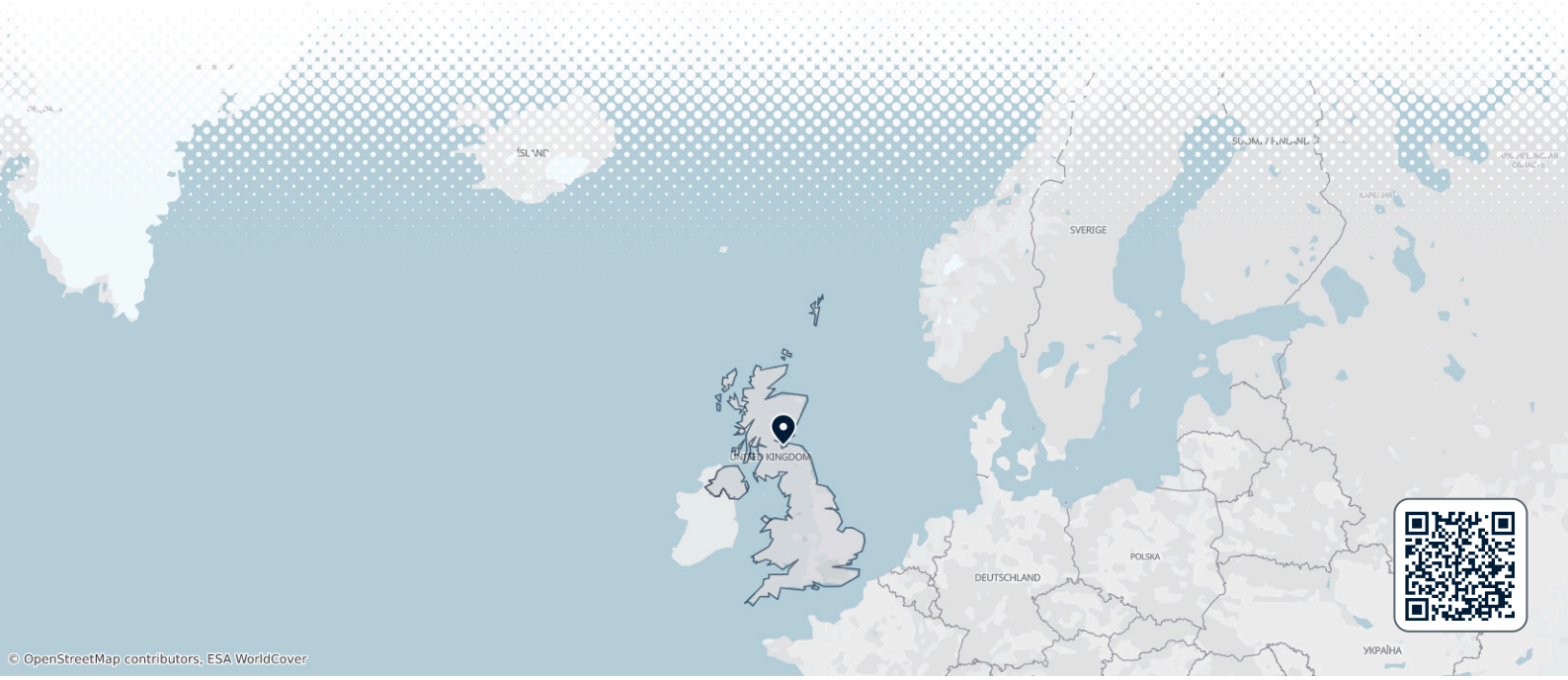


Edinburgh

Scotland · United Kingdom

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Edinburgh is Scotland's capital and its most visited city. Its skyline is dominated by a castle on an extinct volcanic rock, with a medieval Old Town of narrow closes on one side and an elegant 18th-century New Town on the other. Together they form a single UNESCO World Heritage Site.

This is a city built for walking. Its center is compact, its history is visible everywhere, and hills within the city give sweeping views without leaving town. Come in August and the city fills up for the world's largest arts festival; visit any other month for a quieter, still atmospheric capital. The writers *Robert Louis Stevenson* and *Arthur Conan Doyle* were both born here.

When to visit

Summers are cool and rarely hot. Winters are cold with short days, but the city has a lively Christmas market and a famous New Year celebration. Spring and autumn are quieter, with fewer crowds and lower prices.

