

History

Scottish history is a compelling interwoven web, laced with heroic figures and defining battles. Events in the relatively recent past are well documented, but Scotland's history stretches far back into the mists of times where myth and legend take precedence over sketchy facts and scant archaeological records.

In order to pull apart the historical threads that piece together modern Scotland, this chapter is divided into two sections: the timeline chronologically sets out the major events in Scottish history; the text fleshes out the major events in the timeline, and, although following a roughly chronological ordering of Scottish history, it focuses on themes such as religion, a defining battle or the immortal figures, some heavily romanticised, who've made their mark on the country's extraordinary history.

EARLY DAYS

Hunters and gatherers have left remains of shells and animal bones, providing fragments of evidence of the earliest human habitation in Scotland. These early people came in waves from northern Europe and Ireland as the glaciers retreated in the wake of the last Ice Age around 10,000 BC.

Early Neolithic farming people moved into Scotland from mainland Europe and left behind an astonishing diary of human development including the incredibly well-preserved Neolithic village of Skara Brae (p417), dating from around 3100 BC, and extraordinary chambered cairns such as Maes Howe (p416), which indicate they had a belief in the afterlife. Today, the islands of Orkney are the best place to see such prehistoric sites, boasting Europe's greatest concentration. Kilmartin Glen (p285) also has many prehistoric sites, including extensive rock carvings.

Next came the Beaker people who were responsible for leaving behind standing stones, such as those at Callanish (p395 in Lewis; it is one of the most evocative sites in Scotland and testament to the advanced culture that had taken root by 3000 BC.

ROMANS & PICTS

The Roman invasion of Britain by Emperor Claudius began in AD 43, almost a century after Julius Caesar first invaded. However, the Roman onslaught ground to a halt in the north, not far beyond the present-day Scottish border. Between AD 78 and 84, the Roman Governor Agricola marched northwards and spent several years trying to subdue the wild tribes the Romans called the Picts (from the Latin *pictus*, meaning painted). Little is known about the Picts who inhabited northern and eastern Scotland. The only material evidence of

A Traveller's History of Scotland by Andrew Fisher is a concise account of Scottish history that relates historical events to places you can visit. It covers events from Scotland's first people right up to Devolution.

TIMELINE

4500 BC

Neolithic farmers move to Scotland from mainland Europe; prehistoric sites from these ancient days dot today's countryside with the best concentrated in Orkney.

3000 BC

Beaker people come to Scotland bringing with them the Bronze Age which produces the sword and shield, making warfare more popular. They also erect the mystifying stone circles, hill forts and crannogs.

AD 43

Emperor Claudius begins the Roman conquest of Britain, almost a century after Julius Caesar first invaded. By AD 80 a string of forts is built from the Clyde to the Forth.

their culture is their unique carved symbol stones. These boulders, engraved with the mysterious symbols of an otherwise unknown culture, can be found in many parts of eastern Scotland (p231).

By the 2nd century Emperor Hadrian, tired of fighting the tribes in the north, decided to cut his losses and built the wall (AD 122–28) that bears his name across northern England between Carlisle and Newcastle. Two decades later Hadrian's successor, Antoninus Pius, invaded Scotland again and built a turf rampart, the Antonine Wall, between the Firth of Forth and the River Clyde. The Roman fort at Cramond (p90) marked its eastern end. In northern Britain, the Romans found they had met their match.

CHRISTIANITY

Eventually the Romans left Britain and at this time there were at least two indigenous peoples in the northern region of the British Isles: the Picts in the north and east, and the Celtic Britons in the south.

St Ninian conducted the first missionary work among the Picts. He remains a mysterious figure shrouded in myth, but there is little doubt that his influence was profound.

St Columba, Scotland's most famous missionary, resumed St Ninian's work. After fleeing Ireland in 563 he established a monastery on Iona (p309), and Christianity became popular with pagan kings as it seemed to offer them supernatural powers.

According to legend, Columba was a scholar and a soldier-priest who went into exile after involvement in a bloody battle. After arriving on Iona he promptly set about banishing women and cows as he believed 'where there is a cow there is a woman, and where there is a woman there is mischief'. His manner of living was austere – he was said to sleep on the bare floor with a stone for a pillow. After his death he was credited with miraculous feats such as defeating what is today known as the Loch Ness monster. A visit to this holy island today to see the reconstructed 13th-century abbey and the many fine stone carvings is a highlight of the Inner Hebrides.

MACALPIN & CANMORE DYNASTIES

The Picts and Scots were drawn together by the threat of a Norse invasion and by the combination of political and spiritual power from their common Christianity. One story has it that Kenneth MacAlpin, the first king of a united Scotland, achieved power at a 'black dinner' by setting traps underneath the benches of Pictish nobles. He made Scone his capital, and brought to it the sacred Stone of Destiny (see the boxed text, p81), used in the coronation of Scottish kings.

