

ORKNEY

all seasons

YOUR TRAVEL ITINERARY FOR WESTRAY | PAPA WESTRAY | NORTH RONALDSAY

No visit to Orkney is complete without experiencing life on one or more of our smaller islands, each with its distinctively authentic sense of place. Our Island Adventure itinerary gives you the opportunity to discover three islands – Westray, Papa Westray and North Ronaldsay in a three-day trip. You'll encounter famous archaeological discoveries, see some of our special wildlife, take the world's shortest scheduled flight and meet seaweed-eating sheep.

Three days in other worlds at a slower, gentler pace. Travel light but don't forget to bring your camera, comfortable footwear and clothing suited to our changeable weather.



Follow this inspiring travel itinerary to guide you on your three-day island adventure



Westray



Papa Westray



North Ronaldsay



ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Your journey begins on a Friday, in Kirkwall, where you'll board one of Orkney Ferries' fleet of inter-island ferries for the scenic journey to **Westray**, travelling a sea-route our Viking ancestors knew well. You can choose between a local hire car or bicycle to get around and spend the day sightseeing, before enjoying a relaxing evening in your choice of accommodation.

On the second day, Saturday, you'll make a record-breaking hop on the world's shortest scheduled flight to **Papa Westray**. Papay, as it is known affectionately, is small enough to explore easily on foot or locally-hired bicycle. You'll stay overnight in Papay after a day getting to know the island and its inhabitants – wild and human alike!

On Sunday, you'll fly to **North Ronaldsay**, Orkney's most northerly island. Here, you can hire a car or bicycle or just enjoy the small island on foot. Then, at the end of the day, you'll fly back to Kirkwall with three islands' worth of memories: a unique Orkney island adventure.

YOUR TRAVEL ITINERARY

DAY ONE Friday	0720 0845	Depart Orkney Ferries Kirkwall to Westray Arrive Westray Overnight Westray
DAY TWO Saturday	0851 0853	Depart Loganair Westray to Papa Westray Arrive Papa Westray Overnight Papa Westray
DAY THREE Sunday	1051 1059 1753 1827	Depart Loganair Papa Westray to North Ronaldsay Arrive North Ronaldsay Depart Loganair North Ronaldsay to Kirkwall Arrive Kirkwall

Based on Loganair Inter-Isles Feb-Oct 2018 Timetable

We strongly recommend booking your travel arrangements well in advance with **Orkney Ferries** and **Loganair**. Loganair's inter-island service uses a Britten Norman Islander aircraft with only eight seats, so capacity is limited and the flights are very popular.



Loganair's Islander Aircraft

DAY ONE | FRIDAY YOUR ITINERARY



The ferry leaves Kirkwall at 0720, an early start helping you make the most of your day. It arrives at Rapness in Westray at 0845.

Whether your interests are history, wildlife, crafts or just enjoying the friendliness of a welcoming community, there is lots to see and do in Westray. To help you plan your visit, here are 7 things you may not want to miss.

- 1 The **Castle of Burrian**, at Stanger Head, near the ferry terminal at Rapness, is the best place in Westray to see puffins between May and August when they come ashore to breed. Please be careful on the cliffs and don't try to climb the sea stack. It was an early Christian hermitage but is not safely accessible now.
- 2 The main settlement in Westray is the village of **Pierowall**. This charming shoreside village is pleasant to wander through in its own right, but it is also the location of the **Westray Heritage Centre**, an ideal starting point for exploring the island. Among the treasures there is the so-called **Westray Wife**, the oldest Neolithic carving of a human form to have been found in Scotland.
- 3 Also in Pierowall is the **Lady Kirk**, a picturesque ruin of a church built in 1674, on the foundations of its 13th century predecessor. While you are here – and in fact while you are anywhere on Westray's coast – look out for inquisitive seals watching you.
- 4 Not far from Pierowall is **Noltland Castle**, a Z-plan castle with a turbulent history dating back to the 16th century. Built by Gilbert Balfour, who was also constable of Kirkwall Castle, Noltland provided defence as well as comfort. The castle is in the care of Historic Environment Scotland and access is free.
- 5 Close by the castle are the **Links of Noltland** and Grobust beach. Amongst the dunes here, archaeologists discovered an extensive Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement to rival Skara Brae. This is where the Westray Wife was discovered, and each new season's excavations reveal more about this important prehistoric village.
- 6 A little further along the coast is **Quoygrew**, an evocative archaeological site probably occupied from about 900 until the 1930s.
- 7 The cliffs of the **Noup Head RSPB Reserve** are a spectacular seabird city, with a population of thousands of birds in the summer breeding season. Species include gannets, guillemots, kittiwakes and puffins among others.

