

# HISTORY, HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

## Edinburgh & The Lothians and South/Central Scotland



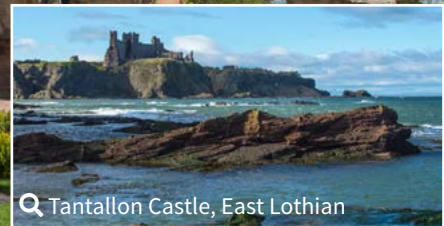
Q Rosslyn Chapel, Roslin, Midlothian



Q Edinburgh's historic Old Town



Q Return to the Ridings, Scottish Borders



Q Tantallon Castle, East Lothian

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.

Edinburgh has been at the heart of Scotland's history for centuries. No visit would be complete without a trip to Edinburgh Castle, standing proud atop an ancient volcanic plug overlooking the city. There's history around every corner in the Old and New Towns, both of which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Uncover the story of Scotland at the National Museum of Scotland.

Many fascinating stories await visitors to the Lothians. Discover how John Muir, the visionary naturalist, was inspired to create the National Parks movement, explore the real connections with the Knights Templar at Rosslyn Chapel made famous in *The Da Vinci Code*, or hear how the Industrial Revolution affected the coal mining industry at the National Mining Museum Scotland.

In the Forth Valley you'll find historic Stirling Castle and the National Wallace Monument, built to commemorate Scotland's national hero Sir William Wallace. Falkirk's fascinating history includes the building of the Roman Antonine Wall and two of Scotland's most important canals, while Clackmannanshire's famous tower houses stand as testament to the area's popularity with members of the Royal Court at Stirling.

The 2015 reopening of the Borders Railway between Edinburgh and the Scottish Borders makes it easier than ever for visitors to explore this lovely part of Scotland. The intriguing maze and 17th century brewery at Traquair House, the magnificent ruins of the four Borders abbeys and the chance to explore Abbotsford, the home of celebrated author Sir Walter Scott, are just some of the experiences that await you.

## EVENTS

### MAY

#### TradFest, various venues

As part of Edinburgh's packed programme of well known festivals throughout the year, Tradfest celebrates Beltane and Mayday which traditionally mark the beginning of summer, bringing energy and colour to the city over 12 days through traditional music, song, storytelling, dance, and more.

[www.tracotland.org/festivals](http://www.tracotland.org/festivals)

### MAY

#### Traquair Medieval Fayre, Traquair House

Step into the past at Scotland's oldest inhabited house for a living history weekend which brings to life jousting, falconry, archery, equestrian displays, early music, and more.

[www.traquair.co.uk](http://www.traquair.co.uk)

### JUNE & JULY

#### Return to the Ridings

The 'Return to the Ridings' is a celebration of the riding of town boundaries on horseback which has taken place for centuries in 11 Scottish Border towns. The festivals surrounding these ride outs are steeped in tradition and celebrate Borders history.

[www.returntotheridings.co.uk](http://www.returntotheridings.co.uk)

### JULY

#### Linlithgow Palace Jousting, Linlithgow Palace

The ancient spectacle of a jousting tournament comes to life as chivalric knights in armour compete for glory at Linlithgow Palace, now a ruin but formerly a comfortable retreat from affairs of state for Scottish kings.

[www.historicenvironment.scot](http://www.historicenvironment.scot)

### SEPTEMBER

#### Lammermuir Festival, various venues

The ethos of the Lammermuir Festival is beautiful music in beautiful places. The Festival allows visitors to hear some of the world's best loved classical music in some of East Lothian's most historic churches and in Lennoxlove House, seat of the Dukes of Hamilton.

