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TASTE
- of -
SCOTLAND'S
Foodie Trails

*Your official guide to
Scottish Food & Drink Trails
and their surrounding areas*



What better way to get to know a country and its people and culture than through its food?

Eat and drink your way around Scotland's cities and countryside on a food and drink trail and experience many unexpected culinary treasures that will tantalise your taste buds and leave you craving more.

Scotland's abundant natural larder is truly second to none and is renowned for its unrivalled produce. From Aberdeen Angus beef, Stornoway Black Pudding, Arbroath Smokies and Shetland salmon and shellfish to Scottish whisky, ales, scones, shortbread, and not to forget haggis, the range is as wide and diverse as you can possibly imagine.

No matter where you go, you can be sure of one thing: a memorable foodie experience is waiting just around the corner.

If you have a savoury palate, sample a countless array of deliciously flavoured cheeses on the ***Scottish Cheese Trail***, try the succulent seafood along the ***Seafood Trail*** or eat piping-hot smoked haddock on the ***Arbroath Smokie Trail***. And if you're after a sweet indulgence, why not

treat yourself to the decadent creations of talented chocolatiers along ***Scotland's Chocolate Trail***? Trust us when we say that their handmade delights are simply a heaven on your palate – luscious and meltingly moreish! On both the ***Malt Whisky Trail*** and ***Scotland's Whisky Coast Trail*** you can peel back the curtain on the centuries-old art of whisky production on a visit to a distillery, while a pint or two of Scottish zesty and refreshing ales from one of the breweries on the ***Real Ales Trail*** will quench your thirst after a day of exploring. And these are just some of the ways you can satisfy your craving for delicious local produce...

Peppered with fascinating snippets of information on the vast array of produce and producers around the country, you can mix and match the trails in this eBook and create an itinerary which will make your mouth water. It's packed with inspirational fun facts, handy information and plenty of other tasty things to see and do near each trail.

Have we kindled a passion for Scottish food and drink in you yet? If so, just print out this handy guide and hit the road – it's that easy. The only hard part is knowing when to stop!

Why not make a picnic of your favourite Scottish produce to enjoy? Looking out over East Lothian from the North Berwick Law.





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ARBROATH SMOKIE TRAIL

The distinctive mouth-watering taste of the *Arbroath Smokie* has made it famous throughout the world. So famous in fact, that in 2004 the European Commission granted protected geographical status under European Law. For the authentic Arbroath Smokie experience, these succulent smoked haddocks must be prepared using the original smoking process unique to *Arbroath*, within a 5-mile radius of the town.

The Arbroath Smokie Trail brings together the places where you can sample this favourite Scottish dish. Discover the restaurants, cafés, fishmongers and smokehouses where you can eat piping-hot Smokies straight from the barrel, pick up some to take home, and try delectable variations on this traditional seafood delicacy, from pâté and pies, to risotto, Cullen Skink and other inventive fayre.

Purchase this simple but satisfying staple of Scottish cuisine from family-owned suppliers who have been producing Smokies using the methods passed down by their forebears, and sit down to fantastic meals featuring the finest, freshest local produce.

FUN FACTS

According to legend, the very first Arbroath Smokies came about entirely by accident. It is said that one night in the village of Auchmithie, a store caught fire with barrels of salted haddock inside. The charred barrels were recovered and inside the cooked and surprisingly tasty haddocks were discovered!

Authentically prepared Smokies are hung in pairs on sticks suspended over a hardwood fire of beech and oak in the base of a whisky barrel, which gives them their unique flavour.

The Arbroath Smokie has been awarded Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) by the European Commission, which means it enjoys the same special status as Parma Ham and Champagne.

Most of Arbroath's Smokie producers are located in an area of Arbroath called the 'Fit o' the Toun', the harbour district of the town. Pay a visit and you're sure to catch the appetising aroma of Smokies being cured on the air.

The award-winning fish and chip restaurant and take-away **The Bell Rock** serves the Arbroath Smokie as a battered or breaded treat.

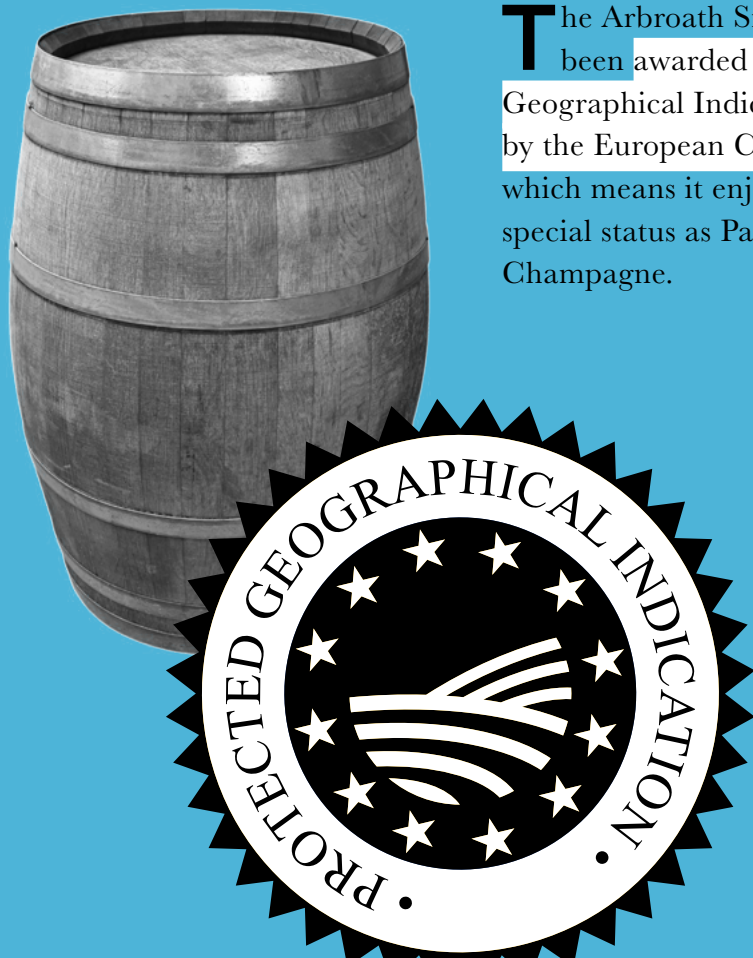
The Arbroath Smokie process is similar to methods carried out in present-day Scandinavia suggesting that it may have been introduced to Angus by Viking settlers.

There's no end to the ways you can enjoy the Arbroath Smokie! Try the surprisingly yummy Smokie ice-cream on offer at **The Old Boatyard Restaurant**.

The Arbroath Smokie Pancake is the signature dish of the enticing menu on offer at **But 'n' Ben**, a restaurant by the shores of Auchmithie.

Arbroath has its own tartan, which celebrates its Smokie-making heritage. Its pattern contains blue and white, representing the sea from which the haddock is hand-caught, red for the smouldering barrel in which it is cured, and yellow to represent its crispy, golden skin.

Arbroath is home to around a dozen family firms that continue to produce Smokies using the methods brought to the town by the inhabitants of Auchmithie in the late 19th century. One such business is **Original Smokies from Arbroath** run by Iain R. Spink, whose family have been curing haddock in this way for five generations.



ARBROATH SMOKIE

Arbroath Smokies being prepared on the beach at Auchmithie.

The Arbroath Smokie is a haddock which is smoked in a way unique to the Angus town of the same name over a hardwood fire. Today it is a Scottish seafood delicacy which is enjoyed throughout the world.

While the origins of the dish remain the subject of some debate, its earliest beginnings in Scotland can be traced to the small Angus fishing village of Authmithie. It is thought that the particular curing method developed by the villagers there was owed in part to their Nordic ancestors, Vikings who settled on the Angus coast in the Middle Ages.

The decline of the fishing industry in the late 19th century saw growing numbers of villagers abandon Authmithie for better prospects in neighbouring Arbroath. Allocated a part of Arbroath known as the ‘Fit o’ the Toun’ by the harbour, it is here that the popularity of the Smokie began to take hold, and before long it was central to the town’s economy.

Arbroath’s proud Smokie-making tradition remains alive and well today, with many local businesses, some spanning generations, serving and supplying authentically produced Smokies to locals, visitors, the rest of Scotland and beyond.

Creamy coloured and succulent, with a distinctive savoury, smoky taste, a single bite of an Arbroath Smokie will have you immediately converted into an aficionado.

A firm favourite of chefs everywhere, discover a myriad of ways the Smokie has found its way into recipes ranging from Mediterranean classics to desserts at Arbroath’s many excellent restaurants and cafés.

Explore the trail:

[*visitscotland.com*](https://visitscotland.com)

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

[*visitscotland.com/tastescotland*](https://visitscotland.com/tastescotland)





TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Golden Cap at Seaton beach.

2. Caley 828 locomotive on Caledonian Railway.

3. Arbroath Signal Tower.
4. Arbroath harbour in sunset.

5. Arbroath Abbey.

Discover Scotland’s Birthplace’ – pay a visit to the magnificent red sandstone ruins of **Arbroath Abbey** where the Declaration of Arbroath was signed in 1320, arguably the most famous document in the country’s history.

Seaton Cliffs Nature Trail – take a revitalising coastal walk along the red sandstone Seaton Cliffs north of Arbroath. Take in awe-inspiring rock formations including the Devil’s Head and the Needle’s Eye and look for birdlife including seagulls, guillemots and even puffins.

Caledonian Railway – ride back in time aboard a steam engine or diesel locomotive on this historic train line that runs between Brechin and the Bridge of Dun during the summer months.

Montrose Music Festival – MoFest is back for the eighth year running, bringing a whole weekend of fantastic live music to this old fishing town. Enjoy free entry to over 200 gigs across 26 venues located throughout the town.

Arbroath Signal Tower Museum – visit this former shore station located beside the town’s harbour and learn about Bell Rock lighthouse and the lives of the intrepid keepers who kept watch over the Angus coastline for over a century.

Scottish vodka and gin – **Arbikie Distillery** near Arbroath recently started producing its first batches of vodka, gin and whisky from ingredients harvested on its farm. Try the creamy, distinctly flavoured vodka and the complex and savoury gin distilled from home-grown wheat, blended with botanicals from the Arbikie Estate.

Dundee Flower and Food Festival – browse the delicious continental produce and spectacular floral arrangements on display at this annual festival held in September in the city’s Camperdown Park.

St Vigeans Sculptured Stones – Arbroath is home to one of the most important collections of Pictish carved stones in existence. You can view these mysterious monuments in a small museum located in the tiny village of St Vigean.

Arbroath Artisan Golf Club – tee off on this links course designed by Tom Morris in 1877 and tackle the tricky hazards - including the Dowrie Burn - presented by its well-manicured greens.

A large, elegant glass filled with golden malt whisky is centered against a dark background. The words "MALT WHISKY TRAIL" are written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the glass. The glass sits on a dark, reflective surface, creating a subtle reflection.

MALT WHISKY TRAIL

Scotland's renowned *Malt Whisky Trail* is the only one of its kind in the world. It passes through one of the country's best-known *whisky regions*, Speyside in the Highlands, and includes nine of the region's greatest whisky attractions.

Whether you're already a whisky lover or are still to sample your first dram, the Malt Whisky Trail is the perfect way to learn all you need to know about the art of whisky creation, as well as discover a few fascinating facts along the way.

Follow the trail to enjoy behind-the-scenes tours of seven of the country's most renowned distilleries, learn how whisky was made in times past at *Dallas Dhu Historic Distillery* and discover the craft that goes into making the all-important whisky casks at the fantastic Speyside Cooperage.

FUN FACTS

Of the five whisky regions, Speyside produces the most whisky, with half of all Scottish distilleries located here.

Whisky barrels aren't just storage containers. A huge amount of a whisky's flavour comes from the barrel it is matured in, making it one of the most important elements in the whisky making process. You can learn more about how these all-important casks are crafted at the fantastic *Speyside Cooperage*.



B*enromach Distillery* was the first in the world to produce a fully-certified organic single malt.

C*ardhu Distillery* is the only malt distillery pioneered by a woman.

The first spirit produced by *Glenfiddich Distillery* flowed from the stills on Christmas Day 1887.

D*allas Dhu Distillery* was originally named Dallasmore Distillery. Owners Wright & Greig Ltd changed its name in 1899 to demonstrate the link between the distillery and their popular blended whisky Roderick Dhu.

G*len Grant Distillery* is the only Scotch whisky distillery that bears the name of its founding owners, the Grant brothers.

Casks of *The Glenlivet* are tucked away safely at various storage locations throughout the country, to preserve stocks in case of fire.

G*len Moray Distillery* is handily located in the beautiful town of Elgin, the historic capital of Speyside.

S*trathisla Distillery* is the spiritual home of the world-famous blended whisky Chivas Regal.

WHISKY

Whisky is Scotland's most famous export and has been lovingly produced throughout the country for centuries. The word 'whisky' comes from the amber nectar's Gaelic name, 'uisge beatha' (pronounced ooshka bay-ha), which translates to 'the water of life'.

As the name suggests, water is an integral part of whisky creation. The art of distilling started as a way of using up rain-soaked barley (another key ingredient) using the fresh water from Scotland's crystal-clear springs, streams and burns.

To this day, distilleries across the country continue the tradition of using locally-sourced Scottish water from the same springs, streams and burns that have been used for centuries. The use of locally-sourced water, along with other locally-sourced elements such as peat, means you'll get a true taste of the region your chosen dram was produced in.

Scotland has five distinct **whisky regions** in total. These are Speyside (the area this trail is set in), Highland, Lowland, Campbeltown and Islay. Although the distilleries in these whisky regions carefully craft single malts and whisky blends to their own secret recipes, they all possess a similar set of intricate flavours and properties that have come to characterise their distinct region.

Whiskies from Speyside are elegant and complex. They are united by a distinct fruitiness, ranging from ripe pears to sultanas, while some possess a refined smokiness. All equally delicious, you'll find plenty of variety to delight you as you travel along the trail. Simply choose a delicious dram and toast in the traditional Gaelic fashion, with a hearty 'slàinte mhath' (pronounced slan-tche vah), meaning cheers or good health.

Explore the trail:

visitscotland.com

You can learn more about whisky and Scotland's distilleries, find more itineraries and check out our videos at

visitscotland.com/whisky



Image: Malt whisky in a glass lying on a cask.

TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Ballindalloch Castle
2. Elgin Cathedral.
3. A caber toss participant at the Gordon Castle Highland Games.

Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival – held from 30 April – 4 May 2015, this famous whisky festival is full of fun events, including the spectacular opening dinner, the Whisky School and the terrific music festival, Spirit of Speyside Sessions.

Piping at Forres – watch as some of Europe’s best pipe bands battle it out at the European Pipe Band Championships, Piping at Forres, on 27 June 2015. Enjoy the colour and splendour of the pipers in their full regalia before watching talented cooks whip up tasty creations in Scotland’s only Tattie Scone competition.

Gordon Castle Highland Games, near Fochabers – pop along to the Gordon Castle Highland Games on 17 May 2015 and experience the unique atmosphere of a traditional Highland games.

Get active – walk or cycle along the gorgeous ***Speyside Way***, or rent a canoe or kayak and paddle your way along the River Spey.

Elgin Cathedral – marvel at the octagonal shaped chapter house, see Scotland’s tallest gravestone and meet the stone bishop, a stunning statue located in the nave.

Brodie Castle – explore the seat of Clan Brodie, one of Scotland’s ancient clans. See priceless paintings, ceramics and antiques, and find out what 6,000 books look like, all in one place.

Ballindalloch Castle – visit during the summer months for tours of this beautiful castle and well-loved family home. Let the kids blow off steam in the play park or have fun visiting the lamas and alpacas.

Johnstons of Elgin – discover the loving craftsmanship that goes into producing Johnstons of Elgin’s beautiful cashmere products and enjoy a tasty lunch at the fantastic visitor centre.

Walkers Shortbread, Aberlour – pop into the Walkers shop in town or the Walkers factory to stock up on delicious sweet treats, from their world-famous shortbread to rich fruit cakes.

Baxters Highland Village, Fochabers – enjoy a spot of shopping and a tasty lunch at Baxters Highland Village in Fochabers.





SCOTTISH CHEESE TRAIL

Scotland is renowned for the quality of its cheeses. From mature cheddars and creamy wheels to tangy blues and delicious smoked wedges, Scotland's artisan cheesemakers offer a huge variety of textures and flavours.

