



## TRIP OVERVIEW

The southern Inner Hebrides offer some of the most stunning and dramatic scenery in the British Isles. From craggy mountain tops to Silver Sands, this swim tour pierces the heart of these remarkable islands. The Gulf Stream, which assists in warming up the sea, makes the swimming here a truly memorable experience. This is a tour of dramatic island crossings, culminating in a tussle with the fabled Gulf of Corryvreckan.

We are based on the Scottish mainland, just south of Oban, at the Loch Melfort hotel - a comfortable country house hotel with stunning views across to the Sound of Jura and the Inner Hebrides beyond. You will be accompanied by a full safety escort during all of your swims.

## WHO IS THIS TRIP FOR?

This trip offers classic SwimTrek island hopping and is perfect for those looking for an adventure in a rugged and visually stunning part of the UK. Conditions on this trip can be challenging, yet extremely rewarding, so experience of open water swimming (in similar sea conditions) is a must to get full enjoyment from this trip.

Swimmers should be capable of completing the average swim distance of 2 km prior to the start of the trip. The average daily swim distance is around 4 km (split over a minimum of two swims). Due to the nature of this trip there is a minimum swimming speed of 35 min/km.

We have given this trip a 'Challenging' grading. These trips are for experienced open water swimmers who want to push themselves.

## TAILOR-MADE SWIMTREK TRIPS

This trip can also be offered as a tailor-made experience. The date of travel and itinerary can be adjusted to suit you. For more information [contact us](#) with the dates you'd like and number of people taking part. We'll be in touch to chat about putting together your dream swimming experience.

---

## LOCATION SUMMARIES

### Jura

Coming from the Norse for "Island of Deer", Jura has over 6,000 deer that often migrate around the Inner Hebrides by swimming between islands. In addition to deer, it is possible to see seals, stoats and otters, which, combined with the famous Paps of Jura mountain range, makes this island a truly remarkable place to explore.

### The Legend of the Corryvreckan

Raging between Jura and Scarba, this gulf is transformed into a whirlpool as the sea surrounds a pinnacle that rises up to within a few metres of the surface. We swim safely across the gulf during slack tide, when



the whirlpool is dormant, finishing under the imposing 400ft cliffs of Scarba. The walk to the cliffs overlooking the whirlpool is a great way (tides dependent) to see the Corryvreckan at its most robust.

Breakan, a Norwegian prince, fell in love with a princess of the Island of Jura. Her father only agreed to the relationship on the condition that Breakan should demonstrate his bravery by anchoring his boat for three whole days in the heart of the whirlpool. Breakan accepted the test and returned home, where he had three cables made of wool, hemp and maidens' hair. The women of Norway readily cut off their hair and plaited the rope. It was thought that the purity and innocence of the maidens would give the rope strength to hold the boat fast in the whirlpool. Breakan came back to Jura and anchored his boat in the Corryvreckan.

On the first day the hemp rope parted. On the second day, the woollen rope parted. On the last day they set the cable of hair and all went well, until a strong burst of wind broke the rope. The boat was sucked under the sea by the whirlpool and a surviving crewman and Breakan's dog dragged the body of Breakan ashore to be buried in the King's Cave on the northern shore of Jura, overlooking the Corryvreckan.

When the crewman finally made it home again and told of Breakan's fate, one of the young Norwegian ladies was consumed with guilt, as she was not as pure as she had claimed - it had been her hair which had weakened the rope.

## **Craobh Haven**

A picturesque yachting hamlet, which is the base for our boat support, offers an excellent finale to our tour of the Scottish Inner Hebrides, with the cosy "Lord of the Isles" pub being a perfect watering hole during our trip.

## **Luing**

Luing lies across the mouth of Loch Melfort on the Argyll coast. The largest centre of population is at Cullipool, where quarrying underpinned the economy of the island for many years. There are footpaths aplenty here, which makes walking a real pleasure.

