‘The city whispers: come
Look at me, listen to the beating of my heart
I am the place you have seen in dreams
I am a stage for you to play upon
I am Edinburgh”

Alexander McCall Smith - Author

Edinburgh’s beauty is both staggering and inimitable - but the city is far more than just a pretty face. Take a closer look and there’s much more to discover.

Our shopping ranges from the world’s best luxury names to local independent talent just waiting to be discovered. Our food, be it Michelin-starred or pop-up street-food markets with award-winning chefs, is mouth-wateringly delicious.

From the rich – sometimes hidden – history that surrounds your every step, to the wealth of lush, green spaces peppered around the city centre, Edinburgh continually surprises, delights and inspires.

Join us and find out why there’s nowhere in the world quite like Scotland’s capital.

For more information on Edinburgh, or to speak with us about visiting our great city, please contact: visit@edinburgh.gov.uk

For urgent enquiries, contact fiona.hunter@edinburgh.gov.uk

edinburgh.org

Image library: flickr.com/thisisedinburgh
Tweet us @Edinburgh
facebook.com/Edinburgh
instagram.com/ThisisEdinburgh
YouTube/ThisisEdinburgh

Every effort is made to ensure that information in this document is correct at time of publication.
Advice on travelling to Edinburgh

Before you travel to Edinburgh, please ensure you are aware of the latest health and safety guidance and travel restrictions. Further information can be found via the Scottish Government’s website: gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-protection-levels/

Each area has a COVID protection level. There are 5 different levels starting from 0 to 4. The lowest level is 0 and the highest level is 4.

Covid-19 protection levels (tiers) by area

Find out the COVID protection level (tier) for Edinburgh and other local areas in Scotland and get information on what you can and cannot do in Edinburgh at each level.

The Guidance includes:
• Not travelling if you have COVID-19 symptoms or have been told to self-isolate
• Observing physical distancing measures
• Regular use of hand sanitiser and regular handwashing
• Planning ahead and checking if businesses and attractions are open and welcoming visitors
• Being considerate of local communities and their precious resources
• Supporting the local tourism industry by eating local, seeing local and buying local.

Test and Protect Scotland App

The Protect Scotland app from NHS Scotland’s Test and Protect is a free, mobile phone app designed to help us protect each other and reduce the spread of coronavirus.

The app will alert you if you have been in close contact with another app user who tests positive for coronavirus. And if you test positive, it can help in determining contacts that you may have otherwise missed while keeping your information private and anonymous.

Download the Protect Scotland app from the Apple Store and Google Playstore.

New marketing campaign for Scotland’s capital
Forever Edinburgh
The Story Never Ends
If Edinburgh’s characterful streets, historic buildings and beautiful outdoor spaces could speak what stories would they tell? A question that will be answered through the new marketing campaign ‘Forever Edinburgh - The Story Never Ends’.

Set to deliver a huge awareness boost amongst domestic visitors, the campaign will bring to life the Capital’s dynamic stories and the unique experiences to be had around every corner of the city.

Alongside showcasing all the city has to offer in its city centre and eclectic neighbourhoods, the campaign will also shine a light on its abundance of outdoor spaces, including coastal and waterway locations, as it looks to demonstrate the versatility of the city for a holistic visitor experience throughout the year.

The campaign will launch with a new hero film, inspiring imagery and dedicated story-themed content and itineraries on edinburgh.org.

Designed to support local businesses in their recovery from the pandemic and encourage footfall from both locals and tourists back into the city centre and its surrounding neighbourhoods, #ForeverEdinburgh will take over the existing ‘This Is Edinburgh’ social media accounts and website, changing the name and gaining an audience of almost half a million followers across Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

This is good news for followers – along with new and updated branding, they can expect to see more updated and refreshed content on social media as #ForeverEdinburgh’s new channels become the go-tos for community news and events, promotional offers and useful information about Edinburgh, including how to explore and rediscover the city centre and local communities safely. The channels will also highlight a vast range of Edinburgh’s incredible local businesses and attractions.

Residents and visitors are being encouraged to join in the conversation and share their stories of their experiences in and around this beautiful location by using #ForeverEdinburgh.
Edinburgh’s Heritage

Edinburgh has been inhabited since the Bronze Age; its first settlement can be traced to a hillfort established in the area, most likely on the castle rock. Here are just a few areas that form part of Edinburgh’s rich heritage...

Royal Mile
The Royal Mile is at the centre of Edinburgh’s Old Town and is one Scots Mile long (around 225 yards longer than a ‘standard’ mile). With Edinburgh Castle at its head and the Palace of Holyroodhouse at its foot, The Royal Mile features many historic buildings; Gladstone’s Land, The Real Mary King’s Close and John Knox House to name but a few. It is also home to St Giles’ Cathedral, established during the reign of King David in the 1120’s. As the epicentre for tourists in Edinburgh, the Royal Mile has also seen prestigious new additions in recent history, most notably the Scottish Parliament.

New Town
Designed in 1767, the New Town’s mixture of classical architecture, squares and terraces, gardens and lanes are a prime example of town planning from the Georgian period. Charlotte Square, designed by architect Robert Adam in 1791, is where you can visit the Georgian House and experience the high society lifestyle from over 200 years ago. Princes Street Gardens, once the location of the Nor’Loch, is now a serene garden space dividing the Old and New Towns.

Dean Village
In the past, Dean Village was known as the ‘Water of Leith Village’; a successful grain milling hamlet for more than 800 years. At one time there were no fewer than eleven working mills there, and the remnants of the industry can still be seen today. Tucked away, this is an area that feels – and looks – very different to the city centre but is only moments away.

Charlotte Square to Stockbridge
A walk from Charlotte Square to Stockbridge incorporates some of the most impressive parts of the Georgian New Town and streets which haven’t changed much since the early 1800s. The Earl of Moray owned the area and in 1833 appointed James Gillespie Graham to design an extension of the New Town which can be seen when walking between destinations.

Edinburgh Castle
Edinburgh Castle dominates the Edinburgh city skyline and has housed many Scottish monarchs including Queen Margaret and Mary Queen of Scots. The Castle is still a functioning barracks, as well as the focal point of spectacular fireworks displays at Hogmanay and during August’s festivals. With its rich history and stunning views across Edinburgh and beyond from within the city centre, it’s a must-see when in the capital. The one o’clock gun is fired at exactly 1pm six days a week, drawing large crowds to watch. The Castle welcomes around 2.1 million visitors each year.

Calton Hill
‘Of all places for a view, this Calton Hill is perhaps the best’ Robert Louis Stevenson, 1889.
Home to some of Edinburgh’s most iconic monuments and one of the city’s most picturesque locations, Calton Hill helped the city earn the nickname ‘Athens of the North’. The twelve columns of the National Monument, built to commemorate Scottish service men who died during Napoleonic Wars but never finished, towers majestically over the city. Calton Hill is also home to the Nelson Monument, built in 1816. The Time Ball on the Monument, added in 1853 to enable ships anchored in the Firth of Forth to set their time-pieces accurately, still drops at one o’clock, six days a week. This is also where the Collective Gallery is situated – a new contemporary art gallery based in the City Observatory which dates back to 1818.

