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Note: Prices are a guide and may change. Earlier booking advised.

Route

TBC

Transport

Calmac Ferries - Colintraive to Bute

We will need to check if we can stand with bikes or if we need tiedowns to let them know how many are coming. The journey is a matter of minutes – less than 10.

The next summer timetables will run from 29 March-20 October 2024. We will update customers via our website once we have a release date confirmed. These will be available to view on our website on 11 January 2024 and bookings will open in a phased approach, from January 18-12 February. **Return tickets for passenger and motorcycle at current prices is about £9.20.**

https://www.calmac.co.uk/summer-timetables/colintraive-rhubodach

Accommodations

Bute has a wide range of fine accommodation on offer to suit all tastes and budgets. Experience true Scottish hospitality in a local B&B, hotel or guesthouse.

Google search for accommodation for six people as an example cut and paste link into your browser: http://tinyurl.com/2vx6muhs

Google search for accommodation for two people as an example cut and paste link into your browser: http://tinyurl.com/2vx6muhs

You could also try:

AirBnB

Booking.com

Bute Backpackers

Prices (2023) £35/PPPN + £6 Service / Cleaning Fee (One-Off Charge Free Wifi, No Dorms, Group Bookings. Catering For: Musicians, Golfers, Walkers, Cyclists, Motocyclists, Fishermen, Birthdays, Stags / Hen Parties https://www.butebackpackershotel.co.uk/

There is an option that people could club together to book out suites in a guest house.

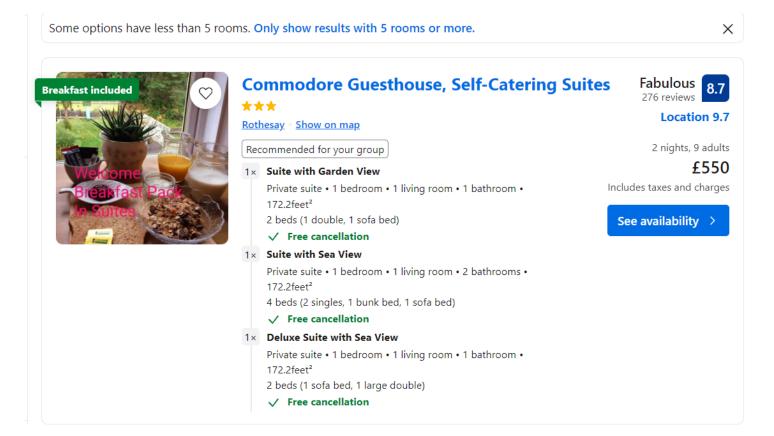
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The rates at The Commodore Guesthouse were pretty decent and had a variety of rooms.

I would suggest people book accommodation ASAP as things will book up fast and prices will rise as the year moves on. Also there may well be another large event the same weekend so competition for accommodation may be high if that event is confirmed.

Below was an example booking for Commodore suites to accommodate 9 people – info on all the rooms and capacities at bottom of document.



Eateries and Entertainment

33 Eateries within 3 miles from cafes to restaurants to takeaways – no shortage of choice of taste and pocket.

https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/RestaurantsNear-g551924-d6232852-Rothesay VisitScotland iCentre-Rothesay Isle of Bute Argyll and Bute Scotland.html

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We are looking at the Black Bull pub for the Saturday evening club meal. You can view the menu here: https://www.blackbullrothesay.co.uk/menu/

Pubs on Bute

Someone once said that Bute has more pubs per head of population than anywhere else in Scotland! You'll find incredible diversity - from simple backstreet boozers to lovely country gastropubs. Many of Bute's pubs and bars offer regular entertainment, such as quiz nights, open mic nights, and karaoke is also a local favourite pastime. The majority of the more lively pubs are focused around the town centre of Rothesay, all within staggering distance of each other, local takeaways of every type imaginable. So if you find that a particular vibe isn't quite you, it'll only be a short walk to somewhere else that might be!

Isle of Bute Distillery

Welcome to Bute! This quaint Scottish island is the driving force behind our small batch distillery. Our products are crafted with care in the heart of Rothesay using a traditional copper still. We source botanicals from across the island and nearby areas to create world-class spirits that embody life on the Scottish isles.