Nearly two centuries later, Kenneth MacAlpin's great-great-grandson, Malcolm II (r 1005–18), defeated the Northumbrian Angles led by King Canute at the Battle of Carham (1018) near Roxburgh on the River Tweed.

Scots History (www.scotshistoryonline.co.uk) gives a useful window into Scotland's past and its people going back 8000 years. It's especially good for images of historic sites.

Stone of Destiny by Pat Gerber is an intriguing investigation into the history of Scotland's most famous lump of stone. Is the one in Edinburgh Castle a fake, with the real stone waiting to be rescued from its medieval hiding place?

THE CLAN WHO WOULD BE KING

In medieval times, when overland travel through the Scottish Highlands was slow, difficult and dangerous, the sea lochs, firths, kyles and sounds of the west coast were the motorways of their time. Cut off from the rest of Scotland, but united by these sea roads, the west coast and islands were a world – and a kingdom – unto themselves.

Descended from the legendary Somerled – a half-Gaelic, half-Norse warrior of the 12th century, himself descended from the Irish king Conn of the 100 Battles – the chiefs of Clan Donald claimed sovereignty over this watery kingdom. It was John Macdonald ofIslay who first styled himself Dominus Insularum (Lord of the Isles) in 1353. He and his descendants ruled their vast territory from their headquarters at Finlaggan (p293) in Islay, backed up by fleets of swift *birlinns* and *nyvaigs* (Hebridean galleys), an intimate knowledge of the sea routes of the west and a network of coastal castles that included Skipness (p287), Dunstaffnage (p314), Duart (p304), Stalker (p315), Dunvegan (p387) and Kisimul (p402).

Clan Donald held sway over the isles, often in defiance of the Scottish king, from 1350 to 1493. At its greatest extent, in the second half of the 15th century, the Lordship of the Isles included all the islands on the west coast of Scotland, the west-coast mainland from Kintyre to Ross-shire, and the Antrim coast of northern Ireland. But in challenging the Scottish king for territory, and siding with the English king against him, Clan Donald finally pushed its luck too far.

Following a failed rebellion in 1493, the Lordship was forfeited to King James IV of Scotland, and the title has remained in possession of the Scottish, and later British, royal family ever since. Lord of the Isles is one of the many titles held today by Prince Charles, heir to the British throne.

This victory brought Edinburgh and Lothian under Scottish control and extended Scottish territory as far south as the Tweed.

With his Saxon queen, Margaret, Malcolm III Canmore (r 1058–93) – whose father Duncan was murdered by Macbeth (as described in Shakespeare's eponymous play) – founded a dynasty of able Scottish rulers. They introduced new Anglo-Norman systems of government and religious foundations.

Malcolm's son David I (r 1124–53) imported monks to found the great Border abbeys; their fiery remains are major attractions in Melrose (p158), Jedburgh (p160) and Dryburgh (p159). He increased his power by adopting the Norman feudal system, granting land to noble Norman families in return for military service.

But the Highland clans, inaccessible in their glens, remained a law unto themselves for another 600 years. The exploits of Rob Roy, especially his daring raids into the Lowlands and reputation as a champion of the poor, typified the romantic notion of these wild clans. A cultural and linguistic divide grew up between the Gaelic-speaking Highlanders and Lowlanders who spoke the Scots tongue (p459).

A well-presented and easily absorbed introduction to Scottish history is at www.bbc.co.uk/history/scottishhistory. The accompanying images of historical sites help to bring it to life.

AD 142

Building of Antonine Wall marks northern limit of Roman Empire. It is patrolled for about 40 years, but after this the Romans decide northern Britain, with its treacherous terrain, is too difficult to conquer.

AD 397

The first Christian mission beyond Hadrian's Wall, in Whithorn, is initiated by St Ninian. The earliest recorded church in Scotland is built here to house his remains.

5th century

Roman soldiers stationed in Britain are recalled to Rome as the Empire faces attack from many different barbarian tribes. Eventually the last Romans depart and Emperor Honorius tells Britons to fend for themselves.

Early 6th century

A Celtic tribe, the Scots, cross the sea from northern Ireland and establish a kingdom in Argyll called Dalriada.

6th century

St Columba establishes a Christian mission on Iona. By the late 8th century the mission is responsible for the conversion of most of pagan Scotland.

780

From the 780s onwards, Norsemen in longboats from Scandinavia begin to pillage the Scottish coast and islands, eventually taking control of Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles.

THE DECLARATION OF ARBROATH

During the Wars of Independence, a group of Scottish nobles sent a letter to Pope John XXII requesting support for the cause of Scottish independence. Bearing the seals of eight earls and 31 barons, and written in Latin by the abbot of Arbroath in 1320, it is the earliest document that seeks to place limits on the power of a king.