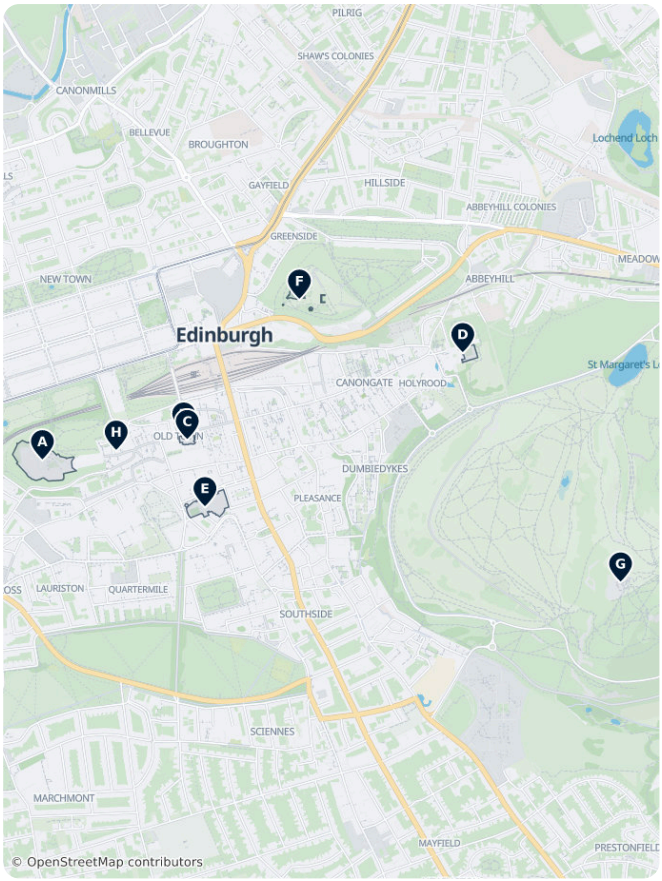
Plan around the **Edinburgh Festival Fringe**, the world's largest arts festival, held every August. The whole city fills with performances and street shows, but accommodation prices rise sharply, so book well ahead.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 10° Feels like 1°	2° / -3°	15 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	7° / 11° Feels like 2°	2° / -2°	14 rainy days · Dry air
March	Poor Poor for hiking	8° / 13° Feels like 4°	3° / -2°	14 rainy days · Dry air
April	Fair Fair for hiking	11° / 16° Feels like 7°	4° / -1°	14 rainy days · Dry air
May	Good Good for hiking	14° / 19° Feels like 11°	7° / 2°	16 rainy days · Dry air
June	Good Good for hiking	16° / 21°	10° / 6°	15 rainy days · Dry air
July	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 23°	12° / 9°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 22°	12° / 8°	16 rainy days · Dry air
September	Good Good for hiking	16° / 20°	10° / 6°	13 rainy days · Dry air
October	Fair Fair for hiking	12° / 16° Feels like 9°	7° / 2°	16 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for hiking	9° / 13° Feels like 5°	4° / -1°	15 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 11° Feels like 2°	2° / -3°	16 rainy days · Dry air

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Rain is possible in any month, so pack a waterproof layer rather than relying on the forecast.

Top sights



A Edinburgh Castle sits on an extinct volcanic rock above the city and has been a royal fortress for over 900 years. Inside are the Scottish crown jewels and the Stone of Destiny, used in the coronation of Scottish and British monarchs.

B Royal Mile runs from the castle down to the palace, linking the Old Town's historic closes, kirks, and pubs in one walkable stretch.

C St Giles' Cathedral is the city's main medieval church, recognizable by its crown-shaped spire, and the resting place of several key figures in Scottish history.

At the foot of the Royal Mile, D Palace of Holyroodhouse is the official Scottish residence of the British monarch, built next to the ruins of a 12th-century abbey.

E National Museum of Scotland covers Scottish history and world culture under one roof, and entry is free.

Climb F Calton Hill for unfinished Greek-style monuments and one of the best skyline views in the city, especially at sunset.

For a longer climb, G Arthur's Seat is an extinct volcano inside the city, with a summit trail that takes most walkers one to two hours round trip.

H Camera Obscura & Illusions combines a Victorian rooftop camera obscura with hands-on optical illusions, a good rainy-day option right by the castle.

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What to experience

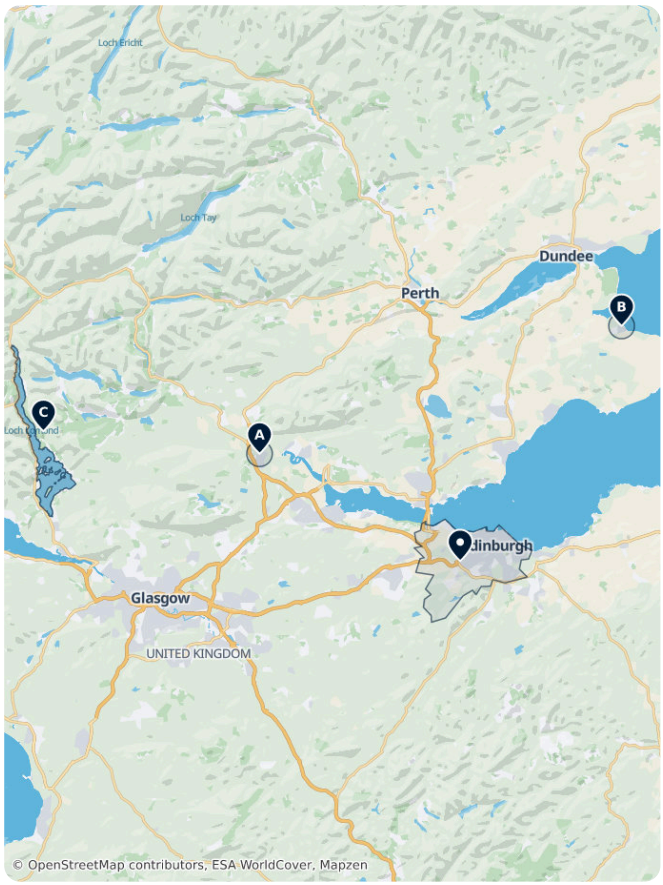
A few things worth building time for, beyond the big sights:

