Discover Scotland’s rich history, heritage and archaeology. From the remains of our earliest settlements going back thousands of years, through the turbulent times of the Middle Ages and on to the Scottish Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, every area of Scotland has its own tale to share with visitors.

In Aberdeenshire you’ll find beautiful Royal Deeside, a favourite holiday spot for the Royal Family since the days of Queen Victoria. Balmoral Castle, the Scottish home of the Royal Family, is just one of the castles on Scotland’s Castle Trail. There are more castles per acre of land in this area than anywhere else in the UK, and the Castle Trail helps you to explore 18 of the most famous and dramatic.

The neighbouring county of Morayshire is steeped in history. There are stunning religious properties to explore and the area has links to Scots king Macbeth, immortalised centuries later in the play by William Shakespeare. This is also the home of the Speyside Malt Whisky Trail, which produces some of the world’s best loved single malt whiskies.

The Scottish Highlands are famous for dramatic landscapes and dramatic events which shaped Scotland’s history, such as the famous Jacobite rebellion highlighted in the early Outlander books by author Diana Gabaldon, now a hit international TV series. The area’s fascinating folk museums recount the cruelty of the Highland Clearances which saw many Highlanders forced off their farmland, many travelling to other corners of the world to seek their fortunes.

Each breathtaking island of the Outer Hebrides has its own unique character. Here you’ll find ancient standing stones and structures which give fascinating insights into how our Hebridean ancestors must have lived years ago.

EVENTS

APRIL/MAY
Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival
www.spiritofspeyside.com

MAY TO SEPTEMBER
Braemar Gathering / Highland Games
www.braemargathering.org

JUNE
Scottish Traditional Boat Festival
www.stbfportsoy.com

JULY
Eilean Doncha Festival
www.edf.scot

SEPTEMBER
Blas Festival
www.blas-festival.com

For more ideas and contacts go to www.visitscotlandtraveltrade.com or email traveltrade@visitscotland.com
DAY 1 - ABERDEENSHIRE

Scotland’s Castle Trail – with over 300 castles, stately homes and ruins dotting its landscape, Aberdeenshire is unsurprisingly known as ‘Scotland’s Castle Country.’ The Castle Trail lets you discover 18 of Aberdeenshire’s most famous and dramatic castles, each with a fascinating history and its own tale to tell. ebooks.visitscotland.com/scotlands-castle-trail

1. Crathie Church – lying in the heart of lovely Royal Deeside, this site has been a place of worship since the 6th century. Queen Victoria laid the foundation stone of the present church in 1893, beginning the tradition of the Royal Family worshiping here during visits to Balmoral Estate. T: 01339 742208 E: braemarandcrathieparish.org.uk/crathie-kirk

2. Fort George – Fort George is one of the most outstanding fortifications in Europe. Taking 21 years to complete, it was built in the wake of the Battle of Culloden (1746) as an impregnable base for King George II’s army. Today, it still serves the needs of the modern British Army. T: 01340 881108 E: traveltrade@nts.org.uk www.nts.org.uk

3. Elgin Cathedral – one of Scotland’s most ambitious and beautiful medieval buildings. Dating back to 1224, it was the principal church of the bishops of Moray and is central to the history of the region. It’s particularly notable for the wonderful 13th century west front and the stone bishop in the nave which resembles a giant chess piece. T: 0131 458 0204 E: enquiries@nts.org.uk www.nts.org.uk/VISIT/places/glencoe

4. Gearannan Blackhouse Village, Lewis – with self-catering accommodation available all year and a seasonal living history museum, Gearannan Blackhouse Village gives visitors a taste of what life was like in a traditional Hebridean blackhouse. There’s also a programme of onsite weaving demonstrations. T: 0131 668 8831 E: trade@hes.scot www.historicenvironment.scot

DAY 2 - HIGHLANDS

Culloden Battlefield – standing on Culloden Battlefield, with stunning views over the Moray Firth, you get a real sense of what it must have been like to take part in the last pitched battle on British soil. Today, up-to-the-minute technology transports you into Bonnie Prince Charlie’s army as he staged his fateful attempt to gain the crown of Scotland. T: 0131 458 0204 E: traveltrade@nts.org.uk www.nts.org.uk

1. Culloden Battlefield – located between the Battle of Culloden (1746) and the 1815 Battle of Waterloo. T: 01340 871108 E: enquiries@speysidecooperage.co.uk www.speysidecooperage.co.uk

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DAY 3 - MORAY SPEYSIDE

Speyside Whisky Trail – Speyside is home to Scotland’s renowned Malt Whisky Trail, running through one of the country’s best-known whisky regions. Discover the secrets behind the art of creating some of Scotland’s best loved malts, and find out how the stunning Speyside landscapes affect the flavour and character of the malts distilled here. T: 01340 881750 E: hello@speyside-trail.com www.maltwhiskytrail.com

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DAY 4 - OUTER HEBRIDES

Calanais Standing Stones – located in the west coast of Lewis, the 5,000 year old Calanais Standing Stones are famous throughout the world. It is believed that this incredible stone circle was created by our Stone Age ancestors up to 5,000 years ago as some kind of astronomical observatory. T: 0131 668 8831 E: trade@hes.scot www.historicenvironment.scot

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

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