[www.lammermuirfestival.co.uk](http://www.lammermuirfestival.co.uk)

## DAY 1 - EDINBURGH



**1**  
**Edinburgh Castle / Edinburgh Old Town** – Edinburgh Castle dominates the city's skyline, overlooking the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh's UNESCO World Heritage Site where history waits around every corner – in the narrow closes and cobbled streets of the medieval Old Town to the elegant streets of the Georgian New Town.  
**T: 0131 668 8831**  
**E: trade@hes.scot**  
**www.historicenvironment.scot**



**2**  
**National Museum of Scotland** – the museum's diverse collections take you on an inspirational journey through Scotland's story from pre-history to the present day. Check out the programme of brilliant seasonal exhibitions or find out about arranging special guided tours for groups.  
**T: 0131 247 4041**  
**E: tours@nms.ac.uk**  
**www.nms.ac.uk/traveltrade**



**3**  
**Palace of Holyroodhouse / Holyrood Abbey / Holyrood Park**  
 The Palace of Holyroodhouse, Her Majesty The Queen's official residence in Scotland, lies at the bottom of the historic Royal Mile. See the magnificent State Apartments, then explore the 12th century ruins of Holyrood Abbey. Nearby Holyrood Park has a wealth of history and archaeology.  
**T: 0303 123 732**  
**E: traveltrade@royalcollection.org.uk**  
**www.royalcollection.org.uk**



**4**  
**Greyfriars Kirkyard** – the atmospheric Greyfriars Kirkyard in the city's Old Town is the resting place of many influential writers, historians and statesmen. Keep your eye open for the charming statue of Greyfriars Bobby just outside the kirk's entrance. When his master died, the famous little dog guarded the grave for over 14 years.  
**T: 0131 225 1900**  
**E: administrator@greyfriarskirk.com**  
**www.greyfriarskirk.com/visit-us**



**5**  
**The Georgian House** – get a glimpse into life in the 18th century, where the more affluent escaped from the overcrowded conditions of the Old Town and moved to the New Town. Dating from 1796, it's situated in Charlotte Square and has been magnificently restored to show a fine collection of period furniture, silver and porcelain.  
**T: 0131 458 0204**  
**E: traveltrade@nts.org.uk**  
**www.nts.org.uk/travel-trade**

## DAY 2 - THE LOTHIANS



**1**  
**Rosslyn Chapel** – as well as being featured in the bestselling novel *The Da Vinci Code*, this fascinating building is famous for its ornate stonework, magnificent carvings and stunning setting. Its story is told in the state-of-the-art visitor centre and there are guided tours to help you uncover its 15th century origins.  
**T: 0131 440 2159**  
**E: mail@rosslynchapel.com**  
**www.rosslynchapel.com**



**2**  
**National Mining Museum Scotland** – get a unique insight into how Scotland led the way in the coal mining industry at the Lady Victoria Colliery, Newtongrange. At what was Scotland's first 'super pit', get up close to the nation's largest steam engine and find out what life was like for the miners and their families.  
**T: 0131 663 7519**  
**E: enquiries@nationalminingmuseum.com**  
**www.nationalminingmuseum.com**



**3**  
**Hopetoun House** – Hopetoun House is one of the most splendid examples of 18th century architecture in Britain. The magnificent interiors, which have remained virtually unchanged for three centuries, reflect the elegance of the Georgian era. There are also 150 acres of grounds, walks and trails to explore.  
**T: 0131 331 2451**  
**E: dayvisits@hopetoun.co.uk**  
**www.hopetoun.co.uk**



**4**  
**Forth Rail Bridge and Forth Road Bridge** – the Forth Bridges are an impressive sight, linking Edinburgh to Fife across the Firth of Forth. The iconic Forth Rail Bridge, built in the late 19th century, is celebrated as a major feat of engineering and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A third bridge - The Queensferry Crossing - opened in 2017.  
**www.theforthbridges.org/visit**



**5**  
**John Muir's Birthplace** – John Muir, known as 'the father of modern conservation', inspired people all over the world to become interested in nature. Visit his birthplace in Dunbar which has been transformed into a visitor attraction exploring his work, motivation and achievements, including creation of the National Parks movement.  
**T: 01368 865 899**  
**E: museumseast@eastlothian.gov.uk**  
**www.jmbt.org.uk**

