

INNOVATION, ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

Orkney and Shetland



Q Up Helly Aa, Shetland



Q Italian Chapel, Orkney



Q Shetland wool



Q Mareel Arts Centre, Lerwick, Shetland

Travel to Orkney and Shetland and discover the beauty and importance of the Northern Isles' built heritage, modern landmarks and innovative design, as well as the people behind some of Scotland's greatest creations.

Orkney is home to the famous Skara Brae, the Neolithic village estimated to date back to around 3200BC, as well as other amazingly-well preserved sites from pre-historic times. There are fascinating buildings dating from the medieval period to the 17th Century, some of which reflect Orkney's Norse links. There are traces too of the major conflicts of the 20th Century, when the island housed prisoners-of-war.

Shetland also has many fascinating pre-historic sites such as Jarlshof Bronze Age, Iron Age and Norse Settlement and Mousa Iron Age Broch. Shetland heritage museums tell their social history providing an insight into the historic Scandinavian links and centuries of fishing and crofting on which the community depended.

In contrast, buildings on both island groups, like the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness, Orkney and the Shetland Museum and Archives in Lerwick are thoroughly modern and house inspirational collections. The natural landscapes and creative spirit of the Northern Isles provide the inspiration for many arts and crafts.

The islands' traditions and creativity also live on in the spectacular music of Shetland fiddlers known throughout the world, and in the crafts produced on the islands today, from the unique styling of the Orkney chair and distinctive jewellery made here to the wool and knitwear for which Shetland is justifiably famous

EVENTS

JANUARY-MARCH

Up Helly Aa, Shetland
www.uphellyaa.org

MAY

Orkney Folk Festival
www.orkneyfolkfestival.com

JUNE

St Magnus International Festival
www.stmagnusfestival.com

SEPTEMBER

Shetland Wool Week
www.shetlandwoolweek.com

OCTOBER

Shetland Accordion & Fiddle Festival
www.shetlandaccordionandfiddle.com

ORKNEY



Orkney Creative Trail – see traditional and contemporary items from artworks and jewellery to ceramics and furniture, including the famous Orkney Chair, all designed and made locally. The Association Creative Orkney established which is downloadable online and leads visitors to workshops where they can talk directly to makers and watch items being made.
E: creativeorkney@gmail.com
www.creative-orkney.com



St Magnus Cathedral – Britain's most northerly cathedral, St Magnus Cathedral is located at the heart of beautiful Kirkwall and known as the 'Light in the North'. It was founded in 1137 by the Viking, Earl Rognvald, in honour of his uncle St Magnus. With its distinctive sandstone hues, it's one of Orkney's most significant landmarks.
T: 01856 874894
E: cathedral@orkney.gov.uk
www.stmagnus.org



Sheila Fleet Gallery – Sheila Fleet OBE is one of Scotland's leading designer-makers of gold, silver and platinum jewellery. Her original designs come from her passion for Orkney and reflect the natural colours of the sea, sky and landscapes on the islands. Marvell at her brand new collection and visit the new Kirk Gallery & Café.
T: 01856 861 203
E: info@sheilafleet.com
www.sheilafleet.com



Skara Brae – Skara Brae pre-historic village is the best preserved group of pre-historic houses in Western Europe. The Neolithic settlement, lying near the dramatic white beach of the Bay of Skail, was uncovered by a storm in 1850 and presents a remarkable picture of life around 5,000 years ago.
T: 0131 668 8831
E: trade@hes.scot
www.historicenvironment.scot

ORKNEY



Ring of Brodgar – is one of the finest stone circles in the world and part of the UNESCO Heart of Neolithic Orkney. Dating back from 2,500 to 2,000 BC, the stone ring was built in a true circle, 104 metres wide and originally contained sixty megaliths. Free walks around the site are provided by Historic Scotland rangers. The circle looks its most majestic and mystical at sunrise or sunset.
T: 0131 668 8831
E: trade@hes.scot
www.historicenvironment.scot



The Pier Arts Centre – houses an impressive collection of British fine art which was donated by philanthropist Margaret Gardiner, including works by Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson and Alfred Wallis. It is recognised as one of the finest collections of 20th Century work in the UK. The excellent shop offers unusual items and locally designed objects and jewellery.
T: 01856 850209
E: info@pierartscentre.com
www.pierartscentre.com