- Watch the **One O'Clock Gun** fire from Edinburgh Castle every day except Sunday, a working naval time signal that has fired since 1861.
- Descend into the sealed 17th-century streets at The Real Mary King's Close, hidden beneath the Old Town on a guided tour.
- Taste and compare single malts on a guided tasting flight at The Scotch Whisky Experience.
- Follow the Water of Leith walkway past St Bernard's Well, an 18th-century mineral-spring folly, on a quiet path away from the crowds.
- Join the street party for **Hogmanay**, Edinburgh's multi-day New Year celebration, one of the largest in the world.

Day trips

Edinburgh sits close to castles, coastline, and countryside worth a full day. A few of the best, closest first:

- **South Queensferry**, about 30 minutes by train — home to the Forth Bridge, a Victorian railway bridge and UNESCO World Heritage Site, plus a small harbor town to wander.
- Rosslyn Chapel, about 40 minutes by bus or car — an ornately carved 15th-century chapel made famous by *The Da Vinci Code*.
- North Berwick, about 30 minutes by train — a seaside town with a beach, a ruined castle, and boat trips to see the huge gannet colony on the Bass Rock and puffins on nearby islands in summer.
- A Stirling, about 50 minutes by train — a historic castle town that controlled the main crossing point between the Scottish Highlands and Lowlands for centuries.
- B St Andrews, about 1.5 hours by train and bus — the home of golf, with a ruined cathedral and a windswept coastline.
- C Loch Lomond, about 1.5 to 2 hours by car or organized tour — Scotland's largest loch, ringed by hills and a good introduction to the Highlands without a multi-day trip.



Where to explore

Glasgow is Scotland's largest city, under an hour away by train, with a different character: grittier, more industrial heritage, and strong art and music scenes. Many visitors combine the two cities in one trip.

Getting there

- **By air**: Edinburgh Airport is the main gateway, about 13 km west of the center. The Airlink express bus takes about 30 minutes to the city center; the tram takes about 35 minutes and calls at stops through the west end. Edinburgh Airport
- **By train**: Edinburgh Waverley station is in the city center, with frequent direct trains from London (about 4.5 hours), Glasgow (under an hour), and other major British cities. National Rail
- **By bus**: Edinburgh Bus Station, on St Andrew Square in the New Town, has long-distance coach links across Scotland and to English cities, generally slower and cheaper than the train.

Getting around

- **Public transit**: Lothian Buses run frequent routes across the city; tap a contactless bank card or phone directly on the reader as you board, no ticket machine or app needed. A single tram line connects the airport to the city center and Leith. Lothian Buses
- **Taxi / ride-hailing**: Black cabs are common and can be hailed on the street; Uber also operates.
- **On foot**: The Old Town and New Town are both walkable, though the Old Town's hills and cobbles make for a slower pace.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The Old Town and New Town are compact and walkable, though steep hills and cobbled streets slow the pace in places.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Cycling works well on the flatter New Town streets and paths like the Water of Leith walkway, but the Old Town's hills and cobbles make it less comfortable.

Driving

- **Which side**: Traffic drives on the **left**, opposite to most of mainland Europe and North America.
- **Is a car worth it?**: No, skip it within the city. Public transit and walking cover the center easily, and traffic and parking are limited. A car only helps for reaching day trips at your own pace.
- **Parking**: Metered street parking and multi-story car parks operate in the center; pay by app or meter, and expect an hourly rate.
- **Restrictions**: A low emission zone covers the city center; older, more polluting vehicles may be charged or restricted.

Food & drink

Edinburgh's food scene mixes traditional Scottish dishes, such as haggis, cullen skink, and fish and chips, with a strong modern Scottish and international restaurant scene.

For a concentrated stretch of restaurants and pubs, head to the **Grassmarket**, a historic square below the castle, or to the Leith waterfront, where old dockside warehouses now hold some of the city's best restaurants, including several with Michelin stars.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Full English Breakfast · Full English
A cooked breakfast typically featuring eggs, bacon, sausages, baked beans, grilled tomato, and toast.