Arthur’s Seat
Set within Holyrood Park, a short walk from Edinburgh’s Royal Mile in the heart of the city, Arthur’s Seat is an extinct volcano, which sits 251m above sea level and gives excellent views of the city. Within the park you’ll also find St Anthony’s Chapel – a 15th century medieval chapel, Salisbury Crags – a series of 150 foot cliffs faces dominating Edinburgh’s skyline, as well as Duddingston Loch – a fresh water loch rich in birdlife.

Grassmarket
Nestled in the heart of Edinburgh’s historic Old Town, the Grassmarket is one of the most vibrant, picturesque and convivial areas of the city. A paradise of independent merchants, designers and artisans, it’s home to some of the best restaurants in Edinburgh as well as some of the most animated and eclectic bars.
The city's past is filled with significant moments, and a few notorious ones too.

- Around 340 million BC. The castle rock is created by volcanic activity.
- Around 900 BC. First archaeological evidence of human settlement on the castle.
- 1124 David I builds a formidable royal castle on the rock. It includes a chapel dedicated to his mother Queen Margaret, which still stands.
- 1500 Edinburgh has a population of about 12,000.
- 1528 King James V enters city with an army, to assert his right to rule; Holyrood Palace is built for him.
- 1801 The population of Edinburgh is approaching 91,000.
- 1802 Construction of the New Town begins. The competition is won by James Craig.
- 1759 The Nor' Loch, now the site of Princes Street gardens, is drained.
- 1761 A ‘journey coach’ to London is introduced; it takes a fortnight to make the journey.
- 1777 The first coffee house opens in the city.
- 1775 Hibernian Football Club is founded.
- 1802 A ‘journey coach’ to London is introduced; it takes a fortnight to make the journey.
- 1875 The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie is published.
- 1875 McVitie & Price Ltd, biscuit makers, are founded on Rose Street.
- 1833 John Menzies opens book shop on Princes Street.
- 1842 Scottish philosopher and father of modern economics, Adam Smith begins to deliver public lectures in Edinburgh.
- 1852 Edinburgh University is founded.
- 1879 Walter Scott is sent to the Royal High School.
- 1801 The population of Edinburgh is about 50,000.
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Culture and Events

Home to so many fantastic cultural attractions, it’s unsurprising that Edinburgh is recognised as one of the most vibrant, beautiful and interesting cities in the world.

The first city in the world to be named a UNESCO City of Literature, Edinburgh offers so many opportunities to spend a day immersing yourself in its rich literary heritage on one of the city’s popular tours.

From major galleries and museums, to theatre, comedy and music, there are discoveries to be made around every corner, and a year-long calendar of exciting festivals and events to suit all tastes and ages.

Hidden Door Festival
15 - 19 September 2021
One of Edinburgh’s coolest and most exciting festivals, Hidden Door is due to return and is taking place at Granton Gasworks. Filling the space with music, immersive film and art, the festival is a celebration of artistic delights. Volunteer-run and not-for-profit, Hidden Door transforms disused spaces around Edinburgh, opening them up for exploration - meaning you’ll find something fascinating around every corner, with contemporary artists rubbing shoulders with some of the UK’s best alternative performers and musicians.

Meadows Festival
2021 cancelled. Due to return in 2022
An annual event since 1974, Meadows Festival is a celebration of local Edinburgh talent - musicians, foodies and performers will descend on the Meadows, creating a festival atmosphere ideal for everyone from families to groups of friends. Enjoy some of the best musical talent the city is home to on the main stage and explore the market stalls and delicious street food on offer. And if that’s not enough, get involved with some of the other exciting and original events in one of Edinburgh’s best-loved open spaces.

Pride Edinburgh
Virtual event expected in summer 2021. An announcement about a physical event in 2022 will be made later in the year.
Pride Edinburgh is Scotland’s National LGBTIQ+ Festival. Scotland’s first Pride festival took place in Edinburgh in 1995. Taking place around June or July each year, the traditional Pride Edinburgh march celebrates diversity and personal identity as well as providing a platform for politicians, community activists, and most importantly individuals turn out to march through the streets of Edinburgh to celebrate Pride.

Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival
16 - 25 July 2021
More than 170 gigs span from the early days of jazz and blues to the best of the contemporary scene mean the Edinburgh Jazz & Blues festival has something for every mood and musical taste, with the finest jazz and blues talent from all corners of the globe descending on Edinburgh. From bop to boogie-woogie to blues-rock, from samba to swing to soul, in venues ranging from grandiose Spiegeltents to the opulence of the Festival Theatre to hip jazz clubs, this is a festival that matches mazing music to some great venues.

Edinburgh Summer Sessions
6 - 15 August 2021
Edinburgh Summer Sessions, at Princes Street Gardens, is back, with an amazing line up for 2021. With tickets on sale now, this is the ideal opportunity to hear artists like Anne-Marie, DMA’s, Tom Jones, Michael Kiwanuka, Travis and Simple Minds in the gorgeous Princes Street Gardens, with the iconic Edinburgh Castle as your backdrop.

Beyond Borders International Festival
Expected to take place 28 and 29 August 2021
Beyond Borders International Festival 2021 is due to return to Traquair House this summer. Join in to experience the world in a weekend for this festival of thought, debate, dialogue, music, performing and visual arts, film, and well-being. Hear tales of high political intrigue from diplomats and journalists, absorb literature and storytelling from internationally acclaimed authors and discuss the ever-turbulent political landscape in Scotland and beyond.
Edinburgh has played a starring role as a superb film location for some of the UK’s best-loved productions. From blockbusters such as Avengers: Infinity War to Trainspotting and Sunshine on Leith, Scotland’s capital is just as used to playing a leading role on the big screen as it is on the world stage.

The city has provided a stunning, evocative and versatile backdrop for big screen productions and television series alike. Its compact nature and popularity make it the perfect film tourism destination and launchpad for other locations across Scotland that have appeared in some of the world’s best loved and enduring films. Find location maps, guides and information about other productions made in the city on the Forever Edinburgh website. edinburgh.org/edinburgh-on-film

**Fast & Furious 9**
*Release date June 2021*
This is an internationally successful franchise. This film is directed by Justin Lin, starring Vin Diesel, Michelle Rodriguez, John Cena, Tej and Tyrese Gibson to name a few. This is the ninth chapter in the saga and has earned around $6 billion around the world. Filmed in Edinburgh over 19 days in 11 different areas of the city centre, locations included Waterloo Place, George Street, Cockburn Street, Victoria Street, Royal Mile, Melville Street and the Museum of Scotland.

**Eurovision Song Contest: The Story of Fire Saga**
*Released 2020*
A feel-good film about chasing your dreams, friendship, rivalry and of course, singing! This musical comedy parody focuses on aspiring Icelandic musicians Lars (Will Ferrell) and Sigrit (Rachel McAdams) who are given the opportunity to represent their country at the Eurovision Song Contest. Film locations included the Royal Mile, Ross Fountain, Calton Hill and the Grassmarket.

**The Princess Switch: Switched Again**
*Released 2020*
A sequel to The Princess Switch, starring Vanessa Hudgens. The story follows Duchess Margaret as she unexpectedly inherits the throne to Montenegro. This film involved some spectacular scenery, country houses and castles in and around Edinburgh including the Dome on George Street, a market scene in Parliament Square, Hopetoun House, Gosford in East Lothian and Manderston in the Scottish Borders.

