



Ideas to inspire

Edinburgh, the Lothians, Stirling, the Forth Valley and the Scottish Borders

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.

Scotland's vibrant and cosmopolitan capital city of Edinburgh encompasses two UNESCO world heritage sites. On the city's famous Royal Mile alone, you can experience medieval tenements alongside one of Scotland's most contemporary buildings – the Scottish Parliament.

The rolling countryside of the Lothians offers an experience of life in times gone by in the area's industries such as mining and milling, but it also boasts stunning gothic architecture and magnificent stately homes.

The Forth Valley is home to some of Scotland's most celebrated engineering achievements such as the stunning Forth Bridges and the mechanical marvel of the Falkirk Wheel.

In the Scottish Borders, the atmospheric ruined abbeys and awe-inspiring stately homes have inspired any writer and artist, while the intrepid explorations of 19th century botanists to all corners of the globe is perfect captured in the splendour of Dawyck Botanic Garden.

Events:

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.

Edinburgh International Science Festival - April – Consisting of more than 200 individual events, this annual event ensures that Scotland's historic reputation as a nation with a strong legacy in science and innovation continues. www.sciencefestival.co.uk

Music at Paxton - mid to late July – Celebrate summer by attending the annual programme of delightful chamber music concerts at Paxton House, the stunning 18th Century mansion designed by celebrated architect John Adam which houses artworks by Scots masters of the period, on loan from National Galleries of Scotland. www.musicatpaxton.co.uk

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

Edinburgh, the Lothians, Stirling, the Forth Valley and the Scottish Borders

Day 1 - Edinburgh



1
EDINBURGH OLD TOWN – Both the Old Town and New Town in Edinburgh are individually recognised as UNESCO World Heritage sites. The Old Town is Edinburgh's medieval heart and there's a sense of history around every corner. Architectural highlights include Edinburgh Castle, St. Giles Cathedral, the Palace of Holyroodhouse and John Knox's House.



2
EDINBURGH NEW TOWN – Dating from 1767, Edinburgh's impressive New Town is characterised by its wide, symmetrical streets and large tree-filled squares. The highlight is Charlotte Square, the north side of which was designed by celebrated Scottish architect Robert Adam. Don't miss the elegant Georgian House at No. 7 Charlotte Square.



3
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND – Dolly, the world's first cloned sheep is just one of the fascinating exhibits to be seen at the Museum where ten new galleries will open in 2016 to showcase items from the museum's collections of science and technology, decorative art, design and fashion.



4
SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT – Scotland's Parliament sits in a stunning location at the foot of Edinburgh's famous Royal Mile. Constructed from steel, oak, and granite, the complex building has been hailed as one of the most innovative designs in Britain. Its design has been inspired by the surrounding landscape and the flower paintings of Charles Rennie Mackintosh.



5
SCOTTISH NATIONAL GALLERIES OF MODERN ART – Not all the art in the excellent gallery hangs on the walls. Right outside, there's a wonderful landscape artwork commissioned from artist Charles Jencks, while inside the Gallery itself there are some impressive works by Edinburgh-born Scottish sculpture Eduardo Paolozzi, including a recreation of his studio, plus many other thought provoking modern artworks.

Day 2 - The Lothians



1
ROSSLYN CHAPEL, MIDLOTHIAN – As well as being featured in the bestselling novel The Da Vinci Code, this fascinating building is famous for its ornate stonework, magnificent carvings and stunning setting. Its story is told in the state-of-the-art visitor centre which has an excellent café and shop.



2
HOPETOON HOUSE, WEST LOTHIAN – One of Scotland's finest stately homes, Hopetoun House is one of the finest examples of 18th century architecture in Britain. The magnificent interiors, which have remained virtually unchanged for three centuries, reflect the elegance of the Georgian era. There are also 150 acres of grounds to explore around the House, with several walks and trails.



3
PRESTON MILL, EAST LOTHIAN – Situated in the rural idyll of East Linton, this 18th Century architectural oddity is beloved by artists and photographers alike, thanks to its distinctive Dutch style conical-roof. It was also East Lothian's last working water mill. Take a walk across the River Tyne to see the nearby beehive-shaped Phantassie Doocot, with its French style horseshoe parapet, built in the 16th century to house 500 pigeons.



