burns Memorial Tower.

River Ayr Way (9)

Marathon runners complete the full 44 miles of the River Ayr Way in a day, but it's up to you how many miles you tackle. Heading east from Mauchline on the B743, you can join the River Ayr Way at the quaint village of Sorn. Turn down the B713 just before the post office to pick up the path alongside the river. From Sorn to Catrine it is a 3.7 km walk, and a further 4.6 km on to Barskimming. If you are in need of refreshment, why not pay a visit to one of Burns' favoured hostelries along the way? It's up to you whether you retrace your steps back to where you started, or make use of the local path network to devise your own circular route (www.eastayrshireleisure.com/index.php?a=landing&id=3&sid=120&mid=142). Alternatively you could catch a bus, or call a taxi, back to your starting point.

Itinerary 3

Arran: Treasure Island

Only 55 minutes by ferry from mainland Ayrshire, Arran is a real treasure of an island. The juxtaposition of rugged mountains, lochs and glaciated U-shaped valleys in the northern half and more fertile rolling hills in the south are a miniature reflection of the rest of Scotland. Whilst you can easily drive around the whole island in a couple of hours, to do justice to a few of Arran's "must see" attractions, this itinerary focuses on the northern half of the island.

Within a short distance of Brodick ferry terminal, Arran Heritage Museum provides a fascinating start to the day, with a wealth of information about every aspect of the island's geological, cultural, social and historical development. Whether gardens, woodland walks, waterfalls or baronial castles appeal to you, Brodick Castle and Country Park - the next stop on your tour, just up the road from the heritage museum – is sure to impress and inspire you. Then on to Lochranza at the northern end of Arran to visit the distillery which produces award winning spirits. While there you can admire Lochranza's amazing castle on a spit jutting out into the sea loch. Following the coast road south to sandy Machrie Bay, explore some of the oldest treasures Arran has to offer: the six circles of standing stones on Machrie Moor. If you are feeling energetic and fancy another walk, you might like to explore Kings Cave at Blackwaterfoot before heading back across Arran to Brodick.

All of this itinerary could be completed by public transport, or by cycle over a couple of days with an overnight stop at Lochranza.

Arran Heritage Museum (10)

From Brodick ferry terminal, head north on the A841 for just over 1 mile. Arran Heritage Museum is at Rosaburn, to the east (right) of the main road. Enjoy a cup of coffee and cake in the Rosaburn cafe before heading on.

Brodick Castle and Country Park (11)

Brodick Castle is barely 2 miles or 5 minutes drive from Arran Heritage Museum. Turn right out of the museum, heading north-west up the A841. Turn right at the junction with the B880 - The String, over the Rosa Water, continuing north on the A841. After 1.2 miles turn left up the clearly signed entrance drive to Brodick Castle. Why not have a stroll or enjoy a picnic in the country park before you leave?

Isle of Arran Distillery (12)

As you leave Brodick Castle, turn left on the A841. Enjoy the views of Goat Fell to your left, or back to the mainland across the Firth of Clyde on your right as you head north up Arran's east coast before the road cuts inland across to Lochranza. The distillery is on your left as you come into the village of Lochranza at the northern end of Arran.

Machrie Moor Standing Stones (13)

After a tour of the distillery, turn left on the A841, following the coast road south with fine views across Kilbrannan Sound to the Mull of Kintyre. Approximately 15 miles from Lochranza, the land levels out. 200 m after the bridge over the Machrie Burn, turn left into the parking area which is signposted. Once you have parked your vehicle, follow the track inland. After about half a mile you will come to the first monument. Carry on along the track up to Machrie Moor, passing a standing stone 100m to the left of the track, and a chambered cairn with pointed upright stone to your right. Beyond the ruins of Moss Farm a series of mown paths link the six stone circles. By the time you get back to your vehicle, you will have walked about 3 miles.