Having railed against the tyranny of Edward I of England and having sung the praises of Robert the Bruce, the declaration famously concludes:

Yet even the same Robert, should he turn aside from the task and yield Scotland or us to the English king or people, him we should cast out as the enemy of us all, and choose another king to defend our freedom; for so long as a hundred of us remain alive, we will yield in no least way to English dominion. For we fight, not for glory nor for riches nor for honour, but only and alone for freedom, which no good man surrenders but with his life.

ROBERT THE BRUCE & WILLIAM WALLACE

When Alexander III fell to his death over a coastal cliff in Fife in 1286, there followed a dispute over the succession to the throne. There were no less than 13 claimants, but in the end it came down to a choice of two: Robert de Brus, lord of Annandale, and John Balliol, lord of Galloway. Edward I of England, as the greatest feudal lord in Britain, was asked to arbitrate. He chose Balliol, whom he thought he could manipulate more easily.

Seeking to tighten his feudal grip on Scotland, Edward – known as the ‘Hammer of the Scots’ – treated the Scots king as his vassal rather than his equal. The humiliated Balliol finally turned against him and allied Scotland with France in 1295, thus beginning the enduring ‘Auld Alliance’ and ushering in the Wars of Independence.

Edward’s response was bloody. In 1296 he invaded Scotland and Balliol was incarcerated in the Tower of London; in a final blow to Scots pride, Edward I removed the Stone of Destiny from Scone and took it back to London.

Enter arguably Scotland’s most tragic hero, William Wallace (see p195). Bands of rebels were attacking the English occupiers and one such band, led by William Wallace, defeated the English army at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297. Wallace was knighted and proclaimed Guardian of Scotland in 1298. However, he lost a major battle at Falkirk, resigned as guardian and went into hiding in Europe – on his return to Scotland, he was betrayed, caught and executed in 1305. This betrayal was largely put down to the fickle loyalties of the Scottish nobility who sided with Edward.

After William Wallace was executed, Robert the Bruce, grandson of the lord of Annandale, saw his chance, defied Edward (whom he had previously aligned himself with), murdered his rival John Comyn and had himself crowned king of Scotland at Scone in 1306. Bruce mounted a campaign to drive the English out of Scotland but suffered repeated defeats. According to

legend, while Bruce was on the run he was inspired to renew his efforts by a spider’s persistence in spinning its web. And the inspiration was not in vain – he went on to secure an illustrious victory over the English at Bannockburn. The exploits of this famous battle are enshrined in Scottish legend as one of the finest moments in the country’s young history.

THE STEWART DYNASTY & THE RENAISSANCE

After the death of Robert the Bruce in 1329 – he’s buried at Dunfermline (see p208), although his heart is buried in Melrose Abbey (p158) – the country was ravaged by civil disputes and continuing wars with England. Edinburgh was occupied several times by English armies and in 1385 the Kirk of St Giles was burned to the ground.

James IV (r 1488–1513) married the daughter of Henry VII of England, the first of the Tudor monarchs, thereby linking the two royal families through ‘the Marriage of the Thistle and the Rose’. This didn’t prevent the French from persuading James to go to war with his in-laws, and he was killed at the Battle of Flodden in 1513, along with 10,000 of his subjects.

Renaissance ideas flourished during James IV’s reign. Scottish poetry thrived, created by *makars* (makers of verses) such as William Dunbar, the court poet of James IV, and Gavin Douglas. Much graceful Scottish architecture is from this period, and examples of Renaissance style can be seen in alterations to palaces at Holyrood (p83), Stirling (p193), Linlithgow (p117) and Falkland (p207).

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS & THE REFORMATION

No figure in Scottish history has had a more turbulent and troublesome history than Mary, Queen of Scots (r 1542–67).

In 1542 King James V, childless, lay on his deathbed brokenhearted, it is said, after his defeat by the English at Solway Moss. On 8 December a messenger brought word that his wife had given birth to a baby girl at the Palace of Linlithgow. Fearing the end of the Stewart dynasty, and recalling its origin through Robert the Bruce’s daughter, James sighed, ‘It cam’ wi’ a lass, and it will gang wi’ a lass’. He died a few days later, leaving his week-old daughter, Mary, to inherit the throne as Queen of Scots.

She was sent to France at an early age and Scotland was ruled by regents, who rejected overtures from Henry VIII of England urging them to wed the infant queen to his son. Henry was furious, and sent his armies to take vengeance on the Scots. The ‘Rough Wooing’, as it was called, failed to persuade the Scots of the error of their ways. In 1558 Mary was married to the French dauphin and became queen of France as well as Scotland.

