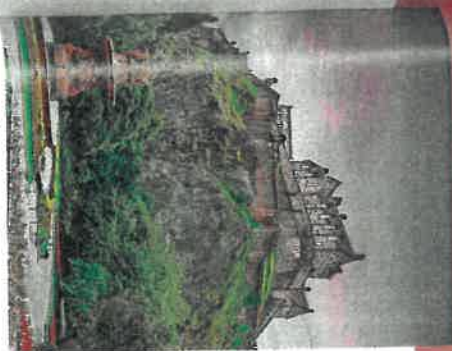
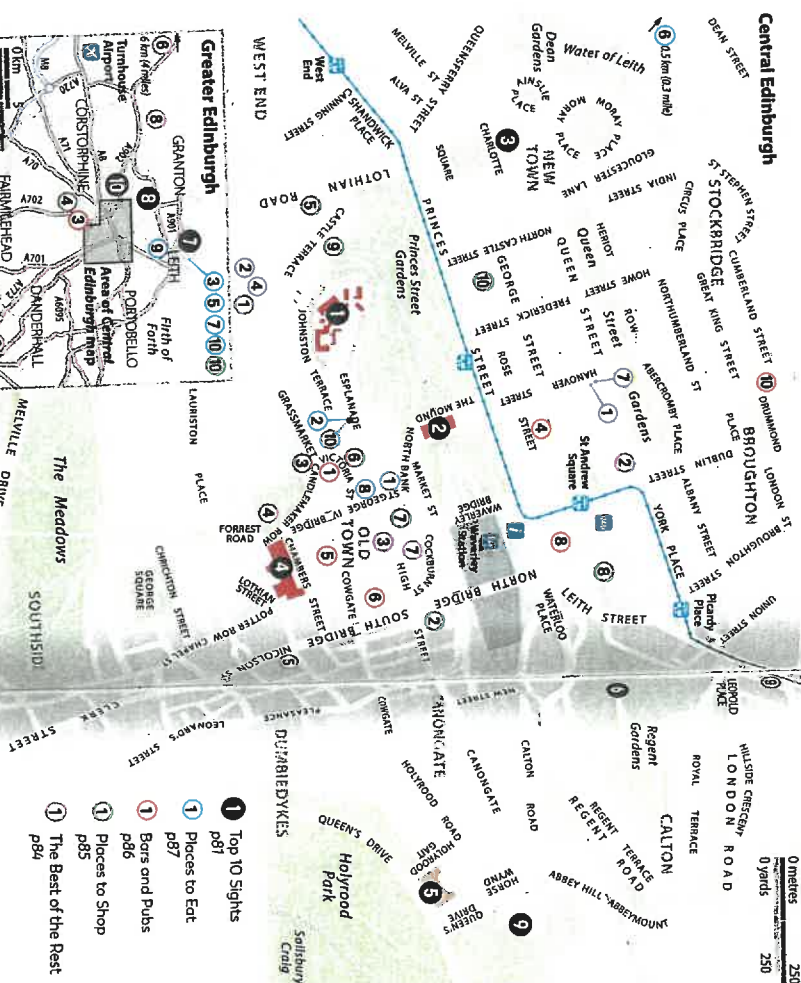


EDINBURGH

Known as "the Athens of the North", the Scottish capital abounds with historical sights and cultural treasures. At its heart lies Edinburgh Castle and the nearby Royal Mile, a charming street that runs through the city's uniquely intact medieval quarter. Just north lies the greenery of Princes Street Gardens, home to the famed Scottish National Gallery, while to the south you'll find the National Museum, a repository of Scottish history. North of the historic centre is the Georgian New Town, filled with upscale shops, boutique hotels and restaurants, as well as lovely urban villages, such as Stockbridge and Leith, that have one-of-a-kind shops and cafés.



Historic Edinburgh Castle atop Castle Rock



For places to stay in this area, see p148

1 and the Royal Mile

This world-famous castle (p22) wears the nation's history. Here you'll find the Scottish Crown, Sword and Sceptre. The Royal Mile (p24) trends a straight but diverting path from the castle to Holyroodhouse.