LUNCH

Fish and Chips
Battered and fried fish (usually cod or haddock) served with thick-cut fried potatoes.

DINNER

Sunday Roast
Roasted meat served with roast potatoes, vegetables, gravy, and Yorkshire pudding, traditionally eaten on Sundays.

Chicken Tikka Masala
A South Asian-influenced curry dish that has become a British national favorite, usually chicken in a creamy spiced tomato sauce.

Shepherd's Pie · Cottage/Shepherd's Pie
Ground beef and vegetables topped with mashed potato and baked, a comforting classic.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Cornish Pasty · Pasty
Minced meat and vegetables encased in pastry and baked, a classic savory hand pie.

Afternoon Tea
Afternoon tea service with finger sandwiches, scones with clotted cream and jam, and pastries.

Sausage Roll
Sausage wrapped in pastry, a popular savory snack from bakeries.

DRINKS

English Ale · Real Ale / Bitter
Traditional English ale, often served at room temperature, distinct from lagers.

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Safety & health

Edinburgh is a safe city for tourists by international standards. The main risks are pickpocketing and bag-snatching in crowded areas like the Royal Mile and around Waverley Station, especially during the August festivals, so keep bags zipped and in front of you.

Late at night, stick to well-lit streets around the Old Town and Grassmarket, as in any large city. Tap water is safe to drink everywhere.

History

Edinburgh Castle has been besieged more than any castle in Britain, changing hands repeatedly between Scottish and English forces during centuries of border wars. Below it, the Old Town grew upward rather than outward, squeezed onto a narrow ridge between the castle and Palace of Holyroodhouse, producing the tall tenements and hidden closes that still define the streetscape.

By the 18th century, the crowded and unsanitary Old Town pushed wealthier residents across the valley to build the New Town: a planned grid of Georgian townhouses, including Georgian House, that still stands largely intact today as one of Europe's best-preserved examples of neoclassical city planning.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for the United Kingdom at a glance:

CURRENCY
GBP £

EMERGENCY
999

ELECTRICITY
Type G
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
English

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Walks

Audio Guides by Tripomatic
Walk it with an audio guide
Available in 9 languages · **Plays when you arrive** · **Works offline**
Scan to get the app

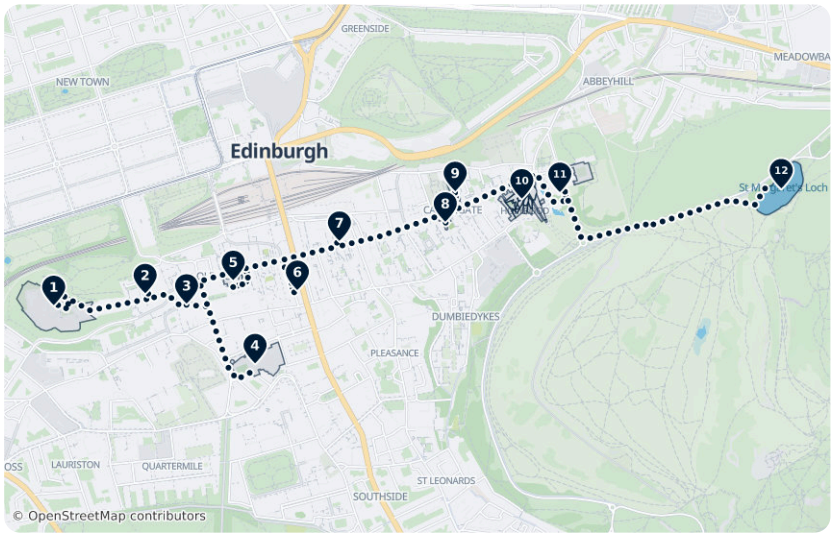
Best of Edinburgh: The Royal Mile & Old Town

