



Harris Tweed Bag

Speyside Whisky Festival

Dunrobin Castle

Dunvegan Castle interior

## Ideas to inspire

### Aberdeenshire, Moray, Speyside, the Highlands and the Outer Hebrides

In 2016 Scotland will celebrate and showcase its historic and contemporary contributions to Innovation, Architecture and Design. We'll be celebrating the beauty and importance of our built heritage, modern landmarks and innovative design, as well as the people behind some of Scotland's greatest creations.

Aberdeenshire is a place of contrasts. In the city of Aberdeen, ancient fishing traditions and more recent links with the North Sea oil and gas industries means that it has always been at the vanguard of developments in both industries. Aberdeenshire, Morayshire and Strathspey and where you can also find the greatest density of castles in Scotland.

The rugged and unspoiled landscapes of the Highlands of Scotland have resulted in some of the nation's most major engineering achievements in the field of transport as well as some of the most splendid castles amid magnificent surroundings. On a visit to this area, you'll soon see that artists and craft makers have long since taken inspiration for the remarkable land and seascapes to be found in this year.

A trip to the Outer Hebrides reveals the unique nature and character of these magical islands. From ancient standing stones to the modern renaissance of Harris Tweed in today's fashion you'll find much to discover and explore.

#### Events:

**Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival - Early May** – Speyside whiskies are famous throughout the world. Historic malt whisky distilleries are found all along the length of the River Spey using the clear water to produce some of our best loved malts. Uncover the development of whisky making over the years in this stunning setting. [www.spiritofspeyside.com](http://www.spiritofspeyside.com)

**Festival of Architecture - throughout the year** – Since 2016 is our Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design, we'll celebrate our rich architectural past and present with a Festival of Architecture taking place across the nation.

**Doors Open Days - September** – Every weekend throughout September, buildings not normally open to the public throw open their doors to allow visitors and exclusive peak behind the scenes at museums, offices, factories, and many more surprising places, all free of charge. [www.doorsopendays.org.uk/opendays](http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk/opendays)

**Braemar Creative Arts Festival - October** – A celebration of arts and crafts against the backdrop of the Cairngorms National Park where you can explore the work of artists, crafts people and musicians and even have a go at creating something yourself! [www.braemarcreativearts.co.uk](http://www.braemarcreativearts.co.uk)

**Torrion Mountain and Sea Festival - October** – Discover how the landscape of this unforgettable place has inspired the area's photographers and artisans plus local produce, real ales, music and a range of activity opportunities. [www.mountainandseafestival.co.uk](http://www.mountainandseafestival.co.uk)

# Aberdeenshire, Moray, Speyside, the Highlands and the Outer Hebrides

## Day 1 - Aberdeenshire, Moray and Speyside



**1**  
**ABERDEEN MARITIME MUSEUM** – This fascinating, award-winning museum tells the story of the city's relationship with the sea from its historic fishing and shipbuilding traditions to innovations in the North Sea oil and gas industry. Compare the antique diving suit with the modern 'newt suit' – straight out of a Bond film!



**2**  
**CASTLE TRAIL** – Aberdeenshire is home to Scotland's only dedicated Castle Trail. Discover the dramatic stories of 17 of Scotland's most famous castles and stately homes including the atmospheric coastal ruin of Dunnotter Castle, the fairytale Braemar Castle with Cairngorms National Park and royal residence Balmoral Castle in Royal Deeside. The collection of Aberdeen Art Gallery will be on display in newly created galleries in Drum Castle until 2017.



**3**  
**MUSEUM OF SCOTTISH LIGHTHOUSES, FRASERBURGH** – Author Robert Louis Stevenson may have been the most famous family member, but the Stevenson family were lighthouse engineers to the world. Discover their story along with the social history and technological advances behind the lighthouses which have guarded Scotland's coastline and the men who were responsible for them.



**4**  
**DUFF HOUSE, BANFF** – Duff House was designed by Scottish architect William Adam and is considered to be an Adam masterpiece. Used first as a family home and then as a private Sanatorium from 1913 to 1923, the house now houses a collection of fine furniture and a wide range of paintings on loan from the National Galleries of Scotland.



**5**  
**SPEYSIDE COOPERAGE, CRAIGELLACHIE** – Set amid rolling hills near the Banffshire town of Craigellachie, Speyside Cooperage is the only working cooperage in the UK where you can experience the ancient art of cooperage. Although shipped across the world, many of the casks made here remain in Scotland, providing a vital ingredient in Scotland's whisky making process.

## Day 2 - North Highlands & Isle of Skye



**1**  
**EILEAN DONAN CASTLE & VISITOR CENTRE, WESTER ROSS** – With its location on an island at the point where three great sea lochs meet, surrounded by some majestic scenery, One of Scotland's most iconic and identifiable landmarks, Eilean Donan Castle lies just south of the main route to Skye. Explore its fascinating rooms where the guides have plenty of intriguing stories to tell.



