



Loch Long looking towards Arrochar from Ardgarten

## WEST HIGHLAND LINE

### Glasgow to Crianlarich

Leaving Glasgow Queen Street station, the train travels uphill towards the Kilpatrick hills, providing impressive views of the Erskine Bridge and down the Clyde Estuary towards the Firth of Clyde. After travelling through the small villages and towns on the Clyde – such as Bowling, Dumbarton (with its celebrated castle), Cardross (where Robert the Bruce lived) and Garelochhead – you will be treated to your first glimpse of the ‘Arrochar Alps’.



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### Crianlarich to Oban

Passing through Tyndrum Lower, the Oban line takes you through beautiful Glen Lochy to Dalmally; and just beyond stands the ruin of Kilchurn Castle, ancient stronghold of Clan Campbell. Around the head of Loch Awe is the Pass of Brander, which skirts the towering bulk of Ben Cruachan – the Hollow Mountain – which conceals a fascinating secret; the mountain caverns house an innovative hydro power scheme inside. And if you show your rail ticket at the entrance of the power station you’ll be treated to a free tour. To the left is the River Awe, setting for Sir Walter Scott’s romance ‘The Highland Widow’.

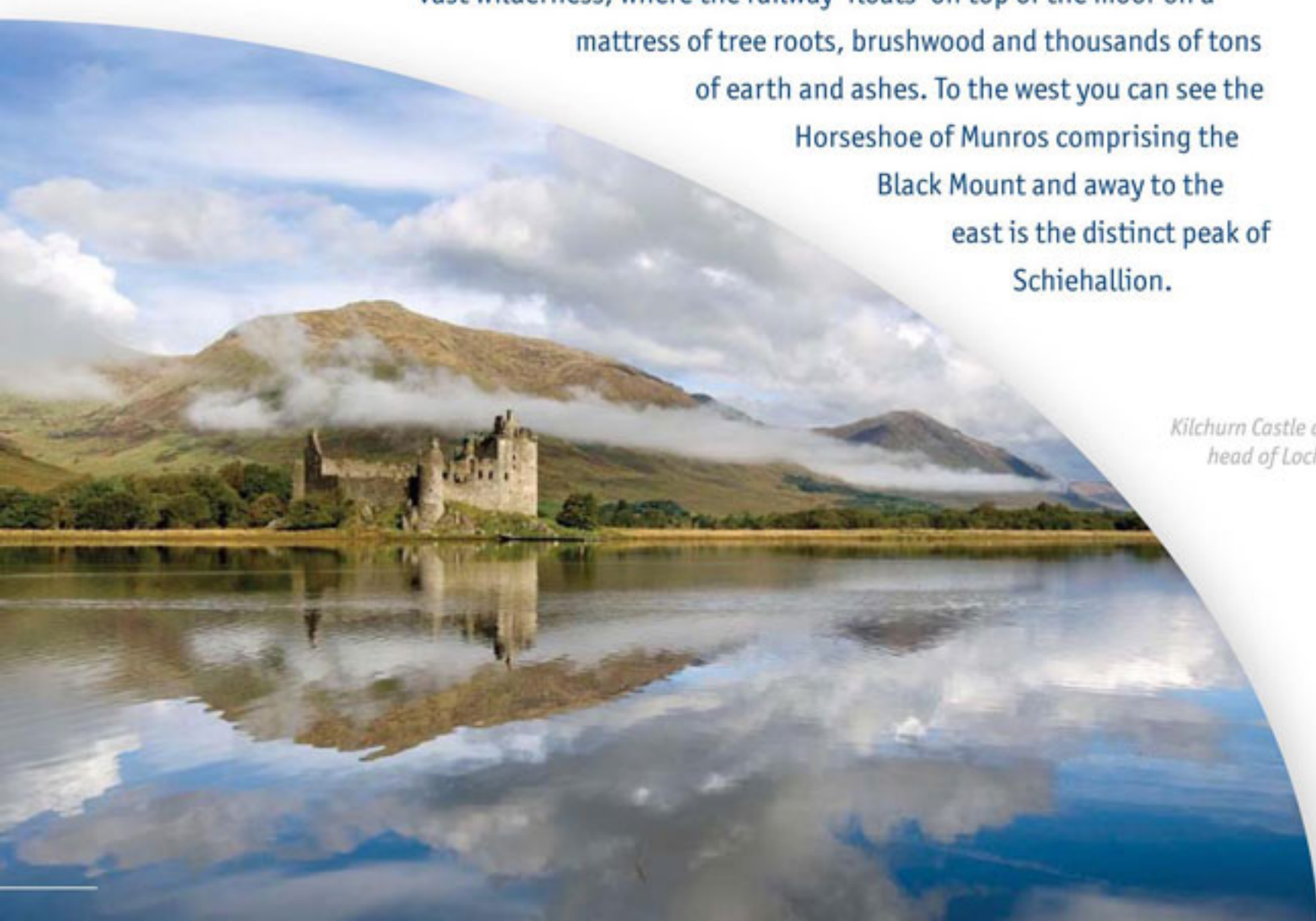
Nearing Oban now and approaching Connel Ferry, you can see the Falls of Lora, a tidal race at the narrow entrance to Loch Etive. This natural occurrence, caused by a fast-moving tide, produces white rapids that can last for up to five days.