1h 40min · 4.4 km · 12 stops



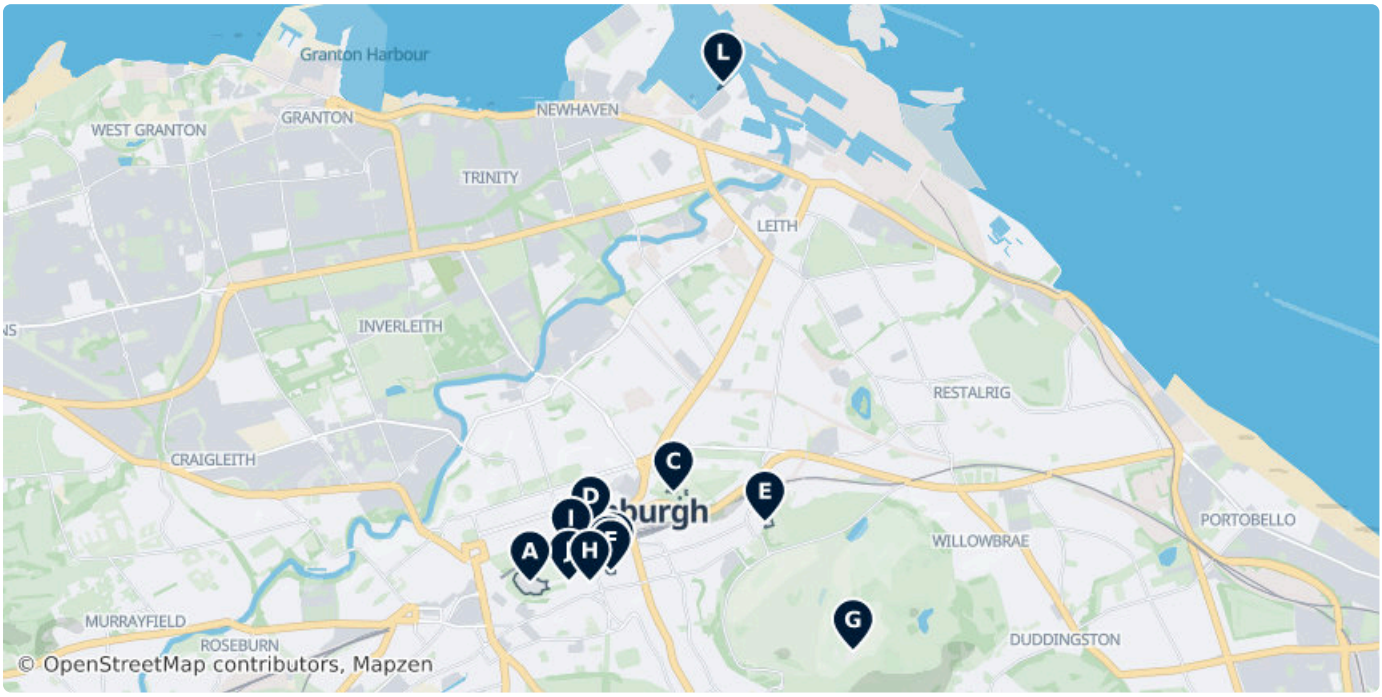
1. Edinburgh Castle
2. Camera Obscura & Illusions
3. Victoria Street
4. National Museum of Scotland
5. St Giles' Cathedral & Mary King's Close
6. Blair Street Underground Vaults
7. John Knox House
8. Museum of Edinburgh
9. Dunbar's Close Garden
10. The Scottish Parliament
11. Palace of Holyroodhouse
12. St Margaret's Loch

Walk the spine of Edinburgh's Old Town, starting at the ramparts of Edinburgh Castle and descending the Royal Mile to the Palace of Holyroodhouse, with detours to Victoria Street and the National Museum of Scotland (with a bonus track on Greyfriars Bobby, whose statue you pass on the way), and the hidden Blair Street Vaults and Dunbar's Close Garden along the way. The walk finishes with a stroll into Holyrood Park itself, to the loch at the foot of Arthur's Seat. Start at the Castle Esplanade, an easy walk up from Princes Street or a short ride to the top of the Royal Mile.



Edinburgh Essentials

Edinburgh's Old and New Towns, both UNESCO World Heritage sites, offer a dense concentration of historical landmarks. This selection covers the city's royal heritage from the 12th-century Edinburgh Castle to the Palace of Holyroodhouse, connected by the medieval Royal Mile. It includes architectural highlights like the Victorian Gothic Scott Monument and St Giles' Cathedral, alongside natural features such as the volcanic peak of Arthur's Seat and Calton Hill's monuments. For cultural depth, the list features the Scottish National Gallery, the underground history of Mary King's Close, and the former royal yacht, HMY Britannia.





A Edinburgh Castle

Historic fortress and national monument with a history dating back to the 9th century, featuring royal artifacts and panoramic views of the city.

Castlehill, EH1 2NG Edinburgh (55.94867, -3.20055)

Apr 01-Sep 30 Mo–Su	09:30–18:00
Oct 01-Dec 23 Mo–Su	09:30–17:00
Dec 25-Dec 26 Mo–Su	Closed
Dec 27-Dec 31 Mo–Su	09:30–17:00
Jan 02-Mar 31 Mo–Su	09:30–17:00



B Royal Mile

Historic street connecting Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Palace, known for its shops, dining, and cultural heritage.

