



active europe for you

GRADE:
① ② ③ ④ ⑤

walk & write scottish highlands with stephanie dale

Founded in 1973, Sherpa Expeditions is specialised in self-guided and escorted holidays throughout Europe and across the globe. We offer a wide range of self-guided inn-to-inn walking and cycling tours, escorted walks, as well as Walker's Britain, a pioneering collection of over 20 British walking tours which include the Coast-to-Coast Trail and Hadrian's Wall. We have refined self-guided holidays to an art. Over many years, our leaders, local representatives and clients have all contributed to the detailed trail notes provided to walkers, making them the definitive guide to the areas we visit, which includes 16 iconic European walking destinations across France, Spain, Italy, Cyprus and much more. Sherpa Expeditions has now joined forces with UTracks <<http://www.utracks.com>> and the World Expeditions Travel Group <<http://www.worldexpeditions.com>> to bring you the most exciting and extensive range of active European holidays available, all at great value. This means you have access to over 300 active itineraries covering more than 25 European countries, from Iceland to Greece, and from Ireland to Cyprus. UTracks offers affordable, self-guided and small group-guided active holidays across Europe. Choose from a wide variety of quintessential European outdoor experiences from trekking the French Alps, cycling through Tuscany, exploring the islands of Greece, Croatia or Turkey by bike and ship, making a pilgrimage along the Compostela Trail, or discovering the lesser known trails in Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovenia. UTracks offers many family-friendly itineraries and can also tailor make tours for private groups. Cycling or walking, 2-star or 4-star, small groups or self-guided, land or sea, introductory level or more challenging - Sherpa Expeditions and UTracks can help you explore Europe exactly the way you want.

TRIP NAME:	WALK & WRITE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS WITH STEPHANIE DALE
TRIP CODE:	WSW
TRIP DURATION:	10 DAYS
GRADE TEXT:	MODERATE - 3
ACTIVITY:	SELF-GUIDED WALKING, WRITING
ACCOMMODATION:	9 NIGHTS HOTEL/GUESTHOUSE
DATE DETAILS:	→ 2018 18 JUN - 27 JUN



highlights

- Walk to the foot of Ben Nevis
- Follow the shores of Loch Lomond, Britain's largest lake
- Visit Rannoch Moor and Scotland's oldest licensed inn
- Wander through iconic Glencoe and Glen Nevis
- Exclusive writing workshops
- Real time record of your Scottish Highlands walk
- Trip escorted by journalist, author, travelling writer, Stephanie Dale

the trip

On this exclusive Walk & Write adventure with journalist, author and travelling writer Stephanie Dale, you'll follow the iconic 96-mile West Highland Way through the south western Scottish Highlands - one of the most popular long distance trails in the British Isles. Starting at the village of Milngavie, just outside Glasgow, the walk includes Loch Lomond, valley trails through the mountains round Crianlarich and open heather moorland across the Rannoch Moor wilderness area. It passes close to somber Glencoe, famed for its massacre of the MacDonald Clan, and finishes at Fort William, near the foot of Ben Nevis (Britain's highest peak, which can be readily ascended by experienced clients if they choose to spend an extra day). The West Highland Way is a well established and popular route, containing landscapes of vast beauty and outstanding heritage value. The altitude range is from sea level to 1850 ft (4408 ft if Ben Nevis is climbed).

ON THIS WALK & WRITE ADVENTURE, YOU WILL:

- * clarify your writing purpose, learn to use writing as a tool for everyday wellbeing & tune into the rhythms of the world around you as you explore your writing voice





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- * engage in gentle purpose as you walk the beautiful Highlands of Scotland
- * receive writing support, guidance and encouragement throughout the journey.

Stephanie Dale specialises in helping new writers get started on their writing. Whether you want to blog your journey, share fabulous social media updates, take notes for a novel, unlock your inner writer or break through writers' block this journey will meet your writing needs in productive time out from everyday life.

