

Suggested Day Itineraries while you are at Sula

Visits that are local or up to 45 mins travel time away

Glencoe – scenery, adventure and history

Glencoe is most famous for its dramatic scenery, some of the best mountaineering in the UK and its history. The drive through the glen is dramatic, but to get a real feel for the landscape take a walk up **the Hidden valley** or the **Pap of Glencoe**. You'll need sturdy footwear, a map and compass and the ability to use them and you'll need to be steady on steep ground as both these walks take you into mountain country. If you're looking to do more serious hillwalking, **Buchaille Etive Beag** is a stunning mountain as a first Munro. If there is snow and ice on the ground you will need winter mountaineering kit – however here are plenty of **local mountain guides** who can give you a mountain experience safely.

If it's shorter walks and well-marked trails you are after there are lovely walks **around Glencoe Lochan** and to **Signal Rock**. And if you are into the views without the effort then a ride on the **Glencoe Mountain chairlift** takes to a fantastic position for views over Rannoch Moor. There's tubing for kids in summer and sledging for kids as long as the snow holds.

All routes in Glencoe end in the climber's bar at the **Clachaig Inn**, famous for its beer and tales of derring-do in the surrounding mountains. They also have a hotel bar and restaurant for a more refined evening. Just opposite the Clachaig on the hillside is the spot where **Hagrid's hut** was set in the Harry Potter films. It was taken away afterwards but you can scramble up to a viewpoint overlooking the little loch a couple of minutes walk west along the road from the Inn. The area is scattered with **Harry Potter film locations**: Glenfinnan, Glen Etive, Steal Falls, Rannoch Moor, as well as Glencoe itself.

You can discover the history and geology of Glencoe at the **National Trust visitor centre**. I feel it is quite expensive to get in but worth it for a first visit to get orientated about the area. For local history and how people used to live the rustic **Glencoe folk museum** in the village gives a home-made feel to interpretation. Stop for lunch and to pick up some local crafts and art at **Crafts n Things** in Ballachullish. **The Laroche** in Glencoe village comes highly recommended by locals and is often full so book ahead.

Hidden Valley Walk (4km 2-3hours)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/fortwilliam/lostvalley.shtml>

Pap of Glencoe (7km 3-5 hours)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/fortwilliam/papofglencoe.shtml>

Buchaille Etive Beag (8km 5-6 hours)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/fortwilliam/buachailleetivebeag.shtml>

Local mountain guides

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/fortwilliam/guides.shtml>

Glencoe Lochan walk (2.5km 1-1.5 hours)

<https://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/visit/glencoe-lochan>

Signal Rock walks (2.5km 1-1.5 hours)

<https://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/visit/glencoe-lochan>

Glencoe Mountain chairlift (all year)

<https://www.glencoemountain.co.uk/>

Harry Potter locations

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/travel_news/article-3316898/Calling-Gryffindors-Slytherins-Ravenclaws-Hufflepuffs-breathtaking-Scottish-locations-recreate-magic-Harry-Potter-films.html

National Trust Glencoe Visitor Centre (March – October)

<https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/glencoe>

Glencoe folk museum (April-October)

<https://www.glencoemuseum.com/>

Crafts and Things

<http://www.craftsandthings.co.uk>

A day out in Oban (although there is so much to do you might need to make this a couple of trips...)

On the way to Oban (if you've timed it right) stop at the **Falls of Lora** to see the spectacular tidal race that appears under the bridge on the ebb tide. Watch for canoeists playing in the standing waves. There is a car park just under the bridge that gives good views.

Next pop into **Dunstaffnage Castle**, one of the oldest stone castles in Scotland, captured by Robert the Bruce and where Flora McDonald, the Jacobite heroine, was held captive. Right by the Castle is the **Ocean Explorer Centre** where you can find out about the wildlife and science of Scotland's seas and the history marine science. The centre has a small café.

In Oban park for free at the long stay car park by the swimming pool/leisure centre a 10 minute walk to the front. To get the best views of Oban and surroundings climb to the top of **Pulpit Hill**, a 15 walk from the sea front, the view from **McCaig's tower**, the huge folly behind the town, is also stunning. Both have car parks nearby if you can't manage the steep walks.

