

# Torridon, Scotland

15<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2024  
7 nights, £2700

FOOD AND  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
RETREATS™

*with the Bennies*

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*Mountains and lochs*

## THE RETREAT

FOOD AND PHOTOGRAPHY RETREATS are for people who enjoy a house-party style holiday in a lovely setting where they can immerse themselves totally in photography, mix with like-minded guests - and eat very well too.

Charlotte and Niall Benvie's seven day winter Retreat in the Torridon region of north-west Scotland is a perfect escape for landscape photographers who want to get away from the crowds, immerse themselves in a rugged landscape of mountains, lochs and sea shores and return in the evening to a log fire and great food. Niall has worked this area for over 20 years and knows where to take you, and when.

We're free of the restrictions of hotels and work meal times around photography, rather than vice-versa. We make time, too, for reviewing your work and offer informed critique and fresh ideas developed during a 30 year creative career.

If you're weary of being herded from one "photo-opportunity" to another and want the time and space to make your own work, then our Retreats are for you.





## WHAT'S ON OFFER

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED in learning one of the [particular skills](#) Niall is known for (including field studio photography, "Colour Transects" or "Chocolate Bars"), take an eLearning class before the Retreat and have a chance to practise what you've learned with him, in the field. Subjects we can work with during the Retreat will include:

- Reflections of mountains at Loch Clair
- Old pine forests at Beinn Eighe NNR, perhaps with snow
- Waterfalls and sea lochs
- Famous red-roofed cottage at Shieldaig
- The UK's steepest road pass, the Bealach-na-Ba, with views over to Skye
- Shoreline and old boat details at Port Henderson
- Loch Maree and views to Slioch
- .We might meet some red deer in Glen Torridon.



## ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

OUR BASE FOR THE WEEK will be in the village of Annat at the head of Upper Loch Torridon. Located within easy reach of many of our key locations, [Ferrock House](#) and cottage (below) sit back from the road, overlooking the saltmarshes and over towards Ben Alligin on the north side of Loch Torridon. Each modern room has an en-suite bathroom, there is wi-fi and a spacious lounge with log-fire where we can relax for reviews and processing. We don't charge single room supplements.

Good food is at the heart of our Retreats, from breakfast through to after-dinner chocolates, all made by Charlotte. She uses local ingredients, when they are available, in dishes that are delicious and imaginative without being fussy. We expect you to be hungry after a cold day in the field. Food allergies and intolerances are catered for sensitively but must be notified in advance on the booking form to give her time to prepare an alternative menu for you. Expect to eat well, for breakfast, lunch and dinner. And in between times too.

Sounds like a holiday!









## TORRIDON AND AROUND

OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS, Niall has spent a lot of time in this area, shooting personal work and commissions for the government agency, Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot). It manages this, the UK's first National Nature Reserve, founded in 1951 in recognition of its internationally important flora—principally of mosses, lichens

and liverworts. It is also a redoubt of the once vast Scots pine forest that covered much of the Scottish Highlands for thousands of years but which has been reduced to a few scraps and remnants. At Beinn Eighe, we can see the work being done to re-establish a corridor of woodland from the pine-clad slopes above Loch Maree, down the length of Glen

Torridon, to join with other fragments of old forest around Shieldaig.

Mountains built from Torridonian sandstone, capped by glistening quartzite, seem to fill the sky. While it's not necessary to climb to gain a good vantage point, doing so can bring its own rewards. The summits conjure with clouds rushing in from

the Atlantic to produce squalls then drizzle then brilliant sunshine then hail—all within an hour. On other days it is utterly still and the dark lochs fill with reflections of emergent plants and sombre mountains. It's as if the whole landscape is holding its breathe: a time to be quiet ourselves and get a sense of the endurance of life here.





## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE RETREAT

**Retreat Price: GBP 2700, 15<sup>th</sup>- 22<sup>nd</sup>  
March 2024, 7 nights**

### What is included in the price of the Retreat?

Seven nights' accommodation at [Ferroch House](#), Annat, Achnasheen IV22 2EU; dinner on day one until breakfast on the last day; travel between locations by mini-bus; transfers between Inverness airport (INV)/ railway station and our accommodation at the pre-arranged time; and tuition from Niall during the Retreat.