2 Scottish National Gallery

Scotland's leading gallery (p26) includes masterpieces by the great Scottish artists, such as Raeburn and Ramsay, but is best known for its 15th- to 18th-century British and European paintings. In these collections, you'll find works by Botticelli, Velázquez, Raphael, Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian and many more besides.

3 Georgian House

13 17 Charlotte Square
Apr-Oct: 10am-5pm daily; Nov-Mar: 11am-4pm daily nts.org.uk
A restored mansion on Charlotte Square, this is the best place to start a walking tour of the New Town. The area was the first daring adventure into planned architecture at a time of sordid living conditions for the masses. Repainted in its original colours and furnished with antiques, it gives an insight into upper-class 18th-century Edinburgh. The beautifully proportioned buildings have lost none of their grandeur.

4 National Museum of Scotland

Two adjoining buildings (p28) in radically different styles and with very diverse contents present the nation's most treasured historical artifacts. It's worth visiting for the Lewis Chess Pieces alone, but don't expect to escape in under four hours.

Statue, National Museum of Scotland

- 1 Top 10 Sights p81
- 1 Places to Eat p87
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- 1 The Best of the Best p84

PRINCES STREET GARDENS

An area of neutrality between New Town and Old, these lovely gardens shelter under the wing of the cliff-top castle. During the festival they become a major events venue, and throughout summer the famous Floral Clock, comprising over 2,000 plants, blooms in a corner by The Mound. During Christmas, an ice rink is set up here, and there's also a festive market.

5 Our Dynamic Earth

Oct-10am-5:30pm daily (Jul 6-Aug: 6pm) [dynamicearth.co.uk](#) Every bit as exciting and illuminating for adults as it is for kids, Our Dynamic Earth (p66) takes you on a journey through time and tells the story of planet Earth, from the Big Bang to the present. Amid this rapid evolution, environmental concerns are brought to the fore.

6 Calton Hill

Towering over the east end of Princes Street and rising above the New Town with fantastic views, Calton Hill is home to several Classical buildings: the

National Monument for the dead of the Napoleonic Wars, the Nelson Monument, commemorating the Battle of Trafalgar and the Old City Observatory.

7 Royal Yacht Britannia

Apr-Oct: 9:30am-4:30pm daily; Nov-Mar: 10am-3:30pm daily [royalyachtbritannia.co.uk](#) From 1953 to 1997 this was the British royal family's vessel. Wander the decks of this fabulous ship with an audio tour that tells of the life and times of *Britannia*.

8 Royal Botanic Garden

Jan 6-Nov: 10am-4pm daily; Feb 6-Oct: 10am-5pm daily; Mar-Oct: 10am-6pm daily [rbg.org.uk](#) Scotland's premier garden (p52) with species from around the world. Lush greenhouses and glasshouses offer the perfect retreat on rainy days.

9 The Palace of Holyroodhouse

Originally the abbey guesthouse, this was turned into a royal palace (p25) by James IV of Scotland and is the monarch's official Scottish residence. The Queen's Gallery is lined with portraits of Scottish royalty. The Royal Apartments are associated with Mary, Queen of Scots. The monarch meets dignitaries in the State Apartments and the Throne Room is used for receptions and State occasions.

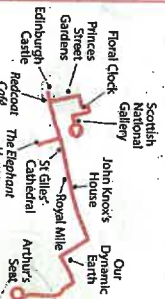
Browsing artworks, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

10 Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

13 075 Belford Rd 10am-5pm daily (Aug: to 6pm) [nationalgalleries.org](#)

Since it opened in 1960, this gallery has amassed some 5,000 works. Here you can find the work of diverse figures such as Picasso, Munch, Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Pop Art trio of Richard Hamilton, David Hockney and Jane Tilson. The gallery itself occupies two buildings: Modern One, housed in a Neo-Classical building designed by William Burn in 1825, and Modern Two, just opposite, which hosts exhibitions.