Walk & Write will encourage you to sit quietly, patiently, like the hunters of old, tuning your senses to the rhythms of life around you. You will find your creative rhythm. You will discover new ways to incorporate writing into your everyday life. You will be offered support, guidance and encouragement to write your story, your way.

TAKEAWAYS will include:

- * real time record of your Scottish Highlands walk
- * concrete writing direction
- * increased writing confidence
- * solid notes for future writing
- * a group of interested writing buddies
- * enthusiasm to do it again!

your leader

Stephanie Dale is an award winning author and journalist with a passion for pilgrimage, who has found true purpose in sharing her writing skills with others.

In 2014, Stephanie founded The Write Road, a creative wellbeing initiative that makes writing and communications training and support available to isolated Australians.

After three years in rural and remote areas in and around the Outback, she expanded The Write Road's mission to include her love of walking long distances, launching Walk & Write in 2017.

Stephanie has lived in Scotland and has great affinity with the landscape, culture and history.

She has walked The Camino, the ancient pilgrimage across Spain, from St Jean Pied du Port to Santiago de Compostela and, in 2007, joined her son on the middle leg of his pilgrimage from Canterbury to Jerusalem (7000kms, 16 countries, 9 months). Stephanie walked with him for 1500kms across Italy and through the Balkans, before the snow bound, thunder struck mountains of Macedonia put an end to her overland journey.

Stephanie is the author of several books, including the acclaimed travel memoir, *My Pilgrim's Heart* (which featured in the Huffington Post: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joan_gelfand/walk_it_out_b_4153412.html)

" My Pilgrim's Heart by Stephanie Dale...tests the author's resourcefulness and is a journey of often painful self discovery, as all good travel writing should be. It (demonstrates) the kind of humour and pluck for which Australians like to think we are famous."

Susan Kurosawa, The Australian, Travel

"A born storyteller with a gift for adventure."

Susan Maushart, author & broadcaster

"Like other great travelogues, the story drew me in right from the start. The path, the imagery and insights made me long for the joys and obstacles of hitting the road with an open mind, and seeing what the world has to teach us."

Vlad P, Amazon reviewer, New York City





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itinerary at a glance

Day 1	Milngavie
Day 2	Walk from Milngavie to Drymen 12 miles/19.5 km
Day 3	Drymen – Rowardennan 14 miles/22 km
Day 4	Rowardennan – Inverarnan 14 miles/22 km
Day 5	Inverarnan to Tyndrum 12 miles/19 km
Day 6	Tyndrum to Inveroran 9.5 miles/15 km
Day 7	Inveroran to Glencoe 10.5 miles/17 km
Day 8	Glencoe to Kinlochleven 11 miles/18 km
Day 9	Kinlochleven to Fort William 15 miles/24 km
Day 10	End of tour

detailed itinerary

Note: Please be aware of English and Scottish Bank Holidays as these weekends are very busy and need to be requested well in advance. 2018: 30 March - Easter Friday, 2 April - Easter Monday, 7 May, 28 May, 6 & 27 August - Bank Holidays.

You will need to also avoid the following dates due to large events in the area of Fort William:

07 - 12 May - Six days Bike Trials

04 - 05 June - Mountain Bike World Cup

Important note Kings House (day 7) due to a refurbishment the hotel is only offering bunkhouse accommodation consisting of 4 rooms sleeping 2 people, 4 rooms sleeping 4 people and 1 room sleeping 6 people.

DAY 1	Milngavie
	<p>Travel to the start point of the walk in Milngavie. It's a short train journey from Glasgow approx 20 mins.</p> <p>Overnight Milngavie/twin share rooms.</p> <p>WALK & WRITE</p> <p>When the whole group has arrived we will spend our first evening together (or morning of Day 2) clarifying our individual writing purposes and setting our walking and writing intentions for the journey ahead. No idea about your writing purpose? No worries! Through a short series of specially-crafted exercises, we'll find it.</p> <p>meals: NIL</p>



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DAY 2

Walk from Milngavie to Drymen 12 miles/19.5 km

The official start of the walk is at the obelisk in Milngavie. You follow some good paths through beautiful scenery. Glengoyne Distillery is worth a visit.