**2**  
**INVERWE GARDEN AND ESTATE, POOLEWE** – A lush, sub-tropical-style, oasis perched on a peninsula at the edge of Loch Ewe amid the rugged landscape of Wester Ross, Inverewe was created out of bare rock and a few scrub willows in 1862 by Osgood Mackenzie. It's full of colourful, exotic plants from around the world and is widely regarded as one of the most beautiful gardens in Scotland - a must for anyone who loves nature.



**3**  
**ACHILTIBUIE GARDEN AND HYDROPONICUM** – At the Achiltibuie Garden you'll discover how fruit and vegetables are grown soil-free by employing the science of hydroponics using water to nourish the plants. Enjoy a coffee surrounded by flowers as well as spectacular views to the beautifully named Summer Isles.



**4**  
**SKYE & LOCHALSH ARTS AND CRAFTS ASSOCIATION** – The land and seascapes of Skye & Lochalsh have inspired artists for generations. Whether you enjoy painting and printmaking or ceramics and sculpture, you can visit the studios or over 60 Association members whose work has been shaped by their stunning surroundings. A craft trail guide can be downloaded online.



**5**  
**DUNVEGAN CASTLE & GARDENS, ISLE OF SKYE** – A wealth of history and clan legends await visitors to Dunvegan Castle & Gardens on the Isle of Skye. It's been the ancestral home of Clan MacLeod for over 800 years and as well as the many fine oil paintings and clan treasures on display, some dating back to the middle ages, there are five acres of formal 18th Century gardens to explore.

## Day 3 - Fort William and Lochaber, Inverness, Loch Ness and Cairngorms



**1**  
**GLENFINNAN VIADUCT, LOCHABER** – Made famous as part of the route to Hogwarts in the Harry Potter movies, the 21-arch viaduct is an acclaimed feat of engineering. It's part of the West Highland Railway which runs from Fort William to Mallaig and is also recognised as one of Scotland's great travel experiences, especially in summer when a vintage steam locomotive named 'The Jacobite' hauls some of the trains.



**2**  
**CALEDONIAN CANAL** – Constructed in the early 19th Century by famous engineer Thomas Telford, the Caledonian Canal runs for over 60 miles, only one third of which is man-made. The rest of this distance is formed by four lochs along the length of the Great Glen Fault, including Loch Ness. Don't miss the change to sail on this most mysterious and atmospheric of waterways.



**3**  
**CAIRNGORM MOUNTAIN** – Cairngorm Mountain is home to the UK's highest Funicular Railway. Relax and savour the easy route to the viewing station where you can enjoy a coffee or snack in the Ptarmigan Restaurant while enjoying panoramic views over the spectacular Cairngorm Mountains from a height of over 3,500ft.



**4**  
**DUNROBIN CASTLE, SUTHERLAND** – With its French chateau-inspired design, conical spires, and enchanting gardens, Dunrobin can truly be described as a castle straight out of a fairy tale. It was a naval hospital during WW1 and a boys' boarding school in the 1960s, but nowadays visitors can enjoy many of the sumptuous rooms. There are falconry displays in the spring/summer months.



**5**  
**CAWDOR CASTLE** – Cawdor Castle dates from the late 14th century, having been built as a private fortress by the Thanes of Cawdor, made famous by William Shakespeare's play Macbeth and it is still home to the Cawdor family today. Visitors can explore what life was like above and below stairs and there are stunning gardens including a holly maze to explore.

## Day 4 - Outer Hebrides



**1**  
**AN LANNTAIR, STORNOWAY** – An Lanntair is Gaelic for Lantern – an apt name for this contemporary modern arts space in Stornoway which shines a light on the arts and culture of the magical islands of the Outer Hebrides. There are up to six local and international exhibitions annually as well as events, live performances and a popular café.



**2**  
**GEARRANNAN BLACKHOUSE VILLAGE, CARLOWAY** – Gearrannan is unlike any other village you're likely to visit. Step back in time to experience the way of life in a typical crofting township of the last century. The traditional Hebridean Blackhouse was the abode for nearly everybody on the Outer Hebrides until well into the 20th Century. You can see traditional activities, including the weaving of the famous Harris Tweed.



**3**  
**DUN CARLOWAY BROCH** – Dun Carloway Broch is one of the best preserved Iron Age brochs in Scotland and is situated close to a large sea loch on the Isle of Lewis. Though the origin and precise use of the broch is unclear, the quaint visitor centre, built into a neighbouring hillside, contains a fascinating exhibition about the known history of the structure and its place in local life.



**4**  
**HARRIS TWEED, ISLE OF HARRIS** – Harris Tweed is synonymous with the Outer Hebrides and is produced by weavers throughout the islands. At Harris Tweed Isle of Harris in Tarbert, you'll find a colourful Aladdin's cave of Harris Tweed with beautiful designs from floor to ceiling. The company also owns the Harris Tweed Exhibition in nearby Drinshader where you can explore the history of Harris Tweed and watch a weaving demonstration by appointment.



**5**  
**CALANAI STONES AND VISITOR CENTRE** – The Outer Hebrides' most intriguing structures, the Calanais stone circle, was erected around 5,000 years ago, with the nearby chambered tomb created a few generations later. Experts believe that stone circle served as a kind of ancient astronomical observatory. Soak up the atmosphere of this magical place and explore their story in the adjacent visitor centre.