

FOR THE TRAVEL TRADE

GLORIOUS GARDENS OF ARGYLL



WILD ABOUT ARGYLL



Glorious Gardens of Argyll

Argyll & The Isles boasts enchanting gardens nestled within its stunning coastal landscapes. Explore historic estates, sheltered walled gardens, and lush woodland grounds throughout the region. Thanks to Argyll's mild climate, courtesy of the Gulf Stream, your clients will encounter a diverse array of native and exotic plants.

Spring is the ideal time to visit, with blankets of bluebells and vibrant displays of rhododendrons and azaleas. Many of these gardens are part of historic estates, offering a glimpse into the past alongside their breathtaking blooms. Wildlife enthusiasts will be delighted by the presence of red squirrels, butterflies, and various bird species in these gardens. Embrace the greenery this spring and discover the magic of Argyll's gardens.



#sustainable #slowtravel #nature #gardens #cartouring #FIT #SmallGroups

DAY ONE: ANCIENT GARDEN

Your clients might be coming from Fort William today or further north and this afternoon's visit will be at a garden with spectacular views.

History tells us there has been a garden at Ardchattan, Loch Etive, for over 700 years. The Valliscaulian monks were the first to settle here on the north shore of the loch. Facing south, there are spectacular views, east to Ben Cruachan and west to the hills of Mull. [Ardchattan Priory Gardens](#) has herbaceous borders, roses, a rockery, ornamental trees and a wildflower garden. A profusion of bulbs and early wildflowers marks the start of spring, while May and June see the flowering of azaleas, rhododendrons, and some early roses.

Overnight in the Oban area or on the Isle of Mull which is the destination for the next day.

DAY TWO: AN ISLAND ADVENTURE

For another island horticultural adventure, your clients will head to [Lip na Cloiche](#) on Mull. This beautiful garden sits on a hillside on the island's north coast overlooking Ulva, the Treshnish Islands and Ben More. From the seating area at the top of the hill, you can enjoy breathtaking views. There's also a small nursery where you can buy plants.



From here your clients can head around the northern part of the island with a stop at [Calgary Bay](#). Unique for its stunning white sandy beach, nestled amidst captivating natural beauty, offering a peaceful retreat, artistic inspiration, and wildlife encounters in a tranquil and historically significant setting.

After a lunch stop in Tobermory, your clients can head to Duart Castle for a visit. Perched dramatically on a rocky promontory on the Isle of Mull in Scotland, is a historic fortress that embodies the essence of Scottish heritage. With its imposing stone walls, tower, and breathtaking sea views, the castle exudes medieval charm. It has been the ancestral seat of the Maclean clan for over 700 years, and visitors can explore its well-preserved interiors, which are steeped in history, and enjoy the captivating tales of clan rivalries that echo within its walls.

Overnight on the Isle of Mull or ferry back to the Oban area.

DAY THREE: ANCIENT WOODLANDS

We are starting the day at [Arduaine Garden](#) near Kilmartin lies on the southern slope of a promontory that reaches out into the beautiful Loch Melfort. This oasis of green is simply stunning, with a dazzling array of plants. The rhododendrons and azaleas are particularly attractive in April and May. The location is glorious, looking out across the Sound of Jura to the Hebridean islands of Scarba, Luig and Jura. The [Loch Melfort Hotel](#) is just a short stroll away and is a lovely place to stop for refreshments after your tour of Arduaine Garden.

[Benmore Botanic Garden](#) is set in a magnificent mountainside location near Dunoon. Springtime visitors to Benmore will be met with a blaze of colour as one of the world's finest collections of rhododendrons puts on the most spectacular display. Benmore is a great place to explore on foot. Seven miles of trails throughout the garden lead to a dramatic viewpoint. In spring, the woodlands are full of bluebells and a great place to spot red squirrels and small birds.

From here your clients can take the ferry ([Western Ferries](#)) from Dunoon to Gourock which is just a short drive from Wemyss Bay to take the onward ferry over to the Isle of Bute for overnight. Alternatively, your client might choose to overnight in Glasgow and do the following day as a day trip.