Accommodation: We stay overnight in a guesthouse, where the host will make you more than welcome and has become a favorite with our customers. Group may be split across 2 accommodations on this night (depending on final numbers)

WALK & WRITE (DAY 2 - 9)

Over the next 8 days Stephanie will conduct 2-3 formal writing workshops as a group that focus on specific writing projects of participants. We will also gather together in common purpose to write along the way in small villages, hilltops and forest glades. There will be ongoing individual support and guidance available from your facilitator, as we wander along the West Highland Way, as well as regular conversations that share our daily walking and writing challenges and triumphs.

meals: **B**

DAY 3

Drymen – Rowardennan 14 miles/22 km

Today you will experience the gentle scenery on the bonny banks of Loch Lomond. Passing highland cattle in the fields, the route winds up through forest and across the moors to Conic Hill, where from the summit you'll be treated to great views over the loch and islands. This marks the boundary of the Highland fault and the official beginning of the Highlands proper. The way drops down to Balmaha by the water, and then winds its way towards Rowardennan along the Loch shore with tree-framed views. Rowardennan marks the road head, and a convenient place to stay at our pleasant hotel. An extra day here would be advised if you wanted to make an ascent of Ben Lomond.

Accommodation: We stay overnight at Rowardennan Hotel with bar (triple/twin share rooms). The Inn is practically on the shore of Loch Lomond and beautiful scenery surrounds it including the mass of Ben Lomond. The restaurant provides carefully selected dishes ensuring that you receive a true taste of Scotland.

meals: **B**

DAY 4

Rowardennan – Inverarnan 14 miles/22 km

Today you walk in the shadow of Ben Lomond for much of the time, following the Loch edge path. There are no big ascents to make, but a few short steep ups and downs. You can pass by Rob Roy's prison and cave, where he is said to have held up in times of difficulty and held prisoners at his pleasure. You could perhaps have a drink at the hotel at Inversnaid before walking on to Ardleish, where you can raise a buoy on a pole to attract the attention of the ferryman who will collect you and transfer you to our hotel on the western side of the Loch (approx £4 per person, not included). Or if you fancy the longer option, or the weather is too rough, you need to continue to Beinglas farm or the Inverarnan Drover's inn to call for a taxi to transfer you to the hotel (not included).

Accommodation: Tonight we stay in the historic Drover's Inn/twin share rooms.

meals: **B**

DAY 5

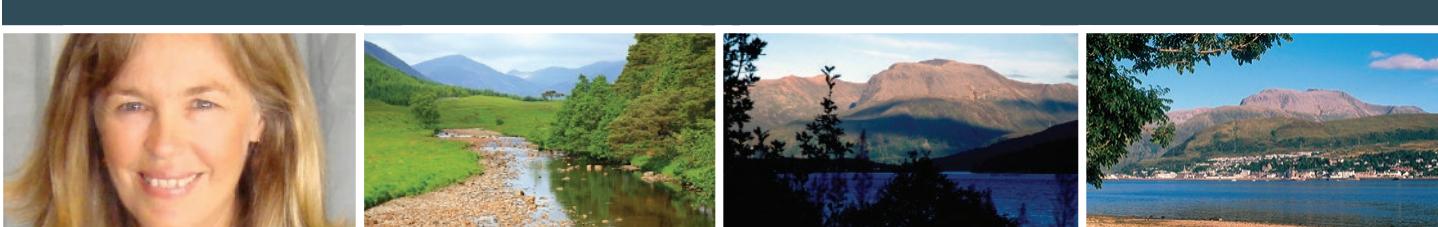
Inverarnan to Tyndrum 12 miles/19 km

A transfer (included) will take you to Crianlarich. Crianlarich lies under another big peak; Ben Mor. The largely valley route goes via the ancient priory of St. Fillan associated with both Robert The Bruce and Rob Roy, through the moraines of Dalrigh, where the Bruce was defeated in 1306, then via the old mining settlement of Tyndrum where a seam of gold has been recently found. There is the famous 'Green Wellie' shop here for all things Scottish and kitsch.

