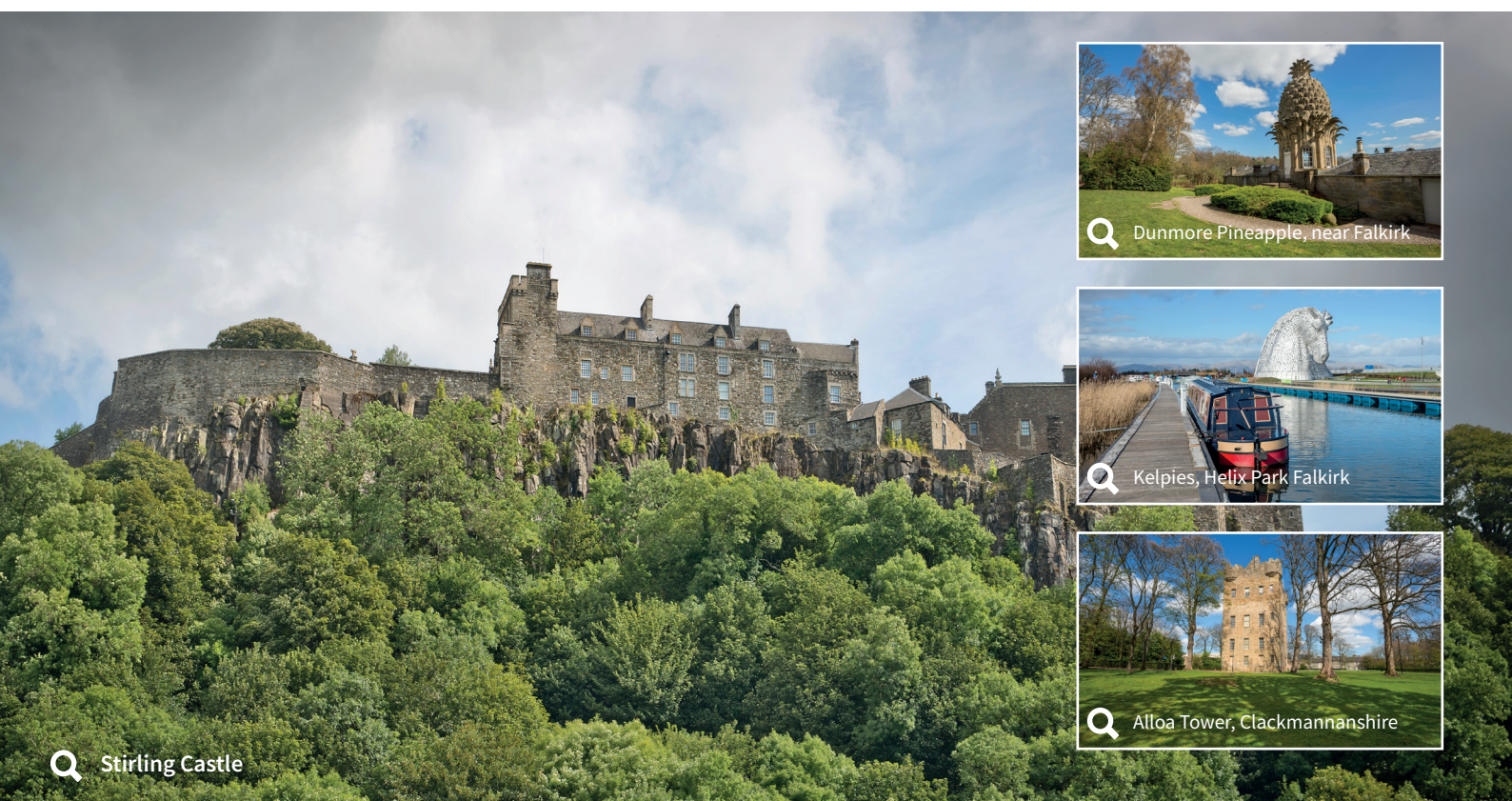


# STIRLING & THE FORTH VALLEY – HISTORY & HERITAGE



From miles of canals, to deep glens once providing power to a thriving textile industry and a city steeped in history, Stirling & The Forth Valley has a rich heritage waiting to be discovered. The regions' central location is within easy reach of both Edinburgh and Glasgow airports, with excellent train connections and road network.

The region includes much of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, with stunning landscapes and glistening lochs, and the city of Stirling is less than 30 minutes away by road. The city itself has witnessed some of the most dramatic events in Scottish history but today offers the perfect mix of history and modernity. Nearby Clackmannanshire is home to the history rich Tower Trail, while Falkirk is where you will find the magnificent Kelpies and an extensive canal network.

**Stirling** is a city where you can step back in time amongst ancient paths and experience ancient tales which are brought back to life, all within a vibrant city.