Create an itinerary to make your mouth water with the help of the ***Scottish Cheese Trail***, which includes some of Scotland's best producers and quality retailers. Try full-flavoured cheeses and see them being produced before your eyes on a behind the scenes tour of an artisan dairy or stock up on mouth-watering cheeses, as well as all the oatcakes, biscuits, chutneys and jams you could wish for to accompany them, at some of Scotland's best farm shops, food halls and delis. You could even book onto a cheese making course and learn how to make a wheel yourself!

FUN FACTS



Caboc is said to be Scotland's oldest cheese and has been made in the Highlands since the 15th century.



You can book onto a specialist cheese making course with *West Highland Dairy* and spend three wonderful days learning all the skills you'll need to produce handcrafted cheese at home.

Sheep are milked from January till about September, meaning that sheep milk cheeses are at their most abundant, and sweetest, in the summer months.



For maximum flavour, serve your cheeseboard before you serve dessert so that the sweetness of the dessert doesn't affect your palate.

Experts say that the best way to cut cheese is lengthwise, so that everyone gets an equal share of the middle part and the outside.



Scottish cheeses can also be used as a special ingredient in many recipes. The delicious crowdie made by *Connage Highland Dairy* can even be used to make a silky cheesecake.



CHEESE

Image: A stack of various types of Scottish Cheese.

Scotland’s cool climate is ideal for making cheese. In times past many Scots handcrafted wheels of mouth-watering cheese for their own use and to this day producers throughout the country continue to use traditional methods when making their deluxe wheels and truckles.

On this trail you’ll find cow, sheep and goat cheese, all with their own unique textures and mouth-watering flavours. Try hard cheeses, such as traditional cheddars and smoked wedges, creamy soft cheeses, including caboc and crowdie, and rich blue cheeses, such as Lanark Blue and Strathdon Blue. To get a broad taste of what Scotland has to offer, look out for some of these Scottish delicacies as you’re following the trail.

Explore the trail:

visitscotland.com

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

visitscotland.com/tastescotland

Cambus O’May – experience a true family recipe when you tuck into a serving of this traditional hard cheese, made from hand-pressed two-day cow’s milk curd. Enjoy the subtle marbling effect when you cut into the cheese before you savour the strong, creamy flavours.

Anster – taking its name from the Fife fishing village of Anstruther, Anster is a dry cow’s milk cheese that dissolves on the tongue to leave a fresh, full finish. Visit the *St Andrew’s Farmhouse Cheese Company* and see the cheesemakers at work from the special viewing gallery before grabbing a bite to eat in the lovely café.

Caboc – made traditionally by *Highland Fine Cheeses*, this double-cream soft cheese is made from cow’s milk and is hand-rolled in toasted pinhead oats. Legend has it that the recipe for caboc was brought to Scotland from Ireland by Mariota de Ile,

the daughter of the chieftain of Clan Macdonald, and has been passed from mother to daughter for centuries.

Crowdie – crowdie is a light cream cheese said to have been brought to Scotland by the Vikings. *Connage Highland Dairy* makes a wonderfully light Crowdie. Visit their excellent cheese pantry near Inverness for some mouth-watering home baking, the chance to see cheesemaking in action as well as to pick up some of their delicious cheeses.

Lanark Blue – made from *Errington Cheese’s* own flock of Lacaune ewes, this delicious sheep’s milk cheese is completely handmade on the farm near Carnwath. Spring and summer cheeses are sweet and fresh, while cheeses that have been matured for longer (normally found in the winter months) are flavoursome and pack a punch.



TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Cheddar cheese at the Anstruther Dairy Farm.
2. The Royal Highland Show.

Ardardan Farm Shop – visit this charming farm shop, garden centre and tearoom near Cardross and spend a day browsing the lush plants, going on a woodland walk, having lunch in the lovely tearoom and shopping for tasty cheeses to take home.

I.J. Mellis Cheesemonger – this haven for cheese lovers has become a Scottish institution and now has three shops in Edinburgh, as well as shops in Glasgow, St Andrews and Aberdeen. Pop in for expert advice, tastings and the chance to buy some of Scotland's best cheeses alongside their top-quality European selection.

Isle of Mull Cheese – take a trip to the stunning Isle of Mull and visit the island's only dairy farm. Watch the cows being milked, see cheesemaking first hand and stop for a lovely lunch in the beautiful garden barn.

Cream o' Galloway – it would be easy to spend a whole day at this wonderful visitor centre near Castle Douglas. Let the kids go wild in the adventure playground before you discover how this working farm turns the creamy milk from its organic herd into wonderful cheeses and ice cream.

The Royal Highland Show – taking place from 18 – 21 June 2015 at Ingliston showground, close to Edinburgh, this four-day event is the biggest one in Scotland's agricultural calendar. See prize-winning Scottish dairy cows, sheep and goats and sample cheeses from all over Scotland, alongside lots of other great Scottish produce, in the fantastic food hall.



ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE FOOD AND DRINK TRAIL

With miles of fertile farmland, crystal clear rivers and a sparkling coastline, *Aberdeen City and Shire* boasts a natural larder overflowing with flavours. A visit to the region isn't complete without a taste of its delicious local produce, be it fresh fish from Peterhead, luscious Mackie's Ice Cream, or the world-famous Aberdeen Angus beef.

The *Aberdeen City and Shire Food and Drink Trail* leads to five fantastic restaurants, shops and eateries, giving you the chance to sample the delights of the region. From award-winning fish and chips in Stonehaven to mouth-watering shortbread in Huntly, each of the producers featured offers food and drink of the highest quality, with a focus on local produce and sustainability.

FUN FACTS

Image: Aberdeen Angus Steak cooking on a hot grill.

Aberdeenshire is famed around the globe as the home of Aberdeen Angus beef. The breed is believed to have originated at Tillyfour Farm near Alford, where a life-size model bull now acts as village mascot.

Another local delicacy is the Aberdeen Rowie, known as a ‘buttery’ in other parts of Scotland. This salty bread roll was created to serve the growing fishing industry during the 19th century and is usually served toasted with butter or jam.

Dean’s of Huntly bake an incredible 69 million biscuits per year. If all the shortbread fingers that they produce in 12 months were placed end to end, the line would stretch from Huntly to Odessa in Ukraine!

The Cow Shed may now be one of Aberdeenshire’s finest restaurants, but the site was once home to a dairy farm. The building from which it takes its name is still standing in a nearby field.

The Mains of Scotstown Inn is well-known for its green ethos. The restaurant grounds are home to a wormery, where 1,000 worms devour waste and provide compost for the salad garden, and all leftover cooking oil is transformed into soap to be used in the facilities.

Finzean Estate takes its name from the Gaelic for *fair place*, inspired by the beautiful Grampian hillside in which it’s located. The spectacular grounds are ideal for walking, cycling and birdwatching, as well as hunting, shooting and fishing.

The team at The Bay have won more than 35 awards for their top quality fish and chips, including Scotland Most Sustainable Restaurant and the UK’s Best Independent Takeaway at the National Fish and Chip Awards in 2013.

WHO TO VISIT

Dean's Shortbread Visitor Centre – Enjoy a bite of Scotland's national biscuit at the Dean's Shortbread Visitor Centre in Huntly. See the sweet treats being made in the viewing gallery before browsing the shop for oatcakes and petit fours to take home. The visitor centre also includes a stylish café-bistro, where visitors can enjoy snacks and hot meals alongside mouth-watering all butter shortbread.

Mains of Scotstown Inn – The Mains of Scotstown Inn is a pub with passion, famed for its commitment to sustainability, great community engagement and, of course, excellent food. Pay a visit to Bridge of Don to sample their selection of locally-sourced dishes, including North Sea haddock and chips, Scottish salmon summer salad and the best-selling Balgownie oatmeal chicken.

Finzean Estate Farm Shop – Located between Banchory and Aboyne, the Finzean Estate is composed of fertile farmlands, heather moors and peaceful, verdant forests, offering stunning views over Royal Deeside. Pop into the farm shop to purchase wild venison, game and rabbit from the estate, ocal vegetables, Finzean honey, award-winning cheeses and more, or enjoy breakfast or afternoon tea at the tearoom.

The Bay Fish and Chips – The fish and chips served up at award-winning 'chipper' The Bay in Stonehaven aren't only delicious; they're also fresh, locally-sourced and sustainable. Try the North Sea haddock, Amity scampi caught in Peterhead, or Scottish favourites such as black pudding and haggis, all served with delicious hand-cut chips and mushy peas.

Cow Shed Restaurant – Just outside Banchory, the Cow Shed Restaurant offers excellent Scottish cuisine made from the finest local produce – try the succulent Aberdeen Angus steak pie, rich Deeside venison or crispy North Sea lemon sole fillets. Aspiring chefs can also hone their skills at the restaurant's cook school, where they'll learn tricks of the trade from chefs Graham and David.

Explore the trail:

visitscotland.com

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

visitscotland.com/tastescotland



Of course, the Aberdeen City and Shire Food and Drink Trail features only a handful of the region's excellent eateries and shops. Check our **food and drink** section to find many more restaurants, bars, cafés and other locations where you can sample the top-quality meat, vegetables, beer, whisky and other produce that the region has to offer.

TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Highland dancing competitors at the Braemar Gathering, held annually in September.
2. Impressive ruins of Dunnottar Castle.

Taste of Grampian – held in Inverurie each June, this free one-day food festival brings together a wealth of different produce from the Grampian region. Get cooking tips from celebrity chefs and sample everything from creamy fudge to craft beer, all made locally.

Banchory Show – taking place on 25 July 2015, the Banchory Show mixes agriculture with food and drink, entertainment and lots of family fun. See different breeds of cattle and horses, join in the tug o' war, catch the dog show and much more.

Aberdeen International Youth Festival – one of the world's biggest celebrations of youth arts, the AIYF takes place from 24 July – 1 August 2015 and plays host to talented young performers from Scotland and beyond, with shows at various venues around the city.

Braemar Gathering – this well-known Highland games takes place on the first Saturday in September and regularly welcomes Royal guests – Queen Elizabeth II herself has been known to attend. Visit this year to enjoy Highland dancing, piping and the famous caber toss, and look out for many more **Highland games** across Aberdeenshire this summer.

Scotland's Castle Trail – see the history of Aberdeenshire first-hand on Scotland's only designated Castle Trail. You'll find several of the 17 castles near the shops and restaurants featured here – don't miss the striking Huntly Castle, or the clifftop ruins of Dunnottar by Stonehaven.

Go Ape! – another must-see is Crathes Castle, just outside Banchory. As well as luxurious interiors and splendid gardens, it's home to Go Ape!, an exciting forest adventure centre where you'll climb through trees, jump off Tarzan swings and zoom down zip wires.

Stonehaven Open Air Swimming Pool – take a splash in Stonehaven's Olympic-size outdoor heated swimming pool, open from 30 May to early September. Look out for special events over the summer, such as midnight swims and the Stonehaven Folk Festival's Aqua Ceilidh.

Knockdhu Distillery – just a short drive from Huntly, the picturesque village of Knock is home to this traditional distillery. Book a tour in advance to discover how their range of anCnoc whiskies are made and try a dram yourself.





SEAFOOD TRAIL

Take a culinary journey through the west coast of Scotland and discover the fruits of the Atlantic ocean and Argyll's sea lochs as you follow the ***Seafood Trail***. This tasty trail consists of eight waterside restaurants spread throughout this beautiful region.

The pristine coastal waters of Argyll are renowned for producing quality fish and shellfish which is among the best in the world. Oysters, mussels, langoustines and scallops are found on plentiful seafood platters, while daily catches of succulent lobsters and flavoursome brown crab can be ordered in the summer months.

Locally landed fish including mackerel, haddock, halibut and herring are popular additions to the menus of these establishments; some of these varieties, such as salmon, are expertly cured in the region's smokehouses.

As you travel throughout the region, you'll find breathtaking scenery around every corner. If you're lucky, you might witness some magnificent sunsets – can you imagine a more perfect backdrop whilst you dine on some of the most mouth-watering fresh seafood around?

FUN FACTS

Image: Freshly caught Langoustines.

The restaurants on the Seafood Trail can be found across **Argyll** in the areas known as the Kintyre peninsula, the Cowal peninsula, Mid Argyll and North Lorn.

Although the region only measures 155 miles north to south, Argyll's convoluted coastline is an astonishing 2,300 miles in the length – that's longer than the coastline of France!

Overlooking Loch Linnhe, the **Pierhouse Hotel** in Port Appin was built in the 19th century. It originally served as the residence of the pier master who oversaw coming and going of steam vessels which stopped off en route between Oban and Fort William.

The **Loch Fyne Oyster Bar** has not only a restaurant, but its own smokehouse and well-stocked deli featuring an impressive seafood counter. The business overlooks the clear waters of Loch Fyne, Scotland's longest sea loch, where oysters, mussels and other produce are sourced from.

A previous owner of the **Creggans Inn**, Sir Fitzroy Maclean had a friendship with writer Ian Fleming and was thought to have been an inspiration for the James Bond character. During their ownership of the inn and the Strachur Estate, Sir Fitzroy and his wife hosted many celebrities and politicians, including Princess Margaret, Roger Moore, Art Garfunkel and Joanna Lumley.

Charming **Inver Cottage** comes with a fascinating history. Situated close to Old Castle Lachlan, it was built by the seventh chief of Clan Maclachlan as a croft and ferryman's cottage before being converted into a restaurant in 1968 by the 24th chief, Madam Marjorie Maclachlan. Today, the eatery and craft shop is run by her granddaughter.

Royal an Lochan Hotel is a firm favourite with Scottish celebrity chef Tom Kitchin, who once said that his ideal meal would be a plate of langoustines and a glass of white wine from the restaurant of this Tighnabruich establishment.

Situated on the coast near Carradale, **Dunvalanree** overlooks a pretty sandy bay which is perfect for a stroll before, or after, you've dined on some beautifully cooked local seafood.

The seasonal **Seafood Cabin** at Skipness is a waterside gem. Lying in the shadow of a historic castle, it's famed for its delicious crab rolls and is a perfect spot to enjoy an al fresco seafood lunch or early dinner.

Built in the 18th century as a coaching inn to serve fishermen and the crews of trading puffer steamboats, the **Cairnbaan Hotel** can be found at Lock 5, approximately halfway along the 9 mile-long Crinan Canal.

SEAFOOD

1. Seafood platter at Ee-Usk, Oban.
2. Scallops at Ee-Usk, Oban
3. Crabs at the Seafood Shack, North Berwick.

It's no secret that Scotland produces some of the finest *seafood* in the world, with hundreds of thousands of tonnes exported to countries in mainland Europe and beyond every year. However, there's nothing like sampling seafood at the source, as fresh as you can get and simply prepared.

After days at sea, fleets of fishing boats return from both the Atlantic Ocean and North Sea to harbours with catches of white fish, such as cod, haddock and whiting, and oily fish, like herring and mackerel.

Other species of fish, such as salmon, sea trout and halibut, are farmed in nutrient-rich sea lochs, or are caught wild close to the coast. Crustaceans, including lobster, langoustine and brown and velvet crab, are caught in creels or sustainably farmed and juicy mussels are rope-grown. Hand-dived scallops are usually the plumpest and tastiest varieties and oysters, perhaps the ultimate shellfish delicacy, are naturally cultivated in shallow waters.

From Michelin star restaurants and hotels to humble seafood shacks, there are some wonderful opportunities to sample seafood cooked with passion and expertise. The seaside town of Oban claims the title of 'Scotland's seafood capital' with many eateries working to a 'pier to plate' ethos.

Scotland is also renowned for its smoked varieties of fish and shellfish, most famously smoked salmon. Many artisan smokeries and smokehouses employ time-honoured techniques to cure the fish, which enhances the natural flavours and adds a wonderful rich smokiness to the taste.

Explore the trail:

[*visitscotland.com*](https://visitscotland.com)

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

[*visitscotland.com/tastescotland*](https://visitscotland.com/tastescotland)



TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1.

View to the Cuillin Mountains, Isle of Skye.
2.

Slices of Stornoway Black Pudding and cooked scallops.
3.

Westport Beach, Kintyre, Argyll.

Loch Fyne Food Fair, 16 – 17 May 2015 – this two-day event takes place in the fields next to the Loch Fyne Oyster Bar and showcases the region’s seafood, as well as other local food produce and ales. Plus, there’s fantastic live music and great activities for children.

Loch Fyne Oyster Bar also regularly hosts ‘Taste of Loch Fyne’ days where visitors can see the oyster farm, learn how to open or ‘shuck’ oysters, enjoy a champagne and oyster tasting, and tuck into an extravagant five course lunch.

Tarbert Seafood Festival, 4 – 5 July 2015 – enjoy a gala-day-like celebration in the charming seaside village. A range of stalls line the harbour and there’s a fisherman’s market, cookery demonstrations, colourful street processions and the crowning of the Seafood Festival Queen.