Churchill Barriers – originally built in the 1940s primarily as naval defences to protect the anchorage at Scapa Flow, the Churchill Barriers are a series of four causeways which allows visitors to easily travel from the Orkney mainland to the explore the southern islands South Ronaldsay, Burray, Lamb Holm and Glimps Holm. Watch out for the remains of some vessels from both World Wars which can still be seen jutting above the water.
www.orkney.com



Italian Chapel – one of the most unusual churches you'll ever see, the Italian Chapel was built on the Orkney island of Lamb Holm by 550 Italian prisoners of war who worked on the construction of the Churchill Barriers during WW2. Constructed from two Nissan huts and such everyday objects as corned beef tins and car exhausts, the chapel is a unique and special place to experience.
www.orkney.com

SHETLAND



Jarlshof Prehistoric and Norse Settlement – provides a fascinating insight into the way of life of the inhabitants of Shetland in the late Bronze Age, Iron Age, Pictish era, Norse era and the Middle Ages. It includes oval-shaped Bronze Age houses, Iron Age broch and wheelhouses, Viking long houses, medieval farmstead and a 16th century laird's house.
T: 0131 668 8831
E: trade@hes.scot
www.historicenvironment.scot



Shetland Crofthouse Museum – located in a delightful setting, this typical thatched 19th century Crofthouse has been restored to how it would have looked in the 1870s. Smell the peat fire, discover the box beds and try to set the traditional Shetland mouse trap. The Crofthouse also has a lovely garden with a path which leads to a restored watermill.
T: 01950 460557
E: info@shetlandmuseumandarchives.org.uk
www.shetlandheritageassociation.com



Sumburgh Head Lighthouse – provides an engaging and interactive visitor experience. Explore the history and natural heritage of Sumburgh Head from early geological beginnings and Iron Age settlers to the present day. Discover what life was like for the lighthouse keepers and learn more about the area's other inhabitants such as whales and puffins.
T: 01595 694688
E: info@shetlandamenity.org
www.sumburghhead.com



Mouse Iron Age Broch – one of the finest surviving examples of a 2,000 year old Iron Age tower or broch and one of Europe's archaeological marvels. After a short boat crossing from Sandwick to the island of Mousa, you can climb the narrow steps to the top of the world's best-preserved broch and take in incredible views across Mousa Sound.
T: 0131 668 8831
E: trade@hes.scot
www.historicenvironment.scot

SHETLAND



Shetland Traditional Music – though it shares links with Scottish traditional music, Shetland music has also absorbed Scandinavian influences over the centuries thanks to Shetland's proximity to and connections with the Nordic countries. The virtuosity of Shetland's fiddle players in particular is known throughout the world and it's worth checking for concerts taking place during any visits.
T: 01595 743 843
E: info@shetlandarts.org
www.shetlandarts.org



Shetland Textile Museum – Shetland Wool and textiles are known worldwide. Inspired by the hues within the Shetland landscape, the islands' rich heritage in this field can be explored at the Shetland Textile Museum. Visitors can find out more about how knitting was a fundamental part of the crofting life on Shetland from the 1830s, providing the islands' women with income and new found freedom.
T: 01595 694386
E: shetlandtextilemuseum@gmail.com
www.shetlandtextilemuseum.com



Shetland Museum and Archives – discover the story of Shetland's heritage and culture from its earliest geological origins to the present day. The galleries contain everything from delicate Shetland lace to Pictish art and you can watch vessels being constructed using hand techniques handed down through the generations in the renovated boat shed.
T: 01595 695057
E: info@shetlandmuseumandarchives.org.uk
www.shetlandmuseumandarchives.org.uk



Shetland Craft Trail – see craftsmakers, designers and visual artists who are part of a growing creative community. Often inspired by their environment, culture or indigenous materials, they create contemporary works for sale and exhibition. Many welcome groups and you can meet the artists and designers, commission special pieces or shop for gifts. A downloadable map is available online.
T: 07747 377856
www.shetlandartsandcrafts.co.uk

Please note some attractions have seasonal opening hours. Please check opening times with the attraction.

For more ideas and contacts go to www.visitscotlandtraveltrade.com or email traveltrade@visitscotland.com