Royal Mile, Edinburgh EH1 1PE, UK (55.94971, -3.19109)

ewh.org.uk/world-heritage-sites/the-roy... , +441315579681

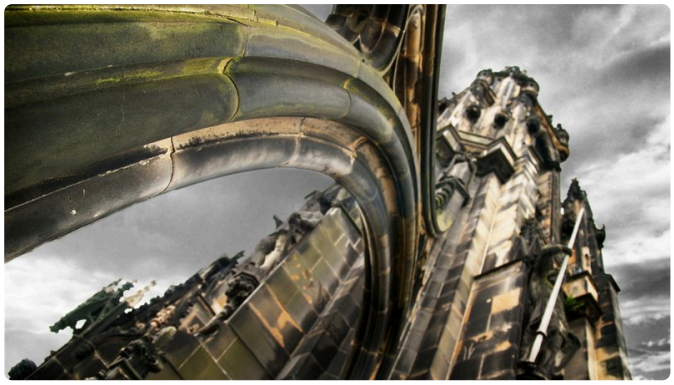
edinburghcastle.scot, +441312259846



C Calton Hill

Historic hill featuring panoramic city views, iconic monuments, and cultural heritage. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Calton Hill, Edinburgh EH1 3BJ, UK (55.95470, -3.18334)



D Scott Monument

Victorian Gothic tower and memorial dedicated to Scottish author Sir Walter Scott, featuring viewing platforms with panoramic city views.

East Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh (55.95236, -3.19326)

Mo–Su 10:00–21:00

edinburghmuseums.org.uk/venue/sco... , +44 131 529 4068



E Palace of Holyroodhouse

Historic royal palace featuring Renaissance architecture, state apartments, gardens, and abbey ruins. It serves as the official residence of the British monarch in Scotland.

Canongate, EH8 8DX Edinburgh (55.95269, -3.17240)

Nov 01-Mar 29 Mo–Su 09:30–16:30
Mar 31-Oct 31 Mo–Su 09:30–18:00

royalcollection.org.uk/visit/palace-of-h... , +44 20 7766 7334



F St Giles' Cathedral

Historic Gothic church with medieval origins and notable architectural features including the Thistle Chapel. It has played a central role in Scottish religious and civic history.

Royal Mile, EH1 1RE Edinburgh (55.94943, -3.19085)

Apr-Oct Mo–Fr 10:00–18:00
Apr-Oct Sa 09:00–17:00
Apr-Oct Su 13:00–17:00
Nov-Mar Mo–Sa 09:00–17:00

stgilescathedral.org.uk, +441312260674



G Arthur's Seat

Volcanic hill reaching 251 meters in height, featuring panoramic views of the city and surrounding areas. It is located within a large park known for its geological and historical significance.

EH16 5, United Kingdom (55.94408, -3.16183)



H Victoria Street

If there was an award for the most picturesque street in Edinburgh, Victoria Street would definitely receive it.

Victoria St, Edinburgh EH1, UK (55.94872, -3.19337)



I Scottish National Gallery

Art museum housed in a neoclassical building featuring a collection of Scottish and European artworks from the 14th to the mid-20th century.

The Mound, Edinburgh EH2 2EL, UK (55.95089, -3.19562)

Mo–We	10:00–17:00
Th	10:00–19:00
Fr–Su	10:00–17:00

nationalgalleries.org, +441316246200



J The Scotch Whisky Experience

The ultimate whisky attraction offering a journey through the distilling process.

Castlehill 354, EH1 2NE Edinburgh (55.94874, -3.19588)

scotchwhiskyexperience.co.uk, +44 131 220 0441



K Mary King's Close

Mary King's Close is a historic close located under the Edinburgh City Chambers building on the Royal Mile, in the historic Old Town area...

2 High Street, Edinburgh, Midlothian EH1 1PG, UK (55.94995, -3.19050)

Mo–Th	10:00–17:00
Fr–Sa	10:00–21:00
Su	10:00–17:00

realmarykingsclose.com, +448450706244



L HMY Britannia

Her Majesty's Yacht Britannia is the former royal yacht of the British monarchy. She was in their service from 1954 until 1997.