**Clique**
*Released 2017 (Season 1), 2018 (Season 2)*
Psychological thriller Clique, from Skins writer Jess Brittain, follows two friends as they embark on their lives as university students in Edinburgh. They soon find themselves drawn to an elite clique of alpha girls led by charismatic lecturer Jude McDermid. Filmed on location in Edinburgh, the series features a host of recognisable spots including The Meadows, Dynamic Earth, Potterow and Parliament Square to name but a few.
Outlaw King
Released on Netflix 9 November 2018
Starring Chris Pine, Outlaw King opened the 2018 Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) and premiered in Edinburgh ahead of its Netflix release. The film spent seven days filming in Edinburgh, but over a month of preparation saw the production team build a medieval village around Craigmillar Castle. The castle, which also features in Outlander season 3, appears alongside scenes shot at Seaciff Beach in East Lothian.

Avengers: Infinity War
Released April 2018
The nineteenth film in one of the world’s biggest and beloved movie franchises, Avengers: Infinity War stars Robert Downey Jr, Chris Evans, Chris Hemsworth, Scarlett Johansson, Mark Ruffalo, Anthony Mackie, Elizabeth Olsen and Paul Bettany. Filmed partly on location in Edinburgh over seven weeks, Avengers: Infinity War was the largest and most complex shoot ever to film in Edinburgh’s historic Old Town and city centre, and the film’s biggest on-location shoot. The Edinburgh scenes featured in the film include an epic battle on the Royal Mile, on the roof of St Giles’ Cathedral and in Waverley Train Station, complete with explosions and a reunion of some of the film’s central characters.

Outlander Season 3
Released September 2017
Adapted from the best-selling book series by Diana Gabaldon, Outlander follows the story of Claire Randall, a nurse who travels back in time to 1743 from her native 1945. For the first time in the series, locations in the city of Edinburgh make an appearance: the lecture theatre at Summerhall, Craigmillar Castle, Bakehouse Close and Tweeddale Court in Edinburgh’s Old Town and the splendid Signet Library are all featured in Season 3.
Twelve festivals over twelve months means thousands of designated festival events in Edinburgh, attracting artists, audiences and media from every continent and over 70 countries. Below are just a few of Edinburgh’s best annual events...

Edinburgh Marathon Festival
The Edinburgh Marathon is officially on the map as one of the leading road races in the world, and the annual Edinburgh Marathon Festival is a focal point in the running calendar, bringing events and races for people of all ages and abilities to get involved and challenge themselves. edinburghmarathon.com

Edinburgh International Children’s Festival
25 May - 6 June 2021
Ideal for family audiences, the Edinburgh International Children’s Festival brings local and international performers together to present a wonderful programme of fun-filled, free shows for children and young people. This is now the UK’s largest festival of performing arts for this age group. imaginiate.org.uk

Edinburgh International Film Festival
18 – 24 August 2021
Intimate in its scale, ambitious in its scope, and fuelled by pure passion for cinema in all its manifestations, EIFF seeks to spotlight the most exciting and innovative new film talent, in a setting steeped in history. Showcasing the best in international film and documentary genres, past premieres have included Dr Zhivago, Taxi Driver, Manhattan, Blade Runner, Back to the Future, and Pulp Fiction amongst others. edfilmfest.org.uk

Edinburgh Science Festival
26 June – 11 July 2021
One of Europe's largest Science Festivals consisting of a large number of exciting events. There is an eclectic mix of discussions, performances, exhibitions and events. sciencefestival.co.uk
Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival
16 - 25 July 2021
Edinburgh Jazz Festival was set up in 1978 by banjo-player and guitarist, Mike Hart with an initial focus on traditional jazz and a host of events taking place in pubs. A concentration on musical excellence and championing spontaneous creativity often leads to music making on the spot. Today, the festival presents some of the very best musical talent from across the globe.
edinburghjazzfestival.com

Edinburgh International Festival
7 - 29 August 2021
Founded in 1947 as a celebration of peace through the arts, the Edinburgh International Festival showcases the very best and most prestigious international companies. In 2021 bespoke, temporary outdoor pavilions across the city will host live music, opera and theatre in a socially distanced setting.
edf.co.uk

Edinburgh Art Festival
29 July – 29 August 2021
More than 40 museums, galleries and pop-up spaces come together in August to programme the Edinburgh Art Festival, with free entry to most exhibitions. It presents the best, most exciting and intriguing work in visual arts practice.
edinburghartfestival.com

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo
The 2021 show has been cancelled.
Dated for 2022 are 5 – 27 August
The Tattoo is an iconic Edinburgh institution and a sell-out year after year after year. Music, dance and precision display with the Massed Pipes and Drums, the Massed Military Bands, cultural troupe, singers and the poignant refrain of the Lone Piper against the stunning backdrop of Edinburgh Castle.
edintattoo.co.uk

Edinburgh Festival Fringe
6 - 30 August 2021
The one and only. An explosion of theatre, comedy, dance, physical theatre, music, children’s shows, exhibitions, musicals, and street performers brings over 2,500 shows to over 250 venues in Edinburgh. Expect the unexpected – all performers are welcome, with acts ranging from the experimental to new material from household names.
edfringe.com

Scottish International Storytelling Festival
15 - 31 October 2021
For centuries live oral storytelling, blended with music and song, has carried Scotland’s voices to generation to generation - and round the world. The Storytelling Festival is a ten-day celebration of traditional and contemporary storytelling, oral traditions and cultural diversity, bringing together artists and audiences across Scotland and beyond.
sisf.org.uk

Edinburgh Oktoberfest
October 2021 – dates to be confirmed
Edinburgh’s Oktoberfest brings more than just a taste of the Bavarian to the Scottish capital. Hosted in a large beer tent next to West Princes Street Gardens, right in the heart of the city, the area is transformed into a traditional Oktoberfest complete with beer, live music, and a fantastic atmosphere. With space for 1,200, immerse yourself in a celebration of authentic German beer, food, community and music!
edinburgh-oktoberfest.co.uk

Edinburgh’s Hogmanay
30 December 2021 - 1 January 2022
Hogmanay - the Scottish word for New Year’s Eve - is one of the big celebrations in Edinburgh and a bucket list experience for people from around the world. With celebrations including an awe-inspiring torchlit procession through the city’s streets to ceilidhs to the street party, fireworks and Loony Dook on 1 January, it’s the ultimate way to say goodbye to the old and welcome in the new year.
edinburghshogmanay.com

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edinburgh-oktoberfest.co.uk

Edinburgh International Book Festival
14 - 30 August 2021
The Edinburgh International Book Festival is the largest public celebration of ideas and the written word in the world. Over 900 participants from 47 different countries are welcomed to Edinburgh, the world’s first UNESCO City of Literature. The 2021 Festival will take place from the beautiful indoor and open, grassy outdoor spaces of the University of Edinburgh’s Edinburgh College of Art on Lauriston Place.
edbookfest.co.uk

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edinburghshogmanay.com

Keep up to date with the latest in Edinburgh’s festival calendar at edinburgh.org/discover/edinburgh-festivals
Attractions
From pandas to pop-art and dinosaurs to Dolly the Sheep, Edinburgh boasts art galleries, museums, parks and much more, all within easy reach in the UK’s most walkable city. Take an early morning walk on Portobello beach, enjoy a dram (or two) at the Scotch Whisky Experience, peruse world-class art in our National Galleries and, of course, visit Edinburgh Castle and watch the One O’Clock Gun being fired. Despite its timeless setting, Edinburgh is a city that never stands still.