Kings Cave (14)

Head south on the A841 for approximately 1 mile to the Forestry car park on your right. This is Machrie Road Car park. A map showing the circuitous walk which continues north around the coast to Kings Cave can be downloaded from <http://www.shiskinevalley.org/walksandwildlifekingscaves.html>.

There is also an alternative route on the same webpage from Blackwaterfoot via Drumadoon.

To return to Brodick from Blackwaterfoot, follow the A841 south around Drumadoon Bay, over the Black Water bridge, past the Best Western Kinloch. Where the A841 turns sharp right, turn left on the B880 (also known as the String Road), which cuts across the middle of Arran between the mountains. At the t-junction with the A841, turn right to bring you back to the Brodick ferry terminal

Itinerary 4

Family fun - or pedal powered

Featuring Vikings, a short ferry ride across the Firth of Clyde to Great Cumbrae, deserted beaches, sandy coves, an abundance of wildlife, historic buildings and finishing back on the mainland with a secret forest, crocodile swamp, amazing adventure course and 13th century castle which has had an unusual artistic makeover, this tour is packed with fun for all the family. Equally suited to people of all ages, it is particularly likely to appeal to those who like to explore by pedal power rather than by car. All of the attractions are within easy reach of each other by public transport, and there is no better way to explore Cumbrae than by bike.

Vikingar (16)

This tour starts at Vikingar, which is on Greenock Road on the north side of Largs. From the railway station head north on Crawford Street. Turn left on Main Street, at the junction with the A78, and continue north for 0.5 miles to Vikingar.

Great Cumbrae

From Vikingar, head south down Greenock Road (A78) toward Beachway. After 0.4 miles, turn right on Fort Street, to find the ferry terminal on your right, from where you can hop on a ferry across to Great Cumbrae. From the ferry terminal on Cumbrae you can catch a bus to Millport, or hire a bike to make the most of this cycling paradise – or explore by car if you prefer. The complete loop around the island is 10 miles. Follow the coast and you can't get lost. Stop for a paddle or a swim at one of the many beaches. Look out for buzzards, cormorants and redshank some of the 120 other species of birds which live on Cumbria on your tour of the island. See if you can identify Lion Rock and Crocodile Rock.

Garrison House Museum (17)

Garrison House is on Glasgow Street, the main road through Millport, in the centre of the town.

Cathedral of the Isles (18)

Turn right out of Garrison House, heading west for 50 metres and then turn right, heading inland up College Street. You'll find the Cathedral of the Isles less than 5 minutes walk from Garrison House.

Kelburn Castle and Estate (19)

Kelburn House is two miles south of Largs, straight down the A78. The entrance to the estate is clearly signed on the left (east) of the main road. For those travelling by public transport, the Greenock to Ayr bus provides a regular service between Largs and Kelburn, with a bus stop opposite the main gates. For timetables see www.stagecoachbus.com.



Other visitor information

There are many other sites to discover in the area. Find out more at the local Visitor Information Centres, which are situated in:

Ayr (all year round) Tel: 01292 290300
Brodick (all year round) Tel: 01770 303774/776
Largs Information Point (seasonal, closed Wednesdays)

Many sites are accessible by public transport. For bus times please contact Traveline Scotland on 0871 200 22 33 or go to www.travelinescotland.com. There are also a great number of cycle routes in the area. Sustrans National Cycle Network www.sustrans.org.uk. Find out more at the local Visitor Information Centres.

Know the code before you go...

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly! Find out more at: www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

National Nature Reserves are magical places where you can experience the incredible sights and sounds of Scotland's natural world. Located throughout Scotland, National Nature Reserves are open to everyone to visit and enjoy. Find out more at www.nnr-scotland.org.uk

Scottish Natural Heritage is the government agency looking after all of Scotland's nature and landscapes, across all of Scotland, for everyone. Find out more at www.snh.gov.uk.



Scotland's Protected Places

Explore and discover some of Scotland's natural and historic protected places.

www.scotlandspreservedplaces.gov.uk

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