For lunch you can't do better than the **Oban Seafood Hut**. This unprepossessing bright green cabin serves the best quality and best value seafood in Scotland (in my humble opinion...) Dress for the weather though – a giant tree trunk sawed in half and exposed to the elements is your perch for eating, with a view of the ferries coming in and out.

If you want to sit inside then Oban is simply heaving with seafood restaurants and fish and chip shops. Most are good I think but I have to confess I don't go anywhere except the seafood hut! **Ee-Usk** is reportedly the place to go – and it certainly has amazing views.

Afternoon is the perfect time to get a tour of the **Oban Distillery**. A lovely dram in a very picturesque building right on the sea front. And if you want some local history and artefacts there is the Oban **War and Peace Museum**, and, north along the front, **Dunollie Castle**, the ancestral home of the Macdougalls which has a small museum.

And do not miss an ice cream from **the Pokey Hat**. It is renown to have the best ice cream found outside of Italy.

Falls of Lora

<https://www.fallsoflora.info/>

Dunstaffnage Castle (open all year but check opening times and days)

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/dunstaffnage-castle-and-chapel/>

Ocean Explorer Centre (8 Jan-21 Dec)

<http://www.oceanexplorercentre.org/>

Pulpit Rock

<https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/oban/pulpithill/index.html>

Jay Raynor's review of the seafood Hut

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2015/oct/18/ee-usk-and-oban-seafood-hut-restaurant-reviews>

Oban Distillery (open all year – check days and times and book ahead)

<https://www.malts.com/en-us/distilleries/oban/>

Oban War and Peace Museum (end Feb- end Nov)

<http://www.obanmuseum.org.uk/>

Dunollie Castle (April – end Oct)

<https://www.dunollie.org/>

Walks amongst Trees and Food with a View (or spread the walks out among various day trips!)

Argyll is known for its trees and woodlands and two of the best remaining examples of Atlantic oak woodland, a relatively rare habitat special for its bryophytes (lichens, liverworts and mosses) and fungi, are within easy reach of Sula. Especially good in April when the primroses are out and in May with the bluebells, or in August – October for fungi.

Start with **Sutherland's Grove**, an arboretum planted in 1870 in honour of the founding father of the Forestry Commission in Scotland. There is a lovely walk and some giant fir trees.

Moving on to **Glen Creran**, one of the most important remaining patches of Atlantic woodlands. Take a short 1km loop around the National Nature Reserve, or walk up the Glen on a longer loop to the Fairy Bridge.

If you're ready for food, then stop for lunch at **the Creran Inn** for views and good food. Or wait until you get to Taynuilt and visit the delicious tearoom, **The Robin's Nest**.

For a final woodland walk of the day visit the **Glen Nant oak woodlands**, with a walk along the river and an interesting industrial history. Just across the loch at Bonawe is Britain's best preserved charcoal-fuelled ironworks, where the oak from Glen Nant was used. What was once a 5 minute ferry ride is now a 30 minute drive around the loch via the Connel Bridge, but a visit to **Bonawe Ironworks** is well worth it.

If you are a woodland nerd and want to visit a fantastic example of Atlantic Hazel woodland (an ever rarer habitat than Atlantic oak woods) then a short **walk up the hill from Sula** will take you to a fantastic example. – the Ardsheal peninsular walk will take you past it.

Sutherland's Grove – 4.5km (1.5-2 hours)

<https://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/visit/sutherlands-grove>

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/glen-dubh.shtml>

Glen Creran and the Fairy Bridge 4km (1.2-2 hours)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/fas-na-cloiche.shtml>

or if you just want a very short walk through Glas Drum National Nature Reserve 1km (0.5 hour walk)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/glasdrum.shtml>

Glen Nant Oakwoods – Taynuilt 3.5km (1-1.5 hours)

<https://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/visit/glen-nant>

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/glen-nant.shtml>

Bonawe Iron Furnace (April – end Sept)

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/bonawe-historic-iron-furnace/>

Robins Nest Tearoom, Taynuilt

<https://www.robinsnesttearoom.co.uk/>

The Isle of Kerrera (Easter- end Sept) an island walk, a castle and local food

Visit to **Isle of Kerrera** for a walk to the fabulous **Tea Garden**, for local food in gorgeous surroundings (Easter- End Sept). The walk is 50 minutes from the ferry or you can do the circular walk in 3-4 hours taking you along a wild and dramatic coastline. You can also cycle the circular walk.