4
NATIONAL MINING MUSEUM SCOTLAND, MIDLOTHIAN – Get a fascinating insight into how Scotland led in the way in coal mining industry at the National Mining Museum Scotland. Located in the Midlothian village of Newtongrange, this was Scotland's first 'super pit', operational for nearly 100 years. Many of the surface structures are of architectural significance.



5
JUPITER ARTLAND, WEST LOTHIAN – Set within a picturesque 80-acre estate, Jupiter Artland is a garden like no other. The colourful an awe-inspiring sculpture park is a whimsical collaboration between the owners the Wilson family, some of the nation's top contemporary artists and the landscape. Andy Goldsworthy, Anthony Gormley and Anish Kapoor and just some of the artists whose work features in this unique place.

Day 3 - The Forth Valley & Clackmannanshire



1
FORTH BRIDGES, SOUTH QUEENSFERRY – The iconic Forth Rail Bridge built across the River Forth in the late 19th Century is a celebrated as a major Scottish landmark and a milestone in the development of railway civil engineering. It was joined by the Forth Road Bridge in 1964, and by the end of 2016, a third – the Queensferry Crossing – will be completed. Marvel at history in the making at the Forth Bridges Visitor Centre.



2
STIRLING CASTLE – Enter the court of Scotland's Stuart monarchs at the grandest of Scottish castles. Stirling Castle was a major strategic stronghold during the 13th and 14th Centuries and was subsequently a favourite royal residence where knights, nobles and ambassadors were received with pomp and ceremony. The Castle's unique story is brought to life by a series of living history performances and there are amazing views from the Castle ramparts.



3
THE FALKIRK WHEEL – Take a boat trip along the Forth & Clyde and Union canals using the world's first revolving boatlift. Replacing the previous system of 11 canal locks, The Wheel transports visitors in specially designed boats from one canal to the other to enjoy spectacular views right across the Forth Valley. There's also a well-stocked gift shop and spacious café.



4
THE KELPIES – The Kelpies are Scotland's newest landmark, lying close to the main road from Edinburgh to Glasgow and Stirling. Step inside these colossal and inspirational sculptures, named after the mystical water-borne equine creatures. The Kelpies tower over the Forth & Clyde Canal, and are a part of The Helix, a 350 hectare park providing access to woodlands, wetlands and waterways.



5
CLACKMANNANSHIRE TOWER TRAIL – A notable architectural feature in the county of Clackmannanshire is its tower houses, a series of 14th and 15th century structures were built by aristocrats who needed to be near the royal court in Stirling. Each has its own fascinating story. The imposing ruin of Castle Campbell boasts a dramatic setting with fine views across the scenic Ochil Hills while Alloa Tower has some stunning artworks and even its own dungeon!

Day 4 - The Scottish Borders



1
ABBOTSFORD HOUSE – The former home of famed author Sir Walter Scott, Abbotsford was created around 200 years ago on the banks of the River Tweed. The house was the culmination of Scott's creative ambitions as a writer and the fount of his inspiration. See the objects which lead to the writing of his greatest poems and novels and explore the beautiful formal gardens and tranquil woodlands.



2
BORDERS TEXTILES – The Scottish Borders textile trade dates back to the stretches as far back as the 13th century. Tartans, tweeds, wool and cashmere produced here make their way to top fashion houses including Chanel and Dior. Follow the Textile Trail to purchase some items to take home from outlets such as Lochcarron of Scotland and Johnstons Cashmere Visitor Centre.



3
MANDERSTON HOUSE – A breathtaking mansion on which no expense was spared, Manderston is the supreme country house of Edwardian Scotland. With the world's only silver stair case and its own marble dairy and 56 acres of formal and informal gardens, complete with woodlands and tennis/croquet lawns, a day at this magnificent property really does offer a surprise around every corner.



4
DAWYCK BOTANIC GARDEN – This stunning 60-acre garden is the culmination of more than 350 years of planting and design and the pioneering international plant hunting expeditions supported by its 17th Century Sir John Naesmith. Here you can see some of the rarest and most exotic plants and trees from around the globe. The late-spring Azalea Terrace is a popular feature for visitors.



5
BORDERS ABBEYS – The Scottish Borders have four remarkable abbeys, all of which are worth exploring for both their historic and architectural significance. Dryburgh Abbey by the River Tweed is a fine example of Gothic architecture. Jedburgh Abbey has a tranquil herb garden, Melrose is said to be the last resting place of the heart of King Robert the Bruce and Kelso Abbey still bears the traces of sustained cannon fire by the armies of King Henry VIII.