Now sit back and enjoy the splendid views as you arrive in Oban – the gateway to the western isles.

### Crianlarich to Fort William/Mallaig

Just beyond Upper Tyndrum, the northbound fork of the West Highland Line navigates the massive sentinels of Beinn Odhar and Beinn Dorain in the unique Horseshoe Curve.

Next stop is Bridge of Orchy - well known to walkers and climbers alike as a landmark hamlet on the West Highland Way. Nearby you’ll find the ruin of Achallader Castle, stronghold of the Fletchers. Passing Loch Tulla on the left, the line starts to cross the wild Rannoch Moor, a vast wilderness, where the railway ‘floats’ on top of the moor on a mattress of tree roots, brushwood and thousands of tons of earth and ashes. To the west you can see the Horseshoe of Munros comprising the Black Mount and away to the east is the distinct peak of Schiehallion.



Kilchurn Castle at the head of Loch Awe

View from The Cobbler, looking down on Arrochar and over to Ben Lomond

At Garelochhead station you get stunning panoramic views of the Gare Loch, with Loch Long just starting to come into view. The jetty below is Finnart deep-water terminal where tankers discharge their oil to be pumped by pipeline to Grangemouth, 60 miles away to the east.

Approaching Arrochar, look to your left for a great view of the celebrated ‘Arrochar Alps’, including such craggy peaks as the Beinn Narnain, Beinn Ime and the well-loved Cobbler.

A few minutes after departing Arrochar and Tarbet station, the world-renowned bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond appear on the right, dominated by the towering presence of Ben Lomond. Across the loch is Inversnaid, an area once roamed by Rob Roy MacGregor, legendary warrior, robber and folk hero. He used to question captives in a nearby cave – and wasn’t averse to dipping them in the loch to extract information!

After enjoying the magnificent scenery surrounding Loch Lomond, you will arrive in Crianlarich. Here the train line divides, with the western route turning towards Oban, and the north route continuing up to Fort William and Mallaig.

Arriving at Corroir, you are now 1350 feet above sea level - the highest mainline station in the UK. The station is one of the most remote in Britain (the nearest road is 10 miles away) and is also famous for appearing in the hit film ‘Trainspotting’ starring Ewan McGregor.



Looking out over the Silver Sands of Morar towards Rum

After passing through Tulloch and shortly before arriving in Roy Bridge, look out for the foaming waters of Monessie Gorge on the left. Once you have passed through Spean Bridge, just before the train pulls into Fort William, the massive bulk of the Nevis Range comes into full view. At just over 4,400ft, Ben Nevis is not only Britain’s highest mountain but covers a huge land area with a base circumference of 24 miles.

Soon after departing Fort William, en route to Mallaig, the line crosses part of the Caledonian Canal, Britain’s longest inland waterway, which links Fort William with Inverness. Looking to the right you will see Neptune’s Staircase, a remarkable series of canal locks.



Looking down Loch Shiel from the top of the Glenfinnan Monument

Shortly afterwards, the breath-taking curve of the 100ft-high Glenfinnan Viaduct sweeps you past the head of Loch Shiel and the monument to Bonnie Prince Charlie, marking the spot where he landed and unfurled his standard in 1745 to commence the Jacobite Rebellion. The viaduct itself, famous as the first mass concrete viaduct ever built in the world, is now more notable for appearing in several of the Harry Potter films.

After passing through the beautiful lochs and hills surrounding Lochailort and Beasdale, you arrive in Arisaig – a popular tourist spot due to its spectacular views over Loch Nan Ceall where you can see the islands of Rum and Eigg.

Less than 10 minutes later you’ll see the spectacular silver sands of Morar, made famous in the 1983 film ‘Local Hero’ starring Burt Lancaster and Peter Capaldi. You’ll also cross Scotland’s shortest river, which runs out of our deepest loch - Loch Morar.

As you approach Mallaig take in the breath-taking jagged peaks of Skye.

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