Our Distillery, Shop and Gin Garden are open for drinks and specially curated Isle of Bute Gin Experiences. Whether touring or just stopping for a drink, join us for perfectly served gins and tonic, gin tasting flights and a small selection of locally sourced snacks. Tour Duration: 2-3 hours

https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction Review-g551924-d21125758-Reviews-Isle Of Bute Distillery-Rothesay Isle of Bute Argyll and Bute Scotland.html

Bute Yard

Celebrate your appetite for life by enjoying local offerings at Bute Yard - your food and drink hub showcasing the best local, artisan and craft fare on the Isle of Bute. Having welcomed visitors from near and far for more than two hundred years, Bute is known for its friendliness, natural beauty, history and seaside holiday charm. You're invited to relax, eat and be merry, knowing the Isle of Bute community is at the heart of Bute Yard, as envisioned by our founder, Johnny Bute (aka Johnny Dumfries).

Bute Brew Co.

Established in 2014, <u>Bute Brew Co</u> is a craft beer brewery and venue on the Isle of Bute. Brewing on site, using the water from the island and hops gathered from all over the world - the brewery boasts a delicious range of local brews that you can taste at the bar, in the beer garden or via the gift

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shop The brewery has now teamed up with their colleagues Greenfry to offer top quality food to complement their range of drinks - including a pear and blue cheese pizza. The venue also offers live music and regular events throughout the year.

Sightseeing - Things to Do - Do Not Miss

Zavaroni's Famous Ice-cream - The best in the world.

The cafe may now be shut but you can still get the ice-cream

Order ahead for the group – Zavaroni's ice-cream Pack

Zavaroni's had a cafe until very recently when Maggie Zavaroni retired. However, the younger members of the family are keeping the family recipe alive and you can order an ice-cream pack. And yes, this is the same Zavaroni family who included Lena Zavaroni the child singing star who performed at the White House and shared a stage with Barbra Streisand, Frank Sinatra and Lucille Ball and was the youngest artist ever to have a record in the Top 10 UK albums chart. https://www.facebook.com/zavascafe/

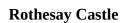
Ardencraig Gardens

The existing gardens originally formed part of the larger layout designed by Percy Cane for the owners of Ardencraig House. The walled garden was acquired by Rothesay Town council in 1970, and latterly by Argyll and Bute Council, and has been developed to create a propagation ,education and show garden.

Extensive bedding and fuchsia displays contain some of the best cultivars available. A number of avaries housing a range of foreign birds species have been built to create further interest.

Opening Dates and times: May 1- September 30.

9-4pm Monday to Friday. 1-4.30pm Saturday and Sunday https://www.facebook.com/p/Ardencraig-Garden-Bute-100057486487682/



Dating all the way back to the 13th Century, <u>Rothesay Castle</u> on the Isle of Bute, is a unique structure, thanks to its distinctive circular design. The castle comprises a curtain wall, strengthened by four round towers, together with a 16th-century forework, the whole surrounded by a broad moat. The Stewart family originally built this castle to defend against Viking invasion, it survived Norse attacks to become a royal residence, occupied by Robert the Bruce during the Wars of Independence and Cromwell's troops in the 17th Century, falling into ruin after the 17th century. The castle was repaired by the <u>Marquess of Bute</u> before passing into state care in the 20th century.



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ROTHESAY'S VICTORIAN TOILETS

You don't generally think of a public toilet as a tourist attraction, but then, Rothesay's Victorian Toilets are no ordinary public convenience! These restored 19th-century gentlemens' toilets are a testament to Victorian design, utilising marble furnishings, copper piping, exquisite tilework, and a mosaic floor. The Victorian Toilets are a reminder of the heady days when Rothesay was a popular destination for day-trippers from Glasgow, who came on regular paddle steamers from the mainland to enjoy an outing by the sea.