Kerrera walk – 11km (3.5-4.5 hours)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/kerrera-gylen.shtml>

Tea Garden (call ahead to check opening)

<https://kerrerabunkhouse.co.uk/tea-garden>

Kerrera Ferry info

<https://www.calmac.co.uk/gallanach-kerrera-ferry-summer-timetable>

Nights out, eating out, music and other things

The **Clachaig** is known for its boisterous Boots Bar and live music on Saturday Nights all year round. **Crafts and Things** has been hosting live music in their really intimate venue 30 for years, despite having no stage and borrowing the equipment they have hosted some really world-class musicians over the years.

The Old Inn at Appin has a great evening atmosphere and serves tasty food. **The Holly Tree** has amazing views at sunset from its restaurant with floor to ceiling windows, nice food and a small swimming pool and sauna which is free for diners. On a nice day we like to sit on the pier with full views up and down Loch Linnhe. Locals recommend **the Laroch** as the best place to eat, I haven't managed to get there yet. And if you want to splash out for a special evening **The Loch Leven Seafood Café** has amazing food in a spectacular position with an outdoor terrace for good weather, They also have a deli where you can buy live seafood to cook at home.

If you want to be more active of an evening there is weekly **Zumba** at Ballachullish Village Hall 630pm on Wednesdays.

In Oban **The View** hosts weekly ceilidhs for visitors where you can learn the steps and join in the fun, they also host live music acts. **The Corran Halls** also have events and concerts. For cinema, if your stay at Sula doesn't coincide with the visit of the **Screen Machine**. Then you need to go all the way to Oban for their amazing community owned **Phoenix Cinema**. It has a main screen and a tiny secondary screen with about 20 seats.

For finding out what is on in the Oban area as far north as Duror have a search about on the **Oban What's On website**

Crafts and things Live Music Nights

<http://www.craftsandthings.co.uk/news.asp>

The Clachaig

https://clachaig.com/whats-on/?whatson_id=5485

The Old Inn at Appin

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/theoldinnappin/>

The Holly Tree Inn

<https://hollytreehotel.co.uk/>

Zumba

<https://www.zumba.com/en-US/class/lynn-mcquillan/274910/2018-03-14>

The View, Oban

<https://www.obanview.com/>

The Screen Machine

<https://www.screenmachine.co.uk/winter-201718/>

The Phoenix Cinema

<https://www.obanphoenix.com/>

Oban What's On

<http://obanwhatson.co.uk/>

Activities – Get outdoors: the steep, the wild and the wintery

Glencoe and Lochaber area is known as Scotland's outdoor capital and for good reason if you're into outdoor activities there is so much to do.

Glencoe, the Mamores and Ben Nevis has much of the best mountaineering in the UK and if you want to go but haven't the skills, there are plenty of **mountain guides** in the area. Why not get started with a session at the climbing wall or the indoor ice-wall at the **Ice factor Kinlochleven**. Outside they have a high ropes course. Only a few hundred metres away at the Gray Mare's tail waterfall, there is a **Via Ferrata** run by Vertical descents, the same company do all sorts of other adventure and adrenaline activities in the area including **canyoning** at Inchree Falls.

If you like going downhill fast then Nevis Range and Glencoe Mountain are for you. **Skiing** in winter and downhill **mountain biking** in all other seasons. **Nevis Range** hosts the world Downhill Mountain Bike World Cup, but there are also more family friendly trails and you can rent bikes there as well as a **High Ropes Course**. Glencoe is simply knarly. For people who prefer cycling on the level **Sustrans Cycle Route 78** will take you much of the way from Oban to Fort William on dedicated cycle paths. There are some lovely loops to do – eg the Appin Loop on cycle paths and quiet roads taking you on some wonderful scenery. If you want to hire bikes or get spare parts for your bike then contact **Glencoe Bike Hire**.

The **skiing** at both Glencoe and Nevis excellent when conditions are right. **Glencoe Mountain** was the first ski resort with a lift in Scotland and has a very retro feel about it to this day. **Nevis Range** may have more facilities up in the ski area (nice café and loos) but it doesn't have the personality of Glencoe. Both have special events throughout the season. Glencoe has a dedicated avalanche transceiver test area.

