



Down to Earth

"Earth science learning for all"

Mull & Ardnamurchan June 4-11 2022



Basalt columns, Fingal's Cave, Isle of Staffa

A word from your leaders...

By the time we visit Mull and Ardnamurchan again it will have been 5 years since our last visit in 2017. In that time there have been quite a few changes to the infrastructure with suitable hotel on Ardnamurchan not being available. To make things simpler, we are basing the whole trip at the Park Lodge Hotel in Tobermory and using the ferry to reach Ardnamurchan. What has not changed is the amazing geology and scenery that we will encounter during this week of contrasts. There really is something for everybody, whatever your geological interest.

I will lead this trip jointly with my friend and colleague, Colin Schofield who will inject his own enthusiasm and also drive our minibus. We both love these places and you'll get the very best out of us, we promise! We'll be based at just two different hotels, one at Strontian on Ardnamurchan and the other at Tobermory on Mull. Both will offer us good quality en-suite rooms and home cooked food. This trip begins in Strontian and ends in Oban, both of which are accessible by public transport.

Geologically, we travel back to the Precambrian for our oldest rocks, which we will encounter on Iona. There are also Dalradian metamorphics in SW Mull and on Ardnamurchan. For those interested in sedimentary rocks we have Triassic and Jurassic rocks, the latter with lots of ammonites and other shells. As for the Tertiary, it is dominated by both igneous extrusive and intrusive rocks, including extensive gabbros, basalts and a fair smattering of rare rock types. These rock types, combined with the action of glaciers, give us today's amazing scenery.

We expect that there will be considerable interest in this trip, so to secure your place, we advise early booking.

Kind regards

Chris Darmon BSc
Course Organiser/Leader

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Getting to the area

Regular ferries depart Oban for the Isle of Mull with a journey time of some 45 minutes. A service bus meets the ferry at Craignure to take you to the village of Tobermory. From the upper part of Tobermory the hotel is a short walk away. If you are bringing your car, Tobermory is some 21 miles from Craignure via a decent island road.

Getting around on the trip

For this trip we will make use of a hired 17-seater minibus driven by Colin Schofield. If numbers exceed 15, we will need an additional car, in which case we would pay all the car costs and fuel, around the tour route. If you are willing to help us in this way, please indicate on the booking form.

Why Mull & Ardnamurchan?

What is commonly known as the Tertiary Igneous Province of Scotland is exposed from Skye in the north down to Northern Ireland, ending with the island of Lundy in the Bristol Channel. It was formed around 60 million years ago as the Atlantic Ocean was in a very active phase of its formation.

Volcanism occurred at a number of distinct centres. Ardnamurchan and Mull were two such centres. Whilst the Mull centre is difficult to access, Ardnamurchan is really open, with a road through the very centre of what is known locally as 'crater view' though it is actually several km below the summit of an eroded volcano! The scenery is as beautiful as it is dramatic with superb circular gabbroic cone sheets that dip in towards the centre. We will also see the rocks into which these Tertiary igneous rocks were intruded, including sediments of Jurassic and Triassic age and the basement Dalradian metamorphics.

Taking the ferry to Tobermory on Mull will allow us to take in the Ross of Mull granite and the ancient Precambrian rocks of Iona, including the famous marble. We'll also take in more Jurassic sediments around Craignure and, weather permitting, may be able to visit Staffa with its fabulous basalt columns that were inspiration for the Hebridean Overture. The scenery of Mull is very different to that of Ardnamurchan with extensive areas of basaltic lavas giving rise to the classic steppe topography.

Accommodation & Food



This trip is based entirely in Tobermory, at the modern and well appointed Park Lodge Hotel which is situated in the quiet upper part of the town. It offers good quality en-suite accommodation with evening meals in the on site restaurant. Packed lunches will be made available for each field day.

There is limited availability of single rooms. If you are willing to share a twin room with another person of the same sex, do let us know.

Itinerary

The following is not intended to be prescriptive, but to give you an idea of what we hope to cover during this trip:-

- The Ardnamurchan igneous centre - a range of different igneous rock types
- Intrusions, extrusions and sediments, the geology of the Kilchoan shoreline
- Geology of the Isle of Iona and south-western Mull
- The minerals of Strontian and the Dalradian metamorphics
- Tertiary igneous rocks of northern Mull
- Weather permitting, a cruise to Staffa
- Jurassic sediments and intrusions at Craignure, Isle of Mull

Cost

For 2 people sharing a double or twin room, the cost of the 7-night tour will be £1395.00 per person and for single rooms £1695.00

What's included in the cost?

- The services of Chris Darmon and Colin Schofield who will be available to you at all reasonable times
- Accommodation and meals as specified here
- The cost of all ferries and transport used during the trip (apart from Oban, Craignure and return)
- The cost of the visit to Staffa which will happen, weather permitting
- Admission to any museums or attractions as visited by the group

What's excluded from the cost?

- The cost of travel between your home and Tobermory
- Travel insurance



- Incidental expenditure
- Lunch on the final day

Insurance

Everyone booking a place and paying a deposit is strongly advised to take out holiday insurance. This will cover you against loss of money in the event of cancellation etc. Cover is often included in with your credit card or bank account.

Your money...

Upon receipt, all monies paid for these trips are placed in a specific 'client trust account' where it cannot be drawn by us until after completion of the tour. This is in accordance with EU Directives and ensures that your money is safe in the unlikely event of corporate failure by Geo Supplies.

Booking

Please fill in and return a completed booking form.. Your booking will be confirmed upon receipt of either a deposit of £300.00 per person or the full payment. The balance of the brochure price will be due by February 28th. 2022.



This trip will run provided a minimum of 12 people have booked by October 31st. 2021.

What happens next?

As soon as we are in a position of confirming that the trip will run - pretty soon judging by the number of people who have shown an interest already - we will let you know. You will then be free to start making your own travel plans and to take advantage of any advance fares on the train. Please don't make any such arrangements until we have been in touch with you.

Please also see information contained in our 'Residential Field Trips 2021/2'