Cowal Highland Gathering, 27 – 29 August 2015 – experience one of the most spectacular Highland games in the world and watch heavy competitions, piping and Highland dancing, as well as great family entertainment, stalls, and food and drink.

Plan time for some **island hopping**. Argyll boasts 23 inhabited islands which, along with Skye and the Small Isles, are known as the Inner Hebrides.

Each island has its own distinct character. Explore the **Isle of Islay**, famed for its many malt whisky distilleries, or catch a ferry to the **Isle of Mull** and go on a wildlife watching safari to spot rare sea eagles.

Best of the West Festival, 12 – 13 September 2015 – discover the very best sounds and flavours of Scotland’s west coast, held in the grounds of Inveraray Castle. Freshly prepared seafood and quality music make a winning combination - this event features some of the best Celtic, traditional and folk-inspired Scottish acts around.

World Stone Skimming Championships, 27 September 2015 – this quirky event takes place on tiny Easdale Island where flooded slate quarries become the arena for an unusual competition, with both islanders and visitors competing to take the title. Sign up and have a go, or enjoy the vibrant atmosphere and tasty food and drink.

Visit a **smokehouse** and discover what goes into creating delectable smoked fish. At **Inverawe Smokehouse** near Taynuilt, you can watch the smoking process in action before enjoying a snack in the tearoom or taking a stroll along one of the nature trails. As well as salmon and trout, this business smokes prawn, mussels, haddock, eel, meats and cheeses.



Explore Argyll on foot and take advantage of the many **paths and trails**, or even follow one of the region’s long distance routes. Both the **Cowal Way** and the **Kintyre Way** provide rewarding challenges and weave through some stunning natural landscapes.

Tee off on the region’s many **golf courses**. Kintyre is home to the **Machrihanish**, an 18-hole championship golf course which is often said to offer some of the best play in Britain.



SCOTLAND'S CHOCOLATE TRAIL

Meltingly moreish chocolates are made in Scotland with high quality cocoa and inventive flavour combinations which include tasty Scottish ingredients. Plunge into a land of delicious chocolate truffles, caramels, ice creams, gingers, liquors and even haggis-flavoured chocolates!

With more than 70 small-scale, artisan and specialist chocolate makers mapped out on ***Scotland's Chocolate Trail***, chocoholics are spoiled for choice. The guide locates chocolate shops, cafés and workshops to visit, and also highlights makers who sell in local shops and online.

FUN FACTS

The **Moniaive Chocolatiers** in Dumfries & Galloway are famous for their Tartan Chocolate. The selection boxes make a great idea for a tasty gift with a Scottish twist.

Did you know that chillies can be grown in Scotland? Mixing dark chocolate with the spicy produce, **Caithness Chocolate** sell this punchy bar online and in local shops near their base in Wick.

Iain Burnett the Highland Chocolatier was winner of the Great British Salted Chocolate Challenge in 2014 with his Salted Raspberry with Szechuan Pepper Salt chocolate. Visit the shop and café in Perthshire to discover more tasty creations.

Chocoholics should head to Edinburgh & The Lothians, the area with highest density of chocolate-makers on the trail. Try artisan chocolates from **Coco Chocolate**, who even make a haggis flavoured bar, and look out for numerous **small-scale sellers** appearing at farmers' markets around the city.

The **Tobermory Chocolate** shop and café on the Isle of Mull make use of whisky from Oban Distillery on the mainland to create malt whisky chocolates.

Discover local folklore at **Shetland Fudge** where you'll discover the myth of the Trow, a troll-like creature who's rumoured to haunt the isles and prey on musicians who've lost their way. Then taste what he's left behind in the Trow's Bogie Fudge which is Chocolate, Mint and Marshmallow flavour, if you dare!

Visit **88 degrees in Kirriemuir**, Angus to enjoy their ever-changing chocolate concoctions, such as cute hat-wearing Scottie Dogs and fiendishly rich 70 percent cocoa sorbet.

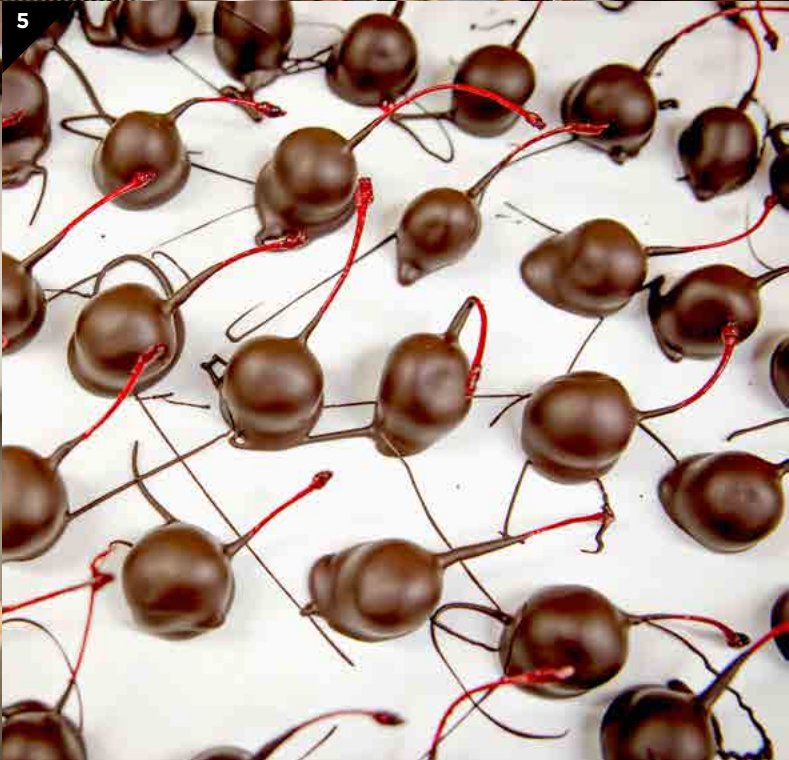
The Chocolate and Pastry School and **Cocoa Black Coffee Shop** in Peebles is headed up by UK World Chocolate Master Ruth Hinks. Come and learn from the pro at her workshops, or pop in to the shop to sample her wares.

Based in Stirling, **i.q Superfood Chocolate** has, with the help of Scottish universities, managed to create rich organic bars which retain a great amount of the beans nutritional content. Look out for this healthier raw chocolate in Scottish shops and online.

You may be surprised to find out that Cocoa pods can, and do grow in Scotland, however they are unlikely to meet the quality and quantity demands of the more than 70 chocolate makers.



Image: Cranachan Truffle.



CHOCOLATE

- 1. Master Chocolatier prepares a recipe.
- 2. Trays of chocolates.
- 3. Oban Chocolate Company.
- 4. Chocolate clementines being prepared.
- 5. Chocolate cherries being prepared in the Scottish Chocolate Centre at Legends of Grandtully.

Mixing unusual and local flavours to create indulgent new chocolates is an alchemy that is alive and well in Scotland. From Hebridean sea salt to essences of Scots pine, *Charlotte's Flower Chocolates* based in Highland Perthshire are inspired by the natural landscapes of Scotland.

Most of the companies also source local ingredients, such as the craft beer used by the *Chocolate Tree* in Edinburgh, and fresh mint in *Mackie's* Scottish Mint Dark Chocolate, which is made in Aberdeenshire.

Many of the chocolatiers follow ethical principles in the buying of cocoa, either by buying Fairtrade or dealing direct with the growers.

Explore the trail:
visitscotland.com

Find out more on the
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[visitscotland.com/
tastescotland](http://visitscotland.com/tastescotland)

TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

Image: Maclellan's Castle in Kirkcudbright.

With over 70 chocolate-makers on the trail, there is an endless variety of experiences that can be combined with a visit to a chocolatier. Here are just a few suggestions:

Following a browse in ***The Chocolate Place*** in Inverness, why not head to Inverness Museum and Art Gallery to learn more about the city and surrounding area?

Look out for ***Perth Festival of Chocolate*** in November, where you can enjoy the chance to meet the makers, such as top pastry chef and chocolatier Gerard Chouet, and sample an array of quality Scottish chocolates all in one place.

A messy hands-on children’s workshop at the ***The Cocoabean Company Chocolate Factory***

in Twynholm, Dumfries & Galloway, can be paired with a visit to ***Maclellan’s Castle*** in Kirkcudbright. Explore the ruins to discover fascinating family secrets, including a hidden spyhole used by the laird.

Indulge in the fine combination of chocolate and your favourite tippie, be it whisky, wine or beer at pairing experiences in various locations. At ***Glengoyne Distillery*** in Dumgoyne, just north of Glasgow, your tour can be complemented by a matching session where Scottish chocolates made by Nucoco are paired with Glengoyne single malt whisky.

Visit local ***farmers’ markets*** and you are bound to find locally made chocolates for sale, as well as stalls selling all kinds of produce, such as local meats, cheeses, tasty snacks and foody gifts.





REAL ALE TRAIL

Scotland has a proud and long history of brewing beer. Taking advantage of the natural environment for centuries, breweries in Scotland have created ales and beers using the purest water, free from artificial additives and preservatives.

One of the best ways to experience many of these delicious ales is by following the ***Real Ale Trail*** where you can discover the ancient art of brewing beer on behind-the-scenes tours, as well as savouring the flavours along the way.

This trail will lead you to a number of independent breweries across the country, where some of our finest beverages are produced from scratch. Your taste buds will be treated to a range of diverse flavours, from the light, refreshing White Wife ale from the ***Valhalla Brewery*** on Britain's northern most isle, Unst in Shetland, to the zesty aromas of Arran Blonde from the ***Isle of Arran Brewery*** on the stunning west coast.

Stop off at the ***Colonsay Brewery***, the smallest island brewery in the world or try some of the quirky named products from ***BrewDog***, which has quickly become one of Scotland's largest independent breweries. BrewDog are renowned in the pub scene for their innovative beers that give a modern twist to traditional real ales.

FUN FACTS



Scottish beer has a history stretching back some 5,000 years, when prehistoric people are believed to have brewed drinks from cereals and herbs – it's even thought that ale could have been made from barley at the famous Neolithic village of Skara Brae in Orkney.

Islay Ales is the only brewery on the westerly isle, but don't worry, you'll never be far from a relaxing beverage with eight active whisky distilleries dotted across the island too.

The **Fyne Ales Brewery** in Cairndow shows off its delicious beers each June by hosting its very own festival, **FyneFest**, in the fields behind the brewery attracting thousands of beer lovers every summer.

Every pint at the **Inveralmond Brewery** of Perth has a story to tell, all of which are inspired by Gaelic and Scots words and folklore. Find out why ales such as Ossain and Lia Fail live up to their legendary names.

Take a trip to the Houston Brewery near Glasgow, where you can watch brewers at work while you sip on a pint of their finest ale at the Fox & Hounds pub.



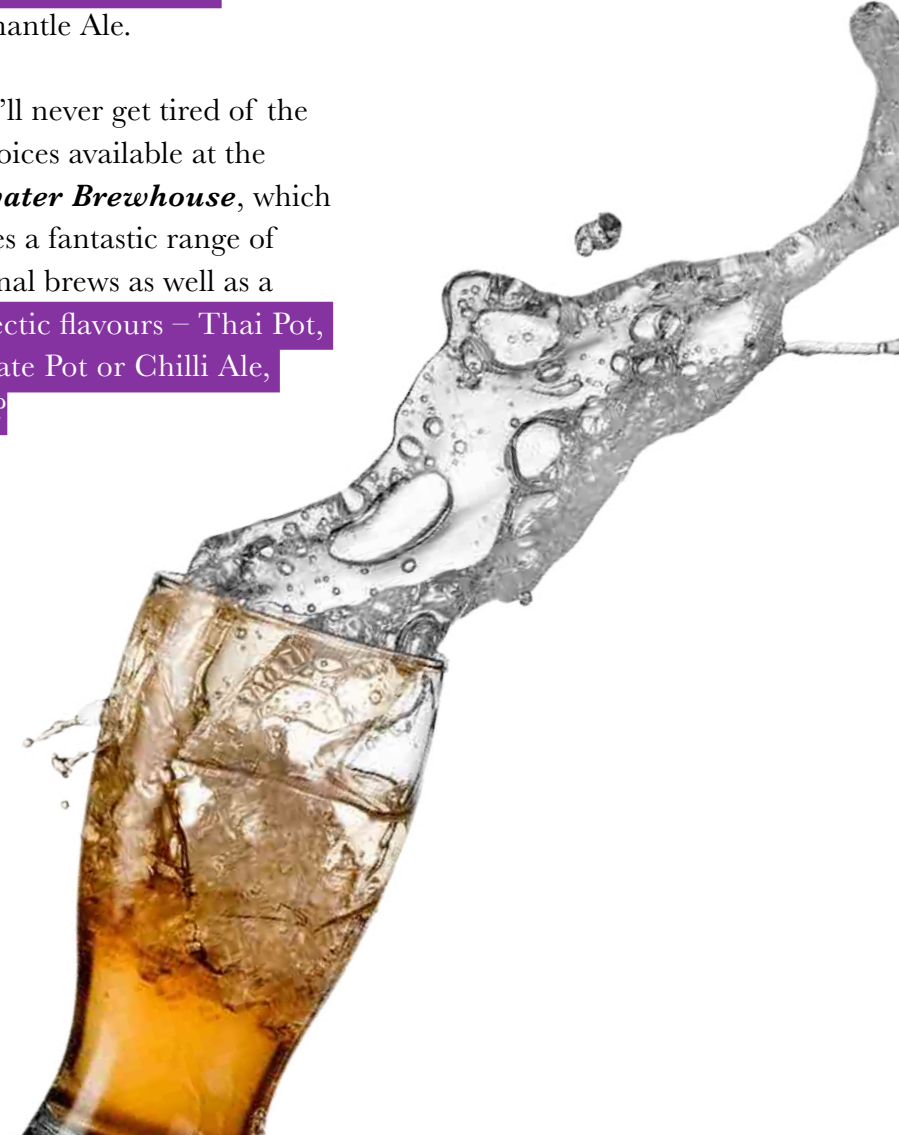
TOP TIP: Inveralmond's Lia Fail, a dark beer with a deep malty taste and a smooth texture, goes well with some local meat. Try Seriously Good Venison in Perthshire for a winning combination.

Broughton Brewery is known by most locals as the Greenmantle Brewery, thanks to its reputation for brewing what many consider the 'best pint in the Scottish Borders', the Greenmantle Ale.

The **Orkney Brewery** is based in amongst the ancient landscape, only a mile away from the Heart of Neolithic Orkney at Skara Brae. The islands' unrushed culture and traditional values hugely influence the way the beer is crafted from start to finish.

The **Valhalla Brewery** is the most northerly brewery in the United Kingdom. Situated on Unst, Britain's northernmost island, the brewery was named after the home of the Norse god Odin, connecting it to Shetland's Norse roots.

You'll never get tired of the choices available at the **Allanwater Brewhouse**, which produces a fantastic range of traditional brews as well as a few eclectic flavours – Thai Pot, Chocolate Pot or Chilli Ale, anyone?



Did you know?

Real ale can also be served by the bottle!
The beer continues to ferment inside the glass
and it will continue to improve in taste, as long
as it is stored in a cool place.



REAL ALE

Image: A selection of Fyne Ales.

The ancient process of brewing beer can be traced back generations. Nowadays, beer has undergone a recent boom and it is one of Scotland's favourite drinks, enjoyed in pubs, bar and restaurants and at events all across the country.

The term 'real ale' was invented in the 1970s, but this type of beer is also known as 'cask-conditioned beer' or 'real cask ale'.

Real ale is brewed from ingredients including malted barley, hops water and yeast and is matured by secondary fermentation. It must be served without the use of extraneous carbon dioxide and is always left to ferment in a cask, which deepens and matures the flavours. Brewers around Scotland are known to use natural and fresh ingredients from their local landscape, to enhance the taste of the beer.

Explore the trail:

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TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

- 1. Inveralmond Brewery.
- 2. Scenery of the Isle of Arran.
- 3. Castle Campbell.

FyneFest, Argyll, 12 – 14 June – for a combination of beer, live music, top DJs and delicious local food, a trip to the Argyllshire-based FyneFest will be a real treat for beer enthusiasts, serving drinks from Fyne Ales, one of the highlights along the Real Ale Trail.

Seafood in Argyll – why not get more acquainted with some of the local specialities? Indulge in some Loch Fyne oysters whilst overlooking the dramatic westerly coastline, or visit the town of Oban for more succulent seafood.

