

## Arran Retreat Landscapes & Sacred Spaces



*Ian Cylkowski, unsplash.com*

*for Shepherd, there was a continual traffic between the outer landscapes of the world and the inner landscapes of the spirit. She knew that topography has long offered humans powerful allegories, keen ways of figuring ourselves to ourselves, strong means of shaping memories and giving form to thought.*

*Robert Macfarlane introducing Nan Shepherd's book the Living Mountain*

This is a 5 day self-led retreat plan among the crosses, hilltops, wells, groves and springs, crossing places and boundaries of the island of Arran. Links to each day's walking routes are provided along with an indication of the distances involved – there is at least one walk or location per landscape/sacred space for you to choose from. Hints at the possible themes that could inform each day are offered such as eternity, vision, possibility, hospitality, growth and being. These days may be done in any order (weather dependent) as a whole 6 days or for shorter (or single day) retreats as desired.

## Landscapes and Sacred Spaces:

### Crossing Places: thresholds of growth — Oceans

Ferry to Arran and back

Winter timetable <https://www.calmac.co.uk/ardrossan-brodick-arran-ferry-winter-timetable>

Summer timetable: <https://www.calmac.co.uk/summer-timetables/ardrossan-brodick>

Ferry to Holy Isle and back

<https://www.holyisle.org/visiting/day-visiting>

### The High Cross: touchstones of eternity — Grasslands

Walk to Machrie Moor Stones (4.25 km)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/arran/machrie-moor.shtml>

Druid Stone (Old Byre Visitor Centre, Auchencar, Machrie)

### Hilltops: summits of vision — Mountains

Walk up to Coire Fhionn Lochan (5.5 km)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/arran/coire-fhionn-lochan.shtml>

Glen Sannox

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/arran/glen-sannox.shtml>

### Wells: pools of possibility — Rivers

Glen Rosa Water Circuit Walk (near Brodick) (8.5 km)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/arran/glen-rosa.shtml>

Kildonan Beach & Shore Walk (Castle / Rocks)

Holy Well and Saint Molaise Cave Buddhist Paintings — Holy Isle (6.75 km)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/arran/holy-island.shtml>

### Groves & Springs: circles of hospitality — Forests

Forest Walk to King's Cave (near Blackwaterfoot) (4.5 km)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/arran/kings-cave.shtml>

Giants Graves & Glenashdale Falls (Whiting Bay) (4.7 km)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/arran/glenashdale-falls.shtml>

Brodick Castle Country Park (Brodick) (3.5 km)

<https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/arran/brodick-castle.shtml>

Loch na Davie - springs are source of water for Arran whisky (16.5 km)

[https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/maps/map7\\_18ar.shtml](https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/maps/map7_18ar.shtml)

### Boundaries: borderlands of being — Deserts

Sunrises and Sunsets

Night Skies  
Sacred Conversations  
Poetry, painting, meditation, music, song

**Possible 5 day schedule selecting from the above options (including Ardrossan-Brodick ferry travel)**

Enfolding your chosen starting and concluding ritual and arrival by ferry from, and depart back to, Ardrossan respectively we have...

Day 1 – Brodick Castle & Glen Rosa (Car Park edge of Am Binnein woods off B880 at Glenshurig Bridge or Cladach Visitor Centre nr Brodick on A841)

Day 2 - Coire Fhionn Lochen Walk ( near Thundergay on A841) & Druid Stone (Old Byre Visitor Centre, Auchencar, Machrie)

Day 3 – Forest Walk to Kings Caves (3 km N of Blackwaterfoot on A841) & Machrie Moor Stones Walk (5 km N of Blackwaterfoot on A841)

Day 4 - Sandstone Bay at Corrie (NE on A841) & Glen Sannox Walk (NE near Sannox on A841)

Day 5 - Giants Graves & Glenashdale Falls (Ashdale Bridge, Whiting Bay) & Kildonan Beach & Shore Walk (SE at Kildonan)

**Remember appropriate footwear and clothing is essential.**

**Some reading options**

Reclaiming the Wild Soul: How Earth's Landscapes Restore Us to Wholeness by Mary Reynolds Thompson

Sacred Spaces: Stations on a Celtic Way by Margaret Silf

The Way of Wisdom by Margaret Self

Beauty: The Invisible Embrace by John O'Donohue

Anam Cara: Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World by John O'Donohue

The Second Half of Life by Angeles Arrien

The Old Ways by Robert Macfarlane

The Wisdom of the Enneagram by Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson