

## KIRKWALL, ORKNEY

The largest town in the Orkney Islands, to the north of Scotland. Orkney is the top cruise destination in Scotland, welcoming around 70 ships a year. Kirkwall is known for its blend of Norse and Scottish culture surrounded by fabulous landscapes.

### KEY INFO

**Currency:** Pound Sterling (1 USD = 0.8 GBP)

**Population:** 10,000 (5.45 million Scotland)

**Emergency #:** 999

**Drinking water:** Tap water is drinkable

**Time Zone:** GMT (winter), GMT+1 (summer)

**ID Requirements:** Passport


**Languages:** English

**Drive on the:** Left

**Pharmacy:** Boots, 49-51 Albert Street, KW15 1HQ 

**Protection:** Standard health precautions

**Wi-Fi:** VisitScotland iCentre



**Post Office:** 15 Junction Road, KW15 1DD 

### PORT LOCATION

Cruise ships either dock at Hatston Pier (2 miles from town), or anchor in Kirkwall Bay and tender to Kirkwall Pier, right in the heart of Kirkwall. A complimentary shuttle service is provided for docked ships

**Getting Around:** The Stagecoach bus route T11 is an open-top double-decker bus that is ideal for visiting the major sites. [Click here for more on Bus Services](#). Orkney Ferries offer the option to explore 13 island destinations from Kirkwall. Walking is the ideal way to explore the town centre itself.

 [Click here for a local map](#) or [here for suggested walking/cycling routes](#)

**Taxis:** Taxis are available, and rates can be negotiated with driver.  

**Tourist Bus:** There is a [Sightseeing Bus](#), route T11 (£21 | Departs Kirkwall Travel Centre at 10a)

**Tourist Information:** The Travel Centre, W Castle St, Kirkwall KW15 1GU 



**Port Facilities:** The Hatston Pier cruise terminal has Wi-Fi, Tourist Information, Toilets and Taxis



**Port Address:** Hatston Pier, Kirkwall KW15 1RQ  | Kirkwall Pier, Harbour Street, Kirkwall KW15 1HU 



### KIRKWALL HIGHLIGHTS

**St Magnus Cathedral:** Stunning example of Romanesque architecture, this cathedral is a historical gem built from red and yellow sandstone. Britain's most northerly cathedral.

9a-5p (Mon-Sat), 1p-5p (Sun) | Free | 0.5 miles from port (10-min walk) |  | 

**Bishop's & Earl's Palace:** Stone ruins of two significant castles. The Bishop's Palace gives a glimpse into the Norse influence here (built in the 1100s), and the Earl's Palace is a remarkable example of 17<sup>th</sup> Century architecture (built: 1606). 10a-4p | Free | 0.6 miles from port (13-min walk) |  | 

**Orkney Museum:** Home to a vast collection of artefacts from the Iron Age to the present day. Set in a 1570s townhouse. 10:30a-5p (Mon-Sat) | Free | 0.5 miles from port (10-min walk) |  | 


**The Orkney Distillery & Visitor Centre:** Learn about the process of making the legendary Orkney gin... and try some too. 10a-5:30p | £29.99 (tour) | 0.3 miles from port (6-min walk) |  | 


**Orkney Wireless Museum:** Filled with vintage radios and war memorabilia, offering a glimpse into Orkney's wartime history. 10a-4p (Mon-Sat) | £ unknown | 0.2 miles from port (6-min walk) |  | 

For more: <https://www.cruise-orkney.com/>, [www.orkney.com](http://www.orkney.com), [www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com)

 card payment accepted

 cash payment accepted

 link to map

 link to website

## FURTHER AFIELD

**Ring of Brodgar:** Neolithic stone circle overlooking the water.

24 Hours | Free | 12 miles from port (23-min drive) |  | 

**Italian Chapel:** Beautiful chapel built by Italian POWs in the 1940s using scavenged materials.

9a-5:30p (reduced hours out of peak season) | £4 | 9 miles from port (19-min drive) |  | 

## SOMETHING TO EAT OR DRINK

**Haggis:** A savoury pudding of sheep's pluck (heart, liver, lungs), minced with onion, oatmeal, suet, spices, and salt. Traditionally encased in a sheep's stomach.

**Neeps and Tatties:** The Scottish take on bubble and squeak, this veggie side of mashed turnips and potatoes is often served with haggis.

**Orkney Fudge:** A traditional comfort food from the region. Local fudge is rich and creamy; made with sugar, butter, and milk.

**Scotch Whisky:** Simply made from barley, yeast, and water... and time. Locals enjoy neat or with a little water.

## LOCAL SOUVENIRS

As with other Scottish islands, the craft scene in Orkney is thriving, and **local crafts** make for a totally unique souvenir to take home. If you are inspired by the history and architecture of St Magnus Cathedral, then you might consider a similarly inspired item of **handmade jewellery**. Otherwise, perhaps a wee tippie is to your fancy – a bottle of **Highland Park Whisky** makes for an excellent memento – this award-winning single-malt Scotch whisky has been distilled on the island of Orkney for over 220 years.

## POPULAR WITH THE BIRDS... AND SHEEP

The largest landowner on the island is the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds), with 113 reserves. Twitchers can look forward to spotting Curlews, Snip, Lapwings, Dunlins, Puffins, Red-throated Divers, among many more.

The North Ronaldsay sheep is a rare, 3,000 year old breed native to Orkney. The breed is one of very few mammals with a diet of almost exclusively seaweed, which gives them their distinctively tender and virtually fat-free meat. The breed is on the endangered species list, with fewer than 600 breeding females registered in the UK.