



VisitAberdeenshire

WELCOME TO ABERDEEN
& ABERDEENSHIRE



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Encircled by mountains and surrounded by 165 miles of coastline Aberdeenshire's great estates, ancient Caledonian forests, well-stocked rivers and vast seas are home to some of Scotland's wildest nature and wildlife. Start your three day wild adventure in Aberdeen city.

i Go on a beach walk

The mile-long golden sands at [Aberdeen Beach](#) can be found only a short distance from the city centre. Lined with seaside cafes and restaurants, it even received the Resort Seaside Award in 2013.

i Spot a dolphin

Have you heard that Aberdeen is one of the best places to spot dolphins? In fact they are regularly spotted in the sea in Aberdeen. Our urban dolphins can be spotted from the vantage point of [Torry Battery](#) as they play round the harbour mouth.

i Have lunch with a view

After a morning of fresh air, you'll be in need of a well deserved treat so kick back at the beach for lunch with a sea view. Sit on the top deck of a parked double-decker bus, [The Highlander Cafe](#), transformed into a cafe offering the chance to do some more dolphin spotting.

i Go to Duthie Park

Take the short journey along the river side to [Duthie Park](#). Donated to the city in 1880 by Miss Duthie, the park is still filled with original Victorian features including a bandstand, fountains, ponds and statues.

i Visit the Winter Gardens

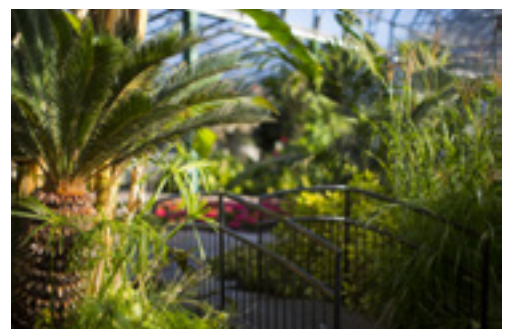
Find one of the [largest indoor gardens](#) in Europe, in Duthie Park too. Discover rare and exotic plants and flowers all year round. Visit the Temperate House, Victorian Corridor and Arid House - home to a vast collection of cacti and the world's only talking cactus!

i Find a hidden gem

Discover a [hidden and colourful garden](#) in the city, with its picture perfect (and Instagram perfect) streams, waterfalls, ponds, rockeries and even a quaint rustic birdge.

i Dine by the seaside

Before you settle down for the night (maybe with a wee dram in hand) ahead of another day of nature and wildlife exploring, head back to the beach front for a delicious evening meal. Find [The Silver Darling](#) at the end of the beach and through the historic old fishing village, Footdee. The restaurant, in former customs house, has floor to ceiling glass windows providing panoramic coastal views and serves up the finest Scottish produce.



Urban dolphins leaping along the coast, seals sunbathing on wide sandy beaches, puffins nesting in craggy cliff edges... spend the day exploring our coastal nature and wildlife.

i Watch bathing seals

Just 20 minutes north of Aberdeen find yourself at a wide [sandy beach](#). Newburgh Beach is home to an extensive sand dune system at the mouth of the [Ythan River](#) and even a 400 strong colony of seals.



i Visit great dunes

Further along the coast discover some of the largest sand dunes in Britain - [Forvie](#) is one of Scotland's most dramatic stretches of coast. The mud flats of the Ythan Estuary also provide a fast food refuelling stop for many passing birds.



i Lunch at Kilmarnock Arms

Steeped in history, have lunch at the [Kilmarnock Arms Hotel](#). In the late 1800's this small hotel was a regular vacation spot for Bram Stoker while he wrote *Dracula* (1897). Enjoy locally sourced fayre with a modern twist.



i See a famous castle ruin

After lunch head to the remains of [Slains Castle](#). The castle is famous for many reasons, partly because it was a place where celebrities were entertained on numerous occasions in the 19th century, most notable being Bram Stoker. It is believed that the castle was the inspiration for the setting of his novel, *Dracula*.