Accommodation: Tonight we will use a number of guesthouses in this small but bustling village.

meals: **B**





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DAY 6	Tyndrum to Inveroran 9.5 miles/15 km
	<p>A fairly short but picturesque day. The route continues up past the domed hulks of Ben Odhar, Ben Lui and Ben Dorain to the Bridge of Orchy passing the farm of Auch, often with cotton grass streaming in the wind. Time for a quick dram before continuing on to Loch Tulla (Inveroran), a beautifully situated lake surrounded by Scots pines a remnant of the ancient Caledonian forest which covered much of Scotland. In good weather you can walk steeply over Mam Carraigh for beautiful views, otherwise take the quiet loch side road. You will be opposite the Black Mount estate of the Flemming family, famous for Ian and Peter. Infact the James Bond story 'Skyfall' is probably based on this humble pile. Plenty of deer and bird life normally evident. There is limited accommodation here hence the reason for staying in either village.</p> <p>Accommodation: Stay at the Inveroran Hotel which is 16.5 miles from Crainlarich, set in beautiful surroundings.</p> <p>meals: B</p>
DAY 7	Inveroran to Glencoe 10.5 miles/17 km
	<p>Continue to Loch Tulla if necessary. We then walk along the old military road across the wilds and the heather clad wastes of Rannoch Moor, past Ba Bridge. The scenery becomes ever more expansive with views into great corries once filled with glaciers. It is not uncommon to see deer and there is great interplay between land, lake, mountain and sky. The military road winds down to the old Drovers Inn near the Gateway to Glencoe. This is in the shadow of perhaps the most impressive looking mountain of the tour- Buachaille Etive Mor, the shepherd of Etive Mor.</p> <p>Accommodation: Glencoe Mountain Resort. Microlodges (basic), with shared facilities.</p> <p>Sleeping bag and liner hire - 5 GBP per person</p> <p>meals: NIL</p>
DAY 8	Glencoe to Kinlochleven 11 miles/18 km
	<p>From the Inn the way passes beside Buchaille Etive Mor and then proceeds up the Devil's Staircase to 1850 ft: not as bad as it seems, as it's a well-graded section of the Way. You can try to imagine the army bringing large artillery up here. Spectacular views back from whence you came. Then it is a long descent to sea level at the head of Loch Leven with views of the Blackwater dam, Loch Leven and The Pap of Glencoe. Kinlochleven was a place for hydroelectric power smelting bauxite for aluminium. There is a new climbing centre in one of the old smelters, offering ice climbing. More sedentary activity can be found by walking to the Grey Mares Tail waterfall on the edge of town.</p> <p>Accommodation: In Kinlochleven we stay in a couple of guesthouses, which have become popular with our clients and a warm welcome awaits.</p> <p>meals: B</p>





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DAY 9

Kinlochleven to Fort William 15 miles/24 km

A steep climb beneath the steep slopes of the Mamore hills at the beginning of the day follows old Victorian hunting tracks, and then you are back on the old military road and over the Lairigmor Pass, through dense coniferous forest to Glen Nevis, past the foot of Ben Nevis, Britain's highest peak (4408ft). The West Highland Way continues into Fort William on the side of Loch Linnhe, where it ends right in the centre and close to handy pubs for a deserved celebration. Fort William is a Mecca for climbers, mountain bikers and train enthusiasts. The town was built as a garrison against the Jacobite threat (made famous in the Outlander series). A few remains of the fort are to be seen by the loch side.

Accommodation: We use many different bed & breakfast and guesthouses in Fort William as it is a busy town.

WALK & WRITE

Final group workshop: Where to from here?