Impressive facade of the Palace of Holyroodhouse



A DAY IN EDINBURGH

Morning

Start at the **Scottish National Gallery** (p26) at 10am. Ninety minutes should allow you to see the Botticelli, Canova and Rodin's skating minister; the Rev Robert Walker and far more. Enter **Princes Street Gardens** at the Floral Clock (opposite the gallery), and ascend the path to Edinburgh Castle (p22), taking care, as it's a steep climb. Tour the castle and make sure you're present when the dramatic One O'Clock Gun goes off. At the **Redcoat Café** ([edinburghcastle.co.uk](#)), have a platter to restore your energy levels before soldiering on.

Afternoon

Stroll down from the Castle Esplanade to the **Royal Mile** (p26), stopping off at the **St Giles' Cathedral** (p26) and probably several shops as well. Admire **John Knox's House** and have hot chocolate in **The Elephant House** ([elephanthouse.biz](#)) where the first of the Harry Potter books was written.

Turn right off the Royal Mile at Reid's Close (easy to miss) and visit **Our Dynamic Earth**.

If you still feel energetic, walk up the Salisbury Cross and **Arthur's Seat** for great views. Ninety minutes up and down or grab a taxi and be driven most of the way up.

The Best of the Rest



Signage on the exterior of the Writers' Museum

1. The Writers' Museum

Celebrating three great Scottish writers, Burns, Scott and Stevenson, the Writers' Museum (p24) has rare books and items such as Burns's writing desk and Stevenson's wardrobe, made by the infamous Deacon Brodie, who was the inspiration behind *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

2. Scottish National Portrait Gallery

Marvel at more than 3,000 portraits of famous Scots, including Robert Burns and Bonnie Prince Charlie.

3. St Giles' Cathedral

The Scottish Reformation was launched by John Knox in this church (p24). Attractions include the Thistle Chapel and memorials to Robert Burns and R.L. Stevenson.

4. Greyfriars Kirk

Historic church, best known for the grave of John Gray, owner of "Greyfriars Bobby" (1858–72), a devoted terrier

who lived by his master's grave. A statue of this faithful dog stands outside the cemetery.

5. Surgeons' Hall Museums

Appreciating Edinburgh's contribution to surgery, this group of three adjoining museums covers everything, including the history of pathology, midwifery and dentistry.

6. Hopetoun

This architectural gem built by Robert Adam, is both a stately home of the Earls of Hopetoun and an art treasury (paintings by Canaletto, Rubens, Rembrandt, to name but a few).

7. Real Mary King's Close

Shiver as you tour this warren of streets hidden beneath the City Chambers. Closed off after the 1645 plague, they are said to be haunted.

8. Lauriston Castle

This Edwardian mansion features a 16th-century tower house, lovely grounds, and fine furniture and antiques. Admission by tour only.

9. Scottish Mining Museum

Don your headlamp for an enlightening underground tour.

10. Scotch Whisky Experience

A replica distillery with the world's largest collection of Scotch whisky.

Places to Shop

1. Edinburgh Books

One of many independent bookshops, to the west of Grassmarket, sells new and second-hand books. West Port's selection focuses on the arts.

2. Hector Russell

Made-to-measure kilts and a gathering of the tartans. They offer kilts for hire too.

3. Armstrongs

A fabulous pre-loved clothing store that is filled with half a century's worth of vintage apparel and footwear. Find everything from velvet jackets to cowboy boots, kilts to dresses.

4. Hailbut & Herring

Find Scottish handmade soaps here and all manner of colourful, squeaky and bathroom accessories, in aquatic hues. It is a useful stop to buy gifts.

5. Edinburgh Printmakers

On display here are a range of limited-edition works from contemporary printmakers at reasonable prices.

6. JJ Mells

Victoria St. JJ Mells's cheeses are celebrated all around Scotland, and feature in many Edinburgh menus, but the Victoria Street branch goes beyond, embracing a panoply of culinary delicacies. Stock your picnic hamper here.

