

Balmoral, The King's residence in Scotland

Aberdeen

Stretching from the mountains to the sea, with “one of the most architecturally distinctive cities in Europe” to “one of the world’s most outstanding coastlines”, Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, in North-East Scotland, truly is a majestic tourism destination.

Cruise guests will quickly become captivated by this friendly, compact city-on-the-sea which has it all: miles of unspoiled sandy beaches, where dolphins and seals are regularly spotted, a profound maritime heritage to cutting-edge culture, colourful street art tours and impressive architecture, much of which is built of silvery grey granite, hewn from nearby quarries. So when the sun shines and Aberdeen sparkles, it’s easy to see why it is nicknamed the Silver City.

Beyond Aberdeen there is an embarrassment of riches. The rugged coastline stretches 165 miles north and south, and inland amongst the fairy-tale castles and world renowned distilleries there is unbeatable

mountain scenery, meandering rivers, crystal clear lochs and ancient forests steeped in history and heritage providing endless scope for outdoor adventures.

The region offers glorious seascapes, ancient sites and mysterious standing stones, quaint fishing villages and sandy coves along with picturesque havens to explore such as Portsoy to the north and Stonehaven to the south.

Port of Aberdeen has a proven track record of welcoming boutique cruise vessels and now extends that expertise to welcoming larger vessels at the transformational South Harbour. The new £400 million deepwater harbour significantly increases capacity for cruise calls and will accommodate the majority of the world's cruise ship fleet.

The port is well positioned to become a major player in the UK cruise industry and has already seen Aberdeenshire recently highlighted by Good Housekeeping as best place to visit in 2023.

Top Five Facts about Aberdeen

1. Aberdeen is home to Marischal College, the world's second largest granite building.
2. Aberdeen is home to a record number of distilleries – 17 to be precise, many of which are open to the public which is a fascinating and entertaining way to learn more about the history of Aberdeen and its culture.
3. There are more than 300 castles in the Aberdeenshire area, more per acre than anywhere else in the British Isles.
4. Cairngorms National Park, which is twice the size of the Lake District and bigger then Luxembourg, is home to tranquil lochs, challenging Munros, beautiful castles and historic events – it's no surprise that it is the largest National Park in the UK.
5. The oldest building in active use in Aberdeen is St Machar's Cathedral. Located in Old Aberdeen, originally a separate burgh, there are historic cobbled streets, mature trees as well as Aberdeen's first University, which was founded in 1496. Nearby Footdee – known locally as Fittie – is a quirky fishing quarter at the water's edge, with squares of tiny cottages and brightly painted outhouses.

Experience Aberdeen

Aberdeen Art Gallery

From Brueghel to Borland, Landseer to Lambie and from Guthrie to Gibb, Aberdeen Art Gallery's collection spans over 700 years and includes a staggering range of works by artists, designers and makers. For over 130 years, the gallery has been acquiring the best and most interesting contemporary artworks. Today this Recognised Collection of National Significance is regarded as one of the UK's finest. The gallery team are proud to share their stories with all visitors.
Link: https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/AAGM/plan-your-visit/aberdeen-art-gallery

Dunnottar Castle

Perched atop a 160 foot rock and surrounded on three sides by the North Sea, these dramatic and evocative cliff-top ruins were the impregnable fortress of the Earls Marischal, once one of the most powerful families in Scotland. Steeped in history, Dunnottar has played host to some of the nation's greatest historical figures including William Wallace and Mary Queen of Scots and is famous for its role in saving the Honours of Scotland (the Scottish Crown Jewels) from Oliver Cromwell's army in the 1650. This romantic and haunting ruin is a photographer's paradise, a history lover's dream and an iconic tourist destination.
Link: https://www.dunnottarcastle.co.uk/

Provost Skene's House

What makes a city? Its buildings and landscape for certain, but more than anything it is people who give a city its character and culture. Inside Provost Skene's House, more than 100 remarkable individuals from Aberdeen and the North-East are showcased in new interactive displays. They include innovators, scientists, live savers, writers, sporting champions and stars of stage and screen. They range from Nobel laureate Lord Boyd-Orr (who helped establish the city's world-renowned Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health) to operatic soprano Mary Garden (one of entertainment's first superstars) and football legend Denis Law.
Link: https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/AAGM/plan-your-visit/provost-skenes-house

Peterhead Prison Museum

Step back in time through 125 years of turbulent history inside 'Scotland's toughest jail.' The former Victorian HM Convict Prison Peterhead unique features include the UK's first state-owned railway and the only site where the SAS (Special Air Service) were used to end a domestic siege in mainland Britain. The museum highlights the work of those that served here between 1888- 2013: you will visually see what "real" prison life was like; listen to officers speak of their experiences during the audio tour and have your sense of smell stimulated in the laundry, shower block and hospital areas.
Link: https://peterheadprisonmuseum.com/

Aberdeen Maritime Museum

Close to the busy harbour, on historic Shiprow, Aberdeen Maritime Museum tells the story of Aberdeen's long and often dramatic relationship with the sea. From the earliest days of trading, fishing and shipbuilding, to offshore energy and life in industry, to Aberdeen's place today as a leader in global energy transition - your voyage of discovery starts here.
Link: https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/AAGM/plan-your-visit/aberdeen-maritime-museum