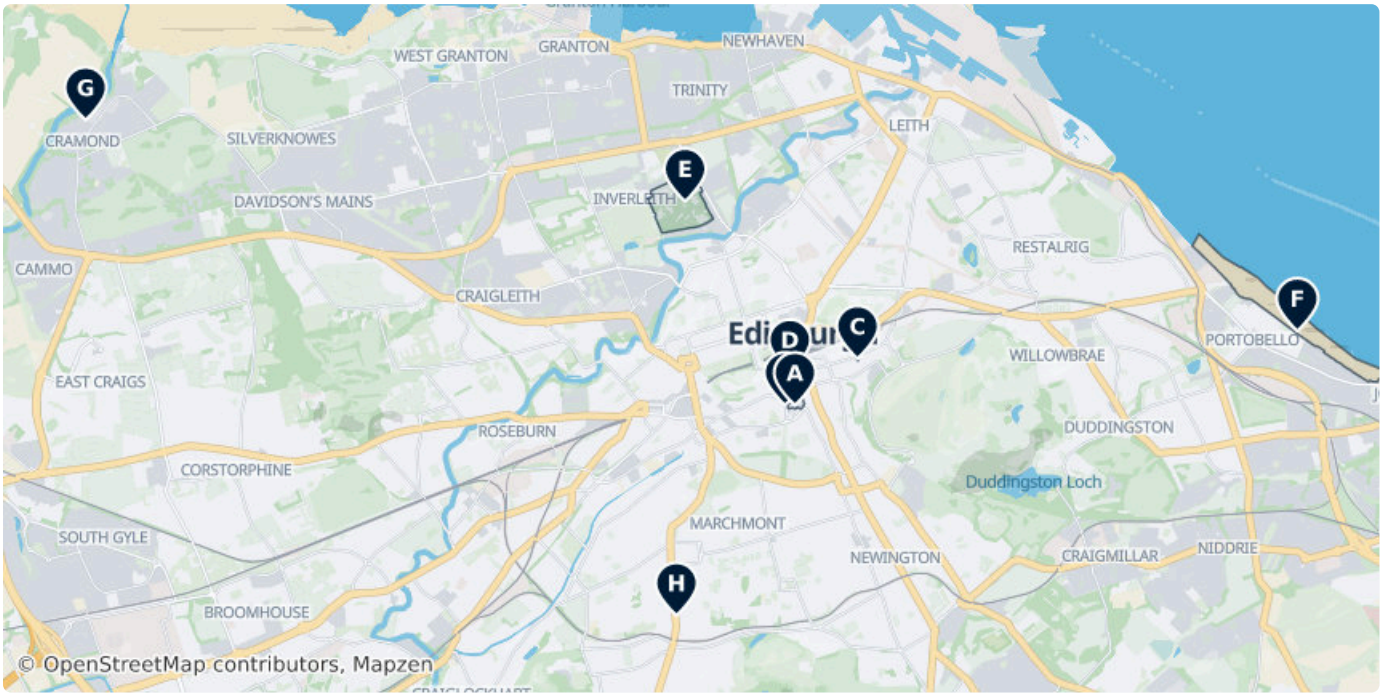
Ocean Drive 100, EH6 6JJ Edinburgh (55.98210, -3.17740)

Nov-Dec Mo–Su	10:00–17:00
Apr-Aug Mo–Su	09:30–18:00
Sep Mo–Su	10:00–18:00
Oct Mo–Su	10:00–17:30

royalyachtbritannia.co.uk, +440 131 555 5566

Editor's Choice Edinburgh

This selection of Edinburgh landmarks spans from the medieval Old Town to the coastal suburbs. Explore the National Museum of Scotland's Romanesque architecture and the 16th-century Huntly House. Discover the subterranean history of Mary King's Close or visit the memorial statue of Greyfriars Bobby. For nature and relaxation, the Royal Botanic Garden focuses on plant conservation, while Portobello Beach and Cramond Village offer sandy shores and riverside walks at the mouth of the River Almond.





A National Museum of Scotland

Major cultural institution featuring exhibits on natural history, Scottish history, Egyptian artifacts, and Celtic art. The building combines modern and Romanesque architecture and offers free admission and accessible facilities.

Chambers Street, EH1 1JF Edinburgh (55.94691, -3.18967)

Mo–Su 10:00–17:00

nms.ac.uk/national-museum-of-scotland, +44300 123 6789



B Greyfriars Bobby

Memorial statue and drinking fountain dedicated to a loyal Skye Terrier known for guarding his owner's grave for 14 years.

Greyfriars Kirk Cemetery, Edinburgh, EH1 2QQ, UK (55.94692, -3.19130)

greyfriarsbobby.org, +44 131 225 1900



C Museum of Edinburgh

Historic museum housed in Huntly House showcasing the city's history, craftsmanship, and legends through diverse collections and exhibitions.

Canongate 142-146, Edinburgh (55.95120, -3.17939)

Mo–Sa	10:00–17:00

edinburghmuseums.org.uk/venue/mu... , +44 131 529 4143



D Mary King's Close

Mary King's Close is a historic close located under the Edinburgh City Chambers building on the Royal Mile, in the historic Old Town area...

2 High Street, Edinburgh, Midlothian EH1 1PG, UK (55.94995, -3.19050)

Mo–Th	10:00–17:00
Fr–Sa	10:00–21:00
Su	10:00–17:00

realmarykingsclose.com, +448450706244

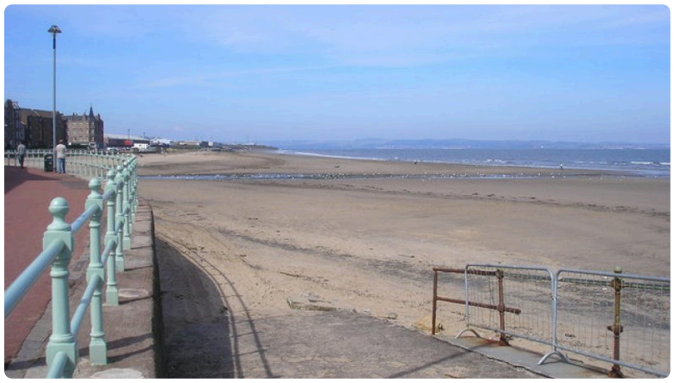


E Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh is a scientific centre for the study of plants, their diversity and conservation, as well as a popular...