Free Attractions

National Museum of Scotland
Discover the delights of the natural world, explore ancient civilisations and enthuse at treasures from around the world. Explore Scottish history, art, design, fashion and the wonders of science, technology and design.
Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF
+44 (0) 300 123 6789 | nms.ac.uk

The Potter Trail
Muggles welcome. Visit and learn about the Edinburgh locations that inspired JK Rowling to create her famous characters and scenes from the much-loved Harry Potter books. Along with visiting where she wrote her books, visitors will learn about the real life witches and wizards of medical Edinburgh.
Tours depart outside Greyfriars Bobby statue on George IV Bridge, across from the National Museum of Scotland. pottertrail.com

Scottish National Portrait Gallery
The Scottish National Portrait Gallery is in the heart of Edinburgh and houses one of the best collections of fine art in the world. From Mary, Queen of Scots and Bonnie Prince Charlie, to contemporary figures such as Tilda Swinton and Billy Connolly, come meet the people who have helped shape the nation’s identity at home and abroad.
1 Queen St, Edinburgh, EH2 2UD
+44 (0) 131 624 6200 | nationalgalleries.org

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
Founded in the 17th century as a physic garden, The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh now extends over four gardens, cultivating a rich living collection of plants, flower and fauna. It’s rightly a world-renowned centre for plant science and education.
20A Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, EH3 5LR
+44 (0) 131 248 2909 | rbge.org.uk

City Art Centre
The home of around 3,500 works of Scottish art in the form of paintings, watercolours, drawings, prints, photographs, sculpture and tapestries including works by McTaggart, Fergusson, Peploe and Eardley. Visitors can enjoy a varied programme of temporary exhibitions from throughout the world including the City’s national recognised collection.
2 Market Street, Edinburgh EH1 1DE
+44 (0) 131 529 3993 | edinburghmuseums.org.uk
Paid Attractions

Johnnie Walker Princes Street
A new whisky visitor experience is set to open in 2021. The drinks giant’s investment is transforming the former House of Fraser department store in Edinburgh West End of Princes Street into a series of private dining areas, modern sensory tasting rooms, personalised tour and tasting experiences, and live performance areas. The new rooftop bar The Explorers Bothy will stock 150 rare bottles and one-of-a-kind cask editions for visitors to enjoy alongside stunning views of Edinburgh Castle.

Edinburgh Zoo
Over 600,000 annual visitors can’t be wrong! Edinburgh Zoo is a must for any animal lover visiting Edinburgh. Get close to over 1,000 rare and endangered animals or join one of the many educational events and activities – ranging from keeper talks through to hands-on animal encounters.

The Real Mary King’s Close
Take a tour underground into one of Edinburgh’s most fascinating streets – covered over and left abandoned, you’ll walk the passageways and through the homes and places where the Old Town’s residents once lived and worked. Frozen in time, Mary King’s Close gives you the chance to walk into the city’s dark past, preserved just as it was in the 17th century.

Usher Hall
Scotland’s only five-star concert hall, the Usher Hall is famed for hosting a range of concerts and performances from the worlds of rock, pop, classical, jazz, world and folk music. Offering a packed programme to suit all tastes, this beautiful Edwardian building is well-loved by performers and audiences alike thanks to its magnificent acoustics.

Dynamic Earth
Experience the primeval forces of nature as they shaped our planet, journey through space and time and even go on a 4DVENTURE around the world with one of Edinburgh’s most exciting attractions. Beginning in the distant past you’ll learn about how the planet formed and how life began before enjoying a thrilling dome theatre trip to space and beyond.

Royal Yacht Britannia
Home to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family for over 40 years, sailing over 1,000,000 miles around the world the Royal Yacht Britannia is the UK’s no.1 attraction (TripAdvisor). Now berthed in Edinburgh, you can follow in the footsteps of Royalty to discover the heart and soul of this most special of Royal residences.

Surgeons’ Hall Museum
Learn more about our fascinating bodies, the histories of dentistry, medicine and surgery and the vital part that Scottish research played in all three. Surgeons’ Hall Museum opened to the general public in 1832, making it Scotland’s oldest museum. The venue features interactive displays and exhibits, which will help visitors discover the stories and breakthroughs that have shaped modern surgical practice.

Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Nicolson Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1LE
+44 (0) 131 527 1711 | museum.rcsed.ac.uk

Edinburgh Zoo
134 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 6TS
+44 (0) 131 334 9171 | edinburghzoo.org.uk

Usher Hall
Lothian Road, Edinburgh, EH1 2EA
+44 (0) 131 228 1155 | usherhall.co.uk

Royal Yacht Britannia
Ocean Drive, Leith, Edinburgh EH6 6JJ
+44 (0) 131 555 5566 | royalyachtbritannia.co.uk

Surgeons’ Hall Museum
2 Warriston’s Close, High Street, Edinburgh, E17 1PG
+44 (0) 131 297 1101 | realmarykingsclose.com
Food and Drink

With more restaurants per head of population than anywhere else in the UK, Edinburgh has a wealth of fantastic places to eat and drink. Head to Leith for an eclectic mix of food options – from high end luxury and Michelin star perfection to pub grub and local food markets with everything in between. Elsewhere, there are supper clubs, pop-up restaurants, even ‘collaborative feasts’ – just a snapshot of the cordon bleu cookery that’s on your doorstep and around every corner in Edinburgh, a cosmopolitan city that loves its grub.

Hawksmoor Edinburgh
A short walk from Waverley station, Princes Street and just off St Andrew Square, Hawksmoor Edinburgh is located in the beautiful former national Bank of Scotland Banking Hall. In Edinburgh, Hawksmoor draws on the amazing produce that Scotland has to offer, featuring seafood from around the Scottish coast and beef from grass-fed native breed cattle.

23 West Register Street, Edinburgh EH2 2AA
thehawksmoor.com/locations/Edinburgh

The Refinery
Perfectly located in the heart of Edinburgh, The Refinery is a laid back but glamorous hub in the city’s thriving drinking and dining scene. A simply stunning setting combining industrial sophistication with Scottish comforts. Day or night, from business breakfasts to long dinner dates, The Refinery St Andrew Square is your escape from the everyday.
5 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 2BD
drakeandmorgan.co.uk/the-refinery-st-andrew-square

Badger & Co.
Housed in the former home of Wind in the Willows author Kenneth Grahame, Badger & Co. serves a menu inspired by local and seasonal produce. They also have an exclusive private dining room and a new outdoor terrace, which offers stunning views of Edinburgh Castle. With fine drinks, food and amazing cocktails, there’s so much to be discovered at Badger & Co.
32 Castle Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3HT
badgerandco.com

Grand Café at the Scotsman
Set within the Scotsman’s former advertising hall, the Grand Cafe’s spectacular double height space seats one hundred and fifty covers across its spectacular ground floor and balcony, filled with light, character and beautiful period features. Inspired by the ‘Grand Cafes’ of Europe, the new North Bridge venue promises a welcoming, relaxed drinking and dining experience to suit all tastes and occasions.
North Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1TR
grandcafeedinburgh.co.uk