Born in the Borders – while you’re passing through the Scottish Borders, why not stop by this exciting new visitor centre? Experience the best of everything that is produced in the area from textiles to home-cooked meals, and you can even go on a brewery tour.

Ben Nevis – challenge yourself to climb Scotland’s tallest mountain, which will reward you with remarkable views of the **Highlands**. When you’ve finished the climb, don’t miss a pint at the Grog & Gruel which serves several Scottish real ales on tap.

Castle Campbell – make a visit to this dramatically situated fortress, which overlooks the picturesque Dollar Glen and the Ochill Hills, dating back to the 15th century. There are many stunning walks nearby, and it is in close proximity to Clackmannanshire’s real ale experts at the Harviestoun Brewery and William Bros Brewery - you’ll find their beers in many pubs in the area.

Isle of Arran – combine some of the fine real ales at the Arran Brewery, with some delicious creamy cheese. The island is home to the **Island Cheese Company**, an award-winning cheese shop where you can indulge in more island flavours.

Norse history - learn more about Viking culture at a variety of **attractions** in Shetland. Sumburgh is home to the remarkable prehistoric and Norse settlement of **Jarlshof**, and in **Lerwick** you see a variety of Viking artefacts at **Shetland Museum & Archives**.

Find out more about the **Scottish beer festivals** taking place throughout the year.



A photograph of a bottle of Cuddybridge Apple Juice standing on a mossy stone surface. Behind the bottle is a woven basket filled with red and yellow apples. The background is a soft-focus green landscape. The title 'SCOTTISH LOWLANDS FOOD & DRINK TRAIL' is overlaid in large white text.

SCOTTISH LOWLANDS FOOD & DRINK TRAIL

Delve into the landscape of the Scottish Lowlands, an area of Scotland spanning parts of the Scottish Borders, East Lothian, Fife and the Clyde Valley, and discover a wealth of delicious home-grown produce on this mouth-watering trail.

Compiled by FarmStay Scotland and Tasting Scotland, the ***Scottish Lowlands Food & Drink Trail*** brings together food and drink suppliers and accommodation providers based throughout these beautiful rural places, giving you the chance to experience some of the country's finest produce and hospitality of the highest standard.

Set off on a gastronomic adventure, feasting upon fantastic food and drink against the backdrop of stunning scenery and watching local producers hard at work. Stay at farms and discover how some of your favourite grub makes its way from the Scottish countryside to your plate, try your hand at preparing local dishes, and stock up on plenty of local produce to fill your kitchen cupboards back home.

From organic farm shops and country estates to smokehouses, cheeseries, distilleries, and even a chocolaterie, the Scottish Lowlands Food & Drink Trail encompasses the entire culinary spectrum. Whether you want to devote a whole week to visiting every stop on the trail or just feel like treating yourself to a superb meal out, get the inside scoop on where to enjoy the best of Lowland Scotland's local produce.

FUN FACTS

You'll be spoilt for choice at **Jannetta's** in St Andrews, a family-run ice-cream parlour established in 1908 which offers over 100 mouth-watering flavours including Irn-Bru sorbet and millionaire's shortbread frozen yoghurt.



You'll find Selkirk Bannock on the menus of cafés across the Scottish Borders. Queen Victoria is said to have been a fan of this rich and buttery fruit bread which is best enjoyed with a cup of tea or coffee.

If you're partial to steak, a session at Hardiesmill Farm in Gordon is an absolute must. Book the **Hardiesmill 10 Steak Experience** and try different varieties of beefsteak from feather to onglet.

A session at **Cocoa Black Chocolate** School near Peebles will have you positively salivating as you get to grips with making delightfully decadent chocolates and pastries under the tutelage of the award-winning chef Ruth Hinks.

Nestled in the sleepy Borders countryside, the small independent **Broughton Brewery** employs ancient recipes to create its superb ranges of beer, stout and larger. Merlin's Ale is just one of the intriguingly titled brews you can try.

Summer is berry-picking season in the Scottish Borders. Head to **Borders Berries** in Kelso and fill your container to the brim with juicy strawberries, raspberries, red and blackcurrants, tayberries and gooseberries.



The **Belhaven Smokehouse** is one of only a handful of independent smokehouses in Scotland and is famous for its distinctly flavoured Dunbar Smoked Salmon which is cooked over smouldering oak chips from whisky barrels and preserved in an old-fashioned rum cure.

Make a pit-stop at **Lindsay Grieve Traditional Butchers** in Hawick and sample the award-winning haggis which is handmade according to a family recipe.

Visit **The Lobster Store** on Crail Harbour in the East Neuk where the Reilly family serves up a fine selection of shellfish which is caught by them personally each day off the Fife coast.



Get your hands on one of the most delectable delicacies of the Scottish Borders, Hawick Balls, at **Turnbull's Coffee House and Specialist Delicatessen**. These hard-boiled peppermint flavoured sweets were a favourite of legendary rugby commentator, the late Bill McLaren.



SCOTTISH LOWLANDS

1. Razor clam fishermen
2. Locally caught seafood from lobster to langoustine, crab, mussels, and fish.
3. Fruit picking at Cairnie Fruit Farm, Cupar Fife.

The Scottish Lowlands Food & Drink Trail highlights places throughout the Scottish Borders and beyond where you can enjoy some of the finest, freshest produce available.

The first trail in Scotland to showcase local food and drink businesses as well as farm accommodation, the trail is perfect for those hankering after a short holiday or even a day indulging in the foodie delights, fresh air and wide open spaces that characterise this beautiful area of Scotland.

Get back to nature during stays in picturesquely located farmsteads and witness the skill, patience and passion of local farmers, distillers, chefs and suppliers as they transform locally harvested ingredients into exquisite dishes and irresistible hand-crafted products.

Gain a unique insight into the area's proud food and drink heritage and the processes used to create the delicious produce that ends up on your kitchen table and in your shopping basket.

Explore the trail:

[*visitscotland.com*](http://visitscotland.com)

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TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Eyemouth.
2. Royal Burgh of Culross.

Crail Food Festival – this two-day foodie extravaganza held in June showcases the superb quality and variety of Fife’s food and drink. Meet local producers and top chefs, pick up useful tips at cooking demonstrations and workshops, and browse a wonderful array of produce in the markets.

Farmers’ markets – one of the best ways to uncover the fare of the Scottish Lowlands is at farmers’ markets held regularly throughout the area. They offer the opportunity to learn more about the provenance of the produce on display which includes everything from organic ales to seasonal fruit and vegetables.

The Terrace Café – after playing a game of golf at the Roxburghe Golf Club you can take afternoon tea and refreshments prepared by the Duke of Roxburghe’s personal chef in a refined al fresco setting within the Walled Garden.

Standhill Cheesery – stop by this artisanal producer in Hawick and take your pick from a variety of hand-crafted cheeses including the soft and creamy Roxburgh Roondie and the quirkily named Minto Mellow Cheddar and Fatlips Castle Blue.

St Andrews Food & Drink Festival – St Andrews will once again play host to an entire fortnight of gastronomic events and activities this November. Celebrate Fife’s glorious natural larder from its freshly caught seafood and artisanal cheeses to scrumptious home baking and hand-crafted chocolates.

The Bakery Dunbar – this community-owned bakery is always worth a visit. Everything from its sausage rolls to its pastry tarts are baked on the premises using only the finest ingredients and time-tested recipes. Discover the joys of bread-making and pâtisserie on courses run by the bakery.

Scottish Fisheries Museum – Fife’s fishing industry stretches back hundreds of years. At this picturesquely situated museum overlooking Anstruther harbour, learn about the hardships faced by generations of fishermen and women and how this proud tradition survives today.

Fife Show – this traditional agricultural show in May attracts thousands of spectators each year. See pedigree livestock, activities including tractor pulling and clay pigeon shooting, and browse a wide range of local produce and crafts.



Eyemouth – seafood lovers should pay a visit to this 13th century town where you can try local delicacies like Eyemouth crab and other exquisite dishes in its restaurants and bistros.

Royal Burgh of Culross – step back in time to the 16th and 17th centuries on a stroll around the cobbled streets of this historic village. Explore the ochre-coloured Culross Palace before stopping for a bite to eat in the Bessie Bar Tearoom which uses eggs laid by the palace’s Scots Dumpy hens.





OUTER HEBRIDES FOOD AND DRINK TRAIL

A breath-taking island chain off the west coast of Scotland, the *Outer Hebrides* has long attracted visitors to its shores with promises of beautiful scenery, aquamarine coastal waters and white sandy beaches. From the Isle of Lewis in the north to the Isle of Barra in the south, each island has its own defined character and is blessed with an abundance of clean water, fresh air and wide, untamed landscapes - the perfect setting and inspiration for some of Scotland's finest seasonal produce.

Follow the trail the length and breadth of the archipelago to discover the islands' outstanding local producers for yourself. Much of the produce on the island is unique to the Outer Hebrides, or the 'Long Islands' as they are sometimes known, and almost entirely made or prepared by hand by the islanders themselves.

FUN FACTS



Image: Traigh Seilebost, looking towards Luskentyre from Seilebost, Isle of Harris, Outer Hebrides.

Stornoway Black Pudding was granted PGI (Protected Geographical Indicator of Origin) status in 2013. It has to be made within the Stornoway Trust area before it can be called authentic Stornoway Black Pudding.

Charles Macleod Family butchers in Stornoway have been making their black pudding for over 50 years. It is regarded as the 'taste of the islands', having graced the plates of gourmets the world over.

Stag Bakeries in Stornoway first opened its doors back in 1885 and specialise in the award-winning handmade Stornoway water biscuit, the perfect accompaniment to a cheeseboard of ripe Scottish artisanal cheeses. The range also includes water biscuits, oatcakes and shortbread made with seaweed.

Opened on the small Isle of Barra in 2000, the **Hebridean Toffee Company** has hand-produced more than 7,000 tonnes of traditional Scottish tablet

in its first decade of business. It is even enjoyed at Her Majesty The Queen's summer residence, Balmoral.

The **Hebridean Brewing Company** is the Outer Hebrides' only brewery, first opened in 2001. The independent craft brewers produce several award-winning real ales brewed with Scottish malts.

Another of the islands' small independent bakeries,

Macleans Hebridean Bakery on the outskirts of Balivanich on the Isle of Benbecula, has made a reputation for its light, crisp, crumbly handmade oatcakes.

Meat on the Outer Hebrides is distinctly flavoured due to the natural vegetation growing on the archipelago, including heather. **WJ MacDonald** butchers in Stornoway sells succulent local lamb while Ardbhan Organics offers a wide range of local organic

produce, including beef and mutton reared on North Uist.

Stop by the **Hebridean Smokehouse** on North Uist and watch staff hard at work hand-preparing locally-reared salmon, sea trout, scallops and more from the viewing gallery. The hallmark of this particular smokehouse is the use of locally-cut peat, an ingredient sometimes used in Scotch whisky distillation. Traditionally, smoking was a way to preserve food but now it is all about flavour.



OUTER HEBRIDES

1. Scallop processing.

2. Hand dived scallops with rashers of crispy bacon.

3. A worker at Salar Smokehouse, holding sides of their award-winning Flaky Smoked Salmon.
4. Eilean na Cille on the east coast of the Isle of Benbecula, Outer Hebrides.

5. Fresh seafood platter.

Given their location off the west coast of Scotland, the inhabitants on the Outer Hebrides have always produced their own food since the time the islands were first settled. Crofting led to a particular way of producing food, a tradition that continues today.

With the wild and deep Atlantic surrounding the archipelago, it is little wonder that seafood is one of the staples of the Hebridean diet and a product they are particularly proud of. The quality of the seafood reared or caught in the waters off the islands is world-renowned, with salmon, scallops and lobsters among the typical island fare. Smoking fish to preserve it was once a necessity, but these days it is purely to enhance the flavour. As well as smoking the daily catch, smokehouses in Stornoway in particular are known for their famous kippers; split, salted and smoked in the town for over 150 years.

Aside from fish, the Outer Hebrides’ landscapes ensure that livestock have plenty to feed on. Hebridean mutton in particular boasts a distinct, delicate flavour due to the heather the hill sheep graze on.

As well as traditional crofting, the islanders have been quick to learn new crafts, including brewing and distillation. Alongside the Hebridean Brewing Company - the islands first and only craft brewery – sits a new stable mate, Abhainn Dearg Distillery – the most westerly in Scotland. It’s the first distillery on the island for nearly two centuries and produces Scotch whisky to a time-old recipe unique to the islands.

Explore the trail:

visitscotland.com

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

visitscotland.com/tastescotland

TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Calanais Standing Stones.
2. Looking out over the deserted beach at Tolsta on the east coast of the Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides.
3. Harris Tweed.

The **Harris Arts Festival** in August uncovers the island's creative side with events celebrating local culture including music, drama and crafts. You can get your art fix all year round at **Hebrides Art** in Seilebost where the island's landscapes inspire the offerings at this wonderful Harris gallery.

Take the short boat trip out to visit **Kisimul Castle**, a brooding medieval keep and the seat of Clan MacNeil which dominates the rocky islet in Castlebay on Barra.

Thanks to hundreds of miles of coastline, the Outer Hebrides is a **watersports** hotspot. Lewis in particular is renowned for surfing with consistent year-round swells and impressive beach breaks. Try your hand at Dalmore, Dalbeg or Mangersta.

Just 40 miles west of North Uist lies the haunting archipelago of **St Kilda**. Inhabited until 1930, the UNESCO World Heritage Site and National Nature Reserve is arguably the most remote part of the UK and a journey of a lifetime.

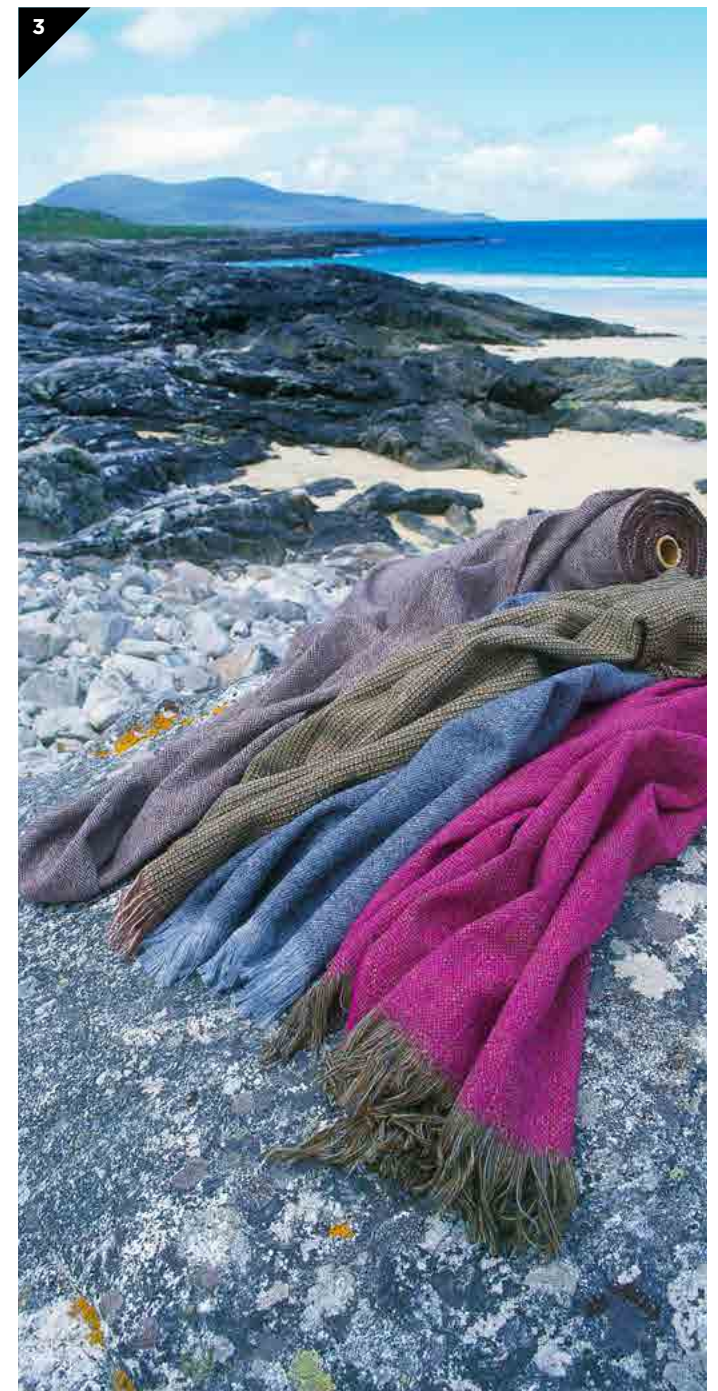
Soak up Gaelic culture at traditional live music festivals, such as **Hebridean Celtic Festival**, **Barralife** and **Ceòlas Music Festival** during the summer months. Check out some of the Fèisean, annual local festivals celebrating traditional music and culture, taking place around the islands.

