

In the Footsteps of Robert Burns



Scotland.
Welcome to our life.



Your Detailed Itinerary

In the Footsteps
of Robert Burns

Day 1

From Glasgow head south-west for **Kilmarnock**, where his first published book of poems – the famous 'Kilmarnock Edition' of 1786 – was printed. Burns was farming at Mossgiel, Mauchline at the time. That meant Kilmarnock was his market and business town. He was well liked there and local business people assisted in raising funds for the publication. Today, Kilmarnock is still the headquarters of the Robert Burns World Federation. Continue to Ayr and overnight.

Day 2

Explore Ayr, then travel a short way south to Alloway. The town of **Ayr** still has features from Burns' day, notably the Auld Brig – The Old Bridge in his poem 'The Brigs of Ayr'. The present Wallace Tower, in the High Street, also mentioned in the same poem, replaced the ancient original in 1834. The town also has a Burns statue, in the square named after him. Ayr is also at the centre of the annual Burns an' a' that Festival, which brings the Burns theme into the 21st century. Several more of the sites associated with Burns and his early years are in the **Robert Burns Birthplace Museum** in Alloway and include **Burns Cottage, Auld Alloway Kirk, Burns Monument and the Brig o' Doon**.

Day 3

Take the road to **Mauchline**, east of Ayr, with its many Burns connections. Mauchline Churchyard was the final resting place of many of his contemporaries, including the local Mauchline character Willie Fisher, whose religious aspirations were satirised (and immortalised) in the unforgettable 'Holy Willie's Prayer'. The present Poosie Nancie's pub has direct links back to Burns time – Nancie was the landlady in Burns' day. Burns' poem 'The Holy Fair' describes the high spirits of Mauchline Holy Fair, a tradition still observed in the town.

Take the main A76 south for Dumfries, passing **Ellisland Farm** on the way. From this farm, Burns moved to **Dumfries** in 1791. The house in which he eventually lived is now a museum with some Burns artefacts. The Burns Mausoleum, his last resting place, is in St Michael's Churchyard close by. Overnight Dumfries.

Day 4

Take the road northwards for Edinburgh. Scotland's capital is where he achieved fame as a 'ploughman poet'. The Writers Museum exhibits manuscripts and other materials associated with Burns, while the city also has a Burns Monument beside Calton Hill. The grave of 'Clarinda', Mrs Agnes M'Lehose, with whom Burns had a passionate affair – but only by letter! – is in the Canongate Churchyard, off the Royal Mile. Burns wrote 'Ae Fond Kiss, and then we sever', perhaps Scotland's greatest song of parting, as a result of meeting her. Literary tours are also on offer, to find out more about Robert Burns and the many other writers who shaped Edinburgh, the first UNESCO city of literature.

The information contained in this publication is as supplied to VisitScotland and to the best of VisitScotland's knowledge is correct at the time of going to press. VisitScotland can accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions. Journey times and frequency are accurate at the time of going to print but may be subject to change. April 2015.

VisitScotland is committed to ensuring that our natural environment and built heritage, upon which tourism is so dependent, is safeguarded for future generations to enjoy. Cover: The statue of Robert Burns, Dumfries, Dumfries & Galloway. © VisitScotland/Scottish Viewpoint

To search over 7,000 quality assured accommodations, from bed and breakfasts to castles go to: www.visitscotland.com

For information, inspiration and more itineraries online check out: www.visitscotland.com



In the Footsteps of Robert Burns

Robert Burns is remembered in Scotland in a way shared by no other poet. Today, his words are still read, his songs still sung and his birthday celebrated. Born in a humble cottage, he knew a life of toil as a poor farmer, yet found the inspiration to produce enduring works of love, passion, drama and humour. This tour explores Ayrshire, the area of his early years, and also around Dumfries where he eventually lived, and then returns to Edinburgh, the city that first feted him as a literary sensation.



DEAN CASTLE, KILMARNOCK – This was the home of Burns' patron, the Earl of Glencairn. Today, the castle houses an important collection of manuscripts, books and paintings relating to Burns.



AYR – To the north of his birthplace, Alloway, the town of Ayr was well known to Burns and he made several poetic references to it – most famously in 'Tam o' Shanter' where he remarks that it was known for 'honest men and bonnie lasses'.



AULD KIRK, ALLOWAY – Immortalised as the setting of the witches' dance in 'Tam o' Shanter', this picturesque ruin was already in disrepair by Burns' day. The poet's father and other relatives are buried here.



BURNS COTTAGE, ALLOWAY, PART OF THE ROBERT BURNS BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM – This icon of Burns and Scotland was built by Burns' father only two years before Burns himself was born there in 1759. Period interior.



BRIG O' DOON, ALLOWAY – Upstream from the modern bridge carrying the Alloway / Maybole Road, this ancient bridge (c.14th century) became famous after its featuring in Burns verse narrative 'Tam o' Shanter' where Tam is pursued by witches.



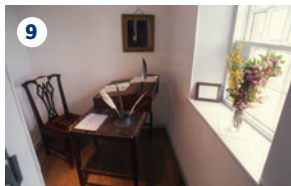
BURNS MONUMENT, ALLOWAY – Opened in 1823, it was designed to give visitors a view of the landscape that inspired Robert Burns. Look out for Masonic symbolism incorporated into the design.



MAUCHLINE – The little town where Burns started his married life and also had some of his most creative years. His former home is now Burns' House Museum, displaying Burns memorabilia and folk artefacts. The striking National Burns Memorial is also in the town.



ELLISLAND FARM, NEAR DUMFRIES
Rented by Burns for three years from 1788. Now a museum and visitor attraction giving an insight into the poet's struggle with the land. 'My farm is a ruinous bargain' Burns wrote in 1790, shortly after starting a new career with the Excise.



ROBERT BURNS CENTRE, DUMFRIES
Housed in a former mill building, this visitor centre features an audio-visual theatre, an exhibition on Burns' life and work, as well as a bookshop and cafe. Burns House, where the poet spent his final years, is also in Dumfries.



GLOBE INN, DUMFRIES – Burns' favourite pub is still open and the annual tradition of Burns Suppers is said to have started here. His favourite seat still survives, and some of his poetry, scratched by the poet on window glass, may still be seen.