Commissioned by Rothesay Harbour Trust in 1899 during Rothesay's hey-day as a holiday resort, the gents lavatory is a magnificent sight to behold. The interior walls are entirely clad in ornately patterned decorative ceramic tiles and the floors are designed with ceramic mosaic. Apart from the cisterns in the cubicles, all the original fitments remain as supplied in 1899 by Twyfords Ltd of Glasgow for £530. The toilets are the most impressive public conveniences in Britain and are B-listed for their heritage value. Three glass-lined cisterns at ceiling level feed 20 urinals made of a mix of marble and ceramic tiles. The centrepiece is a six-sided urinal with black marble frames, supporting a large potted plant on top. Only the gentlemen's' toilets are of Victorian date; the female toilets were added in 1994 by converting storage rooms and are ordinary public toilets. *Female visitors will want to have the attendant knock on the door before taking a look inside!*

Why were there originally only male toilets?

The answer begins in 1853, when a law was passed banning the sale of alcohol in Scotland on Sundays. However, paddle steamers were exempt from this ban. The result ought to have been predictable; Scots intent on a drink took to 'steaming', which became popular slang for getting drunk. Men drank heavily on board the steamers, yet there were few toilets on board. The result was long queues and a pressing need for toilets onshore. Presumably, women didn't drink so heavily on board ship, for no provision was made for them ashore! *The Victorian Toilets were rescued from years of neglect and restored in 1994 and officially reopened by Prince Charles*.

The West Island Way

This waymarked path – the first on a Scottish island – encompasses some of the finest walking on the Isle of Bute, crossing a variety of landscapes; seashore, moorland, farmland and forest, all providing a continually changing picture of Bute. It offers great opportunities to glimpse wildlife – you may be lucky enough to see a Basking Shark offshore at the south end, an Osprey over Loch Fad near Rothesay town, or a Red Deer in the north end of Bute. The Way also passes many highlights of Bute history – from the medieval St Blane's Chapel at the south of the island to the abandoned townships in Glen More at the north end. The route is well marked, with frequent fingerposts and waymarkers, but use of a map for navigation is strongly recommended. Pick up a Discover Bute Landscape Partnership Scheme Map from Visit Scotland at the Discovery Centre (beside Rothesay Pier), local shops or from: www.stirlingsurveys.co.uk/footprint.html

The path is mostly off-road and includes rocky coastline, beaches, farmland, moor and forest tracks. Only a few short sections follow the roadside but the roads are not busy and there is usually a grassy verge alongside. The 30-mile trail is in 4 distinct stages, with the town of Port Bannatyne lying at mid-point. The Way is usually walked over 2 full-day walks or 4 half-day walks. www.westislandway.co.uk/ www.facebook.com/westislandway/?ref=embed_page

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The beautiful beaches of Bute! Five Bute Beaches worth a visit.

Bute is perhaps the most accessible of Argyll's islands. Thanks to this, and a balmy climate, it has been a popular Scottish holiday spot for well over a century. This compact island has got it all: splendid architecture, glorious gardens and wonderful wildlife. But one of the best things about Bute must be its beaches, most of which are found of the island's wild and remote west coast. Here are five beaches on Bute that will take your breath away!

1. Ettrick Bay

Ettrick Bay sits on the north-west coast of the island. It's a milelong stretch of golden sand with stunning views over to <u>Dunoon & Cowal</u> and the neighbouring island of Arran. On a warm day, you can paddle or swim in the clear waters. The facilities are great, with car parking, toilets, picnic areas and a children's play area. At the start of the beach Ettrick Bay Tearoom serves up ice cream, excellent lunches and mouth-watering cakes. To really work up an appetite, why not walk the Tramway Route from Port Bannatyne to Ettrick Bay? This easy, flat 30-minute walk along an old tramway offers fabulous views and the opportunity to spot



Bute's flora and fauna. Or you could walk to the bird hide at the south end of the bay and train your binoculars some of the many seabird species indigenous to the west coast. Another option is to seek out Ettrick Bay Stone Circle, which is found further up the valley and is comprised of eight stones.