Gracing catwalks and favoured by haute couture fashion designers around the world, Harris Tweed is a distinctive cloth handwoven by islanders using local wool. By paying a visit to **Harris Tweed & Knitwear** in Drinishader on Harris, you'll find out how it's made or even arrange a visit to Carloway Harris Tweed Mill and see it being spun firsthand.

Confusing and bewitching visitors for millennia, the enigmatic **Calanais Standing Stones** on Lewis are thought to be older than the Pyramids of Giza. Lewis itself is awash with archaeological treasures, including the famous Lewis Chessmen. You can learn more about the construction of the stones and how they may have been used at the interactive visitor centre.

The Outer Hebrides is a paradise for **wildlife**. Not only will you find the densest population of wild otters in north west Europe but the islands' coastline also plays host to orcas, bottlenose dolphins, basking sharks, grey seals and millions of breeding seabirds.

While away the hours on long, white beaches, including **Tolsta** or **Tangasdale**, and enjoy them practically all to yourself. Or fly to the Outer Hebrides for an altogether different beach experience. **Barra** is the only airport in the world where the tide dictates flight schedules with planes landing directly on Traigh Mhor beach.



WHISKY COAST TRAIL

Bursting with distilleries, the western coast of Scotland is the perfect place to uncover the secrets behind the art of whisky creation, and should be on the travel list of any true whisky-enthusiast.

Stretching from Campbeltown to Isle of Skye and Fort William, the *Whisky Coast Trail* offers a mouth-watering introduction to the region's vast array of marvellous malts. From the mature blends of Lagavulin Distillery to the balanced, deep and complex aromas of Ardbeg and the gentle flavours of Bunnahabhain, discover their distinctive flavours and find your favourite!

Many of the distilleries welcome visitors for behind-the-scenes tours to see their whiskies being produced. You can learn their history, talk to the distillers and at the end of the tour indulge in a dram or two of this golden spirit. Trust us – there is nothing quite like the taste of whisky right at its source!

FUN FACTS

Novices and whisky connoisseurs alike will enjoy the characteristic peaty and smoky tone of whisky from the west coast of Scotland, and will find a tang to suit their palate. The picturesque *Isle of Islay* is arguably home to the world's most distinct and full-flavoured single malt whiskies in the world.

Despite typically producing lightly smoked whiskies, it's *Bruichladdich Distillery's* range of Octomore whiskies that claim the title of the most heavily-peated single malt whiskies on the planet, with a peat level of around 130ppm – that's at least a few-fold more than average!

For a lighter flavour, try *Caol Ila Distillery*, Islay's hidden gem set amongst stunning scenery. The largest malt whisky distillery on the island produces whisky pale in colour, with peaty, floral and peppery notes, and is used extensively in blended whiskies, such as Johnnie Walker and Black Bottle.

Whiskies from *Ardbeg Distillery* are often bottled at a higher alcohol by volume than the minimum required 40 percent. Many of their whiskies are also non-chill filtered which gives them a richer flavour profile.

Springbank Distillery in Campbeltown offers a tour of the entire whisky-making process as it's the only distillery in Scotland to carry out the full production on the one site, including bottling and malting. The nearby *Mitchell's Glengyle* and *Glen Scotia* distilleries are unfortunately not open to the public, but you can still buy their whiskies in shops around Scotland.

Oban Distillery and Visitor Centre is one of the oldest distilleries in Scotland, dating back to around 1800. Its whisky is said to have a 'west Highland flavour' that falls between the dry, smoky style of the Scottish islands and the lighter, sweeter malts of the Highlands.

There's only one distillery on the Isle of Skye, *Talisker Distillery*, but it produces alluring, sweet, full-bodied single malt whisky so don't miss it. This whisky is really easy to enjoy, and like Skye itself, so hard to leave!

Ben Nevis Distillery, situated at the foot of Britain's highest mountain of the same name, is an impressive and historic place well worth a visit. A dram of this whisky is enough to whet your appetite for more.

Once teeming with distilleries producing moonshine spirits, *Isle of Arran Distillery* is now Arran's only working distillery. It offers a cask purchase scheme which allows private individuals to own their own cask of whisky, which can be stored on site at the distillery. Why not give it a go yourself?

If you're interested in the malting process and technology that goes behind whisky production, take a tour of the *Port Ellen Maltings*. Please note that it can only be visited by prior arrangement or during open days as part of Islay Festival of Music & Malt.

WEST COAST WHISKY

Image: A dram of whisky.

You may ask what it is about Scotland's west coast that makes its whisky so unique. Whether it's the hundreds of miles of unspoilt coastline with pristine clear waters, acres of wonderful and fertile farmland or the skills that have been passed down through the generations, western Scotland is known as whisky-lover heaven, dotted with distilleries producing some of the world's most recognisable names in the world of whisky. Their unique aromas and qualities are shaped by the landscape, climate, local culture and hundreds of years of craft.

Taking on the tangs of the salty sea air and peat smoke, whiskies from the west coast of Scotland tend to be big-bodied with maritime aroma, though there are great stylistic differences between the heavily-peated Islay whiskies and the gentler malts from further north along the coast.

Islay malts are unmistakably powerful, bursting with flavour, from the recognised smokiness apparent in almost all offerings, to the more surprising notes such as the black pepper found in Talisker.

Explore the trail:

visitscotland.com

You can learn more about whisky and Scotland's distilleries, find more itineraries and check out our videos at

visitscotland.com/whisky



TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1.

Loch Fyne Oyster Bar.
2.

Slices of Stornoway Black Pudding and cooked scallops.
3.

Looking across Loch Duich to Eilean Donan Castle.
4.

A sandy beach in the foreground on the south coast of Islay, Inner Hebrides.

Scotland’s west coast is blessed with a wonderful larder, from scallops and langoustines to smoked salmon and fishcakes. Embark on a culinary adventure along the *Seafood Trail* which includes the much celebrated *Loch Fyne Oyster Bar*, amongst other fantastic eateries.

In May, Islay sees the week-long *Fèis Ìle - The Islay Festival of Music & Malt*. It’s a great way to discover the smoky, amber delights from the distilleries on Islay and neighbouring Isle of Jura during their open days, so make sure you don’t miss it!

Hailed as the ‘Outdoor Capital of the UK’, *Fort William* is an all-year-round centre for climbing, hillwalking or mountain biking, with Britain’s highest mountain Ben Nevis on its doorstep. Discover more *activities in the Highlands*, or plan a relaxing trip up the Nevis Range by Britain’s only mountain gondola and marvel at the sweeping Highland panorama from 650 m above sea level.

With an impressive 20 Munros, *Isle of Skye* is another Munro-bagger’s paradise. Tackle the heights of its dramatic jagged Cuillin mountain range or take in the breathtaking landslip formation, the Quiraing. Adrenaline-seekers can take a cold but magical dip in the vivid blue waters of the Fairy Pools, recently crowned ‘world’s wildest swim’ by the Lonely Planet.

Highland games are also abundant in this corner of Scotland, and they are as colourful and exciting as you can imagine! From games at *Inveraray* and *Fort William* in July to the world’s largest Highland games at the *Cowal Highland Gathering* in Dunoon in August, there’s plenty to choose from.

Take a cruise out to the imposing *Isle of Staffa*, close to Mull, to see a rich mix of seabirds including guillemots, razorbills and the colourful puffins, or discover Argyll’s spectacular *nature centres and reserves* with their diverse fauna and flora. Find more *tours in Scotland*.

Did you know that if you visit *Laphroig Distillery* in spring, you can witness the peat being hand-cut? And if you come by late summer you can get a glimpse of the peat left on the lands to dry. Across the island lies *Bowmore Distillery*, Islay’s oldest recorded distillery.

Kilchoman Distillery is Scotland’s most westerly distillery and one of the country’s smallest. It’s one of only few distilleries that carries out traditional floor maltings and uses barley grown on the farm at the distillery.



Castles in *Argyll & The Isles* and *Ayrshire & Arran* are truly spectacular, and each and every one boasts a remarkable setting and unique features. Admire the unique circular-shaped *Rothesay Castle*, discover exquisite tapestries at *Culzean Castle*, or take in a marvellous sunset at *Eilean Donan Castle*, the most photographed castle in Scotland, if not in the world.





GLASGOW & THE CLYDE VALLEY AND EDINBURGH & THE LOTHIAN

You might be surprised at the wealth of produce you can find in the two regions which boast Scotland's largest cities. As well as fantastic dining opportunities, Glasgow and Edinburgh both have breweries, chocolatiers, cheesemongers, artisan bakers, specialist suppliers, well-stocked delis and farmers' markets, meaning you really can taste your way around our cities.

Step out of city boundaries and you're met by expansive fertile countryside, interspersed with busy towns and charming villages. Dairy farms, real ale breweries and a venison farm lie in the part of the Clyde Valley known as South Lanarkshire, whilst farm shops, fruit farms, a smokehouse and a distillery all contribute to the distinct character of East Lothian.

Whet your appetite for *Glasgow & The Clyde Valley* and *Edinburgh & The Lothians* and read our interesting facts. You'll discover more about producers and outlets in these regions which feature in Scotland's recognised *food and drink trails*.



FUN FACTS

1. The Scotch Whisky Experience, Edinburgh.
2. Scottish lager, beer and ale at 56 North, Edinburgh.

C*raigie's Farm Deli* and Café is featured on the Scottish Cheese Trail. As well as stocking a wonderful range of Scottish cheeses, the Sinclair family produce delicious chutneys in their jam kitchen which make perfect accompaniments to cheese and biscuits.

Dip your toe in *Scotland's Chocolate Trail* and have a go at making your own

cocoa creations in Glasgow or Edinburgh. The *No. 1 Chocolate Factory* hold workshops for children and masterclasses for adults where you can concoct your own sweet treats, while chocolate guru Nadia from Edinburgh's *Thinking Chocolate* offers a range of classes, covering subjects such as an introduction to chocolate and chocolate dessert-making.

The *Scottish Lowland Food & Drink Trail* offers some mouth-watering experiences. Head to *Carmichael Estate* in South Lanarkshire, which is home to a venison farm, and sample this lean, flavoursome meat in the restaurant, or browse the well-stocked farm shop. In East Lothian, head to *Glenkinchie Distillery* for a tour and the chance to savour a nip of this fine Lowland malt, or pick your own berries in the summer months at *Belhaven Fruit Farm*.

Quench your thirst whilst sampling tasty local brews and discover beers and ales which are part of Scotland's *Real Ale Trail*. Enjoy a pint at Glasgow's *WEST Brewery*, a Bavarian-style brewing operation housed in a handsome Venetian-inspired building that originally served as a carpet factory. In Edinburgh, take a tour of *Stewart Brewing* and discover the process behind the beer.

Explore the areas further:

Edinburgh & The Lothians

Glasgow & The Clyde Valley

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

visitscotland.com/tastescotland



TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1.

The Royal Highland Show at Ingliston, near Edinburgh
2.

Rogano Oyster Bar, Glasgow.

3.

Carving roast beef at the Foodies Festival, Edinburgh.
4.

Lobstershack in North Berwick.

Scotland might be renowned for its whisky but did you know that Edinburgh & The Lothians is home to three small batch gin producers? **Edinburgh Gin** and **Pickering’s** are produced in the city, while **NB Gin** is distilled in the pretty coastal town of North Berwick.

Tuck into fresh fish and chips on a moored boat at **McMonagles Fish and Chip Restaurant** in Clydebank, near Glasgow. Situated on the Forth & Clyde Canal, this chippy operates the world’s only ‘sail-thru’ take-away service.

Experience the taste of fresh seafood accompanied by the salty tang of sea air at **Lobstershack** in North Berwick. Serving lobster, langoustine, mussels and mackerel fillets, this little gem is open seasonally and offers a great al fresco dining experience.

For those with a sweet tooth, don’t miss the chance to try traditional Scottish-made Italian-style ice cream. **Crolla’s Gelateria** on Byres Road in Glasgow has been producing ice cream since 1895, while **S. Luca of Musselburgh** has been operating in the East Lothian seaside town since 1908.

Both Glasgow and Edinburgh offer some incredible dining experiences. Glasgow is home to long-established institutions including **The Ubiquitous Chip** and **Rogano**, while Edinburgh has five **restaurants** which have been awarded a Michelin star.

Glasgow’s worthy reputation for producing some of the tastiest curries is backed by the fact that it has received the Curry Capital accolade four times since 2001. It’s also claimed the chicken tikka masala was invented in a Glasgow restaurant in the 1970s. Judge Glasgow’s curry offering for yourself at **KoolBa** or **Mother India**.

Learn about uisge beatha, ‘the water of life’, at the **Scotch Whisky Experience** on Edinburgh’s historic Royal Mile or visit **Auchentoshan Distillery**, situated at the foot of the Kilpatrick hills.

Enjoy the tastes of rural Scotland whilst in the city at regular farmers’ markets. In Glasgow’s West End, Mansfield Park hosts the **Glasgow’s Farmers’ Market** on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month, while a bustling **weekly market** takes place every Sunday at the heart of Stockbridge in Edinburgh.

Don’t miss **The Royal Highland Show** at Ingliston, near Edinburgh. This countryside showcase is usually held in June and has an impressive food hall with plenty to tempt you.

In August, tantalise your taste buds during one of Edinburgh’s most delicious events, the **Foodies Festival**. For three days, Inverleith Park becomes a food haven with street food and retail stalls, cooking theatres, workshops and masterclasses.



ORKNEY AND SHETLAND

Just off the north coast of Scotland lays the beautiful island groups of Orkney and Shetland. Famed for their gorgeous landscapes, fascinating wildlife and rich history, Orkney and Shetland are made up of paradise islands, just waiting to be explored.

These glorious archipelagos also produce some of the finest food and drink around. During your trip you can taste traditional local delicacies, sample freshly caught seafood as you admire stunning views of the sea and enjoy a drink in a cosy local pub. You'll also find stops for two of the country's most indulgent trails: the ***Real Ale Trail*** and ***Scotland's Chocolate Trail***.

FUN FACTS

Image: Mareel - multi-purpose entertainment centre, Lerwick, Shetland

Shetland's *Valhalla Brewery* is the most northerly brewery in the UK. Situated on Unst, Valhalla Brewery currently produces six real ales, each with their own unique taste and story. Book a tour of the brewery, based at *Saxa Vord Resort* on Unst, to learn about the stages in the brewing process before you try a taste of Shetland classics such as Auld Rock and Simmer Dim.

The wonderful *Orkney Brewery* is based in an old school house. Visit the 5-star visitor centre to learn about the art of brewing, enjoy tastings of the brewery's flavoursome beers and sample some tasty home baking or a hot snack in The Tasting Hall café, situated in the classroom. Sip a frothy coffee as you browse the many artefacts on display from times-gone-by.

The *Shetland Fudge Company* sells edible puffin poo! Made from white Belgian chocolate, mallow, toasted rice and coconut, puffin poo is one of The Shetland Fudge Company's most famous sweet treats. Pop into the shop to pick up a bag (or order online) and browse the delicious range of tablet, fudge and, of course, melt-in-the-mouth chocolates.

Foords *Chocolates and the Chocolate Experience Café* on Shetland are famous for their Hot Chocolate Deluxe and Deluxe Chocolate Experience – the perfect way to indulge in one of the most northern corners of Scotland! Based at the Saxa Vord Resort on Unst, along with Valhalla Brewery, you could combine a trip to the brewery with a stop off at the café, to round off your ale tasting with some delicious sweet treats. You could even pick up some boxes of their famous chocolates to take home with you!