If you'd just like to relax and let a knowledgeable local guide show you their favourite places, you can book a tour with **Westraak**.

TRAVEL TIPS

It is also advisable to book accommodation in advance. Visit orkney.com to see the range of comfortable places to rest your head after a day discovering Westray.



Noup Head



TRAVEL TIPS

Westray is too big to explore on foot in a day, so you should pre-arrange car or bicycle hire from **Rendall's Shop** in Pierowall Village contact 01857 677389 sjgroat@talk21.com.



Noltland Castle

WESTRAY

Westray is one of Orkney's largest islands, with a resident population of 600. It is a prosperous, industrious, friendly community, proud of its long history stretching all the way back to Stone Age times. The Vikings recognised the fertility of the island's farmlands and it became an important family estate featuring in the Orkneyinga Saga, detailing the history of the earls of Orkney.

A more recent, though hardly modern, monument to Westray's history is Noltland Castle. It was built in the 16th century by Gilbert Balfour, who was implicated in the murder of Mary Queen of Scots' consort, Lord Darnley. No wonder he felt the need to build such an impressive castle.



Primula Scotica

TRAVEL TIPS

You can explore on foot or hire a bicycle. Contact the Papay Ranger on 07931 235213 or email papayranger@gmail.com to book in advance.



Gannets




PAPA WESTRAY

Just four miles long and one mile wide, **Papay** may be small in size but it is big in heart; the welcome you'll receive from the vibrant community will be genuine and warm. It is a tradition of hospitality that stretches right back to the Stone Age, because Papay boasts the oldest house in Northern Europe at the **Knap of Howar**.

For bird lovers, Papay is a special experience. Its **North Hill** nature reserve, a maritime heathland carpeted with wildflowers beside low cliffs, is home to colonies of breeding seabirds, the noisiest of natural neighbours. Looking seaward, too, you may be fortunate to see passing seals, dolphins or even whales.

DAY TWO | SATURDAY YOUR ITINERARY

 Today, you will leave Westray on the record-breaking hop to Papa Westray, a distance shorter than the main runway at Heathrow and a flight time so short you can miss it in the time it takes to get your camera ready. **The Loganair flight is scheduled for departure at 0851 with arrival in Papay at 0853.**

Papay packs a lot of things to see and do into a small space. Here are 6 things you may not want to miss, in addition to the island's beautiful beaches.

- 1** The **Papay Kelp Store Craft and Heritage Centre** is the perfect place to get your bearings and learn about the island's history. The recently refurbished building dates from the 1700s and was used as part of the island's once thriving kelp-burning industry.
- 2** The traditional farm steading of **Holland Farm**, formerly home of the Traill lairds who once owned the whole of Papay, gives an insight into the farming heritage of the island community. You are welcome to look round this working farm; don't miss the fascinating bothy museum.
- 3** The two houses known as the **Knap of Howar** are older than Skara Brae and were home to Neolithic farmers. These are the oldest standing houses in Northern Europe, an archaeological treasure that is free to visit. Stand in the remains of the houses and be transported back to 3800 BC.
- 4** Situated on a small peninsula beside the healing waters of St. Tredwell's Loch, lie the ruins of **St Tredwell's Chapel**, an early Christian site and place of pilgrimage.
- 5** **St Boniface Kirk** is Papay's other important early Christian site, in use since at least the 7th century. The restored building dates back to the 12th century when it was in use by our Viking ancestors. A distinctive hogback tombstone of the same period lies in the kirkyard.
- 6** **North Hill nature reserve**, one of the largest areas of maritime heath in the UK and a haven for thousands of breeding birds, is managed jointly by the RSPB, Scottish Natural Heritage and the people of Papay. Please keep to the coastline and avoid disturbing the nesting tern colonies.