2. St. Ninian's Bay

St Ninian's Bay (also known as The Straad) is a small horseshoe-shaped bay covered with white cockle shells. The bay, just a bit further south than Ettrick Bay, is protected by a spit of land called St Ninian's point. It's well worth taking a wander out along the point for the fantastic views of Inchmarnock and to see the ruined 6th-century Ninian's Chapel. Beware though – it gets cut off from the mainland at spring tides, i.e. just after the full moon. The bay, the surrounding fields and the saltmarsh to the northwest are home to a wealth of birdlife. Look out for waders including ringed plover, dunlin, oystercatcher and curlew. Shelduck, greylag and Canada geese all breed in the area and white-tailed eagles have also been spotted here.

3. Scalpsie Bay

Further south is secluded Scalpsie Bay, a beautiful stretch of reddish sand. It's just a five-minute walk from the road along a sign-posted path. This tranquil beach is a great place to relax, soak up the scenery of Bute and admire the views to <u>Kintyre</u> and Arran. It's also the place on Bute to spot seals. Head to Seal View viewpoint where you can watch the large colony of seals, both Common and Grey, on their rocky perches. The state of the tide will determine the number that you see, but if you hit the right time you might see up to 100 seals. There's another viewpoint which gives you stunning views of Arran and the Holy Isle.

4. Kilchattan Bay

Kilchattan Bay sits near the southern tip of Bute on the east coast. It offers wonderful views across the water to Great Cumbrae. A sandy bay known locally as the Wee Bay sweeps around to the north, while to the south is the start of the West Island Way. It leads along the rocky shore and past the lighthouse which marks the southern end of the island. A small settlement, also known as Kilchattan Bay, lines the shoreline, with a row of fishermen's houses, Victorian villas and an old stone pier. Nearby St Blane's Chapel, an atmospheric ruined church, is also worth a visit.

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5. Stravanan Bay

From Kilchattan Bay, you can enjoy a short walk across the narrowest part of Bute to visit Stravanan Bay, a sandy beach on the west coast of the island. This serene spot has wonderful views of Arran and the fort of Dunagoil, an Iron-Age fortification and a fine example of a vitrified structure.

Rothesay Museum

Bute Museum is an independently run museum where visitors can explore the Natural and Historical Heritage of the island. www.facebook.com/ButeMuseum?ref=embed_page www.butemuseum.org.uk

St Blane's Church

This lovely ruined church sits nestled in a valley at the southern end of the Isle of Bute and boasts views that stretch as far as the Isle of Arran and the Holy Isle.

The remarkably well preserved ruins of St Blane's Chapel are found at the southern tip of the Isle of Bute in a sheltered dell located near the top of a south facing slope. It is accessed via a signposted track that lead from a parking area located at the end of a public road two miles south of Kingarth. The remains of St Blane's Chapel are surprisingly extensive the nave and part of the chancel dating back to the 1200s. The churchyards contain a number of weathered grave slabs including a distinctive hogsback gravestone from the time when Bute was part of the Norse Empire. The remains of a well and the foundations of a manse which was in use until 1587 can also be seen. There has been a religious site here since the 500s when St Catan established a monastery which was eventually abandoned in the wake of viking raids. At one time St Blane's served the whole of the Isle of Bute but it fell into disuse following the Protestant Reformation.

St Blane's Church has its roots in a monastery founded here in the AD 500s. This was the home of St Blane – 'fair Blaan of Ceen Garad (Kingarth)' – who may have been buried here on his death. The structures on this site belong to two eras: that early Christian monastery, abandoned during Viking raids around AD 790, and a later parish church, built in the 1100s and in use until the Protestant Reformation of 1560.

Imagine the monastic life at a church founded on one of the earliest Christian sites in Scotland. https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/st-blanes-church/

St Michaels Chapel Ruins - Walk to St Michael's Grave and Chapel.