The Witchery
Hidden in a collection of historic buildings at the gates to Edinburgh Castle, James Thomson’s Witchery is the most spectacularly atmospheric dining destination in the city. The stunning decor and legendary food have ensured the Witchery by the Castle has become a much-loved Edinburgh institution. Dine in the rich baroque surroundings of the original oak-panelled Witchery or among the elegant candle-lit charms of the Secret Garden.
The Witchery by the Castle, Castlehill, The Royal Mile, Edinburgh EH1 2NF |thewitchery.com

Twenty Princes Street
Twenty Princes Street with its massive picture windows overlooking Princes Street effortlessly blends visionary design with exceptional dining & drinking. Whether it’s a lazy lunch, a catch up with colleagues or an enchanting dinner you’ll discover seasonal, handcrafted dishes, using fresh, locally sourced ingredients that are perfectly presented.
20 Princes Street, Edinburgh EH2 2AN
twentyprincesstreet.co.uk
The Kitchin
Tom and Michaela Kitchin opened their restaurant, The Kitchin on Edinburgh’s Leith waterfront in 2006. The restaurant was awarded a Michelin star in 2007 and award after award has followed since. The Kitchin presents modern British seasonal cuisine influenced by French cooking techniques and an appreciation of the best quality ingredients available from Scotland’s fantastic natural larder.
78 Commercial Quay, Leith, Edinburgh EH6 6LX
thekitchin.com

The Ivy
Located in the prestigious St Andrew Square in the heart of Edinburgh’s new town, this is an all-day British brasserie featuring the best of modern British dishes in a relaxed dining atmosphere.
6 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 2BD
theivedinburgh.com

Burgers and Beers Grillhouse
Burgers and Beers carefully take the time to select the best produce locally from award-winning butchers, dedicating between 40-60 hours a week to hand-making all burgers on site. Even their burger buns come from an artisan French bakery. As they take time and pride in sourcing the best local produce, their aim is to be the best burgers you can find in the entire Scottish capital.
192a High Street, Royal Mile Edinburgh EH1 1RW
burgersandbeersgrillhouse.co.uk

o’Oliviero
Classically sophisticated Italian cuisine awaits guests at this restaurant on the Grassmarket. You’ll find an ambience perfect for an intimate dinner date, comfortable family dinner or special occasions with friends. Only steps away from Edinburgh Castle in the Old Town means there’s no reason to resist the authentic Italian cuisine on offer to diners visiting the city.
64 The Grassmarket, Edinburgh EH12JR
olivieros.co.uk

Hard Rock Cafe
Hard Rock Cafe Edinburgh offers guests a delectable menu featuring house-made entrées prepared with a touch of local flavour. Other enticing menu options include their Legendary Burger, fresh salads, and hand-crafted cocktails. Whether you’re after formal or relaxed, with your nearest and dearest or a large group, Hard Rock Cafe is ready for you.
20 George St, Edinburgh EH2 2PF
hardrockcafe.com

Meltmongers
Make way for Edinburgh’s dedicated grilled cheese place! It’s the hot melting cheese in a crispy buttery pocket of toasted goodness that truly makes it everyone’s comfort food. Depending on what you fancy, Meltmongers also offer sweet treats such as peanut butter and banana fried melt with optional Nutella.
80 Bruntsfield Place, Edinburgh EH10 4HG
facebook.com/meltmongers

Brew Lab Barista Training
Fancy yourself a coffee aficionado? Brew Lab offer a number of different levels of classes for you to learn the ins and outs of creating the finest espresso with just the right cream - and they can even help you improve your latte art. Learn in their dedicate brewing lab from their award winning baristas, and when you’re done, relax and stick around into the evening sampling their delicious food and drinks.
6-8 South College St, Edinburgh, EH8 9AA
brewlabcoffee.co.uk/training

Gin Tasting Canal Tour
Setting sail from Fountainbridge every Saturday during the summer months, this is the perfect treat for gin lovers everywhere. The two-hour cruise is packed with mouth-watering premium Scottish gins, cocktails and tasty bites as you cruise along Edinburgh’s canal to the stunning backdrop of the Edinburgh viaduct, before returning to the city centre.
re-union.org.uk

Scotch Whisky Experience
Become part of the whisky making process as you take a swirling, bubbling ride through a virtual whisky experience. Go on to learn the secrets of the Scotch whisky regions and the art of whisky blending with their guided sensory presentation. Tours finish in the fascinating McIntrye Bar with breath-taking views, and afterwards, take a seat in Amber, the restaurant, for mouth-watering food - and the option of more whisky, of course.
354 Castlehill, Edinburgh EH1 2NE
scotchwhiskyexperience.co.uk

At the Market
Every weekend, locals and visitors can explore four neighbourhood markets in Stockbridge, Leith, The Grassmarket and on Castle Terrace. From artisan fresh bread, seasonal vegetables and piping hot street food to local art, jewellery and second hand-books, you are guaranteed to find a tasty bargain.
edinburgh.org/things-to-do/activities/markets/

Red Bus Bistro
Get on board and enjoy either an Afternoon tea, Gin Tea or Gourmet Burger Experience on a vintage 1966 Routemaster Bus, while you take in the stunning sights that Edinburgh has to offer. This Unique experience is perfect for special occasions, or just to enjoy a meal while you get to know the city better – want something a little more private? You also have the option to hire the bus for exclusivity, making it great for parties.
redbusbistro.co.uk

See more of Edinburgh’s award-winning Food and Drink
edinburgh.org/food
Shopping

There are plenty of shopping options in Edinburgh. There is the absolute indulgence of Harvey Nichols and Multrees Walk or the second-hand emporia of Stockbridge or the fine art and antique showrooms in the New Town. In the West End and Grassmarket creative and unusual wares tempt and excite in the original stores and independent boutiques. There’s no risk of unimaginative shopping in this cosmopolitan city.

St James Quarter

Opening in June 2021 the the new centre will house 85 shops, 30 restaurants, 2 hotels and a cinema. The phase one opening line-up will bring together top brands that include: Zara, Mango, Pull & Bear, Rituals, H&M, Kurt Geiger, Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, as well as Dune, Bross Bagels and Salerno Pizza, ensuring there is something for everyone to enjoy. The centre will also see many exciting brands making their Scotland debuts with; Peloton, Bonnie & Wild, & Other Stories, Bershka and Stradivarius offering their exciting products in Edinburgh for the first time.

Over the next 18 months, more shops, restaurants and bars: W Edinburgh, a boutique Everyman Cinema, a Roomzzz Aparthotel, and 152 New Eidyn residential apartments.

Grassmarket

A creative hub for the city, the Grassmarket offers a unique specialist shopping experience. With over 90% of the shops independent, its packed with vintage, boutique, arts and crafts. Armstrong’s Vintage Emporium, established in 1840 has garments and accessories from every decade dating back to the Victorian era. Or check out the stunning tailored tweed at Walker Slater and the beautiful creations of the Red Door Gallery.

George Street

Home to some of Edinburgh’s favourite high street and designer stores, including Hollister, LK Bennett, The White Company, Anthropologie, George Street is the heart of Edinburgh’s Georgian New Town. Shops to satisfy every fashion lover’s needs are here, with cocktail bars and restaurants to match - the perfect venues to relax in after a hard day’s shopping.