And of course, much closer to Sula, the wonderful **walk from the door** around the Ardsheal peninsular. Incredible views and you'll likely hardly see anyone. Finish the day with a **sauna and swim** to warm up at the Holly Tree Hotel

Gray Mare's Tail waterfall walk

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/fortwilliam/mamorelodge.shtml>

Inchree Waterfall Canyoning

<http://www.verticaldescents.com/canyoning/inchree-falls-canyon.html>

Glencoe Bike Hire

<https://www.glencoebikerehire.com/>

Sustrans Cycle route

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map/route/oban-to-fort-william>

Ice Factor

<https://www.ice-factor.co.uk/>

Nevis Range

<https://www.nevisrange.co.uk/>

Glencoe Mountain

<https://www.glencoemountain.co.uk/>

Ardsheal Peninsular Walk

<https://cuilbay.com/2012/10/01/ardsheal-peninsular-walk/>

Wild about Water?

If you're looking to make a splash there are loads of options for watersports: **Rockhopper Kayaks** and **Arisaig Sea Kayaks** both do guided sea kayaking trips. Rockhopper will bring the kayaks to a suitable place and can come to Cuil Bay or they can recommend some of the spectacular options in the area (including Arisaig).

You can try stand up paddleboarding at **Rugged Paddleboarding** in Glencoe and get lessons or rent a board. The sailing on Scotland's West Coast is among the best in the world and there is a **Sail school** in Oban if you want to try it.

If you want the speed with none of the effort there is Sea Explorer who do fast **RIB boat trips** based just under the Ballachullish Bridge. There are also more relaxed boat trips from Port Appin with **Appin Boat Tours**.

For **sea swimming** the best beach is obviously at Cuil Bay(!) but if you want to travel a little further afield there is a long sandy beach at **Tralee Bay** by Benderloch, but the very best white sand beaches with unbelievable views of the Small Isles are at **Arisaig**, particularly the **White Sands of Morar**. They are about an hour and a half to drive to but an absolute must if you haven't been to this part of the world before.

Rockhopper sea kayaking

<https://www.rockhopperscotland.co.uk/>

Arisaig Sea Kayak Centre

<https://arisaigseakayakcentre.co.uk/>

Paddleboarding in Glencoe and on Loch Leven

<https://ruggedpaddleboard.co.uk/>

Fast RIB boat trips

<https://seaxplorer.co.uk/>

Boat Tours from Appin

<https://www.appinboattours.co.uk/>

Beaches in Arisaig and Morar

<https://afamilydayout.co.uk/arisaig/>

Appin, Lismore and Castle Stalker:

Only 15 minutes drive from Sula, the main road passed the most exquisite view of **Castle Stalker**. You can stop for a coffee to admire it from **Stalker View Café**, but the best way to see it is a walk or cycle along the sustrans cycle path. Park in the car park to the Old Inn (it only opens at 4pm so you shouldn't be taking the parking spaces from pub visitors.) There is a lovely walk along the beach past the castle and then back onto the cycle path and across the wooden pedestrian **Millennium Bridge** which gives a superb view of the river estuary

and castle stalker. The mud flats are excellent for bird watching, especially in winter, and there is a little bird hide just before you rejoin the road at Appin.

It is lovely to continue the walk down the minor road to Port Appin and then around the **peninsular** there. The **Peirhouse Hotel** has fabulous seafood and atmosphere, you can watch the kids fishing for crabs with bits of bacon rind off the pier.

If you want a gentle cycle ride, the 15 mile **Port Appin Cycle Loop** is perfect, on minor roads and off road cycle path. The cycling is also excellent on the Isle of Lismore, hire bikes from **Lismore Bike Hire**. The small bright blue passenger ferry goes regularly from Port Appin.

The highlights of Lismore are the **Iron Age Broch**, Tirefour Castle and the ruins of **Coeffin Castle**. The island has an incredible history that is explored in the **Heritage Centre** (with a fabulous café).

The most fascinating story is that of St Columba and St Moulag racing to get to Lismore first to found a monastery. Moulag was losing but then he cut off his little finger and threw it towards the island to claim it just before Columba landed. The tiny island's church is called the **Cathedral of St Moulag**, surely one of the world smallest cathedrals.