You'll stay overnight in Papay, enjoying the island's hospitality and reflecting on an experience-filled day.

TRAVEL TIPS

If you'd like to make the most of your time, or perhaps take a boat trip to the tiny island called the **Holm of Papay**, the **Papay Ranger** can be hired for tours. Contact the Ranger on 07931 235213 or email papayranger@gmail.com to book in advance.

TRAVEL TIPS

It is also advisable to book accommodation in advance. Visit orkney.com for information about the community owned hostel.



Knap of Howar

DAY THREE | SUNDAY YOUR ITINERARY



Your inter-island flight from Papa Westray to North Ronaldsay, operated by Loganair is scheduled to depart at 1051 today, arriving in North Ronaldsay at 1059.

Despite its small size there is plenty to see and do in North Ronaldsay. Here are 5 things you may not want to miss during your short visit.

- 1 A stone-built dyke surrounding the island keeps the **native sheep** on the shore for most of the year, where their diet of seaweed gives the meat a distinctive flavour. The rare-breed sheep are farmed communally and the fleeces are turned into attractive yarn, which is exported around the world.
- 2 North Ronaldsay has two lighthouses. **The Old Beacon** dates from the 1780s while its younger cousin was built in 1854.
- 3 A **visitor centre** at the new lighthouse houses a café, gift shop, exhibitions and wool mill. Tours of the lighthouse tower are available, well worth it for the spectacular view. At the **Wool Mill** you'll be able to see the local sheep fleeces being processed into natural high-quality yarn.
- 4 The **North Ronaldsay Bird Observatory** is a mecca for bird watchers. As well as the island's population of resident birds, there are breeding birds depending on the time of year and a large number of migrant species stopping off on their long journeys.
- 5 The **Broch of Burrian** on the southern tip of the island is an Iron Age tower and defences. The atmospheric ruins are a reminder of Orkney's Pictish past.

All too soon it will be time to leave North Ronaldsay. Your Loganair flight leaves at 1753 and stops on request in Sanday and Stronsay, arriving back in Kirkwall at 1827, marking the end of your island adventure. You may be surprised at how big and busy Kirkwall feels after three days spent adjusting to the slower pace of island life!

We hope that your Island Adventure will inspire you to come back for a longer stay and further explore Orkney's islands.

TRAVEL TIPS

To fully enjoy your Island Adventure, we strongly advise you to book all travel, accommodation, tours, car hire/ cycle hire well in advance.

TRAVEL TIPS

If you want to stay longer in North Ronaldsay, overnight accommodation is available. See orkney.com and there are daily flights to Kirkwall.

The information included in this itinerary is correct as at December 2018. Please check all arrival and departure times when making bookings. Destination Orkney Ltd is not liable for any errors or omissions in this itinerary.



TRAVEL TIPS

The best way to explore North Ronaldsay is on foot or by bicycle. Bikes can be booked via the Lighthouse Visitor Centre on 07809 770082 or email bikehire@northronaldsay.co.uk.



North Ronaldsay Sheep

NORTH RONALDSAY

Situated further north than the southern tip of Norway, **North Ronaldsay** is the most remote of Orkney's smaller islands. It feels distinctly different and as members of the small local community will tell you proudly, that is because it IS different, with its own culture and traditions.

North Ronaldsay is low-lying, ideal for relaxed exploration, and you'll be very conscious of the sea all round you. Whales, porpoises, dolphins and seals are regularly seen from the shore. Migrating birds draw birdwatchers from round the world. And the island's unique rare breed of seaweed-eating sheep, kept on the foreshore by a 13-mile wall round the island, are managed communally.



North Ronaldsay Lighthouse

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