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i Royal Deeside, Aberdeenshire, Scotland

The [Royal Deeside](#) area of Aberdeenshire presents visitors with a stunning backdrop of panoramic mountain views which reflect on the mirror like lochs that lay beneath them. Rugged beautiful landscapes are home to majestic stags that roam the hills and moors, while golden eagles soar high above the tree tops. It's a place that like the many people before, will leave you feeling awe inspired. It is little surprise that in a list of 20 of the most relaxing holiday destinations in the world by travel publication Rough Guides, the Cairngorm National Park ranks as one of the best. If successive Royals get to be themselves here – imagine how you will feel.



i Balmoral Castle

The British Royal family has been visiting Aberdeenshire for over 100 years as their summer holiday destination of choice. It's a matter of record that Queen Victoria fell deeply in love with what would become known as Royal Deeside (and the place where the current Queen is said to be at her happiest): "All seemed to breathe freedom and peace ..." she wrote. It's a sentiment that echoes through the years and still rings true today. [Balmoral Castle](#), the summer residence of the Royal Family, is open to the public to explore important parts of the majestic castle as well as the great estate.



i Cluny Castle

This castle doubled as Balmoral Castle in the 2006 film *The Queen*, starring Helen Mirren. Mirren's portrayal of the monarch won her several accolades, including the Academy Award for best actress in a leading role. Experience living like a Royal when you stay in [Cluny Castle](#). Found in secluded and stunning grounds, this castle can sleep up to 10 guests.



i Royal Lochnagar Distillery

Neighbour to Balmoral Castle, [Royal Lochnagar Distillery's](#) canny owner, John Begg invited Prince Albert to visit the distillery in 1848. Queen Victoria, Albert and their three eldest children visited and following the visit bestowed a By Royal Appointment warrant. It remains one of the finest distilleries in Aberdeenshire. Watch as the team of operators tend to the traditional mashtun, gleaming copper stills and fill casks.



i Rothesay Rooms

Could you imagine having dinner at HRH Prince Charles's house? Well this is as close as it gets. Royal Deeside is a place that remains close to Prince Charles's heart, and in 2015 when storms damaged Ballater, a local village located just six miles from Balmoral Castle, the Prince wanted to support the local community and opened a new [restaurant and luxury gift shop](#) to help rejuvenate the area. The result is a restaurant which in just a few years has been recognised as the North East of Scotland Restaurant of the Year, and gained entry into the Michelin Guide.

i Crathie Kirk

Another famous feature of the extensive Balmoral Estate is the humble [Crathie Kirk](#). The church is where The Queen regularly attends Sunday service when in residence at the Castle and has even been the venue for Royal weddings.



i Highland Games

[The Braemar Gathering](#), held annually in the heart of Royal Deeside, is probably the most famous highland games in Scotland thanks to its Royal guests including the Queen. [The Lonach Gathering](#), marked with the colourful parade of the Lonach Highlanders, similarly reached prominence during Queen Victoria's reign. The men of Lonach twice marched to the Braemar Gathering where Victoria presented them with colours.



i Royal Deeside Railway

If you truly want to experience Royalty in Aberdeenshire take a ride on the [Royal Deeside Railway](#). This track once served generations of the Royal Family and crowned heads of Europe including Queen Victoria and the Tsar of Russia. The railway was closed in 1966 but restarted passenger services in 2006.



i Victorian Heritage Trail and DeeTour

To really explore this Royal land, follow the [Victorian Heritage Trail](#) which takes you to many castles, estates and landmarks for those interested in Royal Deeside's regal past, present and future. You can take a bespoke guided tour with local specialist [DeeTour](#) who can focus on sharing with you a wealth of knowledge of the royal heritage of this part of Scotland. Visitors can also make use of the PassporTour giving them access to deals and offers throughout Royal Deeside.



i Braemar Highland Experiences

It is well-known that when at Balmoral The Queen regularly drives herself through the area in her Land Rover. You can replicate the experience by going on a [Braemar Highland Experience](#). Enjoy an off-road trip through the area taking in spectacular scenery including mountains, dramatic castles, stone circles and ancient pine forests.



i By Royal Appointment

Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire has a total of 28 [Royal Warrant Holders](#). These warrants have been issued by the sovereign allowing the holder to display the royal arms indicating that their goods or services are supplied to the Queen or another member of the Royal Family. You will find this same produce also being used by many of our local visitor providers including hotels and restaurants.