Castle Stalker and Millennium Bridge Walk (3km 1.5 hours)

https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/maps/map1_2ao.shtml

Appin Peninsular walk (2km 1 hour)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/portappin.shtml>

Peirhouse Hotel

<https://www.pierhousehotel.co.uk/>

Port Appin Loop Cycle

<https://www.glencoescotland.com/see-do/mountain-biking/port-appin-loop/>

Lismore Bike Hire

<https://www.facebook.com/lismorebikehire/>

Tirefour Castle

<https://canmore.org.uk/site/23082/lismore-tirefour-castle>

Cathedral Church of St Moulag

<http://www.lismoregaelicheritagecentre.org/the-cathedral-church-of-lismore/>

Lismore Heritage Centre and Café

<http://www.lismoregaelicheritagecentre.org/the-cafe/>

Glen Nevis & Inchree: waterfalls, walks and a whisky

A visit to **Glen Nevis** is a great day out, it is famous for its dramatic waterfall, **Steal Falls** which featured in Harry Potter. Drive to the end of the glen where there is a small car park and a well-marked path will take you past dramatic water carved rocks in the gorge up to the flat glen in around 30 minutes. There is a **rope bridge** that takes walkers starting up the many mountains in the Mamores that lie across the river. It's worth using it to cross the river if you have a head for heights and hanging on for dear life.

For lunch a stop at the Ben Nevis Inn is worthwhile. Park at the **Ben Nevis visitor centre** car park, cross the pedestrian bridge and walk 200 m up the hill. They have a beer garden and terrace and a perfect view of the path up Ben Nevis so you can watch the never-ending parade of people going up and down.

If the rope bridge in Glen Nevis wasn't enough for you, there is a **high ropes course at Nevis Range**, the ski and mountain bike centre further up the A82 past Fort William. You can also rent mountain bikes there and the **Pine Marten café** does surprisingly good coffee.

You will pass the **Ben Nevis distillery** on the way back to Fort William, the visitor experience is as dated as their website, but it is good value for £5, which includes a dram, and is worth visiting if you aren't planning to go to Oban.

On the way home, if you haven't had enough of waterfalls, stop at **Inchree Falls** which are much wider than Steal and tumble in three terraces down among dramatic scenery. There are some nice circular walks from the car park and a **feeding station for red squirrels** where you are more-or-less guaranteed a view.

Glen Nevis Walk – Steal Falls.(3.5 km 1.5-2 hours)
<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/fortwilliam/steallfalls.shtml>

Ben Nevis Inn
<http://www.ben-nevis-inn.co.uk/>

Ben Nevis Visitor Centre
<http://ben-nevis.com/visitor-center/visitor-center.php>

Nevis Range
<https://www.nevisrange.co.uk/>

Ben Nevis Distillery
<https://www.nevisrange.co.uk/>

Inchree Falls
<https://www.wildlochaber.com/glencoe/walking/glen-righ-and-inchree-falls>

Kinlochleven: waterfall walk, ice-climbing, and a seafood cafe

Kinlochleven was once the centre of a huge Aluminium smelter, taking advance of the electricity produced by the hydro scheme. In fact, because of this, Kinlochleven was the first village in the world to have all its houses connected to electricity. The smelter is now a huge **indoor climbing wall**, The Ice Factor, and has a special area where you can try **ice-climbing on a real ice-wall**. The centre has a small **soft play area** for kids, a café and an **out-door high ropes course**.

There is a short 10 minute walk to the **Grey Mare's Tail waterfall**, and a few planks of wood and metal handholds will take you to the base of it. This is the start of a **Via Ferrata** run by Vertical Descents. You can continue from here on a circular trail that takes you along some of the West Highland Way.

The **Lochleven Seafood Café and deli** is a great place to visit, even if you aren't going to eat at their amazing (if pricey) restaurant. They sell fresh seafood and fish to take home and cook later, and you can look at the catch of the day in the enormous sea-water tanks. You can also buy lovely Spanish Ceramics at the gift shop.

The Ice Factor (open all year)
<https://www.ice-factor.co.uk/>

Gray Mare's Tail and Mamore Lodge walk (3.5km 1.5-2 hours) only 10 minute to the waterfall

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/fortwilliam/mamorelodge.shtml>

Via Ferrata Kinlochleven
<http://www.verticaldescents.com/via-ferrata/via-ferrata.html>

Lochleven seafood Café (March-October)
<http://www.lochlevenseafoodcafe.co.uk/>

Visits that involve travelling 45 mins -1.5 hours

The Slate Islands: stone skimming, history, walks and tearooms.