Multrees Walk

Multrees Walk is the heart of luxury shopping in Edinburgh. Designers such as Mulberry, Louis Vuitton, Burberry, BOSS, Michael Kors and Strathberry create a treasure trove of shops. Pandora and Swarovski help shoppers sparkle, while fashionistas’ dream Harvey Nichols is packed with all the names you’d expect to find in the city’s finest shopping area.

St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, EH1 3DQ

multreeswalk.co.uk

Thistle Street

Nestled behind George Street, Thistle Street is one of Edinburgh’s best kept secrets filled with premium boutiques such as Jane Davidson, ALC and Biscuit. For a stylish and unique collection of baby and children’s clothing, be sure to visit Skelitta.

Thistle Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1EN

The West End

The West End shopping area spreads across William Street and Stafford Street. This cobbled oasis of independent retailers and stylish boutiques features Paper Tiger with its toy department, books and gifts. International womenswear boutique, Oska and award-winning jewellers, Lily Luna. Women’s fashion shop Sam Brown and Remus, interior design pioneers and purveyors of home-based curiosities.

West End, Edinburgh, EH12 5AU
Princes Street
There are many beautiful facades to the old buildings along Princes Street, housing some of the most popular high street shops in Britain. High street flagship stores include the likes of H&M, Zara, Dr Martens, All Saints and Waverley Mall. A high-street lovers’ paradise, with some of the city’s best views of Edinburgh Castle.
Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4AD

The Stand
If you’re looking for a laugh, then don’t miss out on The Stand. Major acts and local hopefuls take the mike in this comedy basement. They also run free lunchtime shows! 5 York Place, EH1 3EB | +44 (0) 131 558 7272 | thestand.co.uk

Secret Gardens
Edinburgh is a city of secret gardens all hidden in plain sight. Just off the Royal Mile, Dunbar’s Close, beside the Scottish Book Trust, brings a little bit of tranquillity to the hubbub of the tourist streets. Or take in the Archivist’s Garden, tucked behind HM Register House on Princes Street.
edinburgh.org

Camera Obscura & World of Illusions
The Camera Obscura show is a fascinating and highly amusing way to see the city and learn about its history. This unique experience has delighted and intrigued people for over 150 years. Step into a world where real-life collides with technological trickery. Tour Edinburgh’s streets without moving. Pitch your brain against mind-bending illusions. It’s all part of the Camera Obscura and World of Illusions experience.
Castlehill, The Royal Mile, Edinburgh EH1 2ND | +44 (0) 131 226 3709 | camera-obscura.co.uk

Gardner’s Cottage
The Gardener’s Cottage is committed to creating and serving excellent food using the best local produce. With the focus on seasonal cooking and social dining, a six-course set menu is served in the evenings on long communal dining tables. Lunch is a la carte and brunch is served at the weekends.
1 Royal Terrace Gardens, London Road, Edinburgh EH7 5DX | +44 (0) 131 558 1221 | thegardenerscottage.co

Water of Leith
Offering 24 miles of idyllic walking and cycling pathways along the leafy riverside, the spot around the old 19th century mills of Dean Village is one of its most popular spots. Wander down from Stockbridge to the vibrant bars and restaurants of Leith.
edinburgh.org

St Giles’ Roof Top Tours
Not only offering panoramic views of the city and Royal Mile, the rooftop tour gives visitors a rare glimpse into how the cathedral has been altered over the years. You’ll hear all sorts of tales about the tower and even get up close to the medieval beams and bells of St Giles’. St Giles’ Cathedral, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1RE | stgilescathedral.org.uk
Stay
From the Penthouse at the Radisson Collection to the affordable style of Motel One, Edinburgh spoils you for wonderful places to rest your head. There’s unashamed luxury at The Balmoral or the Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa.

For quirky intimacy, try Hotel du Vin, housed in the old asylum in the heart of Edinburgh’s Old Town. Or if you adore unique retreats, the city boasts a plethora of boutique hotels, tucked away in quiet corners.

The Balmoral
The Balmoral is in the heart of Edinburgh, in a prime position for exploring the city’s many historical and cultural sites, from Edinburgh Castle and the Royal Museum to the City Art Centre and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. It’s perfectly positioned for browsing the designer boutiques and department stores of Multrees Walk and the ideal base during the Edinburgh International Festival and Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

1 Princes St, Edinburgh, EH2 2EQ | roccofortehotels.com/hotels-and-resorts/the-balmoral-hotel/

Fingal
Long-awaited and certain to exceed expectations, Fingal is one of Edinburgh’s most luxurious hotel experiences. Fingal began life based in Oban, facing storm-lashed seas bringing supplies and equipment to some of Scotland’s most remote lighthouses. Today she’s been transformed through a journey of glamour and sophistication, offering luxurious cabins in a truly unique and beautiful situation - and in good company too, with the Royal Yacht Britannia moored close by.

Alexandra Dock, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 7DX

Waldorf Astoria Edinburgh - The Caledonian
Undergoing a recent £24 million investment and renovation programme, ‘The Caley’, as it is affectionately known among Edinburgh locals, has embodied the very best in Scottish hospitality for over a hundred years. Situated at the west end of Princes Street, this former Victorian railway hotel nestles in the shadow of Edinburgh Castle and is a two-minute walk from the designer stores and fashionable bars of George Street.

hilton.com

Kimpton Charlotte Square
Overlooking one of Edinburgh’s prettiest private garden squares, Kimpton Charlotte Square — formerly The Principal— consists of seven inter-connecting Georgian townhouses in the heart of the New Town. After a multi-million restoration and refurbishment, all the bedrooms and suites have been given a smart, new look, inspired by the golden age of travel and a genuine sense of Scottish hospitality.

38 Charlotte Square, EH2 4HQ
kimptoncharlottesquare.com

Adagio Aparthotel Edinburgh Royal Mile
Live like a local in the heart of Edinburgh with your own apartment, complete with its own kitchen and living space. Located on the historic Royal Mile, the Adagio is within walking distance of Edinburgh Castle, Holyrood Palace and Edinburgh Waverley train station and places you right in the heart of the city’s hustle and bustle in a comfortable space to call home while you’re here.

231 Canongate, Edinburgh, EH8 8BH
adagio-city.com

Hotel Indigo Edinburgh
A handsome listed building set behind the Georgian facade of five original residential properties, the interior of Hotel Indigo’s Edinburgh city centre hotel combines historic interest with well-chosen features of contemporary design. A stylish boutique hotel with 60 individually designed rooms, Hotel Indigo offers supremely comfortable beds in spacious rooms in the heart of Edinburgh’s city centre.

51 - 59 York Place Edinburgh EH1 3JD
edinburgh.hotelindigo.com
Make the most of the great outdoors in Scotland’s beautiful capital city. Venture outside and discover the city’s cobbled streets, fashionable walkways and ancient alleys. From the picturesque West End sprinkled with stylish boutiques, gift shops, florists and interior shops to the bustling streets of George and Princes Streets and the colourful Grassmarket and ancient Royal Mile, the beauty of Edinburgh city centre is its compact size. A walkable city, you can easily explore the architecture, history, shops, theatres and museums on foot.

Princes Street Gardens is a welcome break from the hustle and bustle of the capital’s main shopping street. Enjoy the beautiful seasonal floral displays, historical statues and grand monuments.