### What is not included in the price of the Retreat?

Travel between your home and Inverness; transfers at times other than those specified; alcoholic drinks; insurance for you and your possessions; additional entrance fees.

### Travelling to and from the Retreat

The Retreat starts at the Inverness where Niall will meet you at Arrivals at the airport or at the entrance to the railway station (Station Square). You may choose instead to drive directly to Ferroch House. We recommend the [Waze app](#). to take you straight there.. At the end of the Retreat, you will be taken back to the airport or railway station.

### Daily routine

Each evening we publish the plan for the next day, based on the local weather forecast. The sun rises at about 07:00 hrs and sets a little after 18:00 hrs at this time of year so we will spend most of the day outside. We believe it's important to strike a good balance between field and studio time so that you can work with, and receive feed-back on, your photographs.

### Your safety during the Retreat

We treat your safety seriously on our Retreats. While most of the locations we visit present few difficulties to those with even just average fitness, where particular hazards - such as slippery surfaces, boggy ground or drop-offs - present themselves, you will be properly briefed first so that you can make a decision about how to proceed. If we work beside the road at dusk or dawn, we ask you to wear one of the high visibility vests we provide for the week. We also issue guests with Motorola two-way radio so they can keep in touch if they wander off and need to attract Niall's attention. Walks do not normally exceed five kilometres and are usually a lot shorter.

### Insurance

It is a requirement of booking that guests provide evidence of personal

travel insurance to cover cancellation and curtailment, medical and emergency expenses (including repatriation), personal accident, injury and death in addition to loss of/damage to luggage and possessions, personal possessions and flight cancellations/ delays.

### COVID

At the time of writing, the threat from COVID has receded. Nevertheless, if there is a resurgence, we will require guests to conform to the statutory guidelines pertaining at the time.

### Weather

The average March temperatures in this part of the Highlands are a high of 9° C and a low of 3° C. It's possible we'll encounter snow, even at low levels. The wind can be penetrating



and strong, especially if we climb.

### Clothing

Expect it to be cold first thing in the morning and in the late afternoon. And it could be wet in between times. And cold. A waterproof shell jacket with down jacket, waterproof trousers, a warm hat and fold-back mitts with liners will keep you dry and snug. It is wet under-foot so neoprene wellington boots are useful and can be bought at the start of the Retreat in Inverness. Hiking boots should be properly proofed. You could bring slippers/ indoor shoes for the house. The house has drying facilities.

### Equipment

If you are travelling by air, you will be able to bring more into the cabin if you carry it in a photographer's

vest with large pockets, in addition to your carry-on bag. With regards to equipment you'll need during the Retreat:

- If possible, please bring a laptop loaded with Adobe Lightroom (or your preferred RAW converter) and Photoshop
- A macro lens, a mid-range zoom and a moderate wide-angle will get most use
- We may have an opportunity to photograph red deer in which case a lens over 300 mm will come into its own
- However inconvenient it seems, a tripod is a must
- A head torch or hand-held one, for navigation and safety
- All the chargers, cards, batteries and backup media you need, plus UK power adaptor if you're travelling from abroad

- A polarizing filter and graduated ND's, only if you have them.

For our review sessions, we set up a Zoom meeting for everyone in the room; it makes it easier to follow what Niall is demonstrating and to share your own work with the group.

### About us

After many years leading tours and workshops for other companies at home and abroad, Niall and Charlotte Benvie established Food and Photography Retreats in 2018. Our offer combines the cultivation of your photography in attractive locations with great hospitality, conversation and food.

Niall has been a professional photographer, writer, designer and guide for 30 years with a massive

publication record including six books and hundreds of articles. He has been involved in founding and running several of the biggest outdoor photographic initiatives of the last decade, including Meet Your Neighbours, Wild Wonders of Europe and 2020VISION.

