



SESSIONS AND SAIL - VOYAGE NOTES

The Trip



Join us aboard the Lady of Avenel for Sessions and Sail 2018. This two-masted, Brigantine-rigged tall ship will be your home for the week as we sail between the islands off the west of Scotland.

The ship will be our base for a voyage of exploration and music as we cruise the waters of the Sound of Sleat, Skye and the Small Isles, with sessions, workshops and more. Walk to Loch Coruisk, explore the islands and their hills before returning to the village or the ship for an evening of music. Enjoy locally sourced food beautifully prepared by our on-board chef. Look out for the dolphins, whales and basking sharks frequently spotted in these waters.

Conclude the experience with a grand ceilidh held in the village hall in beautiful Arisaig on the last night of the trip.

Who is the trip aimed at?



If you are a keen musician playing at any level - whether beginner, intermediate or expert - with an interest in the traditional and folk music of Scotland, this trip is for you. No sailing experience is necessary, but those keen to participate will be encouraged to join in the sailing of the ship should they wish to, whether steering, helping set and trim the sails, or even climbing the mast for the finest view of all.



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Locations

Mallaig



Mallaig is a fishing town at the end of the West Highland railway, one of the most spectacular railway journeys in the world. The town looks across the busy little harbour to the south end of Skye and the beautiful Small Isles of Rum, Eigg, Canna and Muck, and has a selection of restaurants and cafes serving good Scottish seafood.

Skye



Home to the spectacular Cuillin mountains, Skye is the largest of the Inner Hebrides. Sailing out from Mallaig will give the most spectacular view of these mountains, and a beautifully remote anchorage at Loch Scavaig will allow walks to the stunning Loch Coruisk (pictured).



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Canna



Canna is an island with an important musical tradition, having been owned from the 1930s by famed musician and Gaelic song collector Margaret Fay Shaw and her fellow-collector husband, John Lorne Campbell. Although John died in 1996, and Margaret in 2004, their home Canna House and their estate is preserved by the National Trust for Scotland.

The population of Canna has declined to a mere 15 but a hard-working community keep the island alive and vibrant.

Eigg



Famed for its spectacular mountain ridge, or *Sgurr* in Gaelic, Eigg became in the 1990s one of the first Scottish Islands to be bought out by its own community. Today, the island is famed as being a self-sufficient, creative place with its own renewable-powered electricity grid, having a popular summer festival and a vibrant community life alongside the crofting and traditions that run deep.



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Rum



Rum was designated as a National Nature Reserve in 1957 and is now managed by Scottish Natural Heritage. As well as rugged hills and forests populated by red deer, the isle of Rum features the opulent Kinloch Castle, built in 1897.

Arisaig



Centred on the sheltered shore of Loch nan Ceall on the west coast, Arisaig is a pretty village boasting superb scenery.

This lovely collection of largely white-painted buildings scattered between the harbour and the line of the road to Morar is situated on an inlet in the Morar peninsula at the western end of the legendary Road to the Isles.

The landscape is characterised by a rocky coast, blue seas and particularly white sand which all make the village a good base for exploring the scenic surrounding countryside. The views out to the islands of Rum and Eigg can be breathtaking, especially at sunset.



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Itinerary

The following itinerary is a suggestion of how the trip may take form; all destinations are weather dependant and at the discretion of the Captain.

Day 1

You meet the 'Lady of Avenel' alongside the pier in Mallaig harbour and are given a tour of the ship and a briefing from the Captain. We leave the harbour with our first professional tutor (names to be announced) aboard, and sail across the Sound of Sleat, to arrive four hours later at the stunning Loch Scavaig at the base of the Cuillin Mountains. Here we have dinner aboard and get to know one another with our first music session.

Day 2

After breakfast we have the opportunity to go ashore and walk to Loch Coruisk at the base of the Cuillins. Back on board for lunch, we then have our first music workshop, learning some new tunes and techniques. We then raise anchor and sail on to Canna, arriving by sunset in time to play some more tunes.

Day 3

We have the day to explore Canna, walk the coastline, climb the hill and meet the community; then in the early evening we head ashore with our instruments for a session with the locals in the Arts Centre.

Day 4

We wave goodbye to Canna in the morning, sailing on to Eigg. Arriving by afternoon, we are joined by two more professional musicians who will run a workshop onboard. Then in the evening we go ashore for a session with local musicians, led by our professional tutors.

Day 5

After a couple of hours ashore in the morning, we sail on to Rum, arriving in time to take a walk ashore before dinner. After dinner, there will be the chance to play some more tunes onboard, and some may wish to plan and practice any concert items we may want to put together for tomorrow evening.



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Day 6

A walk and an explore ashore, then we sail from Rum in the early afternoon headed for Arisaig. We arrive at the bay off Arisaig by 6pm, and head ashore for the party.

The public ashore and the Arisaig Hall are ready for the Sessions and Sail ceilidh; we join them there. Some Sessions and Sail participants may wish to put forward an item for the concert, which takes place before the dance; we listen to the acts then dance to jigs, reels and waltzes to the music of a ceilidh band.

Day 7

Leaving Arisaig with the tide, we sail the short distance round the coast to Mallaig where we tie up alongside the pier once more and say farewell to the Lady of Avenel and our crew.

Equipment list: (We recommend you bring the following):

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instrument | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof jacket and trousers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warm jumper/fleece | <input type="checkbox"/> Long trousers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boots/waterproof footwear | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Towel | <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of identification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thermal layers | <input type="checkbox"/> RYA logbook if you have one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thick socks | <input type="checkbox"/> A soft bag (no suitcases please!) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient cash to last the week | |

Getting there

Mallaig is connected by bus via Fort William <http://www.citylink.co.uk> ; one of the world's most scenic rail journeys can take you there direct from Glasgow Queen Street Station www.thetrainline.com/www.scotrail.co.uk or, if you feel like adding to the experience, you could take the Jacobite steam train from Fort William.

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

We recommend confirming flights and travel arrangements as early as possible to avoid price rises and availability problems.



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The ship



Lady of Avenel is a 102 foot Brigantine rigged ship, with 12 guest berths in addition to crew quarters. She was built in Poland in 1969 as a tug, but was converted to a sailing vessel in the Netherlands in 1992. She has been operating out of Maldon, Essex since 2012 and works with a number of different activities, from open water swimming to sea kayaking and paramotor trips.

To learn more about the ship you can visit www.ladyofavenel.com

Accommodation will be in double cabins; two showers and three toilets are shared.

Meals are prepared in the modern upper deck galley; these will be of a high standard and prepared by our own chef. Meals, tea and coffee are included in the price of the trip.

The upper deck saloon provides an ideal place to socialise and, with the tables cleared away, will be the perfect session space for the evenings we spend aboard. Should the weather be fair enough, we may be able to play sessions on deck.

Drinks (Beer, wine, soft drinks) will be available from the ship's bar; this is run on an honesty system where drinks taken are marked down and the bill settled at the end of the trip.

Other

Extra expenses may be involved should we have the opportunity to visit cafes, bars or attractions ashore. Cash machines may be in short supply in the remote places we will be visiting, so it is recommended to bring along enough cash for the week.

If there is any further information you need regarding your trip, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us by email or telephone.