i Spot a puffin

Puffins don't go a miss here either. The dramatic cliffs at the Bulters of Buchan are where many have been lucky enough to get up close to Aberdeenshire's puffins amongst many other species of seabird.

i Wildlife watching

At [Troup Head](#) the high cliffs provide a spectacular setting for Scotland's only mainland gannet colony. Porpoises, minke whales and dolphins have also been known to roam the waters nearby and in spring, Troup Head is vibrant with thousands of butterflies and moths amongst the grassland and wild floras



i Taste Scotland

Get ready to taste Scotland as you dine in style at [Eat on the Green](#). The fine-dining restaurant offers refined modern Scottish cuisine from owner and 'Kilted Chef', Craig Wilson - enjoy a local gin whilst here in the Gin Garden.

Encircled by mountains, among heather and whin of open moorland, Royal Deeside's great estates, ancient Caledonian forests and well-stocked rivers are home to a wide variety of nature and wildlife.

i Meet Highland Cows

Start your day face-to-face with our iconic Highland Cows at [Aberdeenshire Highland Beef](#). On arrival at the farm you will even be piped in by bagpipes before you are taken on an informative guided tour.



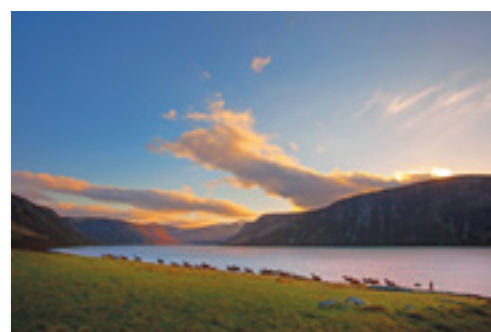
i Go on a safari

Get up close to even more of our countryside wildlife on a guided [estate safari](#). As you journey through the heart of the estate you might spot golden eagles, herons fishing over the secluded trout loch, or red squirrels darting between the ancient scots pines.



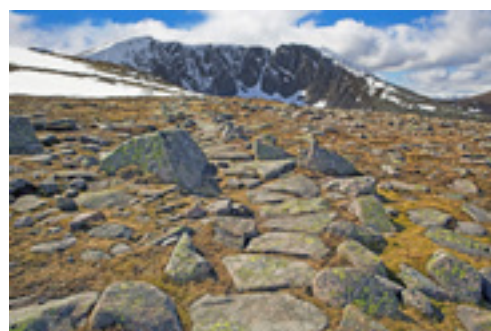
i Lunch at The Boat Inn

Go back towards Aboyne for a lunch stop and refuel before continuing your wild escape. Set on the banks of the River Dee, enjoy a freshly prepared, locally sourced and comforting meal at [The Boat Inn](#).



i Visit Lock Muick

[Loch Muick](#), on the Balmoral Estate, is a freshwater loch roughly 8km south of Braemar; set in a picturesque location there is a pleasant terrain for walkers. Keep your eyes peeled as you will frequently spot red deer and other wildlife roaming across the mountain passes. Top tip: On the western side of the loch you will find Glas-allt Shield - a hunting lodge built for Queen Victoria in 1868. This lodge became her retreat after the death of Prince Albert. It is also known as Widow's House.



i Admire Lochnagar

Admire famous [Lochnagar](#); this is one of Scotland's most celebrated Munros. If you choose to visit the mountain during your stay, from the summit you can take in breath-taking views over the mountain ridges and lochs, and if you do scale the mountain, during the ascent enjoy panoramic views of Royal Deeside. You might recognise the name of this mountain as it starred in Prince Charles' popular novel, The Old Man of Lochnagar.



i Evening meal with a Royal theme

Is there anything better than a hearty meal after a day of getting back to nature? [The Rothesay Rooms](#) was established by Prince Charles following flooding in Ballater and this popular fine-dining restaurant is now serving up the best local produce.