

Iona, Scotland Trip Info

Heart of the Trip

This is a pilgrimage at heart. We are journeying to a sacred site in hopes of deepening our connection with God, with one another, the world we live in, and those we meet along the way.

It is not a traditional sightseeing trip. While there are a lot of those elements within the travel, the foundation of the trip is focusing on spiritual renewal, growth and inspiration; whatever that might look like for you!

Why Iona

The island of Iona has, for centuries, been a centerpiece and atrium for the Celtic Christian tradition. This is one that embraces and seeks God's goodness in creation and in the human experience. It is also the home of the Iona Community. They are an international community that focuses on a commitment to seeing faith in action. The Iona community are firm and active advocates for social and climate equity, stemming from their experiences of living out our shared faith in community with one another. You can find out more about their values here: <https://iona.org.uk/>

The Trip

- Participants will arrive at either Edinburgh or Glasgow.
 - You will be responsible for how you get to Scotland on the designated day. The church will organize travel to Iona and back.
- Participants will board a train for Oban where the entire FBC group will meet.
- The group will spend the night in a hotel in Oban.
- The following day, the group will take a Ferry from Oban to Mull, then a bus across Mull, then another Ferry to Iona.
- The group will spend 6 nights in Iona at the Iona Abbey
- The group will return to Oban, and where you depart from there, whether you journey home, or extend your travels is up to you!
 - You will be responsible for your travel plans for home. However, if you need assistance in getting home that will happily be given.

The Stay at the Abbey

Over the week, you will be invited to engage with the program of the Iona community. This includes worship, meals, and a mix of structured activities as well as open time. Activities involve guided hikes around the island, a trip to the island of Staffa, a community Ceilidh (music, dance and stories), gardening, cooking, small group learning sessions, etc. While all the activities are optional to you, engagement with the life of the community is highly encouraged. [Click Here to see an example weekly program.](#)

While at the Abbey, they provide our meals and snacks. That is breakfast, lunch, dinner, and occasional tea. There are other dining options on the island that you are free to explore.

There is a town on the island to explore as well. For those who enjoy coming home with trinkets, there are many artisan shops, especially textiles, that are on the island.

Sleeping at the Abbey

One of the biggest questions is; “what are the rooms like”

While the abbey itself is as old as the Vikings; the facilities have been renovated and modernized multiple times, most recently in 2021. The rooms are simple, cozy, comfortable, but also shared. They are well reviewed online, I recommend reading some: [Trip Advisor Iona Abbey](#)

It is possible you would share a room with someone you have not met. The abbey has around 40 individual beds dispersed between 21 rooms. Rooms have between one and four beds in them based on the size of the room.

The Abbey teams places people to best accommodate the guests based on needs of accessibility and family. Guests with accessibility needs, like an on-suite bathroom, wheelchair access, stair-free access, etc., are giving priority rooms with those things. Double rooms are usually reserved for couples/families/friends traveling together. Meeting new people is part of the journey!

The style of the accommodation is akin to a hostel or dorm. The quality of the accommodation is exceptional. It is far from the barracks at Caswell, but at heart is still a retreat center.

Organizing the Trip

Each participant will organize their own travel to Scotland. This means you will purchase...

- Round-trip flights from home.
- Travel arrangements *from* Oban following our Abbey Stay.
 - If you wish to go directly home after our Abbey stay, we can help organize that for you if you need it.

The rest of the travel arrangements will be organized by FBC. This includes...

- Travel inside of Scotland, to Oban
- Overnight Stay at Oban
- Travel to Iona
- Stay at Iona
- Return travel to Oban

This means that if you wish to extend your travels, either before, or after this trip, you are free to do so! The goal is to give everyone flexibility in their travel plans.

Cost Estimates

The estimated cost for this trip is between \$3,000 and \$3,500 per person. Here is how that cost breaks down;

(Purchased by individual)

- Round trip Flights: ~\$1,000 - \$1,500

(Paid to FBC)

- Abbey Stay: ~\$1,300
 - Kids under 5 are free. Kids under 17 are discounted.
- Travel to Oban, & Oban Hotel: ~\$800

Dates

The two available weeks we are looking at are:

11-18 June 2027, or 20-27 August 2027

If one of these weeks works better for you, please email Michael and let him know!

Images and Remarks from Michael

I did a trip like this 10 years ago and have wanted to go back since the day I left. While this might not be true for everyone, this place changed me. In the Celtic tradition, they have an idea called “thin places”. These are places in our world where the veil between heaven and earth is so thin you cannot tell the difference. For centuries Iona has been one of those places for many people. The Iona community has shaped the way I view my faith, the things I believe, and the way I operate in the world. My hope is that those who are interested in taking the leap and going on this trip will be inspired, changed, and renewed in their own way.