The historic city of Stirling is surrounded by spectacular scenery which can be admired from Stirling Castle's esplanade, high above the city. Its strategic location set the scene for epic battles, such as The Battle of Bannockburn. Relive some of the action with a visit to The Battle of Bannockburn centre where 3D technology allows you to experience medieval combat like never before and even command the knights and soldiers who fought in 1314. Wander the cobbled streets of the Old Town, from the castle down to the city centre, where you will find an impressive food and drink offering, from a wee dram at a whisky bar to local produce at the farmers' market. Nearby, savour local beers at Allanwater Brewhouse in Bridge of

Allan or warming whisky at Deanston Distillery in Doune. Browse independent boutiques in The Stirling Arcade as well as Bridge of Allan for the perfect gift to take home.

**Falkirk** is perhaps best known as the home of The Kelpies, housed in Helix Park. These 30m high equestrian sculptures are a spectacular sight, both day and night, but there are many more reasons to visit the town of Falkirk and its surrounding area too!

Discover parts of the Antonine Wall, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, at Rough Castle Fort or in the grounds of the impressive 14th century Callendar House. The house has permanent displays of the local area including its Roman connections and is free to enter, or at Kinneil House near Bo'ness, explore 2,000 years of history from occupying Romans to the Industrial Revolution. In addition you will also find a true feat of engineering in the world's first rotating boat lift, linking the Union and Forth & Clyde Canals. Frequent boat trips mean visitors can experience this unique experience first-hand.

**Clackmannanshire** is close to the City of Stirling and although it may be Scotland's smallest county, it's bursting with history and tales of times gone by. Join the Tower Trail and discover four medieval towers and a manor house dating from the late 14th and 15th centuries. Highlights of the trail include the stunning Alloa Tower, used to guard an important ferry crossing on the River Forth and Castle Campbell. The castle sits high above the region on the edge of the Ochil Hills and was the lowland residence of the Campbell dynasty. The hills can be seen for miles and the many paths showcase how important the hills were in the once thriving textile industry which dominated the area.

# STIRLING & THE FORTH VALLEY – HISTORY & HERITAGE

## DAY 1 - BEYOND STIRLING



**Balquhiddier Church** – tucked away to the north of Callander and near to Loch Voil, is Balquhiddier's parish church, built in 1853 by David Bryce. The ruins of the old parish church are in the graveyard with ancient carved stones steeped in history, including that of Rob Roy MacGregor who was laid to rest here in 1734 where he lays alongside his wife and two of their sons.

01877 376315  
enquiries@lochkatrine.com  
www.lochkatrine.com



**Loch Katrine** – located 34 miles from Stirling this fresh water loch is home to the Steamship Sir Walter Scott. The beauty of the loch has long inspired literary figures, including Sir Walter Scott who wrote his famed poem Lady of the Lake in 1810. Take a cruise on the water or hire a bike and explore the shore-side path.

01877 376315  
enquiries@lochkatrine.com  
www.lochkatrine.com



**Deanston Distillery** – located just eight miles from Stirling, the distillery sits by the River Teith at the entrance to the dramatic Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. Having been a cotton mill for 180 years, Deanston was transformed into a distillery in 1960. Experience the sights, smells and sounds of this impressive distillery on a variety of tours.

01786 843010  
www.deanstonmalt.com



**Doune Castle** – experience this 14th century courtyard castle, built as the home of Regent Albany, 'Scotland's uncrowned king'. His rich tastes can be seen clearly in the architecture of the medieval castle. Only 9 miles from Stirling, it is also a popular filming location and has featured in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, *Game of Thrones* and most recently *Outlander*.

01786 841742  
www.historicenvironment.scot



**Dunblane Cathedral** – located six miles from Stirling it was established in 1836 and is one of Scotland's most noble medieval churches, dating back to the 11th century. It is a largely intact early Gothic cathedral with some early interior fixtures including examples of late 19th and early 20th century stained glass and woodwork.

01786 825388  
www.dunblanecathedral.org.uk

## DAY 2 - CITY OF STIRLING



**Stirling Castle** – stroll through the Royal Palace of James V, restored to its renaissance magnificence and described as the jewel in Stirling Castle's crown. Explore the Great Hall, the largest built in Scotland and visit the Great Kitchens which have been reconstructed. A hop-on hop-off bus can be used to visit the castle and all of Stirling's top attractions.

01786 450000  
stirlingcastle@hes.scot  
www.stirlingcastle.scot



**Old Town Jail** – located in the heart of Stirling's Old Town, the jail paints a frightening picture of imprisonment in the 1800s with dark corridors, and small cells. Day and evening tours available. Nearby, explore The Church of the Holy Rude where James VI was crowned King of Scotland in 1567 with the ceremony being performed by John Knox.

01786 464640  
geoff@scottishpass.com  
www.oldtownjail.co.uk



**Engine Shed** – located in the city centre, this conservation centre is dedicated to celebrate Scotland's rich built heritage, through a fully immersive experience. You will find interactive exhibits, 3D theatre and augmented reality experiences, and an array of events. The centre is easily accessible by road, bus and train.