We will refine your writing goals, create a mud map for your ongoing journey and develop a plan to keep going! You will be given the opportunity to continue to engage with your writing buddies in an ongoing writing support group.

meals: B

meals: B

DAY 10

End of tour

The tour ends after breakfast but why not stay an extra night to climb Ben Nevis and take the evening sleeper out of Fort William?

meals: B

additional supplements

At the time of booking we aim to offer our usual choice of accommodation, however if these are not available then alternatives are used (and on occasion a small supplement may apply). If these are of a different standard and / or a supplement applies you will be informed on confirmation of your booking.

inclusions

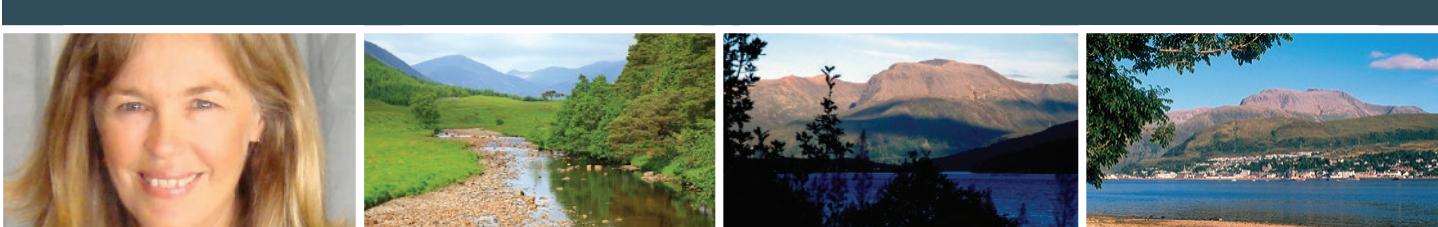
- 7 breakfasts (it is not possible to pre-book breakfast on Day 7. There is a café is on site where breakfast can be bought)
- 8 nights B&B and 1 night room only accommodation on a twin share basis with ensuite facilities where available. Important note (day 7) we stay at the Glencoe Mountain Resort which has shared facilities, toilet block and shower block. In Edencraig (Day 8) you will stay in triple or quad share rooms (depending on final make up of the group)
- One piece of luggage per person transferred from Inn to Inn, not exceeding 20kg
- Information pack including route notes & maps
- Emergency hotline
- Taxi Ardlui to Crainlarich
- Trip escorted by journalist, author, travelling writer, Stephanie Dale

items not included

- Lunch, Dinner and drinks.
- Breakfast on Day 7
- Entrance fees
- Travel insurance
- Travel to the start and from the end point of the trip
- Personal expenses such as laundry and phone calls
- Unscheduled transfers required during the trip



**Sherpa
expeditions**



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trip grading - moderate

The walk is graded as moderate. The terrain is hilly with some steep slopes, boggy areas and narrow trails in places with tree roots. There are also gravel type roads and there is some tarmac walking.

way marking

Reasonably well waymarked with the white thistle logo of the Scottish long distance trails, on signs and small wooden posts. Nevertheless ability with a map and compass is important in poor weather.

route notes

Please note that one set of route notes per room booked is included in the cost of the holiday. If you require more sets of notes then there is an extra charge. For bookings received four weeks or less prior to the tour departure, courier fees may be applicable to ensure you receive your final documentation in time. As rates are variable, please contact your consultant for details. Sherpa Expeditions will try to avoid courier charges where possible.

extending your trip

Extra nights are available anywhere along the trail. Please contact us.

what you carry

As the walks are fully supported you only need to carry a daypack with your daily requirements including raincoat, lunch supplies, waterbottle, warm top, camera map and compass etc.

meal inclusions

Breakfast in the UK will generally consist of sausage, bacon, eggs etc, cereals, toast and fruit will also be available. It is important for you to tell us if you have any dietary requirements when you book your holiday so that we can inform everyone that you are staying with.

dietary requirements

Provided we are advised in advance we are able to cater for vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance to determine whether we can cater on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

accommodation

DURING TOUR

Described is the normal accommodation that we use on this tour. Baths/showers: Many rooms with ensuite/private facilities have a shower rather than a bath, usually because of limited space. Some hotels/guesthouses may however have a separate room in the house where a bath is available to guests. In some places you will not have ensuite are not available and facilities will be shared. In some places (depending on final group numbers and make up of the group), the group will be split across 2-3 accommodations. In some places (again, depending on final group make up and numbers), group members will be in triple share or on the rare occasion, quad share).