Balmoral Castle and Estate

Balmoral Castle has been the Scottish home of the Royal Family since it was purchased for Queen Victoria by Prince Albert in 1852, having been first leased in 1848. Enjoy a relaxing visit of the grounds, exhibitions and Ballroom at Balmoral with audio tours available in English with Dutch, French, German, Italian and Spanish translations. For the more active there is also The Cairns Walk and Albert's Pyramid Walk where you can explore the historical cairns erected by the Royal Family on the Balmoral Estate, with great views over Deeside and Balmoral Castle itself. Note: access may change if Royal Family is in residence.
Link: https://www.balmoralcastle.com/

Greyhope Bay

Greyhope Bay, operated by a charitable organisation, exists to connect and engage visitors and the local community with the marine world. From the historic site of Torry Battery visitors can enjoy panoramic views of the coast, and is the best place in the UK to spot bottlenose dolphins from the shore. Spotted daily, bottlenose dolphins can be seen feeding, jumping and playing at the entrance to the Port of Aberdeen with no need for binoculars! Torry Battery has been shown to have the highest year-round probability of spotting bottlenose dolphins in Scotland.
Link: https://www.greyhopebay.com

Glen Garioch Distillery

One of Scotland's oldest operating distilleries, Glen Garioch (pronounced Geery in the ancient Doric dialect still spoken here) has been making its mighty malt in the quaint and historic market town of Oldmeldrum since 1797. Shielded from the world's prying eyes, deep in the fertile 'Granary of Aberdeenshire', and only ever produced in small, precious batches, Glen Garioch is a rare find indeed, but warmly appreciated by those who like a hearty Highland malt, non chill-filtered as nature intended, with a wholesome maltiness,

honeyed sweetness and delicious creamy texture to savour.
Link: https://www.glengarioch.com/

The Gordon Highlanders Museum

For two hundred years, this spectacular landscape gave us the men who made one of the finest regiments the British Army has ever seen: The Gordon Highlanders. Within the ranks were farmers and fishermen, ghillies and labourers, aristocrats and university students. Ordinary men with an extraordinary sense of duty; all with a story to tell. These stories are brought to life at The Gordon Highlanders Museum by exploring our Nationally Significant Collection. Guided by our knowledgeable staff and volunteers, retrace the remarkable history of these famous fighting men.
Link: https://www.gordonhighlanders.com/

Grampian Transport Museum

Located in the rural village of Alford, just 25 miles from Aberdeen, our award-winning Grampian Transport Museum boasts an impressive range of transport exhibits, from travelling chariots of the 1800s to some of the fastest cars ever made. The museum is a living museum that probes the past, present and future. Many exhibits are climb aboard, hands on and even ride on! The exhibits are updated every year during the closed season, providing a wide range of new and exciting things to see each year.
Link: https://www.gtm.org.uk/

Port Information

Time zone : GMT & BST
Operational hours : 24hrs
Berth Enquiries / Reservations : Via ship's agent
Latitude & Longitude : North Harbour – Latitude 57º 09'N / Longitude 02º 04'W South Harbour – Latitude 57º 09'N / Longitude 02º 04'W
Prevailing Weather : SWesterly wind
Anchorage position : Anchoring positions agreed on request
Distance to landing stage nm : Dependent on Anchorage position
Berth Information : Blaikies Quay (North Harbour) Duthies Quay (North Harbour) Clipper Quay (North Harbour) Regent Quay (North Harbour) Castlegate (South Harbour) Balmoral Quay (South Harbour)
Vessel Length : North Harbour – 165m, South Harbour – 300m
Vessel Width : Max beam: North Harbour – 30m, South Harbour – 45m
Air Draft Restrictions : N/A
Vessel Draft : Max draft: North Harbour – 8.5m, South Harbour – 8.5m
Depth on Berth : North Harbour – 8.5m, South Harbour – 9m
Largest cruise ship to call : 202m
VTS Channel : 12
Maximum Ship Dimension : North Harbour – 165m, South Harbour – 300m
Pilotage : Complusory
Tugboat : Available on request or as per port requirements
Security Facilities : Fully compliant with ISPS regulations
Gangway : Not presently provided by port
Fresh Water : Available at berth
Power Supply : Vessel's own
Fuel supply : North Harbour – available at berth, South Harbour – barge
Hot works/painting/lifeboats : Requested via agent to Harbour Team
Waste Handling : As per PWMP, additional services can be arranged by vessel agent

Passenger Facilities

Cruise Terminal Building : Temporary facility on the quayside
Currency Exchange : Available in city centre
Internet Access : Available in city centre
Telephones : Available in city centre
Mailbox : Available in city centre
Taxi rank : North Harbour – 0.5 miles / 0.8km South Harbour – 2 miles / 3.2km
Distance to railway station : North Harbour – 0.5 miles / 0.8km South Harbour – 2 miles / 3.2km
Distance to airport : North Harbour – 7.2 miles / 11.6 km South Harbour – 8.6 miles / 13.8 km
Banks / ATM Machines : Available in city centre
Restaurant/Café : Available in city centre

Further info & contacts

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