7. Royal Mile Whiskies

This popular spot is favoured by whisky lovers from across the world. A cornucopia of all things alcoholic, particularly single malt Scotch whisky, it offers hundreds of varieties and regular tasting sessions.

8. St James Quarter

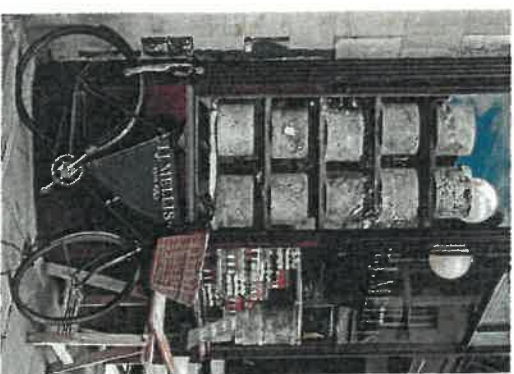
Mutrees Walk. This vast multi-storey mall is filled with high-end clothing, jewellery and accessory brands, as well as countless bars, cafés and restaurants.

9. Edinburgh Farmers' Market

The city's weekly foodie fest spreads its wares beneath the castle crags every Saturday morning, selling everything from Scottish cheeses and venison sandwiches, to local craft beers and traditional Scottish sweets.

10. Tiso Edinburgh

An outdoor clothing and gear shop, Tiso Edinburgh has everything you need before heading for the hills. The Leith branch on Commercial Street also offers a café and a ski servicing centre.



Artisanal cheese on display at the popular JJ Mells

Bars and Pubs

1. Bow Bar

☐ N4 ☐ 80 West Bow St

Lush red and cream gloss paintwork envelops this modest pub, where the background sounds are the jovial chatter and clinking glasses.

2. The Blue Blazer

☐ L5 ☐ 2 Spittal St

Perfect for discerning drinkers, this place offers real ales and an array of malt whiskies. The back room hosts regular live folk-music sessions.

3. Bennet's

☐ L6 ☐ 8 Leven St

This classic old-school pub, with its ornate interior and superb portfolio of malt whiskies, real ales and fancy cocktails, is one of a vanishing breed.

4. The Dome

☐ M2 ☐ 14 George St

The Dome is a Corinthian-columned whale of a building, entered through a flight of steps flanked by nocturnal doormen. Its interiors are decorated

with chandeliers and palm plants.

There are many bars and dining areas such as the Georgian Tea Room and the majestic Grill Room. The Front Bar is great for cocktails.

5. BrewDog

☐ N4 ☐ 143 Cowgate

Scotland's most successful artisan brewery operates this industrial-chic altar to craft beer, a hugely popular oasis of real ales in the Old Town.

6. City Café

☐ P4 ☐ 19 Blair St

Ideally situated in the heart of the city's clubland, this popular bar packs in the capital's contingent of party people on weekend nights.

7. Bramble

☐ M2 ☐ 10a Queen St

Stone steps lead down to this maze-like, candlelit cellar where accomplished mixologists create some of Edinburgh's finest cocktails.

8. Café Royal Circle Bar

☐ N2 ☐ 19 West Register St

Walk in at lunchtime to swirling ceilings, brass lamps and a convivial atmosphere of both young and old, enjoying simple seafood dishes from the kitchen of the Oyster Bar next door.

9. Joseph Pearce

☐ P1 ☐ 23 Elm Row, Leith Walk

Swedish owners have taken this century-old Scottish pub and given it a Scandinavian makeover, creating a welcoming and family-friendly bar.

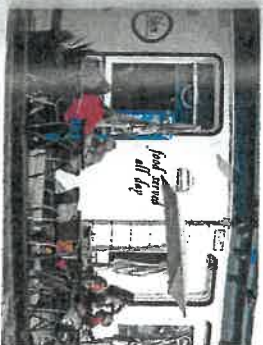
10. The Cumberland

☐ M1 ☐ 1-3 Cumberland St

Enjoy the well-lit, cosy interiors of this much-loved pub in the winter, or cool down in its side garden in the summer.

