

A woman with dark hair and sunglasses is sitting on a grassy cliff, looking out over a large, ruined stone castle. The castle has several towers and walls, some of which are crumbling. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The overall scene is a scenic view of a historic site in Scotland.

ADVENTITIOUS
VIOLET
BLOG

A BRIEF GUIDE TO SCOTLAND

VISIT LIKE A LOCAL

CAMILA, EXPAT IN SCOTLAND AND WRITER BEHIND
ADVENTITIOUS VIOLET, GIVES YOU THE LOW-DOWN ON
PLANNING AND ENJOYING A TRIP TO SCOTLAND LIKE A LOCAL

YOUR SCOTTISH ADVENTURE BEGINS HERE

Welcome to Adventitious Violet's guide to Scotland!

This is a free bite-sized guide to help get you started with planning your adventure to Scotland.

It includes an introduction to Scotland and some advice as to where to stay, what to see and how to get around the country.

If you have other needs, don't hesitate to check out www.adventitiousviolet.com and buy additional guides.

Guides available include: Edinburgh and St Andrews.

- CAMILA CONTRERAS

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WELCOME TO THE LAND OF HAGGIS AND KILTS

SO YOU'RE PLANNING A TRIP TO
SCOTLAND?

Scotland is an underrated country that you'll never regret visiting.

Secluded at the northernmost part of the British Isles, Scotland extends from the UK mainland to nearly 800 isles surrounding the country.

With a population of around 5 million inhabitants, Scotland technically has more sheep than people. This means it's never too crowded!

Scotland uses the GBP, British Pound; however, Scottish bills are different from English bills. Fear not, both are accepted throughout the UK!

The language spoken is English, though many use Scottish-isms. In the Highlands and Isles, you'll notice many speak Gaelic.

Quick lesson in Scottish/Gaelic most-used terms: BEN is the word used for mountain, GLEN for valley, LOCH for lake, FAILTE is the Gaelic for welcome and ALBA for Scotland.



SCOTLAND IN A NUTSHELL

ANSWERS TO FAQS

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME OF THE YEAR TO GO TO SCOTLAND?

May to September are the best months to visit, with May and September having the best average weather.

You'll be warned that on the west coast, and the isles, July-August will be midge (bug) season, so bring repellent.

Edinburgh hosts a variety of festivals throughout August, so while it's a fun month full of activities and art, be aware that it will be very busy and accommodation prices go up exponentially.

WHAT SHOULD I SEE?/
WHAT IS THERE TO SEE?

Scotland is a geographically small country to visit, but it has tons to discover. Please see page 3 for a top 10 of Scottish experiences. This includes food, sights, and locations not to miss.

WHERE SHOULD I GO?

If you're coming for a short break, you should probably stay in one of the two big cities, Edinburgh or Glasgow. They both have loads to offer on a city break.

If you're coming for a week or more, then you definitely have time to do a tour of the country. This could be an organised tour or you could rent a car and create your own itinerary. Go up to the Highlands and hop on to one of Scotland's many islands.

WHERE CAN I SEE A HIGHLAND COW?

Highland cows (or hairy coos) can be found throughout the country!

You can find them in Stirling, at Pollock Country Park in Glasgow, and many tours will include a 'hairy coo' stop for your enjoyment!

10 MUST-SEES ON YOUR TRIP TO SCOTLAND

A LIST OF MUST-HAVE
EXPERIENCES, FOOD, AND SIGHTS

Scotland is a wonderful country full of history, incredible sights and fun experiences.

Whether you want to join a party of dancing men in kilts, do a whisky tasting, travel through time by visiting millennium-old castles, the following list will inspire you to come to Scotland and experience the real Scottish culture and learn more about what makes this country so unique and enchanting.

1 VISIT THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES OF THE NEW AND OLD TOWN OF EDINBURGH

Edinburgh is a beauty, and it definitely grows on you. It is moody and dark in the rain and it is splendid in the sun. You can walk the wider streets of New Town, where you will find many cafes, shops and restaurants, or head over the hill to the Old Town, with the wynds, alleyways, tiny shops and all the history.

2 DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY AT A CEILIDH

A ceilidh is a Scottish (and Irish) folk dance, that usually involves a band playing and singing live. Grab a partner, listen attentively, and have fun spinning around the dance floor to some traditional Celtic music.

3 TASTE THE DRINK AND FOOD OF THE NATION

As everyone knows, Scotland rhymes with haggis and whisky. Visit a distillery, or head over to a pub for a tasting of the water of life. As for food, there are many things that say Scotland, like Cranachan (traditional dessert), haggis (you can have vegetarian haggis too don't worry!), oats (whether in cakes, desserts, or porridge), or even fish and chips!

4 VISIT ONE OF THE MANY ISLES

Whether it's the gorgeous Isle of Skye, the Isle of Orkney, the Isle of Mull, the Isle of Arran or even the tiny Isle of May, make sure not to miss it. The island life and the island landscapes are so different from the mainland and the people even nicer. They are worth the detour.

5 VISIT THE WEST END OF GLASGOW

The city centre of Glasgow is lovely, especially if you walk toward the water or go see the Necropolis or the museums, but truly the West End of Glasgow is where you want to go. It has the gorgeous buildings of the ancient University of Glasgow and the Kelvingrove gallery. It has windy streets lined by trees, bookshops, tiny shops and fresh food stalls.

10 THINGS NOT TO MISS ON YOUR TRIP TO SCOTLAND

- CONTINUED -

6 GO ADMIRE OR HIKE UP A MUNRO

Perhaps you won't have time during your visit to hike a munro, but admiring the many mountains of the country is definitely easy – from the train, the car, or even from the boat. They are gorgeous and truly shape the Scottish landscape.