Very serene and spiritual place. It's a bit of a walk but worth it. You follow the road up the coast from Ettrick Bay. Follow it until the tarmac runs out where there is a small car park where there is a house set back called Glecknabae. The tarmac road gives way to a farm track. You follow the track on foot alongside the Kyles of Bute. The views are restricted by trees most of the way but still pleasant. The track at first passes a farm on your right after about 300 yards and eventually after a mile or so you arrive at St Michael's grave (on the left of the track). It is directly opposite a white cottage on the right of the track. It is easily visible from the road. There is no public footpath to it but seemingly the way to do it is just to unhitch the gate (remember to close it behind you!) and

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cross the field - to the grave (about 100 yards). This is not in itself spectacular but you get a great view down the Kyles. Return to the track and continue for another 500 yards or so until you reach another farm. Just before the farm is a public footpath sign on the left pointing across the field to the Chapel. You cross two fields to reach it. It is unsurprisingly a ruin but you can make out various features and use your imagination!. It does have a special atmosphere with good views across to Kames.

The Standing Stones Of Bute

We cannot promise you a visit from Sam Heughan – but we cannot promise you won't time travel.

Check out the Standing Stones of Bute at:

Acholter – Port Bannatyne
Colmac – Port Bannatyne
Craigberoch
Kingarth
St Colmac – Ettrick Bay
St Ninian's – Straad
Stravanan Bay

https://www.visitbute.com/standing-stones/

The GRAND ATTRACTION

Tour of Mount Stuart House

Mount Stuart is an award-winning attraction featuring magnificent Victorian Gothic architecture and design together with contemporary craftsmanship, surrounded by 300 acres of gloriously maintained grounds and gardens.



The spectacular Gothic house was the ancestral home of the Marquess of Bute. The late Lord Bute was Johnny Dumfries – the F1 Racing partner of Ayrton Senna.

Mount Stuart House was designed by <u>Sir Robert Rowand Anderson</u> for the <u>3rd Marquess</u> in the late 1870s, replacing an earlier house by <u>Alexander McGill</u>, which burnt down in 1877. The house is a Category A listed building. The house is the seat of the Stuarts of Bute, derived from the hereditary office "Steward of Bute" held since 1157. The family are male-line descendants of John Stewart, the illegitimate son of <u>King Robert II</u> of Scotland, the first Stuart King, by his mistress, Moira Leitch. By virtue of this descent, they are also descendants of Robert the Bruce, whose daughter <u>Marjorie</u> was mother of <u>Robert II</u> by her marriage to <u>Walter Stewart</u>, 6th High Steward of Scotland. After his earlier creations of <u>Cardiff Castle</u> and <u>Castell Coch</u> in Cardiff, the Marquess used many of the builders and workman he had employed in <u>South Wales</u>, including <u>William Burges</u> and much of that architect's team. Burges built an <u>oratory</u> at the house.

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The main part of the present house is a flamboyant example of 19th-century Gothic Revival architecture, built in a reddish-brown stone. Mount Stuart's major features include the colonnaded Marble Hall at the centre of the main block and the Marble Chapel, which has an elaborate spired tower which is the tallest part of the building. Two earlier wings in a strikingly different style survive. They are much smaller in scale, have Georgian-style sash windows and are painted white.

Much of the furniture was custom-designed for the house by <u>Robert Weir Schultz</u> in the early years of the 20th century. He also laid out many sections of the gardens. The Mount Stuart House claims to have the world's first heated pool in any house; it was also the first home in Scotland to be lit by electricity. The house holds The Bute Collection, a private collection of artwork and artefacts. The Collection also houses archives, books, furniture, and silverwork reflecting the interests of the Bute family's various generations, including 25,000 books on topics including theology, botany, agriculture and Scottish history and literature. In April 2016 it was announced that a Shakespeare <u>First Folio</u> had been discovered in the House's Library. The folio belonged to <u>Isaac Reed</u>.

Tickets: Adult Gardens Only: £7.50 per ticket. Adult House and Gardens: £16.50 per ticket Concession/Student House and Garden: £14 Group House and Gardens: £9.50 per ticket