Lavish interior of the bar at The Dome

Places to Eat



Diners enjoying a meal at the Fishers in Leith

1. Chez Jules

☐ M2 ☐ 109 Hanover St ☐ chezjulesbistro.com • ££

This cheerful little bistro serves classic French dishes such as *moules frites* and *dind* and beef bourguignon; the lunchtime set menu has terrific value.

2. The Witchery by the Castle

☐ M4 ☐ Castlehill ☐ thewitchery.com • ££

Aim for the Secret Garden room to experience The Witchery at its romantic best. It excels at dishes with a rural flavour. Try the foraged soup, roast wood pigeon, loin of venison.

3. Restaurant Martin Wishart

☐ K3 ☐ 54 The Shore, Leith ☐ restaurantmartinwishart.com • £££

Make sure to book ahead for this Michelin-starred restaurant. The food is memorable and the lunch is of excellent value.

4. Timberyard

☐ M4 ☐ 10 Lady Lawson St ☐ timberyard.co • £££

Originality is the watchword at this beautifully converted wood-working shop. The focus is on locally produced seafood, pork and game garnished with foraged ingredients, such as damsons and mustard leaf.

PRICE CATEGORIES

For a three-course meal for one with half a bottle of wine (or equivalent meal), taxes and extra charges.

£ under £30 ££ £30-60 £££ over £60

5. Fishers, Leith

☐ M2 ☐ 1 The Shore, Leith ☐ fishersrestaurants.co.uk • ££

This seafood restaurant is loved for its honed cooking and warm ambience.

6. The Scran and Scallie

☐ K1 ☐ 1 Cornely Bank Rd ☐ thescranandscallie.com • ££

This upscale gastro-pub, managed by star chef Tom Kitchin, serves modern classics based on Scottish produce.

7. The Kitchin

☐ F5 ☐ 78 Commercial Quay ☐ thekitchin.com • £££

Sample exemplary French-influenced cuisine at Tom Kitchin's exceptional Michelin-starred restaurant.

8. Ondine

☐ M4 ☐ 2 George IV Bridge ☐ ondine-restaurant.co.uk • £££

Seafood, from Scottish lobster to Portuguese prawns, graces the menu at this sleek and sophisticated restaurant.

9. The Little Chartroom

☐ K3 ☐ 14 Bonnington Rd ☐ thelittlechartroom.com • ££

This tiny restaurant offers innovative dishes, such as octopus carpaccio and lamb with courgette and merguez.

10. Heron, Leith

☐ K3 ☐ 87-91A Henderson St ☐ heron.scot • ££

Located on the Leith waterfront, Heron is surprisingly affordable for a Michelin-starred establishment. It offers a modern take on dishes, such as Orkney scallops and Arbroath smokies.

LOCAL DISHES

1 Haggis

Scotland's national dish, served as the centrepiece of every Burns Night dinner, is made from the minced heart, liver, and lungs of a sheep, combined with oatmeal, suet and spices. There are also excellent veggie lentil-based versions. Haggis is usually served with mashed "neeps" (swede) and "tatties" (potatoes); for a gourmet take, try The Scan and Scallie in Edinburgh (p87).

2 Scotch Broth

This hearty, filling and richly flavoured soup is ideal for a winter's day. It's made from mutton or beef stock, with leftover snippets of meat, and thickened with pearl barley and vegetables such as carrots and leeks. Scotch broth is a soup-of-the-day favourite at the Glen Clova Hotel (p99) on the edge of the Cairngorms.

3 Stornoway Black Pudding

Black pudding is a type of blood sausage popular across northern Britain. Made only on the Isle of Lewis, the Stornoway version is the finest of them all, with oatmeal giving it a superior texture. It's an essential part of a full Scottish breakfast: while in Edinburgh set yourself up for the day at Conthini (conthini.com), where it's

served alongside haggis, bacon, sausage and all the trimmings.