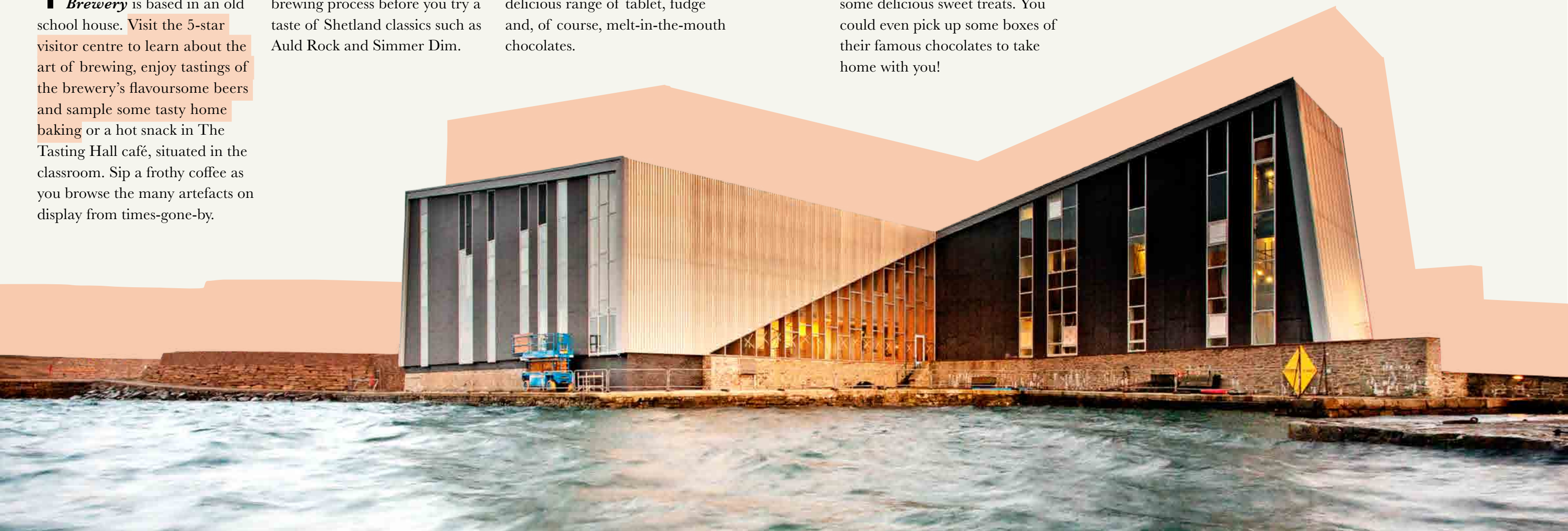
Delicious white, milk and dark chocolates are lovingly hand-crafted on Orkney by *Kaye's Handmade Chocolates*. From decadent chocolate truffles to melt-in-the-mouth chocolate caramels, look out for Kaye's Handmade Chocolates at seasonal fairs.

Explore the areas further:

*Orkney
Shetland*

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

*visitscotland.com/
tastescotland*



TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

- 1. Houses at Skara Brae.
- 2. St Magnus Cathedral, Orkney.
- 3. Kirkwall, Mainland, Orkney.
- 4. Sumburgh Head and lighthouse, Mainland, Shetland.

Orkney and Shetland aren’t just famous for their real ales and melt-in-the-mouth chocolates. During your time on the islands you’ll encounter a whole host of delicious local produce, ranging from Orkney’s famous smoked cheese to Shetland’s plump mussels, which are grown on ropes in the sea.

Surrounded by glittering seas both Orkney and Shetland are famous for their seafood, with fresh catches of fish and succulent shellfish being landed on a daily basis. Indulge with a taste of crab, lobster or scallop, and look out for succulent fillets of fresh fish, including halibut and haddock, on many menus.

Each of the regions have their own unique delicacies for you to try too. On Orkney you can try a taste of the famous North Ronaldsay Lamb, a breed which grazes exclusively on seaweed, making its meat particularly flavoursome and tender, while a trip to Shetland is incomplete without a sample of reestit mutton, a traditional local delicacy. To prepare the dish, butchers salt the mutton in brine before hanging it to dry above a peat fire, giving the meat a traditionally savoury flavour.

You’ll also find many beautiful beaches and a variety of wonderful wildlife throughout the islands. In the summer months, Orkney is home to thousands of seabirds, including guillemots and puffins, while the islands’ 13 **RSPB** reserves provide the perfect place for birdwatching.

Take to the **Orkney Craft Trail** to discover just some of the islands’ skilled artists, jewellers, potters, textile designers and furniture makers, and visit the famous Highland Park Distillery to learn about how the amber nectar is produced before you try a sample in the place where it is made.

On Shetland you’ll discover a unique blend of Scandinavian and Scottish culture, a result of the Viking invasion in times past. Fragments of the extinct language Norn, can still be seen and heard today and you can even sample dishes made using traditional Norse cooking methods, such as smoked or pickled fish and shellfish. Try gravadlax, a pickled salmon delicacy, or tuck into some delicious smoked salmon.

Shetland is also famous for its fantastic cultural attractions, including the wonderful **Mareel** centre, and its unique arts and crafts. See beautiful pieces being made before your eyes by following the **craft trail** or visit the **Shetland Textile Museum** in the Böd of Gremista, Lerwick, to learn about the islands’ renowned textile heritage. See traditional demonstrations of spinning and knitting and admire over 500 beautifully crafted items.

Inhabited since 8,000 BC Orkney is packed with historic sites that tell the tale of the islands throughout the centuries. Visit the ancient sites at the world famous **UNESCO Heart of Neolithic Orkney**, such as the prehistoric village of **Skara**



Brae or the **Ring of Brodgar**, learn about the island’s Norse connections at the **St Magnus Cathedral** and discover Orkney’s role in both the world wars at world war attractions, including the **Italian Chapel** and WWII gun batteries at Hoxa Head.

Uncover Shetland’s Viking connections at the brilliant **Shetland Museum** or see how Shetlanders would have lived in the 1870s at the **Shetland Croft House Museum**. At the fantastic **Sumburgh Head Lighthouse** you’ll get a key insight into both the lighthouse’s history and the wonderful nature and wildlife in the area. Explore the diverse landscapes and incredible geology at **Geopark Shetland** and get up close to some fascinating wildlife, including adorable Shetland ponies, elusive sea otters and huge colonies of seabirds.



PERTHSHIRE AND FIFE

The natural larder of *Perthshire* and the *Kingdom of Fife* enjoys a sparkling reputation and justifiably so.

Both regions are home to acres of unspoilt, fertile landscapes which yield a plentiful supply of fresh seasonal produce throughout most of the year, not to mention locally reared meat and game, highly prized by chefs of top restaurants throughout Scotland and the rest of the UK for its distinctive taste. Discover the sheer variety and quality available at farm shops packed to the rafters with the finest organic produce, and at farmers' markets held regularly throughout the regions.

Perthshire's rivers and lochs offer some of the best fishing in the country, with the River Tay regarded as one of the best rivers in Europe for catching Atlantic salmon, a staple on the menus of restaurants throughout the region. Fife's picturesque East Neuk meanwhile, has a seafaring heritage which stretches back centuries, and is one of the few remaining places

in Scotland where you can dine on mouth-watering seafood, including prawns, crabs and lobsters, caught by local fisherman that very same day.

The superior taste and quality of Perthshire and Fife's produce also extends to its beverages. Visit whisky distilleries to learn about the time-honoured process behind Scotland's national drink, enjoying a complimentary dram or two, and discover one of Scotland's leading craft breweries in Perthshire.

Cheese lovers will find plenty to tempt them while those with a sweet tooth will find themselves spoilt for choice at independent chocolatiers, each offering their own unique array of irresistible confections.

Whatever your palate or budget, the food and drink of Perthshire and Fife won't disappoint, with everything from fish n' chips to Michelin-star dining on offer.

FUN FACTS

1. Ingredients for a chocolate recipe in the Scottish Chocolate Centre at Legends of Grandtully
2. A pint of Ossian ale at Inveralmond Brewery, Perth

Life is famed throughout the world for being the home of the **Old Course**. It is also recognised as one of Scotland's top seafood destinations. Head to the East Neuk and dine on the catch of the day at superb restaurants cloistered within the pretty white-washed fishing villages of Crail, Pittenweem, Anstruther, Elie and Lower Largo.

The town of St Andrews boasts its own fair share of foodie delights. **Fisher & Donaldson** is a fifth generation family-owned bakery which offers everything from freshly baked morning rolls to beautiful constructed cakes.

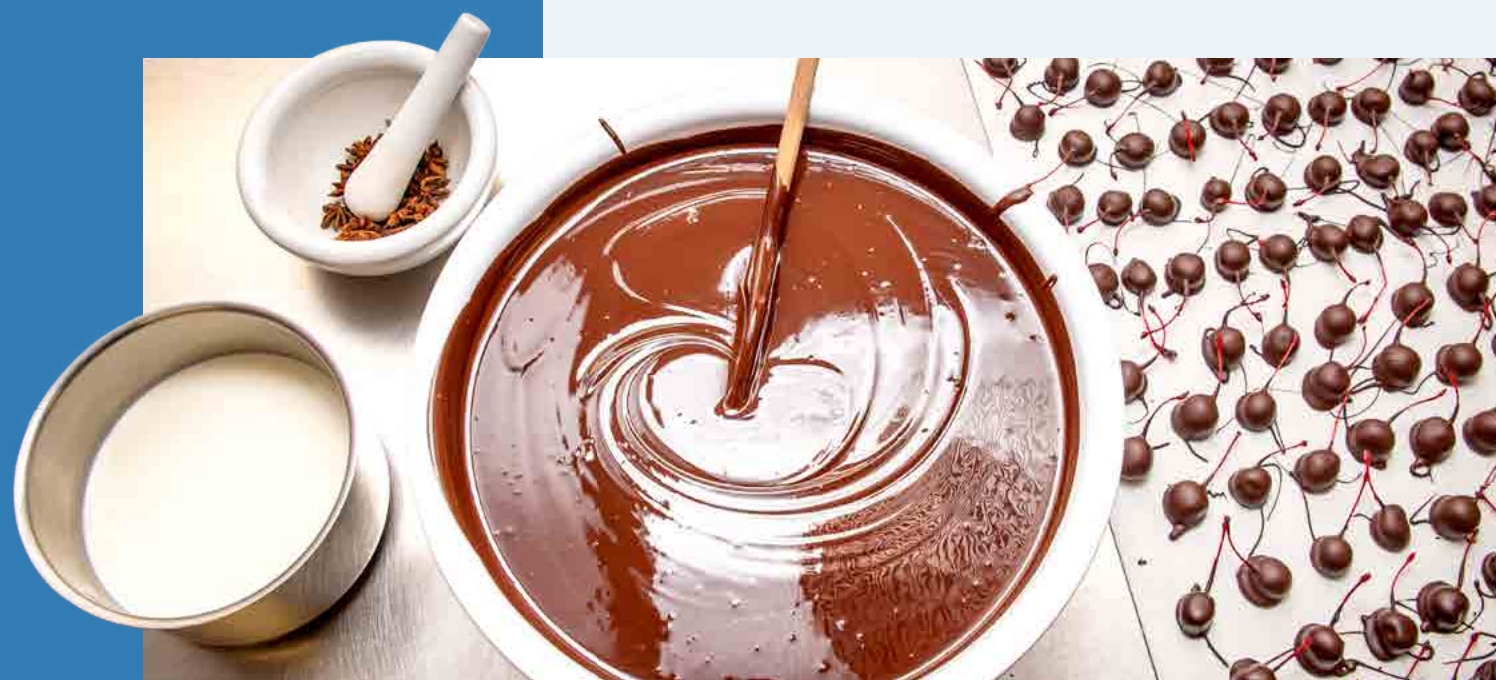
Located just a mile outside St Andrews, the **Balgove Larder** is a great pit-stop during the summer months when it operates a pop-up al fresco restaurant in converted combine sheds. Enjoy steak, chips and salad, all prepared from ingredients harvested from the surrounding countryside.

The delectable chocolates on display at the Grandtully shop, café and visitor centre of **Iain Burnett, the Highland Chocolatier**, are hard to resist. Treat yourself to Burnett's signature Velvet Truffles and his other delightful confections including spiced pralines and cherries and clementines dipped in chocolate. At the **second shop** in St Andrews you'll find the entire gourmet range along with the Hot Velvet Shot, a wonderfully rich hot chocolate shot available at the Chocolate Espresso Bar.

The fishing in Perthshire doesn't disappoint. Cast your line in the River Tay, known as 'the queen of the salmon rivers', and try and catch your own dinner. If luck isn't on your side don't despair. You'll find the delicately flavoured wild salmon and brown trout hand-caught from the region's rivers on the menus of many local restaurants.

One of Scotland's leading breweries, **Inveralmond Brewery** welcomes visitors with a behind-the-scenes tour of its operations. Watch talented brewers hard at work producing Inveralmond's acclaimed range of beers before enjoying a pint from the brewery tap.

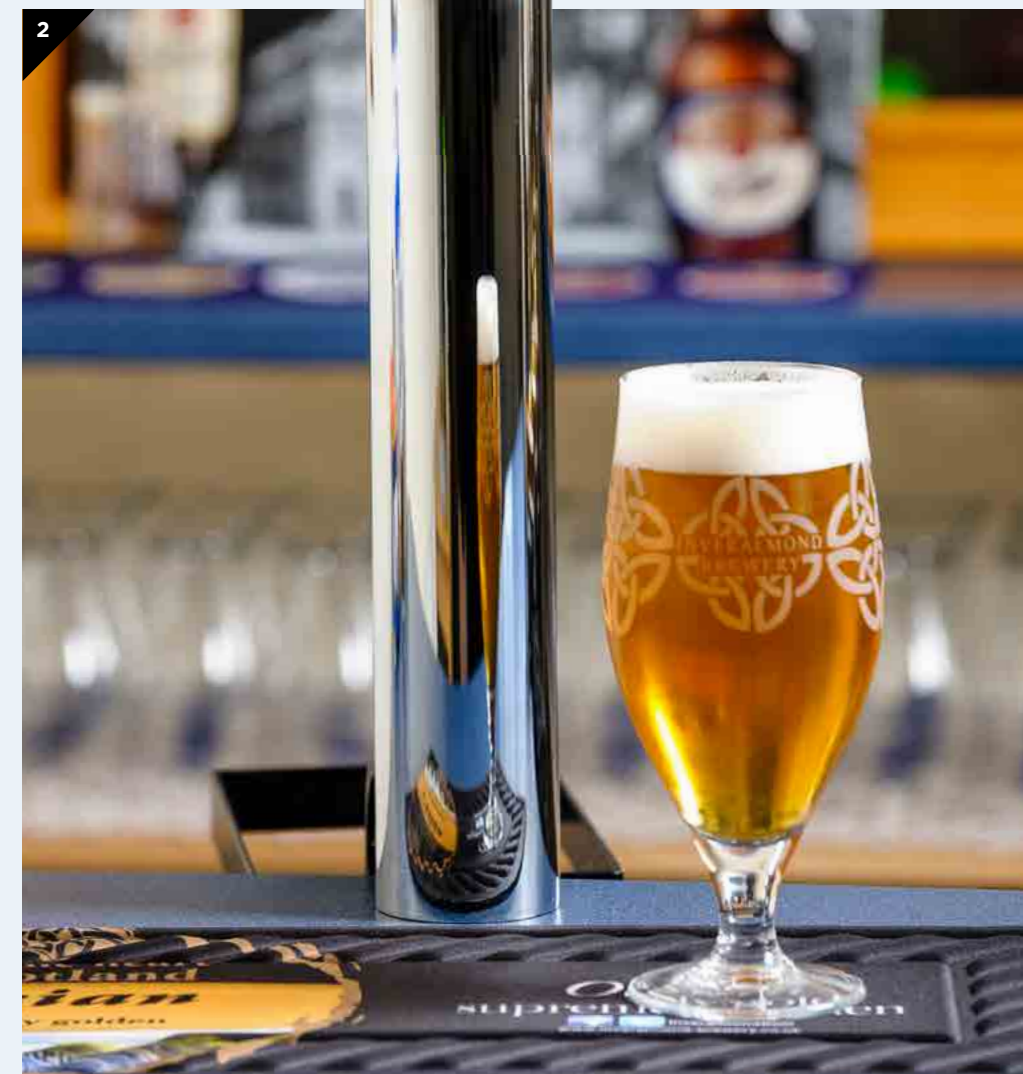
Pay a visit to the **St Andrews Farmhouse Cheese Company** where you can watch the Stewart family's famous 'Anster' cheese made from scratch the old-fashioned way, using the milk from their herd of home-bred Holstein Friesian cows.



Gloagburn Farm Shop & Coffee Shop boasts one of the finest selections of local and speciality fayre in Perthshire, but it remains most popular for its free-range eggs, which have been laid by the farm's hen flock for the last 15 years.

Ardross Farm Shop in Elie is well-known for its traditionally reared beef. Succulent, tender and bursting with flavour, it more than lives up to its excellent reputation and can be enjoyed in a range of choice cuts, delicious sausages, roasts, mince and outstanding burgers.

Ever wondered what goes in to crafting the perfect chocolate? Or maybe you fancy honing your cake-decorating skills? Book a course or workshop at **Taystful in Perth** and channel your inner patisserie chef.