Holyrood Park and Arthur’s Seat are popular with energetic walkers throughout the year. Small Lochs, craggy cliffs, natural fauna and superb views will reward an energetic stride around this landmark overlooking the capital.

The Meadows to the south of the city is a popular spot for outdoor sports and ball games.

Inverleith Park is a perfect spot for a gentle stroll and an opportunity to admire the cityscape. Popular with dog walkers and those with young children, it has a play park and boating pond which sees boating enthusiasts steer their remote-controlled vessels through the water.

Water of Leith Visitor Centre is a great starting point for a gentle walk along its banks. The Water of Leith starts its journey in the Pentland Hills and winds its way through the picturesque Dean Village before arriving at the Shores of Leith and Firth of Forth.

Corstorphine Hill is a popular nature reserve in the North West of the city. Enjoyed by dog walkers and ramblers, listen out for woodpeckers or see if you can spot a kestrel. Night-time visitors include badgers and tawny owls.

Portobello Beach offers a delightful alternative to the city centre. This beach is a much-loved escape for most Edinburgh locals, and offers a great view of the sunset.

Cramond is a popular spot with walkers and roller-bladers with beautiful views of the Firth of Forth. When the tide is out, a walk across its famous causeway will lead you to Cramond Island, where you can have a picnic and watch the seabirds.

The Pentland Hills overlook Edinburgh to the south of the city. Over 100km of signed paths guide walkers through an oasis of green hills and lochs. With views of the surrounding area, there are also cycle and pony trails offering lots of ways to explore this beautiful outdoor sanctuary.

The Midlothian Snowsports Centre overlooks the city from the Pentland Hills. Open all year round, the centre offers skiing enthusiasts the opportunity to experience the thrill of Europe’s largest artificial ski slope. A jump slope and learning slopes means that visitors of all levels can take advantage of first class tuition. Dare devils will also love the excitement of the centres tubing runs.

https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200281/snowsports_centre

Discover more at edinburgh.org.uk/things-to-do/activities/outdoors
Day trips from Edinburgh

Explore beyond Edinburgh city limits and discover all the Lothians region has to offer. From sweeping silver beaches, diverse wildlife, exciting museums and legendary golf course, the Lothians has all you need for a great day out.

**East Lothian**
A day out to East Lothian is a must: this beautiful region boasts 40 miles of stunning coastline and some of the best beaches around. East Lothian is a haven for water sports, with a thriving surfing scene in Dunbar and fantastic sailing opportunities in North Berwick. East Lothian's seaside is a popular day out destination for Edinburgh locals, who flock to the likes of Gullane, Yellowcraig and Belhaven Bay during the warm summer weekends. Discover Glenkinchie Distillery, the National Museum of Flight, the Bass Rock, home to 150,000 birds, and 22 golf courses, earning East Lothian the title 'Scotland's Golf Coast'.

**Midlothian**
Enjoy the beautiful rolling Pentland Hills with over 100km of signposted paths and tracks – the perfect spot for hiking, walking and exploring. Ski the longest dry ski slope in the UK at Midlothian Snowsports Centre or have family fun at Dalkeith Country Park with a range of activities including a kids adventure zone, cycle trails and a new stable yard with local quality produce. Fans of the Da Vinci Code will love Roslyn Chapel which was founded in 1446 and discover the award-winning five-star attraction, the National Mining Museum, which tells the story of coal in Scotland. Butterfly and Insect World is the place to get up close and personal with all sorts of creepy-crawlies and a trip to the medieval Cistercian monastery, Newbattle Abbey, is a must. Crichton Castle is another must-see which was home to James Hepburn, 4th Earl of Bothwell and third husband of Mary Queen of Scots.

**West Lothian**
Home to lots of parks, West Lothian is perfect for a family day out. Animals lovers should check in at Fives Sisters Zoo at West Calder and the kids will also love Almond Valley, a fantastic outdoor park with a range of farm animals, trampolines, pedal go-karts and more. You’ll also find lots of grand palaces and homes in West Lothian, including the magnificent Linlithgow Palace – the birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots. Hopetoun House is a breath-taking 18th century house located near South Queensferry. Marvel at the magnificent interiors and follow up with a walk around the expansive grounds and try spotting some of the local wildlife. If retail therapy is your thing day trippers will love Livingston Designer Outlet or pop across the road to The Centre with over 155 high street shops.

**Fife**
Explore the Kingdom of Fife! Stretching 117 miles, the Fife Coastal Path offers an excellent way to explore the region and is a perfect walking route. If you’d rather explore on wheels, Fife has a big appeal with relatively flat terrain and a network of some 300km of cycle routes. There are plenty of woodlands to explore too. Known as the ‘Home of Golf’ with over 50 courses to choose from, Fife is one of the most sought-after golfing destinations in the world. Visit Kingarrock, located in the grounds of Hill of Tarvit and play golf as it was played 100 years ago! Fife is rich in history and royal connections. Visit the Royal Burgh of Culross, St Andrews Cathedral or Dunfermline Abbey in what was once Scotland’s ancient capital. If you are an Outlander fan, Fife is a must, with filming locations in Falkland, Aberdour Castle and Dysart. From picturesque harbour festivals, quirky music concerts, mouth-watering gourmet food and drink markets to a huge range of outdoor events, Fife certainly has lots going on!

**Scottish Borders**
The Borders are picture perfect. Absorb the essence of Scotland in rolling hills and heather-clad moors, winding rivers, and farmland, not forgetting the Berwickshire coastline ideal for water sports.

Melrose is a must-see – take it Abbotsford House, Sir Walter Scott’s 1800s mansion on the banks of the River Tweed, with his study and landscaped gardens. Under the iconic triple peaks of the Eildon Hills is Melrose, a charming town with an impressive history. Don’t miss Melrose Abbey – this Cistercian abbey, now partially ruined, dates from 1136, and it’s believed to be the resting place of Robert the Bruce’s heart.

In contrast, Peebles and its neighbour Innerleithen have gained iconic status for mountain bikers, while retaining their small town vibe, full of independent shops, hotels and restaurants. Equally iconic, this time for fishing folk, is Kelso sited on the confluence of the rivers Tweed and Teviot. Long a market town, the town square (the largest in Scotland) is lined with independent stores, many featuring local crafts.

edinburgh.org/discover/lothians-and-beyond/east-lothian/
edinburgh.org/discover/lothians-and-beyond/midlothian/
edinburgh.org/discover/lothians-and-beyond/west-lothian/
edinburgh.org/discover/lothians-and-beyond/fife/
edinburgh.org/discover/lothians-and-beyond/scottish-borders/
We’re proud of the awards and accolades our city has earned. Here are just a few highlights from recent years...

