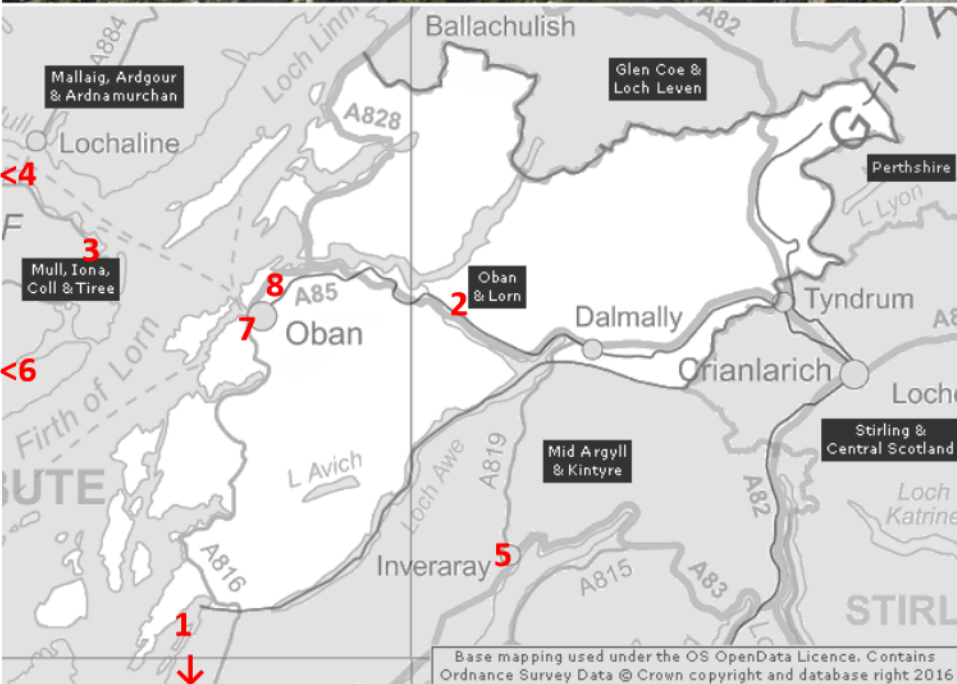


Oban

“Gateway to the Isles”



Your first view of Oban is one you are unlikely to forget. From the north, you glimpse this bustling port from the top of the 'Bealach-an-Righ'. As you sweep down the hill towards the expanse of the bay, the view opens up before you and one begins to appreciate why Oban has developed into Scotland's most popular west-coast holiday town. Beyond Oban ("little bay" in Gaelic) lie the islands of the Inner Hebrides



1. Arduaine Gardens
2. Cruachan Power station
3. Duart Castle (Mull)
4. Fingals Cave (Staffa)
5. Inverary Castle
6. Iona Abbey
7. Oban Distillery
8. Ocean Explorer Centre

Oban is the perfect base from which to explore the Western Isles, with regular ferry services to Barra, Coll, Colonsay, Islay, Lismore, Mull and Tiree. Onward connections from Barra to the northern Outer Hebrides provide the basis for a very unique self drive vacation of the islands, returning through either Ullapool or Mallaig (Fort William).

Arduaine Garden started in 1898 20 miles south of Oban overlooking the Sound of Jura, this exotic garden nurtures plants from across the globe - East Asia to South America - creating a palette of colors year round.



Duart Castle the castle proudly guards the sea cliffs of the Isle of Mull, while enjoying one of the most spectacular and unique positions on the West Coast of Scotland. Brought back from ruin in 1911, the Castle treasures 800 years of history of one of Scotland's oldest Clans, The Maclean's, and is one of the last surviving privately owned Clan Castles in Scotland.



Inverary Castle the ancestral seat of the Dukes of Argyll, Chiefs of the Clan Campbell whose family have resided in Inveraray since the early 15th century. French tapestries which were woven especially for the Castle, fabulous examples of Scottish, English and French furniture and countless other precious artworks. The castle's priceless collection of china, silver and family heirlooms spans generations.



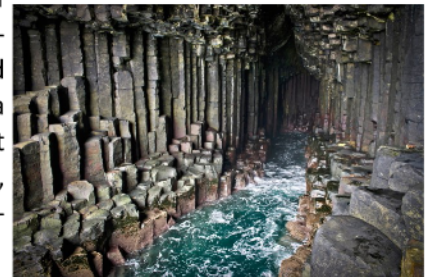
Oban Distillery is both one of the oldest distilleries in Scotland and one of the smallest. It was established in 1794, underwent a refurbishment in the 1890s and there has been little change to the present buildings since. The distillery's tours offer visitors the chance to witness the production first-hand before enjoying complimentary drams of the 14 year old Malt.



Cruachan Power Station here, a short distance from Oban, you can discover one of the hidden wonders of the Highlands. A power station buried one kilometer below the ground. At its center lies a massive cavern, high enough to house the Tower of London! Here enormous turbines convert the power of water into electricity, available to you in your home



Fingals Cave on Staffa perhaps the best known of all caves. Its structure is unique. Nowhere else is there a sea cave formed completely in hexagonally jointed basalt. Its appeal lies in the size, the sounds, the colour, and the remarkable symmetry of this cavern, and by Nature's gift of fractured columns which form a crude walkway just above high water level, allowing exploring visitors to go inside.



Iona Abbey is located on the Isle of Iona, just off the Isle of Mull on the West Coast of Scotland. It is one of the oldest Christian religious centers in Western Europe. The abbey was a focal point for the spread of Christianity throughout Scotland and marks the foundation of a monastic community by St. Columba,



Ocean Explorer Centre Turn into an oceanographer when you visit the Centre at Dunstaffnage to discover how the marine environment works. You can operate an underwater observatory to discover what lives in the Firth of Lorn and what it sounds like down there! Put on a lab coat to view algae under a research microscope. A cinema shows short films about the work marine scientists from Oban and elsewhere do.