For 28 years, Charlotte combined a career in the Civil Service with freelance catering and hosting roles before coming to work with husband, Niall. She has travelled and worked extensively around the Highlands during that time. Guests value not only her expertise in the kitchen and dining room but her attention to detail and warmth. She has a keen eye for a picture too and often leaves Niall envious of her iPhone photos. She is a trained chocolatier and has won several

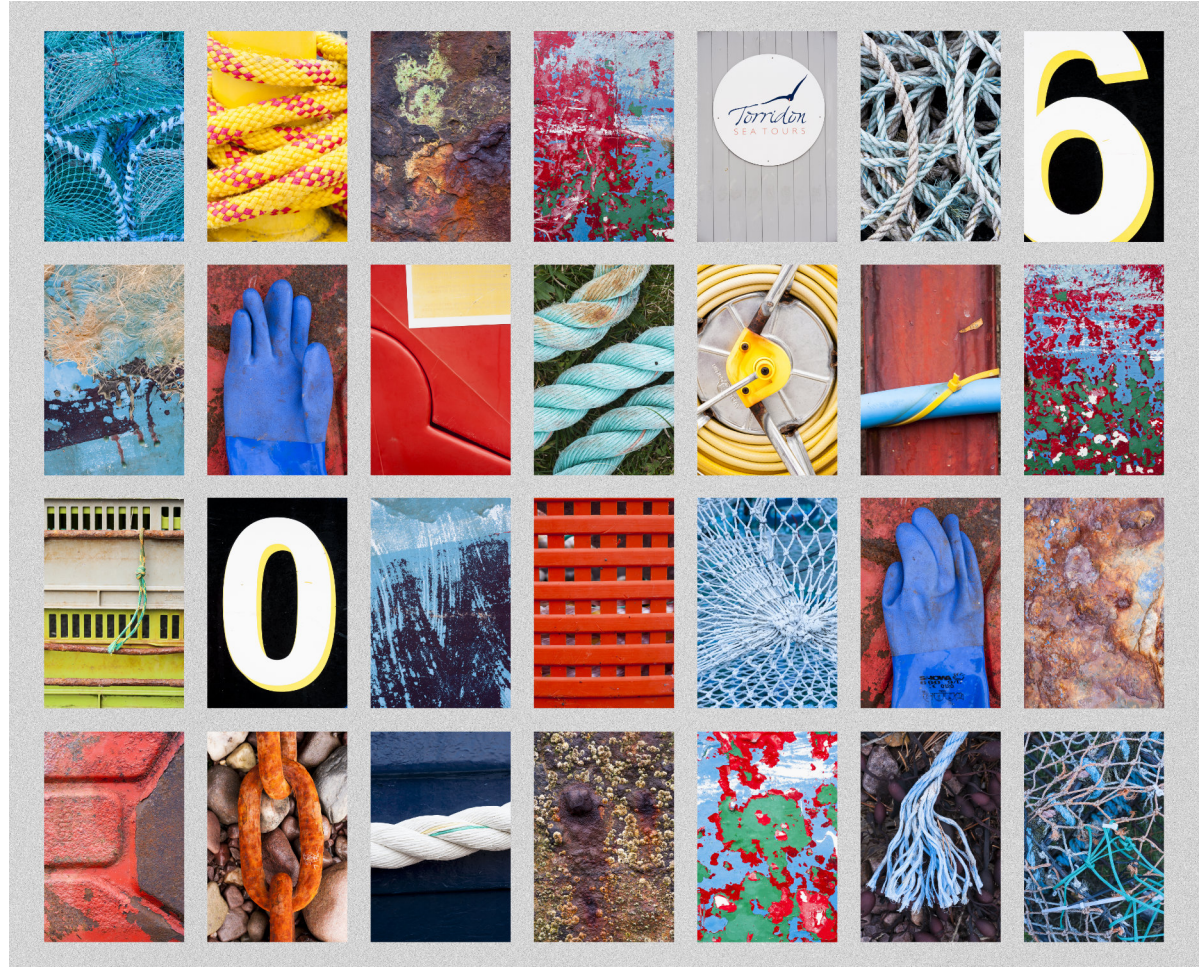
Great Taste Awards (The Guild of Fine Food) for her work.

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