DAY FOUR: SEA ADVENTURES

Your client's day on Bute might start with a visit to glorious [Mount Stuart](#), a spectacular stately house built in 1719 with glorious gardens and grounds, all set against the backdrop of the Firth of Clyde. The grounds are home to atmospheric woodlands and colourful vistas. Woodland glades and a shoreline wilderness contrast with the meticulously measured beauty of the formal lawns and gardens. In spring, the wooded areas are carpeted with daffodils and bluebells.

From Left to right.
Duart Castle
Loch Melfort Hotel, Benmore

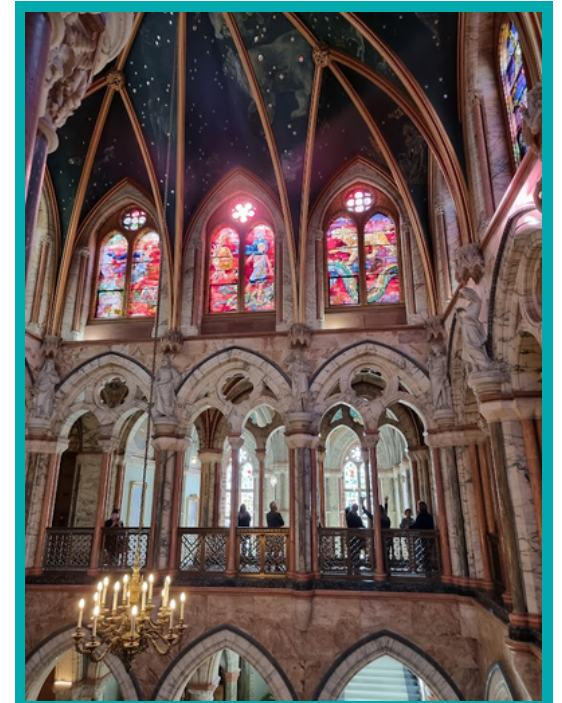
Don't miss your chance to see inside Mount Stuart too. The ancestral home of the Marquess of Bute, features magnificent Victorian Gothic architecture and design together with stunning craftsmanship.

After lunch at Mount Stuart, take a panoramic tour of the island, taking in the beautiful views of the Isle of Arran and the expansive sandy beaches.

Later visit [Ardencraig Garden](#). This large walled garden with glasshouses is used to cultivate flowering plants for Rothesay's numerous civic floral beds and baskets. It's full of colour, with displays of favourite bedding plants such as begonias, fuchsias and chrysanthemums.

For those staying overnight on the Isle of Bute we recommend a visit to [Bute Yard](#), a new, contemporary venue in the heart of Rothesay, Isle of Bute. Home to the Isle of Bute Smokehouse, Isle of Bute Distillery, Coffee and Chocolate and Bute Brew Co, Bute Yard runs a taproom from 12 noon daily. This unique, versatile space is ideal for relaxation, celebrations, events, groups and popup restaurants, featuring a great kitchen, indoor area and outdoor courtyard set among a beautiful garden surrounded by historic buildings.

Overnight tonight on Bute or in the Glasgow area before your clients continue on their tour of Scotland or return home.



WHAT TO SEE WHEN:

Spring:

Bulbs, trilliums, peonies, cherries, magnolias and especially rhododendrons

Summer:

A riot of candelabra primulas, irises, rodgersias and other damp-loving plants and grasses

Autumn:

Deciduous trees change into vibrant hues of red, orange, and yellow, chrysanthemums, asters, fruit orchards, mushrooms and fungi in wooded areas

Gardens open all year:

- Achamore
- Angus
- Ardkinglas
- Ardmaddy Castle
- Ardtornish
- Arduaine
- Crarae
- Kinlochliach
- Linn Botanic

Images:
Mount Stuart House

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wildaboutargyll.co.uk | traveltrade@wildaboutargyll.co.uk

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