Explore the areas further:

**Perthshire
Fife**

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

**[visitscotland.com/
tastescotland](http://visitscotland.com/tastescotland)**

TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Fresh Scottish vegetables
2. Edradour Whisky Distillery, by Pitlochry, Perthshire.

Fife has the unique distinction of being home to Scotland's largest buffalo farm and butchery. Pay a visit to the **Buffalo Farm's** stand at farmers' markets including Perth, St Andrews, Dunfermline and Cupar and sample the signature Puddledub Buffalo.

Farmers' markets are a fantastic introduction to the variety and quality of the produce on offer in Fife and Perthshire. Held on the first Saturday of the month, **Perth Farmers' Market** is the oldest in Scotland.

For a great family day out this summer make your way to **Cairnie Fruit Farm** in Cupar. Pick your own strawberries, raspberries, blackcurrants and other soft fruit before trying to find your way out of the six acre maze.

Go cocoa-crazy at the **Perth Festival of Chocolate** this November, Scotland's only outdoor chocolate festival, which brings together talented independent chocolatiers from across Scotland to showcase the delicious fruits of their labour.

There's no shortage of whisky distilleries for you to visit in Perthshire. Take a tour around **Glenturret Distillery**, the oldest in the country, where you can sample the entire Famous Grouse Malt range straight from the cask.

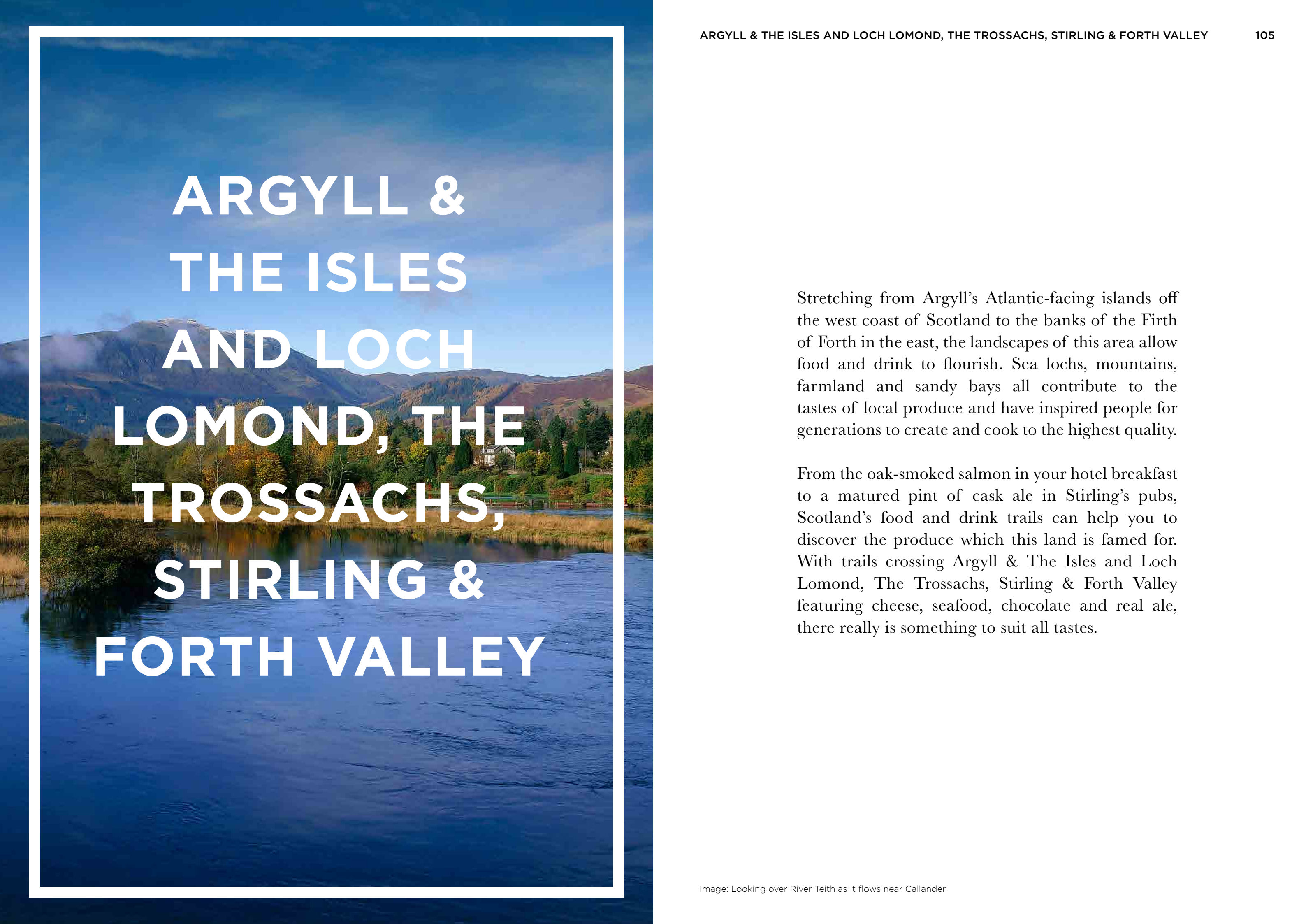
The Gleneagles Hotel is the perfect location for the Michelin-star Andrew Fairlie's restaurant. After a day relaxing at this luxurious 5-star resort or playing a round on three of the top Scottish championship golf courses, savour exquisite French dishes prepared with traditional Scottish fayre.

No visit to the East Neuk would be complete without stopping for a fish supper at the award-winning **Anstruther Fish Bar & Restaurant**. Enjoy your fish 'n' chips on the benches outside and gaze out over harbour as the local creel fisherman land their daily catch.

St Andrews is the setting for a two-week food and drink extravaganza this November. Experience the very best of Fife's amazing larder at the **St Andrews Food & Drink Festival** from its freshly caught seafood and Scotch lamb and beef to seasonal vegetables, whisky and homemade ice cream.

And don't miss out the smallest distillery in Scotland, **Edradour Distillery** in Pitlochry. Witness the art of whisky production first-hand before enjoying a complimentary dram of its 10-year-old single malt.





ARGYLL & THE ISLES AND LOCH LOMOND, THE TROSSACHS, STIRLING & FORTH VALLEY

Stretching from Argyll's Atlantic-facing islands off the west coast of Scotland to the banks of the Firth of Forth in the east, the landscapes of this area allow food and drink to flourish. Sea lochs, mountains, farmland and sandy bays all contribute to the tastes of local produce and have inspired people for generations to create and cook to the highest quality.

From the oak-smoked salmon in your hotel breakfast to a matured pint of cask ale in Stirling's pubs, Scotland's food and drink trails can help you to discover the produce which this land is famed for. With trails crossing Argyll & The Isles and Loch Lomond, The Trossachs, Stirling & Forth Valley featuring cheese, seafood, chocolate and real ale, there really is something to suit all tastes.

FUN FACTS

Image: Glen Fyne, Argyll.

Campbeltown on the Kintyre Peninsula is well-known for its distilling history, but did you know the town's creamery has been producing cheese since 1923? Pick up some of the creamery's Mull of Kintyre Cheese at **Ardardan Farm Shop** near Cardross, which is part of the **Scottish Cheese Trail**.

Travelling in a hired green 30-year-old VW Camper Van, author Carole Fitzgerald toured the **Seafood Trail** along Argyll's coast before writing recipes and tales from her trip in her book *From Crab Shack to Oyster Bay*. Her culinary adventure included tasting fresh local catches, including pan-fried Loch Fyne oysters.

Paying homage to Scotland's other national drink in the form of their **Iron Brew** Truffles, **Oban Chocolate Factory** is one of over 70 chocolate makers who feature on Scotland's **Chocolate Trail**. Likely to leave a meltingly good taste in the mouths of chocoholics, the factory also produces artisan bars and rich hot chocolates.

The town of Balmaha, on the banks of Loch Lomond, is home to the **Oak Tree Inn** which serves beers from its very own brewery. Set up by the hotel, bar and restaurant, Balmaha Brewery is part of the Scottish **Real Ale Trail**. Their range includes the Kiltwalk, a light blonde ale which helps to raise money for children's charities. Each year the **Glasgow Kiltwalk** charity fundraiser sees thousands of people walk from the city to the banks of Loch Lomond.

Argyll is often referred to as the **Whisky Coast** as it is home to 16 seaside distilleries.

Use the trail to discover the versatile flavours of this liquid gold, from the rich peaty taste of Islay whiskies, to the malty whiskies of **Tobermory Distillery**.

Explore the areas further:

**Loch Lomond, The Trossachs, Stirling & Forth Valley
Argyll & The Isles**

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

**[visitscotland.com/
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TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Mussels at Ee-Usk, a seafood restaurant in Oban, Argyll & The Isles .
2. Pepper beef with mushroom sauce by Nick Nairn.
3. Mount Stuart – the historic seat of the Marquis of Bute on the Isle of Bute.

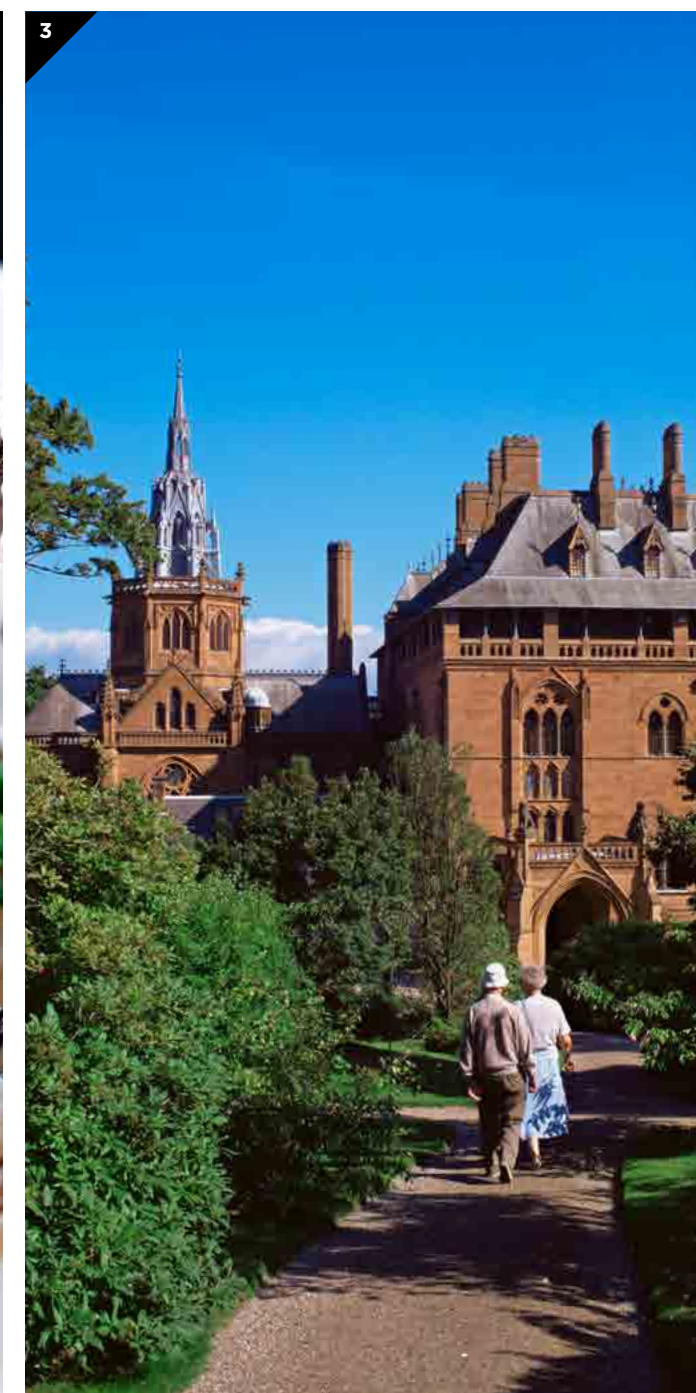
The 14th century **Callendar House** and its surrounding parkland in Falkirk make for a great family day. Tour the house, including the working 1825 kitchen before the kids let off steam at the play park and on the paddle boats outside. Head to the nearby **Milk Barn Ice Cream Parlour** on Glen Farm to try tempting flavours, including jaffa cake and sea salted caramel.

While visiting the historic city of **Stirling**, with its impressive hilltop **castle**, why not pop into the traditional **shopping arcade** to discover independent boutiques and great options for eating and drinking?

Oban is known as the Gateway to the Isles, but also the ‘seafood capital of Scotland’, so if you’re planning an island hopping trip around **Argyll**, make sure you have time in the port town to sample some fresh seafood. Even right by the ferry terminal you can pick up a portion of langoustines to take away!

Following a hill walk up **Ben Ledi**, the highest Munro in **Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park**, you could reward yourself with a hot chocolate or an ice cream at one of the quaint cafés in nearby Callander. Look out for the fascinating details of the town’s architecture and past by following the **Callander History and Heritage Trail**.

Butefest in July is a great opportunity to experience the **Isle of Bute** on the Firth of Clyde. It’s a family-friendly affair with live Scottish music, children’s entertainment and an array of local food and drink. Be sure to visit **Mount Stuart**, a theatrical Neo-Gothic house, and the island’s famed gardens during your stay.





AYRSHIRE & ARRAN, SCOTTISH BORDERS AND DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

Embark on an unforgettable culinary journey through southern Scotland, a land of breathtaking scenery, wilderness and romance. Stretching from the crystal clear waters of the Scottish Borders' coast in the east to the rolling hills and hidden lochs of Dumfries & Galloway and beyond to the picturesque beaches of Ayrshire & Arran in the west, this area truly wows with its outstanding natural beauty.

Travel to any part of this area and you will find some of the finest and freshest produce made locally. From creamy cheeses and mouth-watering ice creams to light, zesty ales and heavily-peated whiskies and meltingly moreish chocolate delights, you name it and the area has got it!

A number of Scottish food and drink trails cross through the area. Choose from the ***Cheese Trail***, ***Real Ale Trail***, ***Whisky Coast Trail***, ***Chocolate Trail*** and ***Scottish Lowlands Food & Drink Trail***, and treat your taste buds to some unparalleled tastes that the southern part of Scotland offers. No matter your personal taste or budget, you're bound to find something to soothe your soul!

FUN FACTS

Image: Andy Goldsworthy's Striding Arch on Bail Hill, Dumfries and Galloway

Discover the rich character of Arran's single malts at **Arran Distillery** in Lochranza, the island's only working distillery, as well as a range of cask bottles and blended malts. Get some excellent insight into the whisky-making process on a guided tour, and at the end sample a dram or two of this amber drink.

Those with a sweet tooth will be in heaven at the **Arran Chocolate Factory**, which offers lashings of mouth-watering handmade truffles, fudges and chocolates with all imaginable fillings to drool over. From champagne and ginger to passion fruit crème and mandarin marzipan flavours – it's a true paradise on earth!

Treat yourself to a tasty afternoon at the **Cocoa Bean Company**, Kirkcudbright, and sample their exquisite range of luxurious treats. You may even produce your own chocolate creations in the interactive workshops. It doesn't really get any better for chocolate-devotees, does it?

For more chocolate extravaganza, head to **Cocoa Black Chocolate** in Peebles. From their confectionary-filled shop to café selling chocolate afternoon teas, everything is chocolate there! What better way to experience these flavours than in their pastry school? Give it a go yourself and gain some chocolate and pastry skills.

Enjoy a savoury indulgence, by yoghurt producer **Rowan Glen** from Newton Stewart which has long been offering pots of goodness as well as mature and mild cheddars. Try their delicious cheeses sliced on oatcakes or use them for cooking some classics like macaroni cheese and soufflés.

Don't forget to stock up on the award-winning organic cheeses and dairy products from the artisan producer **Loch Arthur Creamery** too. Their range of great tasting and quality cheeses has become recognised nationwide and vey sought after. Get a wheel or two home so you can enjoy them for a while longer.

While in the Borders, you can also try the award-winning pies at Sanderson's Butchers in Coldstream and deli treats at the highly-praised **Mainstreet Trading Company**, sample some of the 2,500 organic lines available at **Whitmuir Organic Farm** near Peebles and taste any of an excellent range of hand-crafted ales from the **Scottish Borders Brewery** near Jedburgh.

Rounded and mellow flavours of beers from **Sulwath Brewers**, Castle Douglas, will nicely round off a hearty meal. You can meet the brewers, sample the ales and witness the care and skill that goes into preparing those traditionally crafted beers on a behind-the-scenes tour. Did you know that their beers are supplied to connoisseur markets as far away as Devon in the south of England to Aberdeen in the north?