The Slate islands are an archipelago south of Oban where much of the Slate for Glasgow and other cities in Britain came from. Luing and Easdale are the two most easy to visit.

Before you can get a boat to Easdale or Luing you need to cross over the famous '**Bridge over the Atlantic**' to Seil Island. It is worth stopping to look at the narrows where the stone arched bridge crosses.

Continue past the **Balvicar shop** (a useful stop for fresh sourdough bread from the Seil Bakery) to the ferry to Easdale. I am very sad to report that the kitch and labyrinthine souvenir shop, and shrine to the owner's late father, Highlands Arts, where you could buy anything so long as it was supremely tacky, has closed. I just loved that place.

The little pedestrian ferry to Easdale goes regularly and takes you across the 100m crossing to the car-free island of tiny quarriers' cottages. There is a fantastic café/restaurant – **The Puffer** and a **folk museum** telling the story of the quarrying. The quarries were abandoned when the sea flooded them and left deep, still pools which are ideal for **stone skimming** the perfect fat slate pebbles lying around. In fact, Easdale holds the annual stone skimming World Championships.

Luing is bigger and has a vehicle ferry to take you across – you will pass **Balachuan Hazel Woodland** on the way to the ferry, a Scottish Wildlife Trust nature reserve that has some lovely walks and is one of the best remnants of the extremely rare habitat Atlantic hazel woodland.

The best place to start your visit to Luing is the **Atlantic Islands Centre**, a café and heritage centre, where they can advise on walks and places to go and serve you a splendid cake while they are doing it. A circular walk north from there will take you past the quarry and to wild slate beaches.

Balvicar Stores

<http://www.balvicarstores.co.uk/>

Puffer Bar and Restaurant

<http://pufferbarandrestaurant.co.uk/>

Easedale Folk Museum

<http://www.easdalemuseum.org/>

Ballachuan Hazel Wood

<https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/reserve/balachuan-hazel-wood/>

Luing Heritage Centre and Café, The Atlantic Islands Centre

<http://www.atlanticislandscentre.com/>

Kilmartin: a trip back in time to the Neolithic

Kilmartin is absolutely one of my favourite places in Scotland. An extraordinary Neolithic landscape of **chambered cairns and standing stones**, with the added intrigue of **Dunadd**, the seat of power of the ancient Kingdom of Dalriada, where kings were crowned by setting their foot into a carved footprint which is still there today.

Kilmartin Museum, is one of my favourite small museums with atmospheric displays taking you back 3000 years of history and a beautifully built green oak café with huge windows and a view of the linear cemetery of extraordinary chambered cairns. They serve exquisite cakes.

The monuments in this Neolithic landscape are even denser than in Orkney and it is easier to get to, however there are a fraction of the visitors. Don't miss the atmospheric **Temple Wood stone circle**, the collection of ancient **Celtic stones in Kilmartin churchyard** and Dunadd fort. If you can take the **Kilmartin Glen walk** which takes in seven of the Neolithic monuments and starts from the Kilmartin Museum.

Not far from Kilmartin and while you are in the area visit the **Crinan canal** which links the first of Clyde to the Atlantic, and the picturesque village of Crinan itself. The **Crinan hotel** has nice food and atmosphere, as does the little coffee shop close by. A 15 minute drive south from Crinan takes you to the **Taynish oak woodlands** with beautiful walks and wildlife. A little closer to Crinan is the **Knapdale Beaver project** with a small visitor centre (hut) and a short circular walk through beaver country. Look out for signs of beavers in this beautiful woodland and wetland landscape.

My blog on things to do in Kilmartin

<https://cuilbay.com/2013/04/16/the-glen-of-ghosts-kilmartin/>

Moine Mhor and Dunadd walk

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/moine-mhor.shtml>

Kilmartin Museum

<http://www.kilmartin.org/>

Kilmartin Glen walk (7km – 2.2.5 hours)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/kilmartin-glen.shtml>

Crinan Hotel

<https://www.crinanhotel.com/>

Taynish Oak woods

<https://www.nature.scot/enjoying-outdoors/scotlands-national-nature-reserves/taynish-national-nature-reserve>

Kapdale Beavers

<https://www.scottishbeavers.org.uk/visit-knapdale/>

Glenfinnan, Arisaig and the Harry Potter Express

This is the must-do day trip for Harry Potter fans of course and also for fans of spectacular scenery and Highland history.

