

An Art and Craft Trail in Stirling and Argl

Our group of 6 friends wanted to enjoy Scotland's autumn landscapes while exploring their individual art and crafts interests. Our brief was to make sure there would be plenty of time for country walking, not too much travelling, good food and lodging, opportunity to see examples of all types of art and craft work and to meet the makers – and they all wanted to learn something new during their holiday!

Using Glasgow as the starting point, this is what we managed to fit in.....

- Coffee and conversation at the studio of a young award-winning jewellery designer
- Willow cultivation and a display of basket weaving
- Silk art, ceramics and embroidery studios
- A look at innovative design in furniture making from local woodlands
- Abstract figurative wall hangings and ecological textile clothing and accessories
- A visit to a traditional knitwear designer who works in cashmere, Shetland and Scottish lambswool



Among other activities, the friends also enjoyed a tour of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's masterpiece, Hill House, a guided walk and talk on conservation of Scottish native woodlands, a visit to a gallery "launch pad" for new young artists and designers, lunch in an historic pub beside the "Bridge over the Atlantic" and an evening at the theatre in Glasgow. They had a session in photography with a professional and plenty of country walking.

The scenery was gorgeous, of course.

The verdict?

"We can't believe we fitted in so much yet still had such a relaxing trip. Everything was fabulous. You managed to tick all our boxes and whetted our appetite for more so we'll be back next year to "do" a different part of Scotland – we fancy an island or two!"