## DAY 3 - STIRLING & THE FORTH VALLEY



**1**  
**Stirling Castle** – one of the most important historical sites in Scotland, Stirling Castle was once a favoured residence of the Stewart kings and queens. Meet characters from the 16th century court and admire the amazing views from the castle ramparts across the city to the Trossachs and the Ochil Hills.  
**T: 0131 668 8831**  
**E: trade@hes.scot**  
**www.historicenvironment.scot**



**2**  
**National Wallace Monument** – a distinctive Stirling landmark, the Monument commemorates the life and legacy of Scotland's national hero Sir William Wallace, celebrated by the Oscar-winning movie *Braveheart*. Learn about his fight for Scotland's freedom, see his famous broadsword and admire the stunning panoramic views from the crown.  
**T: 01786 472140**  
**E: info@nationalwallacemonument.com**  
**www.nationalwallacemonument.com**



**3**  
**Forth & Clyde Canal** – was the first canal to be built in Scotland in 1768 and played a vital part in the Industrial Revolution. Thanks to the innovation of the unique Falkirk Wheel which opened in 2002, today's visitors can now take a boat trip on the canal, linking to the Union Canal which was originally built to transport coal back in 1822.  
**E: enquiries@scottishcanals.co.uk**  
**www.scottishcanals.co.uk**



**4**  
**Callendar House** – a 17th century house situated within the 170-acre Callendar Park, which has been host to many important historical figures over the centuries. A fascinating exhibition covers the Falkirk area's history between the 11th and 19th centuries, including a restored 1825 kitchen producing freshly baked treats of the times.  
**T: 01324 503772**  
**E: callendar.house@falkirkcommunitytrust.org**  
**www.falkirkcommunitytrust.org**



**5**  
**Clackmannanshire Tower Trail** – a series of 14th and 15th century tower houses built by aristocrats who needed to be near the royal court in Stirling. Each has its own fascinating story. The imposing ruin of Castle Campbell boasts a dramatic setting with fine views across the scenic Ochil Hills while Alloa Tower has some stunning artworks and even its own dungeon!  
**www.discoverclackmannanshire.com**

## DAY 4 - THE SCOTTISH BORDERS



**1**  
**Abbotsford** – created 200 years ago on the banks of the River Tweed and the former home of famed author Sir Walter Scott. See objects related to his greatest poems and novels, explore the beautiful formal garden and visit Scott's View for his favourite view of the stunning surrounding countryside  
**T: 01896 752043**  
**E: enquiries@scottsassbotsford.co.uk**  
**www.scottsassbotsford.com**



**2**  
**Borders Railway** – The Borders Railway line linking Edinburgh and Tweedbank was closed in 1969, but was reopened in 2015, offering visitors the option of a scenic journey through the Scottish Borders to visit this fascinating part of Scotland. Journeys by steam train run at certain times of the year.  
**www.visitscotland.com**



**3**  
**Traquair House** – is the oldest inhabited house in Scotland dating back to 1107. Trace the footsteps of Scottish kings who stayed here and have fun exploring the grounds including the maze. Sample the locally produced ales at Traquair House Brewery founded in the early 1700s to serve the house and estate.  
**T: 01896 830323**  
**E: enquiries@traquair.co.uk**  
**www.traquair.co.uk**



**4**  
**Borders Abbeys** – these four abbeys have their own unique history. Dryburgh is the burial place of Sir Walter Scott, Jedburgh has finds from an 8th century shrine, Melrose is said to be the last resting place of the heart of Robert the Bruce and Kelso still bears marks of cannon fire from the armies of King Henry VIII.  
**T: 0131 668 8831**  
**E: trade@hes.scot**  
**www.historicenvironment.scot**



**5**  
**Mary Queen of Scots Visitor Centre** – lying in the heart of Jedburgh, this 16th century tower house is dedicated to Mary Queen of Scots and her associations with the town. There's a wonderful collection of objects associated with her and each room focuses on a different aspect or time period of her life.  
**T: 01835 863331**  
**www.scotborders.gov.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](http://www.visitscotlandtraveltrade.com) or email [traveltrade@visitscotland.com](mailto:traveltrade@visitscotland.com)