4 Stovies

Potatoes and onions are slow-cooked with beef dripping (fat) and leftover roast lamb or beef to make super-hearty and delicious stovies. Many Scots swear by the dish as a remedy for the effects of a night of overindulgence, so it's a popular New Year's Day treat. Teuchter's Landing, a cosy pub in Leith (teuchtersbar.com), serves stovies by the mug.

5 Clootie Dumpling

This rich suet pudding is made with morsels of dried fruit, flavoured with spices, tied into a muslim 'clout' (cloth) and steamed. Like haggis, it's a Burns Night favourite; fried in butter, a slice can also complement a hearty Scottish breakfast. Clootie dumplings are a famous menu staple at the Speyside Centre's restaurant in Grantown-on-Spey (speysidecentre.com).

6 Forfar Bridle

Hailing from the Angus town of Forfar, the bridle is Scotland's answer to the Cornish pasty: a horseshoe-shaped meat pie of minced beef, (sometimes) minced onions and seasoning, wrapped in either shortcrust or flaky pastry. It's often served – for an extra calorie hit – with chips and baked beans. McLaren Bakers in Forfar (mclarenbakers.co.uk) has been baking what may be the world's best bridles since 1893.

7 Rumbledebumps

Creamy mashed potato, cabbage and onion are the key ingredients of this hearty baked dish from the Scottish Borders. Its glorious name is said to derive from the noise made as the ingredients are bashed around the pot. Sample it, alongside other Border's favourites, at Seasons restaurant in Melrose (seasonsborders.co.uk).



Light yet indulgent cranachan, a classic Scottish dessert

8 Cranachan

Traditionally served to celebrate the berry harvest in August – but now a firm favourite at any special occasion – this delicious dessert is made from oats, fresh raspberries, heather honey, cream and whisky. Sample the finest cranachan at the Witchery by the Castle in Edinburgh (p87).

9 Venison

Scotland's deer population is booming, making venison – wild or farmed – its most sustainable meat. Low in fat, it's a healthy alternative to beef, too, and is equally versatile, whether served as steak or cut into colllops (thin slices). In hearty casseroles, pies or burgers, or even cured as charcuterie, Stravaighn in Glasgow (p109) has imaginative ways with local venison, or try it as salami at the Taybank hotel in Dunkeld (p98).

10 Shortbread

Buttery and crumbly, Scotland's most famous baked good is made from just three ingredients: sugar, butter and flour. You'll find it in tairn tins all across the country but for a treat enjoy melt-in-the-mouth shortbread as part of the legendary afternoon tea at The Balmoral's Palm Court tearoom in Edinburgh (p148).

TOP 10 SEAFOOD EATS

1. Cullen Skink

Originating in the cure fishing port of Cullen on the Moray coast, this Scots ancestor of chowder is made from smoked haddock, simmered in milk and thickened with potato.

2. Kippers

Butterfied or filleted herring are salted and oak-smoked to make this favourite breakfast dish, often served with a poached egg.

3. Arbroath Smokie

North Sea haddock, smoked on the bone in curing sheds, are a speciality of the Angus town of Arbroath.

4. Smoked Salmon

Smoking over oak lends a rich taste and deep pink colour to boneless, thin-sliced salmon that melts in the mouth. Choose wild salmon if you can.

5. Scallops

Meaty scallops are delicious pan-fried and served with black pudding. Make sure they are hand-dived, not dredged.

6. Finnan Haddock

Undyed and cold-smoked over green wood and peat, this delicate smoked haddock is the main ingredient of Cullen skink.

7. Partan Bree

A silky crab bisque, based on stock made with roasted crab shells, thickened with rice and cream and sometimes sweetened with a dash of sherry.

8. Kedgeree

Scottish cooks added flakes of smoked haddock to this Indian-inspired dish of rice, hard-boiled eggs and spices, sometimes eaten for breakfast.

9. Oysters

The plumppest, tastiest native oysters are farmed in the sea lochs of the west coast and around Orkney.

10. Lobster

Scotland's clear, cold waters are the perfect environment for lobsters to mature slowly and develop firm, intensely flavoured flesh. Best enjoyed simply grilled.