## **Scarba**

Uninhabited and isolated, with its own unique breed of cattle, Scarba offers us some of the most stunning scenery on the trip and is the target for our first island hop from the Scottish mainland.



## TRIP SCHEDULE

<b>Start Point</b>	Loch Melfort Hotel, Arduaine <a href="http://www.lochmelfort.co.uk">www.lochmelfort.co.uk</a>
<b>Start Time</b>	16:00 on Day 1
<b>Finish Point</b>	Loch Melfort Hotel
<b>Finish Time</b>	12:00 on Day 4

Please note that the below daily itineraries are an example of the swims that may take place during the course of your trip, however, actual swim locations and distances will vary according to local weather and sea conditions. Your SwimTrek guides and local boat pilots will determine the most suitable swim locations each day and will communicate the plan with all guests as soon as possible.

### Day 1

We meet at the Loch Melfort Hotel in Arduaine on Scotland's west coast. This is an ideal base from which to explore this unique part of the Scottish Inner Hebrides. We hold a full trip briefing overlooking the Slate Isles, located within Asknish Bay, and discuss the plan for the trip in more detail. After this we head down to the local beach for a short acclimatisation swim, which allows you to get used to the conditions before the trip starts properly tomorrow.

### Day 2

After breakfast we walk down to the hotel's local beach where we meet up with our support vessel and begin our island-hopping adventure with a swim to the island of Shuna - named from the Norse word for 'sea-island'. Keep an eye out for seals as you approach, as well as red deer and eagles. This is an ideal first swim as the stretch of water is non-tidal which makes it easier to get your bearings and get used to swimming with your fellow SwimTrekks.

After lunch and a little time to relax, we carry on with our island hopping as we cross Shuna Sound and swim to the inhabited island of Luing. The first part of the swim is along the Shuna coastline as we swim above kelp forests, which hug the shoreline. We then cross over the sound before arriving at the main jetty at Toberonochy. It is a stunning swim and a great place to arrive. On arrival we have a chance to explore some of the island on foot. If you could make it over to the west coast, and to Black Mill Bay, you will be able to see tomorrow's first swim across to Lunga. Once everyone is back onboard our boat, we return to the mainland base and our accommodation. There are stunning sunsets from the hotel over the island of Luing.

### Day 3

A busy day as we meet with our support boat and head out to the island of Luing's west coast and the wonderfully named headland of "Cobblers of Lorne" - our starting off point for the swim to Lunga. This is the first crossing of the trip which is tidal. We aim to finish at the inlet of Fiola an Droma which is a wonderful place to explore for sea otters.

We then take our boat support and travel to Jura and Bàgh Gleann Nam Muc Bay which lies just off the Corryvreckan. It's a good spot to wait for the slack tide, which is when we will undertake this iconic



crossing of this unique phenomenon. The sheer cliffs of Scarba are a dramatic site with wild deer often being spotted. Dolphins and minke whales have been seen by swimmers in the past on this crossing, so keep your eyes peeled. Once we have completed the swim, it's back on our support boat to our accommodation where we take a well-deserved rest and have a chance to relax before we head out for an evening meal where we can look back on the day's adventures.

## Day 4

After breakfast today there is a chance for one last swim. This time we head north on foot from our hotel to the shores of Loch Melfort. Unlike our other swims of the trip, this one is coastal along the Loch's southern shore. Various wildlife has been spotted here previously. It is a relaxing last swim and a great way to be able to stretch out if you so wish. Returning to shore, we walk back to our hotel where the trip comes to an end.

## TRIP INFORMATION

### Equipment Checklist

In addition to your daily non-swimming clothes, we also recommend that you bring the following items:

✓	ITEM	✓	ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Costume (x 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thermal Long-Sleeve Top
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Goggles (x 2)*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aqua Shoes / Sandals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Towel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Day Pack (Preferably Waterproof)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Woolly Hat and Gloves	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun Hat, Sun Cream and Insect Repellent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking Shoes / Boots	<input type="checkbox"/>	Torch or Head Torch
<input type="checkbox"/>	Waterproof Trousers and Jacket	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sweater / Fleece
<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal Drink Bottle (x2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wetsuit**

\*Try to bring one clear lens and one tinted lens for different light conditions.