The classic way to do the journey would be via the **Jacobite steam train** which leaves from Fort William in the summer months, but you can have almost the same experience on the regular **scheduled train service** if you don't manage to get a space before they get booked up. I would recommend getting the Jacobite one way and the scheduled service the other to allow you to stop off on the way out or back at Glenfinnan. The other option would be to drive and park at Glenfinann to start your journey on the train.

Glenfinnan is home to the spectacular **Glenfinnan viaduct** that features in the Harry Potter movies. There is a **walk to a fabulous viewpoint** above the viaduct from the car park/visitor centre. If you didn't manage to get tickets on the Jacobite then you can time your visit for when the Jacobite crosses the viaduct for the perfect view.

The National Trust **Glenfinnan Visitor Centre** tells the story of Bonnie Prince Charlie raising his standard at Glenfinnan and thereby bringing about the 1745 rebellion. You can walk out to the **Glenfinnan monument** right at the head of Loch Sheil, the setting for the Hogwarts lake.

At the station there is a **small station museum** and the **Glenfinnan dining car** where you can get tea and cake.

From Glenfinnan the train continues past **Lochailort**, one of my favourite of the many picturesque places in the area, where the sea loch is scattered with myriad islands. If you are driving you can stop in a layby to see the **Prince's Cairn**, at the place Bonnie Prince Charlie left for France after the failure of the uprising. If you are on the train look out for xx island – a gorgeous island covered with Scots Pine and the location for xxx and xxxx in the Harry Potter films.

The train will take you past Arisaig and Morar with dramatic views of the small islands – Rum and Eigg. Look out for the **Silver Sands of Morar** as you cross the bridge over the river just before Morar station – at low tide the beach is huge. If you are in the car be sure to stop at one of the many heavenly beaches between Arisaig and Mallaig. Perfect turquoise seas and views to Eigg and Rum makes these the best beaches in Scotland (in my opinion).

If you want a very full day-trip and leave the house early and take the Shearwater passenger ferry to **Eigg** for the day and explore the island that had the first community buy-out in Scotland.

Mallaig is a typical west coast fishing village where you can see the boats going in and out, fishing boats, the Calmac Ferry and the small boat to Inverie, Knoydart – Scotland's remotest mainland village. You could get some **fish and chips**, at the Cabin while you are there but I have to confess that I am looking forward to going to a new restaurant/café/bakery **The Crannog** that opened this year, it looks like my kind of place. The Fisherman's Mission has an absolutely second-to-none **second hand book store** run by volunteers with a surprising collection of specialty books on trains and railways and West Highland history.

Jacobite Steam Train

<https://www.westcoastrailways.co.uk/jacobite/jacobite-steam-train-details.cfm>

Circular Walk including viewpoint over Glenfinann Viaduct (4km 1-2 hours) 30 mins just to viewpoint

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/fortwilliam/glenfinnan.shtml>

The Glenfinnan Monument and Visitor Centre

<https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/glenfinnan-monument>

Glenfinnan Station Museum

<https://glenfinnanstationmuseum.co.uk/>

Glenfinnan Dining Car

<https://glenfinnanstationmuseum.co.uk/facilities/dining-car/>

the Prince's Cairn

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince%27s_Cairn

The Beaches of Arisaig and Morar

<https://afamilydayout.co.uk/arisaig/>

Eigg

<http://www.isleofeigg.org/>

The Crannog Bakehouse

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/oldquaybakehouse/>

Other further-away Day-trips people who stayed at Sula have Done:

- Speyside (a brilliant place if you don't mind the drive) – my recommended things to do <https://cuilbay.com/2013/03/21/speyside/> and don't forget the amazing Highland folk museum <https://cuilbay.com/2014/10/16/we-love-the-highland-folk-museum/>
- Mull and Iona (Sea eagles and Celtic Christian history)
- Urquhart Castle and the Loch Ness Experience
- Strontian oak woods via Coran Ferry, Castle Tiorum, Glenuig (nice Inn) and back via Lochailort and Glenfinnan (a long but beautiful drive)
- Eigg daytrip (an early start!)
- Cruachan - The Hollow Mountain