20A Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, EH3 5LR, UK (55.96565, -3.20771)

rbge.org.uk, +440 131 552 7171



F Portobello Beach

Portobello is a coastal suburb of Edinburgh in eastern central Scotland.

Portobello, Edinburgh, UK (55.95375, -3.10711)

visitscotland.com/info/towns-villages/portobello-beach-p...



G Cramond Village

Cramond Village is a village and suburb in the north-west of Edinburgh, Scotland, at the mouth of the River Almond where it enters the...

Cramond Village, Edinburgh EH4 6NU, UK
(55.97313, -3.30620)

cramondassociation.org.uk



H The Canny Man's

Established in 1871 in Morningside, this historic pub is known for its eclectic interior filled with antiques and clocks. It features an extensive malt whisky collection and outdoor seating.

Canaan Lane, Edinburgh, EH10 4QZ, United Kingdom
(55.92757, -3.20912)

Mo–We	11:00–23:00
Th	11:00–00:00
Fr	11:00–01:00
Sa	11:00–00:00
Su	11:00–23:00

cannymans.co.uk, +44 131 447 1484

Edinburgh's Hidden Gems

Beyond the crowded Royal Mile, Edinburgh holds secluded sites like the hand-carved sandstone chambers of Gilmerton Cove and the Victorian interiors of Bennets Bar. This collection features the Royal Observatory on Blackford Hill and contemporary installations at Jupiter Artland. Nature seekers can explore the Water of Leith Walkway or Dr Neil's Garden by Duddingston Loch, while history enthusiasts can find the William Henry Miller Monument and Muschat's cairn, a landmark immortalized in Sir Walter Scott's literature.





A Royal Observatory, Edinburgh

The Royal Observatory, Edinburgh is an astronomical institution located on Blackford Hill in Edinburgh.

Blackford Hill, EH9 3HJ Edinburgh (55.92292, -3.18818)

roe.ac.uk



B Water of Leith Walkway

The Water of Leith Walkway is a public footpath and cycleway that runs alongside the river of the same name through Edinburgh, Scotland,...

19 Dean Terrace, Edinburgh EH4 1NL, United Kingdom (55.88754, -3.33891)

waterofleith.org.uk/walkway



C Gilmerton Cove

Gilmerton Cove is a series of underground passageways and chambers hand-carved from sandstone located beneath the streets of Gilmerton, an...

Drum Street 16, EH17 8QH Edinburgh (55.90559, -3.13311)

gilmertoncove.co.uk, +44 7914 829177



D Jupiter Artland

Jupiter Artland is a contemporary sculpture park and art gallery outside the city of Edinburgh, Scotland.

EH27 8BB Wilkieston (55.90508, -3.42261)

Apr-Oct Mo–Su	10:00–17:00
Nov-Mar Th–Su	10:00–17:00
Jan Mo–Su	Closed

jupiterartland.org



E Inverleith House

Inverleith House is a historic house, now within the Royal Botanic Garden, in the suburb of Inverleith, in Edinburgh, Scotland.

(Unnamed Road), Edinburgh EH3 5, United Kingdom (55.96502, -3.21021)

rbge.org.uk/the-gardens/edinburgh/inverleith-house



F William Henry Miller Monument

William Henry Miller was a Scottish book collector and parliamentarian. He sat in the House of Commons from 1830 to 1837.

9 Craigentinny Crescent, Edinburgh EH7 6QB, United Kingdom (55.95710, -3.13713)



G Muschat's cairn

Located in Holyrood Park, this stone monument marks the site of a 1723 crime and was famously featured in Sir Walter Scott's novel, The Heart of Midlothian.

5 Royal Park Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 8JD, United Kingdom (55.95441, -3.15831)



H Dr Neil's Garden

A secluded garden on the banks of Duddingston Loch featuring diverse plant species and the 19th-century Thomson's Tower, built for the Edinburgh Skating Club.

EH15 3, United Kingdom (55.94087, -3.14891)

drneilsgarden.co.uk



I Bennets Bar

A Victorian pub established in 1839 that retains original features including etched mirrors, ornate wood carvings, and a traditional 'jug and bottle' hatch.

Valleyfield Street, Edinburgh, EH3 9LP, United Kingdom (55.94174, -3.20321)

bennetsbar.co.uk

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