https://www.mountstuart.com/

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COMMODORE GUESTHOUSE SUITE INFO FOR PLANNING IF THAT IS THE CHOICE

Includes taxes and charges I	Room type	Number of guests	Price for 2 nights	Your choices	Select amount
Only 1 left on our site Bedroom 1: 2 single beds □ Includes taxes and charges Incl	More				
Ensuite bathroom Sea view □ Fiat-screen TV Free WiFi More Suite with Sea View □ Private suite 1	Suite with Sea View Only 1 left on our site Bedroom 1: 2 single beds and 1 bunk bed			✓ Free cancellation before 6 September	0 🗸
Only 1 left on our site Bedroom 1: 3 single beds Sea view Private kitchenette Filat-screen TV Free WiFl Only 1 left on our site More Private kitchenette Priva	Private kitchen	****		✓ Free cancellation before 6 September	0 🗸
## Final Private kitchenette ## Ensuite bathroom	Suite with Sea View Only 1 left on our site Bedroom 1: 3 single beds Living room: 1 sofa bed	****		✓ Free cancellation before 6 September	0 🗸
Only 1 left on our site Bedroom 1: 1 double bed Living room: 1 sofa bed Living room: 1 sofa bed Living room: 1 for 172 feet² Private suite 1 1 172 feet² Private kitchen Private bathroom See Sea view Free cancellation before 6 September 2024 Living room: 1 sofa bed Living room: 2024 Living room: 1 sofa bed Living room: 2024 Private suite 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Private kitchenette			✓ Free cancellation before 6 September	0 🗸
E170 Includes taxes and charges Free WiFi More E170 Very good breakfast included Free cancellation before 6 September 2024	Suite with Sea View Only 1 left on our site Bedroom 1: 1 double bed Living room: 1 sofa bed			✓ Free cancellation before 6 September	0 🗸
	₩ Ensuite bathroom 🕍 Sea view	**		✓ Free cancellation before 6 September	0 🗸
	more				

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Room type	Number of guests	Price for 2 nights	Your choices	Select amount					
Suite with Sea View Only 1 left on our site Bedroom 1: 1 double bed Living room: 1 sofa bed Private suite 10 344 feet ² Private kitchenette Private bathroom Sea view Flat-screen TV Free WiFi		£210 Includes taxes and charges £190 Includes taxes and charges	 ✓ Very good breakfast included ✓ Free cancellation before 6 September 2024 ✓ Very good breakfast included ✓ Free cancellation before 6 September 2024 		I'll reserve It only takes 2 minutes Confirmation is immediate				
Limited supply in Rothesay for your dates: 2 three-star guest houses like this are already unavailable on our site Commodore Guesthouse, Self-Catering Suites may charge additional fees not shown above. See the fine print to read more about this property. Guest reviews See availability									
Categories:	9,5	Facilities	8.7 Cleanline	acc	9,3				
Comfort		Value for money	9.0 Location		9.7				
Free WiFi	8.9								
Select topics to read reviews: + Location + View + B	Breakfast + Clea	an + Room							

See what guests loved the most:

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Bedroom 1: 1 large double bed Living room: 1 sofa bed				• Ca
☐ Private kitchen ☐ Private bathroom ☐ Sea view ☐ Flat-screen TV ☐ Free WiFi	***	£190 Includes taxes and charges	 ✓ Very good breakfast included ✓ Free cancellation before 6 September 2024 	0 🗸
✓ Free toiletries ✓ Kitchen ✓ Toilet ✓ Sofa ✓ Bath or shower ✓ Towels ✓ Linen ✓ Cleaning products ✓ Seating Area ✓ TV ✓ Refrigerator ✓ Tea/Coffee maker ✓ Microwave				
✓ Heating ✓ Hairdryer ✓ Kitchenware ✓ DVD player ✓ Carpeted ✓ Electric kettle ✓ Wardrobe or closet ✓ Toaster ✓ Dining table ✓ Upper floors accessible by stairs only ✓ Toilet paper ✓ Board games/puzzles ✓ Books, DVDs, or music for children ✓ Sofa bed ✓ Hand sanitiser	44	£170 Includes taxes and charges	✓ Very good breakfast included ✓ Free cancellation before 6 September 2024	0 🗸
Suite with Garden View Only 1 left on our site Bedroom 1: 1 double bed Living room: 1 sofa bed	***	£180 Includes taxes and charges	✓ Very good breakfast included ✓ Free cancellation before 6 September 2024	
		£160 Includes taxes and charges	✓ Very good breakfast included ✓ Free cancellation before 6 September 2024	0 🗸