\*\*Due to the variable nature of conditions on these swims, it is advisable to bring a wetsuit along with you to use if required.

SwimTrek will supply swim hats, water and electrolyte drinks. The guides will no longer distribute shared drinks bottles but will fill your personal drink bottles. Please ensure these are clearly marked to help our guides identify yours. If you would like to use a wetsuit, rash vest or fins during your swims, please ensure that you bring these with you. For more on our Updated Packing List check out our [Covid-19 guidance](#).

### Group Size and Boat Support

This trip has a maximum group size of 12 guests. The group will be split into a maximum of two groups,



based on speed, with each group being accompanied by their own safety vessel/escort.

Boat support on this trip includes one main boat and one support boat to be piloted by your SwimTrek guides and a local boat pilot. Please note that this boat support is subject to change without notice and cannot be guaranteed.

## TRIP GRADING

We have given this trip a 'Challenging' grading. These trips are for experienced open water swimmers who want to push themselves.

### Swimming Distances

SWIM	DISTANCE	SWIM	DISTANCE
Arduaine - Shuna	2½ km	Shuna-Luing	2 km
Luing-Lunga	2½ km	Jura - Scarba (Gulf of Corryvreckan)	1½ km
Loch Melfort	2½ km		

\*Please note that these swims are an example of what may take place during the course of your trip and should be used as a guide only. Actual swim locations and distances will vary according to local weather and sea conditions.

### Swimming Conditions

Swimming in the sea is a fantastic experience, however you should be aware that certain marine life such as seals, jellyfish, sea urchins and coral could be present during the swims. In all cases we will work on reducing your contact with these creatures, however if you suffer from anaphylaxis, please consult the office prior to booking.

### Walking Conditions

While walking is not a significant part of this trip it does help us reach some of the swim sites. Any walks we undertake are on either waymarked paths or mixed ground, which can sometimes be challenging and tricky underfoot.

### Temperatures

MONTH	WATER TEMPERATURE*	AIR TEMPERATURE*
August	14-16°C / 57-61°F	22-23°C / 72-73°F

\* Please note that these temperatures are indicative and should be used as a guide only.

### Weather Caveat

For safety reasons, we rely on decent weather conditions when carrying out our swims. As a consequence, open water swimming holidays require a certain degree of on-trip flexibility which can result in changes to the planned itinerary. These changes often add a touch of uniqueness to your trip and



will be communicated to you by your SwimTrek guides as quickly as possible.

## GETTING THERE

Our base is the Loch Melfort Hotel located in Arduaine, in Argyll. While we have outlined various travel options below, they are subject to change and should be used as a guide only.

As SwimTrekks come from all over the world, and join our swimming holidays in numerous destinations, we don't currently offer flights as part of our SwimTrek packages. We do however want to do as much as we can to ensure that our guests get the best deals when travelling to one of our trips so check out [SwimTrek's tips to help you get the best deals for your flights](#) page on the website.

### Driving to Arduaine

The easiest way to reach Arduaine is to drive. If you're arriving from outside Scotland you can fly to Glasgow International Airport (GLA). Once in Glasgow you can rent a car. The drive from here is around two to three hours. Alternatively, Arduaine is around twenty miles south of Oban, which can be reached by public transport (see below).

If driving from Glasgow or Oban the postcode needed to get to the Loch Melfort Hotel is PA34 4XG.

### Getting to Arduaine via Public Transport

Oban has National Rail and bus links. For further details on public transport prices and timetables please see the below information:

Information on trains from the rest of the UK to Oban can be found at [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk).

Information on buses from Scotland or the rest of the UK to Oban can be found at [www.citylink.co.uk](http://www.citylink.co.uk).