7 RIDE THE STEAM TRAIN FOR YOUR VERY OWN HARRY POTTER ADVENTURE

There are many steam trains in Scotland, but many will recognise the Glenfinnan Viaduct from the Harry Potter movies on the Jacobite West Coast line. This steam train is such a lovely mode of transport – it takes you back to the olden days, but also drives you through gorgeous country sides and by the seaside.

8 DAY TRIP TO A SMALL COASTAL TOWN

Scotland is a country with a lot of coast and so it shouldn't be surprising that you should definitely visit one of its small coastal towns. Their mode of life is slower, they give you access to the best seafood available, and give an amazing insight into Scottish culture. North Berwick and St Andrews are easy day trips from Edinburgh. Pennan and Stonehaven are nearer Aberdeen. Kyle of Lochalsh and Ullapool are two options for the north west.

9 IMMERSE YOURSELF IN HISTORY AND VISIT A CASTLE, PALACE OR RUIN

This goes almost without saying – there is so much history in Scotland! From the battlefield of Culloden, to the palace where ancient kings used to be crowned on the Stone of Destiny, to the famous castle of Edinburgh, to the many ruins hidden at the far corners of the country, there is so much to discover and something for everyone.

10 GO ADMIRE ONE OF THE MANY LOCHS

Did you know that there are over 30,000 lochs in Scotland? That is a lot to choose from and a lot of beauty to behold. Though Loch Ness can be the popular choice, you can also go to Loch Tay, Loch Lomond or Loch Katrine, among others. From walks to cruises, you can enjoy lochs in many different ways.

“

experience the real
Scottish culture

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WHERE TO STAY

THE LOW-DOWN ON ACCOMMODATION IN SCOTLAND

1 HOSTELS

There is a huge variety of hostels in most places in Scotland. They are often in great locations, great value for money, and very fun to stay in. They also offer private rooms if you're not a fan of dorms. Honourable mentions go to the Isle of Iona hostel and the Skye Walker on the Isle of Skye.

2 AIRBNB & RENTAL COTTAGES

Airbnb is mostly used in Scotland for city breaks in Edinburgh or Glasgow, but there are flats, cottages and houses to rent all over the country. This is often used for longer stays and to have a home base. Perfect to experience life like a local.

3 B&BS

B&Bs are always a great choice in Scotland, because you get to be taken care of by amazing welcoming Scottish people. They are usually very affordable, accommodating, cosy and give you a hearty start to each day (with free full Scottish breakfast).

4 HOTELS

Hotels in Scotland can be a hit or miss. It's always difficult to judge, even by the price, so please check the reviews before booking (especially if it's expensive). Never underestimate the budget hotels. They aren't fancy, but they are really affordable and usually reliable.

5 CASTLES AND ESTATES

As everyone knows, Scotland is a land of castles and fancy estates. Some of them are transformed into hotels and welcome guests all year long. If you want a unique and lavish experience, you may want to treat yourself to a night in one of those historical accommodations.





HOW TO GET AROUND

HERE ARE SOME ADVICE TO NAVIGATE SCOTTISH PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

1 BUS

The options for bus tickets are: single, return and day passes. Edinburgh and Glasgow especially offer day passes to make it affordable to go around as much as you like. Don't forget that in many places exact fare is required.

2 TRAIN

Peak tickets are more expensive than off-peak. However, be aware that peak times are different for every line, so always ask at the station if you're not sure. Weekend is always off peak.

Buying a day return will often be less expensive than buying a single, so it is worth doing day trips if you can. And if you know your itinerary, buying tickets well in advance will reduce the costs.

3 BOAT

If you want to bring a car on the ferry, definitely book your spot in advance. On some ferry routes, you are able to purchase joint train-ferry tickets.

4 BICYCLE

If you don't have a bike but fancy a tour of a city, often there are renting schemes available. Among others, Stirling and Glasgow take part in the European scheme Nextbike.



If you're going to drive around Scotland, here are a few things you should be aware of:

You will need a passport and a valid driving licence to rent a car in the UK. Please be aware that it costs additional money to add a second driver, so plan accordingly.

The entirety of the UK drives on the left side of the road. It's fairly easy to get used to it when you drive as you just follow other cars, but be aware that you may need some time to adjust. Be extra careful and ensure that you have read the Highway Code.

In the rural areas of Scotland, there are many roads that are only big enough for one car, whether they are two lanes or single-track. This means be careful when you come around corners or blind peaks.

Because of those roads, be warned that driving time will differ from what Google tells you. A single track road may have a 60MPH limit, but you may find yourself driving at only 30MPH therefore taking twice as long to drive.

Enjoy your trip and make sure to stop to enjoy the sights!

ADVICE FOR ROAD TRIPPERS

SEEING SCOTLAND BY CAR
IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS
TO CREATE YOUR OWN
ITINERARY AND FOLLOW IT
AT YOUR OWN PACE



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Camila Contreras is a Canadian/Chilean writer and publishing professional.

She moved to Scotland in 2012 to study at the University of St Andrews. There, she met the love of her life and decided to stay.

With her Scottish partner, she has since lived in Edinburgh and Stirling, and visited much of the country.

The popularity of her travel/expat blog pushed her to develop useful bite-sized guides to help people plan and enjoy their trip to beautiful Scotland.

WANT MORE INFO?

Did you like this brochure and want more?

Camila offers specific guidebooks for the following Scottish destinations

- Edinburgh
- St Andrews
- ...and more to come!

You can purchase them for a small price at her online shop: WWW.ADVENTITIOUSVIOLET.COM/SHOP

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SCOTLAND WILL ALWAYS SURPRISE YOU

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