Why not try one of the many drinks produced by **Broughton Ales** in Biggar? This small independent brewery uses the finest malts and hops blended with pure Scottish water to produce an extensive range of beer, stout and lager available in bottle, cask, keg and gift packs.

Find more inspirational ideas on the **Cheese, Real Ale, Whisky Coast, Chocolate** and **Scottish Lowlands Food & Drink Trail** and explore each trail in more detail.

Explore the areas further:

**Dumfries & Galloway
Scottish Borders
Ayrshire & Arran**

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

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TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, Alloway, South Ayrshire.
2. Melrose Abbey, Melrose, Roxburghshire, Scottish Borders
3. A mountain biker on the Red Trail, at the Dalbeattie Mountain Biking Centre.

Characterised by striking contrasts, Ayrshire & Arran is packed with fantastic **parks and gardens** and **hides and reserves** teeming with **wildlife**. The beautiful islands of Arran, Cumbrae and Holy Isle are all worth a visit.

Visit the long list of fantastic **attractions** throughout the region. Spend a few days exploring an array of **castles** and **historic homes and buildings**, each different and unique in its own way, grab a show, or see an exhibition at the abundant **galleries** and **museums**.

Get closer to Rabbie Burns, Scotland's National Bard, and step into his world by following the **Burns in the south west** itinerary. Explore the biggest and most important Burns collection in the world at the fantastic Robert Burns Birthplace Museum and stop at his favourite drinking hole – the Globe Inn, among other **Burns attractions**.

Dumfries & Galloway is home to a diverse range of **events**. Ranging from great exploration of the stunning outdoors at the **Wild Spring Festival** in April to glorious musical entertainment at the **Wickerman Festival** in July and **Wigtown Book Festival** in September, the choice is yours.

Whatever floats your boat, you will find it in this corner of Scotland; you can tee off, saddle up or cast your fly. Practice your swing at excellent **golfing trails**, discover miles upon miles of **cycling paths**,

or simply take a leisurely **walk** and discover the region at your own pace.

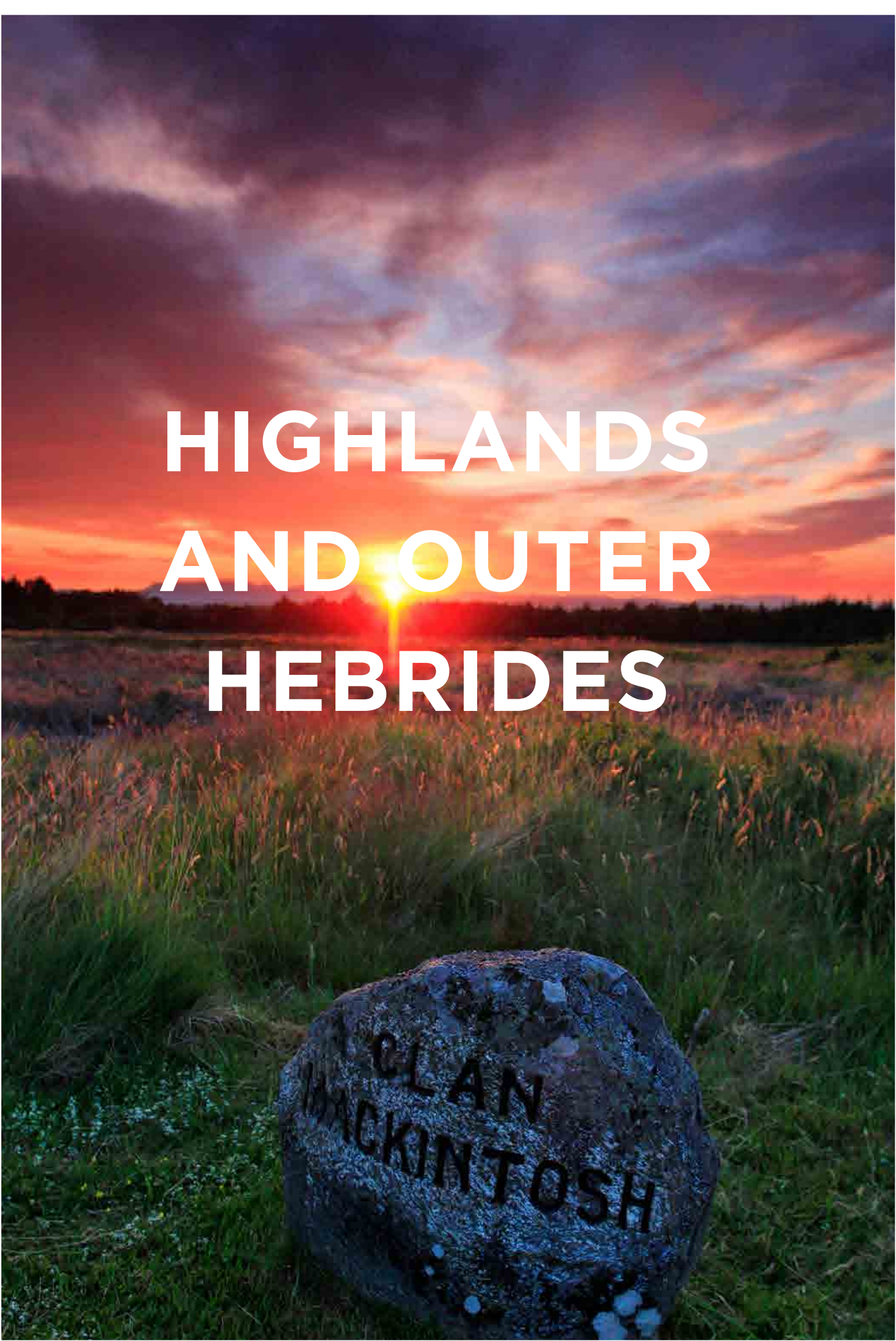
Ideal to explore in daytime, with ancient woodland and stunning valleys, **Galloway Forest Park** also boasts some of the darkest and clearest skies in Europe, which provide exceptional conditions for **stargazing**. Grab your loved one and have a magical moment or two trying to spot the Milky Way.

While in the Scottish Borders, explore the enthralling history of the remarkable **Borders Abbeys**. Did you know that Melrose Abbey is where the heart of Robert the Bruce is thought to be buried? Kelso Abbey was once the grandest examples of Romanesque architecture, Dryburgh Abbey boasts fine Gothic features, while the tranquilly set Jedburgh Abbey has some amazing artefacts on display.

As far as your eye can see, the region enjoys magnificent rolling hills, lush forests and sparkling lochs and rivers – a perfect setting for **outdoor adventures**. Take to the **7stanes** mountain biking centre or explore the area **on two wheels** by following the breathtaking **Tweed Cycle Way**, or on a walk along the **Southern Upland Way**.

Once you've worked up your appetite, get a quick bite or a tasty meal at one of the area's many **restaurants and cafés** which can suit your taste or budget. For a more relaxing experience, the Herges on the Loch restaurant in **Galashiels** is a great choice.





HIGHLANDS AND OUTER HEBRIDES

As two of the most rural and picturesque parts of Scotland, these neighbouring regions offer visitors some of the most unique foodie experiences in Scotland. With an emphasis on freshness and locality, the best place to sample produce in the Highlands and Outer Hebrides is to travel through the regions and savour it first-hand in an area where it is produced by hand and according to tradition.

The Highlands of Scotland are synonymous with many things, its eye-wateringly beautiful scenery being just one of them. Another is malt whisky. Scotch, or the ‘water of life’ as we know it here in Scotland, is produced at tens of dozens of distilleries around the Highlands. Known and enjoyed around the world, Scotch is one of the country’s biggest exports and the essence of Scotland in a glass. Of course, whisky is not the only drink produced in the Highlands. Craft brewers have cropped up across the region over the last decade, producing world-class real ales and beers using

readily available clean mountain water and Scottish malts.

These wild mountainous landscapes are also home to many types of game. Deer in particular roam across the acres of heather, bracken and forests, providing a plentiful supply of tender, succulent venison, perfect in pies, filleted or smoked.

The *Outer Hebrides*, a beautiful island chain 40 miles off the west Highland coast of Scotland, has been self-sufficient for centuries. Since the arrival of the first settlers, islanders have fashioned and produced their own food and drink out of necessity due to the archipelago’s location. Nowadays, with quick and modern transport, the islands are very accessible but the tradition remains.

The Atlantic seas surrounding the islands are a bounty of unbeatable fresh seafood, including lobster, langoustines, salmon and more, while on dry land, visitors and residents alike savour local delicacies like black pudding and island-reared lamb.

FUN FACTS

Image: The Calanais Standing Stones at the entrance to Loch Cean Thulabhig, the Isle Of Lewis, Outer Hebrides.

Talisker Distillery, the only distillery on the rugged Isle of Skye, has produced whisky on the shores of Loch Harport for over 175 years with the process changing little in that time.

Chocolatier Iain Burnett studied under French, Belgian and Swiss chocolate masters before founding The Highland Chocolatier in Perthshire. For a unique food pairing experience, visit *Dalwhinnie Distillery* in the Highlands and sample a dram with Burnett's sublime velvet truffles.

Spend three wonderful days learning all the skills you'll need to produce handcrafted cheese at home when you book onto a specialist cheesemaking course with *West Highland Dairy*.

Casks are an important part of the whisky-making process. Scottish distillers use bourbon casks from the United States or sherry casks from Spain to mature their spirit in but first they have to rebuild or repair them. Watch the coopers at the *Speyside Cooperage* hard at work from the public gallery as these few but skilled men keep this traditional trade alive.

First opening its doors in 2001, the *Hebridean Brewing Company* is the Outer Hebrides' only brewery. Producing several award-winning real ales, the independent craft brewers brew using Scottish malts.

Hebridean mutton boasts a distinct, delicate flavour due to the heather the hill sheep graze on. You can find it in butchers around the Outer Hebrides, including *WJ MacDonald* in Stornoway and Ardbhan Organics on North Uist.

Explore the areas further:

*Highlands
Outer Hebrides*

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

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TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. Looking down to the ruins of Urquhart Castle.
2. The Blackhouse Museum, Arnol, Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides.
3. The Jacobite steam train passing over the Glenfinnan Viaduct at the head of Loch Shiel, Lochaber, Highlands of Scotland

Take a tour of the ***Black Isle Brewery*** on the Black Isle peninsula in the Highlands. The ales produced here are entirely organic, with refreshing blonde beers, golden pale ales and chocolaty stouts available in cosy pubs across the region.

The wildlife in these two regions is abundant. For some excellent opportunities to spot whales, including humpback, minke, killer and the occasional sperm whale, keep your eyes peeled on the Minch, the stretch of sea separating the Highlands and the Outer Hebrides.

Explore the 50 sq miles of moorland, forest, lochs and beaches around ***Ardnamurchan*** in the west Highlands – one of the most unspoilt areas of the country – and try to spot rare golden eagles fly overhead.

The Battle of Culloden in 1746 was the last battle fought on British soil. Today, it is said you can still hear cries across Drumossie Moor, the site of the battle. The impressive interactive ***visitor centre*** lets you experience the sites and sounds of the battle for yourself, which ended in defeat for the Jacobite leader Bonnie Prince Charlie.

Take a boat tour on ***Loch Ness*** and perhaps spot its legendary resident, Nessie. There are a range of boat and speed boat tours available to take you up and down Britain's largest and deepest loch, which tie-up at the picturesque ruins of Urquhart Castle.

An increasing number of directors are being attracted to ***film*** here in Scotland. Experience real-life film sets when you travel onboard the Jacobite steam train over the ***Glenfinnan*** Viaduct, both of which featured in the *Harry Potter* films.

With some of the darkest skies in Europe and nine Dark Sky Scotland discovery sites, the ***Isle of Skye*** and Lochalsh is the perfect spot for miles around to stop and stargaze.

Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, is a vibrant and modern city nestled on the banks of the River Ness. With the Highlands within touching distance and a wealth of great shopping and eating experiences, the city is ideal for a revitalising break.

With the smell of burning peat filling your nostrils, step inside the ***traditional Hebridean*** blackhouse at Arnol on the Isle of Lewis to see how people on the Outer Hebrides once lived. Some islanders lived in such houses up until the 1960s!

Stroll along the beautiful beach at ***Uig Sands*** where the famous Lewis Chessmen were unearthed. A large sculpture commemorates the finding of the intricately carved ivory chess pieces in 1831 and you can learn more about them at the Uig Museum on Lewis.





ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE AND DUNDEE & ANGUS

In the north east corner of Scotland, discover a land combining majestic landscapes, rugged countryside and cultural cities, stretching from the tip of Aberdeen City and Shire's coast to the picturesque rural outskirts of Dundee & Angus.

The area is filled with charming country towns, quaint fishing villages and the bustling city centres of Aberdeen and Dundee, all of which are bursting with memorable foodie experiences and plenty of excuses to sample the local cuisine.

Come and find out more about the famous food and drink in these regions, and sample their specialities including the Arbroath Smokie and Aberdeen Angus beef.



Image: Dunnottar Castle, Aberdeenshire.

FUN FACTS

The *Aberdeen City and Shire Food and Drink Trail* will lead you to some of the area's top quality bistros, cafés, restaurants and local suppliers. Don't miss a visit to the *Dean's Shortbread Visitor Centre*, and find out all the secrets behind creating Scotland's national biscuit. Did you know that the business began in the Dean family's kitchen in 1975, when Helen Dean's husband discovered her miraculous baking?

The *Arbroath Smokie* is produced out of the fishing town of Arbroath in Angus, and can be sampled along its very own *Arbroath Smokie Trail*. Famed for its distinctive taste, European law states that only haddock smoked using specific traditional methods within a 5-mile radius of Arbroath can be an official Arbroath Smokie.

These regions are also popular among chocolatiers, with many businesses whipping up a chocolate frenzy and taking advantage of the north east's high quality dairy produce. Indulge your chocolate cravings at *Chocolate Ooze* in Aberdeen or 88 Degrees Fine Food Emporium in Angus on your travels; these are both highlights along the *Chocolate Trail* which features over 70 businesses across Scotland.

One of Scotland's largest independent breweries, *BrewDog*, is local to Aberdeenshire and is a popular stop along the *Real Ale Trail*. The business started its brewing career in Fraserburgh and now brews more than 120,000 bottles of beers a month. Sample a pint in their first BrewDog bar in the city of Aberdeen.

Explore the areas further:

Aberdeen City and Shire

Dundee & Angus

Find out more on the Year of Food & Drink Scotland 2015 at

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With such a stunning coastline, it's easy to see why the area is so acclaimed for its fish and chips. Why not stop for a locally-sourced fish supper at the multi award-winning *Bay Fish & Chips* in Stonehaven? This was the first fish and chip shop in the UK to gain permission from the Marine Stewardship Council to sell Scottish North Sea haddock.

TASTE OF WHAT ELSE TO DO

1. The Dundee Flower and Food Festival.
2. Scottish Traditional Boat Festival, held every year in Portsoy, north Aberdeenshire.
3. Looking across to Balmoral Castle.

The **Royal Deeside Railway Station** in Aberdeenshire was regularly patronised by the Royal Family and their guests to the **Balmoral Estate**. Experience a real, royal journey by travelling on a steam train along the original track, just as Queen Victoria would have done on her visits, and enjoy a light lunch or high tea as you marvel at the glorious views over Royal Deeside from the Carriage Tearoom.

The **Dundee Flower and Food Festival** takes place from 4 – 6 September and is a unique celebration of food, music, horticulture, storytelling and much more. As well as some delicious samples to try, there will be cookery demonstrations, talks from professional chefs, baking challenges and many more events which will inspire you to get cooking!

Get a sense of the Aberdeenshire's seafaring past at the **Scottish Traditional Boat Festival** in Portsoy from 3 – 5 July. During the festival, some of the best seasonal produce will be available, showcasing the region's excellent seafood.

While you're getting your fix of culture at the Dundee Rep Theatre or browsing the latest exhibitions at the Dundee Contemporary Arts Centre, why not finish off the day with some mouthwatering dishes at **Byzantium** or perhaps some fine dining at **The Playwright?**

Following a trip to Crathes Castle, one of the many castles in the area known as 'Castle Country', head to the nearby town of **Banchory** for a delicious and great value meal at the **Cow Shed Brasserie & Cook School**, which specialises in modern Scottish cuisine.

Don't forget the historic market towns like **Huntly**, **Oldmeldrum** and **Turriff**. Here you'll find centuries-old **distilleries and castles**, bustling **farmers' markets** and **independent shops**.





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