Information on local buses from Oban to Arduaine can be found at [www.westcoastmotors.co.uk](http://www.westcoastmotors.co.uk). Please note that the 23/423 bus route from Oban to Arduaine may not operate on weekends.

---

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Accommodation

Loch Melfort is a unique country house hotel set in 17 acres of gardens in the most amazing setting of the Argyll coast. The hotel has stunning views to the Sound of Jura and the Inner Hebrides beyond. Indoor and outdoor restaurant dining. During the stay there is a Garden Bistro.

Our accommodation is based in either the 20 Sea View Lodges or in the 10 main house bedrooms. Each is an ensuite bedroom offered on double or twin-share basis. There are a limited number of single occupancy spaces which can be reserved during the booking process, subject to availability.

### Pre/Post Trip Accommodation and Trip Extension Options

If you require additional nights' accommodation before or after the SwimTrek tour, this can be arranged directly through the Loch Melfort Hotel via email at [reception@lochmelfort.co.uk](mailto:reception@lochmelfort.co.uk)



## Food and Drink

Three breakfasts and two lunches are included, as well as dinner at the Loch Melfort Hotel on the first night. Other meals are at your own expense. This gives you the opportunity to either dine at the Loch Melfort Hotel again or to explore and experience a local restaurant of your choice.

## Extra Activities

Croabh Haven Watersports have a fantastic cafe on site, plus a picnic area by the water's edge which is ideal for any spectators or family. They even run fishing trips in the evenings during the summer as well as kayaks and paddleboards to hire ([www.watersportscotland.co.uk](http://www.watersportscotland.co.uk)).

Argyll has plenty of walking trails through forests, coastal and heritage walks. There is also pony-trekking, from local stables, museums and a scattering of castles.

## Money, Extra Expenses and Tipping

You should bring extra money with you to cover items such as entertainment, dinners, snacks, and souvenirs. The local currency in the UK is British Pound Sterling (£).

In some countries tipping, gratuities, is not part of the culture in others it has become an expected norm. We believe that tipping is entirely at your discretion. If you have been provided with excellent it may be something you wish to do. Your SwimTrek guides can advise on local norms for service providers like boat crew, waiters or taxis. Nothing is expected for your SwimTrek guides, but many groups like to present something to the guides at the end of the trip.

## Passports and Visas

Non-residents of the UK require a full passport to enter the country, which should be valid for six months beyond the expected length of stay. Citizens of all EU member states, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand do not currently require a visa to enter the UK. Please note that visa regulations are subject to change and we advise that you check your own visa requirements prior to travel.

## Travel Insurance

We consider comprehensive travel insurance to be essential, and we strongly recommend that you purchase insurance which includes, but is not limited to, cover for illness, accident, emergency repatriation, ambulance, air ambulance, helicopter rescue services, cancellation, lost luggage and delays. Your travel insurance should also cover you for open water swimming and any other activity listed in your trip itinerary (including races and competitions, where applicable). Please read your policy details carefully and remember to take them with you on your trip for your own reference. For further information about travel insurance, please visit: [www.swimtrek.com/travel-insurance](http://www.swimtrek.com/travel-insurance).

## Health Information and Recommended Vaccinations

Lyme Disease is a bacterial infection that is passed to humans via infected ticks. Ticks are present on many of the deer on the islands. They can be picked up when walking anywhere on the islands. Your guides will brief you about checks that you should carry out during and after the trip.

For comprehensive health information for people travelling to the UK, including all recommended and



required vaccinations, please visit [www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries](http://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries). Please note that this information is subject to change and you should re-check this site regularly prior to your trip.

### **Internet Access, Electricity and Travel Plugs**

Due to our remote location, mobile signal at the Loch Melfort Hotel can be limited, however a satellite dish has been installed allowing much faster data transfer and phone signal within the whole hotel. The hotel offers free Wi-Fi in all bedrooms and public rooms.

For a useful source of information on the different electrical outlets, electrical plugs, and electric sockets, please visit [worldstandards.eu](http://worldstandards.eu).