Please be aware that all the accommodations along the West Highland Way are small, family run properties and often no two rooms are the same. Each property has their own character and staying in these places is part of the charm of walking this route.





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check in/out

It is generally normal practice when staying in hotels that you check-in on or after 2pm and checkout by 10am the following morning. Guesthouses/bed & breakfast establishments are normally check-in on or after 4pm and checkout by 10am.

luggage

We do not offer porter service on our holidays. You must be able to move your own luggage to and from your rooms. This more than likely involve stairs as many of the properties we stay in do not have lifts. Sometimes your luggage will have been taken to your room awaiting your arrival however do not be surprised if it is waiting for you to take up to your room and you are asked to bring it down again the next morning.

getting there

BY TRAIN

Outward journey from London to start point: Train from London Euston to Glasgow Central (5 1/2 hours). Train to Milngavie approx 20 mins. Inward journey to Glasgow at end of tour: Short walk to Fort William station. Train to Glasgow approx 3 hours 40 mins, then travel to airports from Glasgow. You can also take a City Link bus from Fort William to Glasgow Buchanan Street station in 3 hours. 4 departures a day. See: www.Citylink.co.uk Inward journey to London at end of tour: Short walk/ taxi ride to Fort William station. Train to London, via Glasgow. There is also an overnight sleeper service from Fort William to London via Glasgow.

BY AIR

Most convenient major city and international airport: Glasgow. Glasgow International Airport is only 30 mins from the centre of town by public bus (quicker by taxi) (Prestwick Airport is about 45 mins from Glasgow Central by train). Train through to Milngavie approx 20 mins.

insurance

All clients must have appropriate cover for the activities included for the duration of our trip.

fast facts

COUNTRIES VISITED	Scotland
MIN GROUP SIZE	6
MAX GROUP SIZE	12

how to book

To book this trip go to our website to make a booking online or download our booking form. A booking form can also be found at the back of our Active Europe brochure. If you complete a paper booking form, email, fax or post the form to our office – contact details can be found on our website.

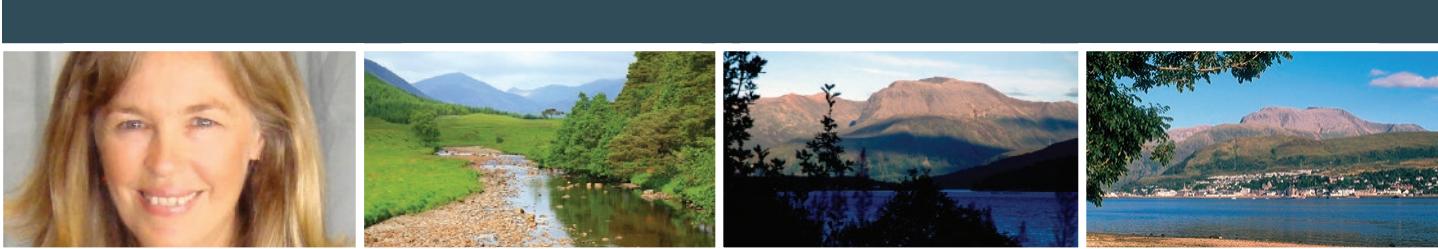
e-newsletter

To keep up to date with our new and exciting adventure opportunities, special promotions and adventure news, subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter! You can do this on line through our website, www.sherpa-walking-holidays.co.uk or contact our office.

social networks

You can make sure you're up to date with all our latest information by liking, following or pinning us on the following social networks:





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IMPORTANT NOTE

THESE TRIP NOTES REPRESENT THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE FOR THIS ITINERARY, AND SUPERSEDE ANY INFORMATION DETAILED IN THE CURRENT BROCHURE, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE ITINERARY AND PRICE.

