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A 3-day Glasgow day trips itinerary

From our guide **Top 10 Best Day Trips from Glasgow**. Print it or save it to your phone.



You can build a very full trip from one Glasgow base. These three days keep the travel simple and avoid doubling back.

Day 1: Lochs and castles

Take a morning train to Balloch for Loch Lomond Shores, then the bus to Luss for lunch and a lakeside walk. Return to Glasgow in the evening, or save energy for Stirling. If you prefer castles, take the morning train to Stirling for the castle and old town, and add the Wallace Monument if the weather is clear.

Day 2: Capital and canals

Take an early train to Edinburgh for the castle and Royal Mile, then head back via Falkirk to see the Kelpies as the light fades. The Falkirk stop adds a modern contrast to the old town, and the trains are frequent enough to make it easy. Allow a taxi for the short hop between the sights.

Day 3: An island or the coast

Choose between Arran and Bute for an island day, with Bute the easier option. Take the train to Wemyss Bay and the ferry to Rothesay, visit the castle and Mount Stuart, and be back in Glasgow for dinner. On a clear day with more energy, Arran gives mountain views and a castle. Pick the return sailing first, then plan around it.

The 10 places at a glance

1. Loch Lomond and Luss

How to get there: Train from Glasgow Queen Street to Balloch in under an hour, then a local bus to Luss. Check the National Park bus and train guide.
How long to spend: A full day if you visit both Balloch and Luss.
Best time to go: Late spring to early autumn for boats and long light, though winter walks can be lovely on clear days.
Tip: Check the bus times before you leave Luss so you do not miss the last connection back to Balloch.
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2. Stirling

How to get there: Direct ScotRail train from Glasgow Queen Street, around half an hour. See the ScotRail guide to Stirling.
How long to spend: A full day for the castle, old town and monument.
Best time to go: Spring and early autumn, when it is quieter than summer.
Tip: Visit the castle first, when you have the most energy for the climb, and keep the monument for the afternoon.
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3. Edinburgh

How to get there: Direct ScotRail trains from Glasgow Queen Street to Edinburgh Waverley, with the fastest taking under 50 minutes.
How long to spend: A full day, or a half day for one theme.
Best time to go: Spring and autumn for quieter streets, though the city is busy most of the year.
Tip: Book Edinburgh Castle ahead in peak months, and use Waverley station as your base because it is close to the Old Town.
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4. The Falkirk Wheel and the Kelpies

How to get there: Train from Glasgow Queen Street to Falkirk High in around 20 minutes, then a taxi or bus. See the Falkirk Wheel on Scottish Canals.
How long to spend: Half a day, or longer with a boat trip.
Best time to go: Dry days from spring to early autumn, with a late visit to see the Kelpies lit up.
Tip: Book the boat trip ahead in school holidays, as sailings can sell out.
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5. New Lanark

How to get there: Train from Glasgow Central to Lanark, then a local bus or a downhill walk to the village.
How long to spend: Half a day for the village, or a full day with the Falls of Clyde walk.
Best time to go: Spring for the woodland flowers and early autumn for colour.
Tip: The walk back up from the village is steeper than the walk down, so save some energy for the return.
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6. The Isle of Arran

How to get there: Train from Glasgow Central to Ardrossan, then the CalMac ferry to Brodick. Check CalMac for sailings.
How long to spend: A full day, ideally with a late sailing back.
Best time to go: Late spring to early autumn, when ferries are more frequent.
Tip: Plan your return ferry first, then fit the island around it.
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7. Culzean Castle and the Ayrshire Coast

How to get there: Train from Glasgow Central to Ayr, then a local bus to the park. Confirm the bus route with the operator.
How long to spend: A full day for the castle and grounds.
Best time to go: Spring to early autumn, and on a clear day for the sea views.
Tip: Walk the clifftop paths in the park, because the views over the sea are free and often the best part of the day.
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8. Oban

How to get there: Direct ScotRail train from Glasgow Queen Street, around three hours each way. Check the ScotRail timetable before you go.
How long to spend: A long day, or better, an overnight stay.
Best time to go: Late spring to early autumn, when more boats and cruises run.
Tip: Book your return train in advance and note the last departure, as the service is limited.
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9. Inveraray

How to get there: Scottish Citylink coach from Glasgow Buchanan Bus Station, under two hours each way. Check Inveraray Jail for visitor information.
How long to spend: A full day, with time for the castle and jail.
Best time to go: Spring to early autumn, when the castle is open.
Tip: Check the castle's season before you plan, because it closes in winter.
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10. The Isle of Bute

How to get there: Train from Glasgow Central to Wemyss Bay, then the CalMac ferry to Rothesay. See CalMac's Wemyss Bay page.
How long to spend: A full day.
Best time to go: Late spring to early autumn.
Tip: Take the bus to Mount Stuart early, as it is the furthest sight from the ferry.
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Getting around from Glasgow

Glasgow has two main stations. **Queen Street** serves Stirling, Falkirk, Edinburgh, Balloch and the Oban line, while **Central** serves Lanark, Ayr, Wemyss Bay and Ardrossan. Buses and coaches leave from **Buchanan Bus Station**. Use the ScotRail website or app to plan routes, and check the CalMac timetable for ferries.

Most of these trips work without a car, but a few, such as Culzean and parts of Loch Lomond, are easier if you have one. If you hire a car, be aware that city centre parking is limited and the roads to the west coast can be busy on summer weekends. A good compromise is to use the train for the main leg and a taxi for the last stretch.

Opening times, prices and transport change often, so check with each venue or operator before you go. For the full guide, photos and FAQs, see https://toptravelinsider.com/top-10-best-day-trips-from-glasgow/.