2021
- Top location in the UK for a dog-friendly getaway by tails.com
- Edinburgh’s Princes Street Gardens voted most beautiful park in the UK outside London – based on a study of TripAdvisor reviews
- Travel bible Condé Nast has voted Edinburgh as Scotland’s ‘friendliest’ city
- Conde Nast Award – Edinburgh voted the best city in the UK in 2021

2020
- According to The Scotsman, Edinburgh’s Royal Botanic Garden was Scotland’s most popular attraction in 2020
- CN Traveller voted Edinburgh one of the top Honeymoon Destinations of 2020
- Edinburgh is the best UK holiday destinations for families according to The Independent
- Scots crown Edinburgh ‘Capital of Adventure’ following a survey by The Scots Magazine

2019
- Edinburgh has more trees than people, and more trees per head of population than any other UK city
- Edinburgh is named one of the best places to live in the UK for those aged under 26 according to analysis by the BBC
- Edinburgh is the best city in Scotland to start a Small or Medium sized Enterprise according to research carried out for Paymentsense
- According to Barclays Mortgages, Edinburgh is home to the UK’s happiest homeowners
- Edinburgh is the only UK city listed in ECA International’s list of the world’s top 20 ‘most liveable’ world cities for European expats
- Edinburgh has topped the Scottish SME health index (CYGB)
- Edinburgh is the UK’s top city for economic growth according to property consultants Lambert Smith Hampton

2018
- Edinburgh’s Leith area named ‘one of the Coolest Neighbourhoods in the World’ by Time Out magazine
- Edinburgh rated most vibrant area in Scotland in the Vibrant Economy Index published by consultants Grant Thornton
- Edinburgh named one of the best cities in the world for students by higher education data analysts QS
- Edinburgh reported as the ‘best’ place for tech in the UK in Tech Nation’s 2018 industry report
- Edinburgh named the UK’s top city for inward investment by global consultancy Arcadis
- The Scottish capital found to be the most attractive city to live and work in a study commissioned by Royal Mail
- Edinburgh named Europe’s most influential small city in Colliers International’s Cities of Influence report
- The UK’s top-ranking city for hotel development in Colliers International’s UK Hotels Market Index
- Edinburgh was voted the UK’s Best Destination for Young People in British Educational Travel Association’s British Youth Travel Awards
- Edinburgh was named Scotland’s Kindest City in a report commissioned by Travelodge in February 2018
- Edinburgh was voted one of the world’s top twenty must-see literary destinations by expedia.com users
- Readers of Which? voted Edinburgh the best UK destination for a weekend away for the third year in a row
Fast Facts

- Edinburgh city is home to a population of 525,000 and 1.4 million regionally (National Records for Scotland, April 2020).
- In 2019 4.89 million people visited Edinburgh, generating £1.89 billion for the local economy (domestic and overnight visitors). 19.7 million day-trippers spent a further £1.17 billion.
- Edinburgh is full of wide-open spaces, and is the UK’s greenest city, with 112 parks, as well as more trees per head of population than any other city in the UK.
- Edinburgh’s residents are the happiest of the largest 10 cities in the UK - 97% are satisfied with Edinburgh as a place to live.
- Pre-Covid, Edinburgh Airport was Scotland’s busiest airport with more than 30 airlines serving 120+ worldwide destinations.
- The Sheep Heid Inn at the foot of Arthur’s Seat in Duddingston is Edinburgh’s oldest pub, serving real ale for over 400 years.
- Edinburgh is home to three UNESCO World Heritage sites. Joining Edinburgh’s famous Old and New Towns, The Forth Rail Bridge was awarded World Heritage status in July 2015, 125 years after it opened.
- 75% of buildings in Edinburgh city centre are listed.
- Edinburgh’s Royal Mile is actually a Scots Mile – one mile and 107 yards long.
- Edinburgh is home to five of Scotland’s 10 most visited free attractions and five of the top 10 paid-for attractions.
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who was born in Edinburgh, is said to have based his famous fictional detective Sherlock Holmes on Professor Joseph Bell, President of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.
- Over 4,000 productions have been filmed in the Edinburgh region over the last 25 years, including the likes of Avengers: Infinity War, Trainspotting and its sequel T2 Trainspotting, The Da Vinci Code, One Day and Cloud Atlas.
- 90,465 students are in higher education (university and college combined).
- Edinburgh was the first city to receive UNESCO City of Literature status back in 2004.
- There are more than 20,000 beds in Edinburgh and the surrounding area, with over 50% within a 2km radius of the city centre.
- More than 70km of specially created traffic-free cycle paths criss-cross the city.
- Edinburgh's official social media channels (Instagram, Twitter and Facebook) have over 487K followers combined, with 140,000 unique visitors monthly to edinburgh.org.
- A recent survey found Edinburgh Castle is Scotland’s most popular spot for a selfie. Ranked in the top 40 of worldwide selfie hot spots, Edinburgh Castle was just behind the likes of the Eiffel Tower, Sydney Opera House and the Empire State Building.

10 things you probably didn’t know about Edinburgh

1. Sunshine on Leith
   Don’t listen to clichés about Scottish weather. With less rainfall than Rome, Frankfurt or New York, your chances of enjoying a lovely, clear day in Scotland’s capital city are pretty good.
2. Half Hangit Maggie
   Edinburgh even has ghost stories without ghosts! Maggie Dickson was executed for concealing the death of her child in 1724. But on the way to be buried she sat straight up in her casket and it was decided that being already officially dead, she couldn’t be hanged again. She went free and lived for another 30 years. A pub bearing her name can be found in the Grassmarket.
3. Spit on the Heart
   Outside St. Giles Cathedral is the Heart of Midlothian, which marks the spot of an old public execution site. Local folklore says that to spit on the heart brings good luck.
4. Crowded House
   The wonder of Edinburgh’s festivals is well known. But did you realise that the city’s population doubles over the month of August to over 1 million?
5. Name that city
   As well as ‘Athens of the North’, Edinburgh has earned itself a few other nicknames over the years. The most famous is ‘Auld Reekie’, which translated from Scots means ‘Old Smoky’, a reference to the dense chimney smoke caused by industrialisation and closely built houses. Now, the air is fresh and clear and an abundance of parks means Edinburgh is surprisingly lush. Visit the secret city-centre oasis of Dunbar’s Close, hidden just off of the Royal Mile.
6. Biscuit brainchild
   Daily the Sheep, chequebooks, even the rules of golf – Edinburgh is a hotbed of invention. A lesser known – but no less loved – discovery that the city can also lay claim to is the humble digestive biscuit, created by bakers McVitie and Price in 1892.
7. Say cheese
   A recent survey found Edinburgh Castle is Scotland’s most popular spot for a selfie. Ranked in the top 40 of worldwide selfie hot spots, Edinburgh Castle was just behind the likes of the Eiffel Tower, Sydney Opera House and the Empire State Building.
8. Write here
   As the first UNESCO City of Literature, there’s many a story to tell, none better than the fact that JK Rowling both started and finished the Harry Potter series in Edinburgh. The final lines were penned in room 502 of the Balmoral Hotel in the city centre.
9. Site for sore eyes
   When walking through the city, from New Town to Old, look at the city’s stunning architecture. All of Edinburgh’s city centre is a UNESCO World Heritage site.
10. Cultural hub
    Edinburgh is home to a variety of galleries, theatres, cinemas and music venues. Leading venues include Edinburgh Playhouse, Capital Theatres, Filmhouse, King’s Theatre, Royal Lyceum Theatre, Traverse Theatre and the Usher Hall.
Explore our hub and discover things to do and what’s on in Scotland’s capital at edinburgh.org

Social Media
With more than 487,000 followers across Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, Forever Edinburgh’s social media channels are the place to keep up to date with the latest updates, news and photos of our beautiful city.

Videos
A picture is worth a thousand words - how much better then is a video? Our YouTube channel is home to several videos that show Edinburgh at its very best.

For more information on Edinburgh, or to speak with us about visiting our great city, please contact:
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