

Picture this – ideal Christmas gift for potential travel writers

An Edinburgh journalist and a national news photographer have teamed up to give would-be travel writers a platform to hone their writing and photography skills.

The Rabbie Burns inspired weekend in January could be the perfect Christmas present which kick-starts new writing careers, says established travel writer Jean West.

On Assignment – [a writing and photography retreat held at the Ness Walk Hotel in Inverness](#) – includes three nights accommodation, dinner and a Burns Supper at the five-star establishment.

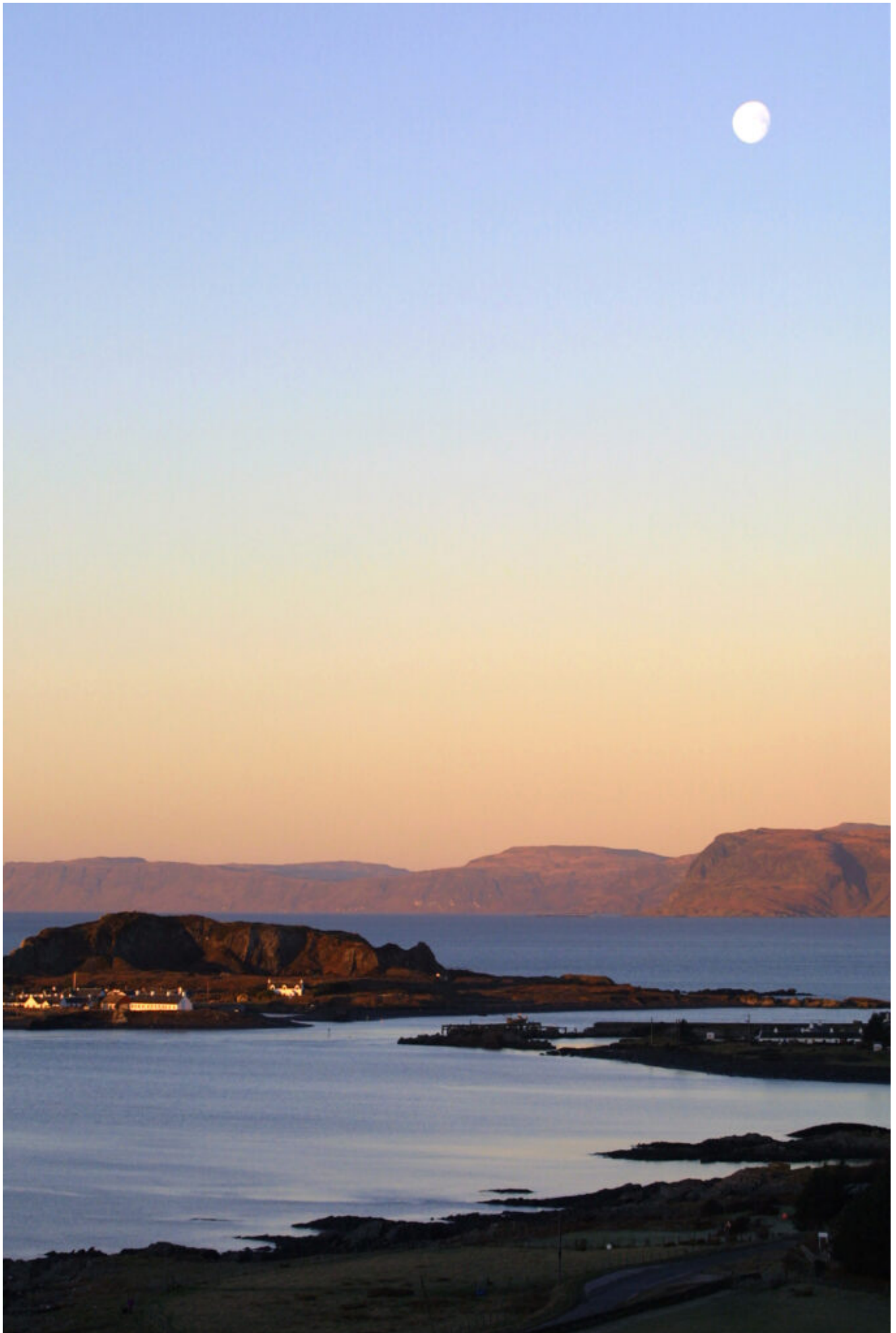
Daily workshops which unveil a toolbox of professional media tips will revolve around the life of Scotland's national Bard and the stunning historical attractions of the Highland Capital.

The workshop is tagged for those who want to have a go at travel writing – and there will be plenty of colour to draw on from the natural world and ancient and historic Inverness. But the pair are also excited to encourage those keen to establish a blog or who simply want to create a professional diary of their hobbies.

Photographer Colin Macpherson has spent three decades

documenting the nation's biggest news and feature stories for Scottish and international newspapers and magazines while West is an established travel journalist whose work is published in leading publications.

Jean West said: "We have deliberately chosen Burns weekend for this exploration of how to create written and visual stories with confidence. Whilst we will discuss the writer's legacy during the weekend and celebrate with a colourful Burns Supper at Ness Walk, our broader teachings will be about capturing and representing this magnificent Scottish Highland capital city as you find it today.



@Colin McPherson



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“From the elegantly placed hotel on the banks of the majestic River Ness we are presented with a rich opportunity for source material. The city boasts an ancient cathedral and castle, vibrant art galleries and museums, and a thriving music scene and its colourful past and present draw thousands of international visitors each year.

“We will help guests distill the stories harvested during the weekend course into exciting copy animated by stunning visuals and they will leave with a practical toolbox of tricks that will serve long after departure.”

“We want to pass on our skills, expertise and confidence so that participants feel they can produce content they feel more than happy to share,” says McPherson, who has had work displayed in the National Galleries of Scotland.

“Past workshop participants have loved to travel and take a camera or notebook to record their experiences. We want to tool them up with the courage to share with friends and family, on a blog or even attempt publication.”

On Assignment Burns Night Photography and Writing Retreat at the Ness Walk Hotel, Inverness runs from 24-27 January. For more details and to book, [visit here.](#)