01786 234800  
technicaleducation@hes.scot  
www.engineshed.scot



**The National Wallace Monument** – towering over Stirling for over 140 years, today you can still climb the 246 steps and admire the spectacular panoramic views. Look out for the soldier who tells the story of William Wallace and the Battle of Stirling Bridge. On the second floor gallery you will see Wallace's sword proudly on display.

01786 472140  
info@nationalwallacemonument.com  
www.nationalwallacemonument.com



**Battle of Bannockburn** – stand shoulder-to-shoulder with medieval warriors and armoured knights and learn about the tactics of two opposing kings using state of the art 3D technology. Experience medieval combat like never before and learn about this crucial event in Scottish history. Book in advance online to avoid disappointment.

01786 812 664  
bannockburn2014@nts.org.uk  
www.battleofbannockburn.com

## DAY 3 - CLACKMANNANSHIRE AND FALKIRK AREA



**Dollar Museum** – located nine miles from Stirling and housed in an early 19th century woollen mill, this gem of a museum is free to enter and tells the story of the local area from prehistoric times to the present day. Discover where Robert Burns found love nearby, admire images of Scotland's first Japanese garden or research some family history in the reading room.

dollarmuseum@btconnect.com  
www.home.btconnect.com/  
dollarmuseum



**Castle Campbell** – 14 miles from Stirling and commanding an impressive location high above Dollar Glen, this fortress, built in the 1400s, belonged to the Campbell Earls of Argyll. Today, you can step inside one of Scotland's best-preserved tower houses, and imagine all of the drama the castles walls have witnessed. Stroll through the terraced gardens, and take in the spectacular views.

01259 742408  
www.historicenvironment.scot



**Alloa Tower** – dating back to the 14th century, this is the largest surviving keep in Scotland, and was home to the leader of the 1715 Jacobite Rising. Its strong medieval exterior gives way to an interior of opulent rooms filled with historical art and riches, where Mary Queen of Scots once spent part of her childhood under the care of the Erskine family.

www.nts.org.uk



**The Dunmore Pineapple** – one of the most unusual sights in the Falkirk area is the Dunmore Pineapple, nine miles from Falkirk. This wonderfully unique property was built as an elaborate summer house and you can even stay in it. The location of the building is perfect for exploring, thanks to the walled garden and the woodland grounds, which are an oasis for wildlife and perfect for picnics.

www.nts.org.uk



**Charlotte Dundas Trail** – follow the trail to learn about the world's first practical steamboat created by William Symington and built in 1802, as well as the impact this steamboat and the canal network still has on the area today. Start the short trail at The Kelpies, Helix Park and follow it to lock 1 providing a great way to explore the canal network further.

www.visitfalkirk.com/things-to-do/heritage/charlotte-dundas-heritage-trail

## DAY 4 - FALKIRK AREA



**The Falkirk Wheel** – this feat of engineering is the world's first and only rotating boat lift, linking the Forth & Clyde and Union Canals. Take a boat trip and soar 35 metres into the air hearing all about the history of the area and the wheel's construction. Find Segway tours, bike hire, kids splash zone and visitor centre with gift shop or explore a little further and take the #Wheel2Kelpies Selfie Trail.

www.scottishcanals.co.uk/falkirk-wheel



**Callendar House & Park** – dating from the 14th century and tucked away in the town of Falkirk. Also see The Antonine Wall, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, sections can be found in the grounds of this 5-star, free to enter visitor attraction. The restored 1825 kitchen is a particular highlight where you can sample 19th century food.

01324 503796  
hello@falkirkcommunitytrust.org  
www.falkirkcommunitytrust.org/  
venues/callendar-house



**Town Centre Heritage Trail** – this is one of the best ways to fully appreciate the history of Falkirk Town Centre. The Falkirk Steeple in the town centre is an excellent starting point, although a variety of routes can be taken. The trail covers 25 sites of historical interest including the site of the Falkirk Roman Fort and a Masonic Temple completed in 1906.

www.visitfalkirk.com/things-to-do/heritage/falkirk-town-heritage-trail



**Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway** – 19 miles from Edinburgh, is Scotland's largest railway museum where you'll discover full-sized locomotives, interactive displays and vintage subway cars from Glasgow, all telling the story of our rich railway heritage. Hop on the steam train, another *Outlander* filming location, and journey along the Forth Estuary enjoying afternoon tea.

01506 822298  
enquiries.railway@srps.org.uk  
www.bkrailway.co.uk



**Blackness Castle** – used as a filming location for *Outlander*, this castle is often referred to as the 'ship that never sailed' due to its shape and is only 17 miles from Edinburgh. It is a formidable fortress with sweeping views across the Forth, providing the perfect view of the Forth Bridges. Wander the imposing rooms, spot wildlife from the curtain wall or wander the shore beneath.

www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/blackness-castle

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](http://www.visitscotlandtraveltrade.com) or email [traveltrade@visitscotland.com](mailto:traveltrade@visitscotland.com)