While Mary was in France, being raised as a Roman Catholic, the Reformation tore through Scotland. The wealthy Catholic Church was riddled with corruption, and the preachings of John Knox, a pupil of the Swiss reformer Calvin, found sympathetic ears. To give you an idea of this influential man, Knox, concerned with the sway that political rulers wielded over the church,

Mary Queen of Scots by Antonia Fraser is the classic biography of Scotland’s ill-starred queen, digging deep behind the myths to discover the real woman caught up in the labyrinthine politics of the period.

843

Kenneth MacAlpin, the king of Dalriada, takes advantage of the Picts’ custom of matrilineal succession to take over the Pictish throne, thus uniting Scotland north of the Firth of Forth into a single kingdom.

872

The King of Norway creates an earldom in Orkney, and Shetland is also governed from here – these island groups become a vital Viking base for raids and colonisation down the west of Scotland.

1263

Norse power, which controlled the entire western seaboard, is finally broken at the Battle of Largs, which marks the retreat of Viking influence and eventually the handing back of the western isles to Scotland.

1296

King Edward I marches on Scotland with an army of 30,000 men, razing ports, butchering citizens, and capturing the castles of Berwick, Edinburgh, Roxburgh and Stirling.

1298–1305

William Wallace is proclaimed Guardian of Scotland in March 1298. After Edward’s force defeats the Scots at the Battle of Falkirk, Wallace resigns as guardian and goes into hiding, but is fatally betrayed after his return in 1305.

1314

Robert the Bruce wins a famous victory over the English at the Battle of Bannockburn – a victory which would turn the tide in favour of the Scots for the next 400 years.

wrote *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*. It was an attack on three women rulers calling the shots in Scotland, England and France and linked his name to a hatred of women ever since.

Following the death of her sickly husband, the 18-year-old Mary returned to Scotland in 1561. She was formally welcomed to her capital city and held a famous audience at Holyrood Palace with John Knox. The great reformer harangued the young queen and she later agreed to protect the budding Protestant Church in Scotland while continuing to hear Mass in private.

She married Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley, in the Chapel Royal at Holyrood and gave birth to a son (later James VI) in Edinburgh Castle in 1565. Any domestic bliss was short-lived and, in a scarcely believable train of events, Darnley was involved in the murder of Mary's Italian secretary Rizzio (rumoured to be her lover), before he himself was murdered, probably by Mary's new lover and second-husband-to-be, the earl of Bothwell!

The Scots had had enough – Mary's enemies finally confronted her at Carberry Hill, just east of Edinburgh, and Mary was forced to abdicate in 1567. Her son, the infant James VI (r 1567–1625), was crowned at Stirling, and a series of regents ruled in his place. Meanwhile in England, Queen Elizabeth I of England died childless, and the English, desperate for a male monarch, soon turned their attention north. James VI of Scotland became James I of Great Britain and moved his court to London and, for the most part, the Stewarts ignored Scotland from then on. Indeed, when Charles I (r 1625–49) succeeded James, he couldn't be bothered to travel north to Edinburgh to be formally crowned as king of Scotland until 1633.

COVENANTERS & CIVIL WAR

Civil war was to strangle Scotland and England in the 17th century. The arrogant attempts by Charles I to impose episcopacy (the rule of bishops) and an English liturgy on the Presbyterian Scottish Church set off public riots in Edinburgh. The Presbyterians believed in a personal bond with God that had no need of mediation through priests, popes and kings. On 28 February 1638 hundreds gathered in Greyfriars Kirkyard (p85) to sign a National Covenant affirming their rights and beliefs. Scotland was divided between the Covenanters and those who supported the king.

In the 1640s civil war raged in England between the Royalists and Oliver Cromwell's Parliamentarians. Although there was an alliance between the Covenanters and the English parliament against Charles I, the Scots were appalled when the Parliamentarians executed the king in 1649. They offered his son the Scottish Crown provided he signed the Covenant and renounced his father, which he did. Charles II (r 1649–85) was crowned at Scone on 1 January 1651 but was soon forced into exile by Cromwell, who invaded Scotland and captured Edinburgh.

After Charles II's restoration in 1660, he reneged on the Covenant; episcopacy was reinstated and hardline Presbyterian ministers were deprived

of their churches. Charles' brother and successor, the Catholic James VII/II (r 1685–89), made worshipping as a Covenanter a capital offence.

James' daughter, Mary, and her husband William of Orange (1689–1702) restored the Presbyterian structure in the church and kicked out the bishops, but the political and legal functions of the church were subject to parliamentary control. And so Scotland's turbulent reformation came to an end.

UNION WITH ENGLAND

The civil wars left the country and its economy ruined. During the 1690s famine killed up to a third of the population in some areas. Anti-English feeling ran high: William was at war with France and was using Scottish soldiers and taxes – many Scots, sympathetic to the French, disapproved. This feeling was exacerbated by the failure of an investment venture in Panama (the so-called Darien Scheme), which resulted in widespread bankruptcy in Scotland.

The failure of the Darien Scheme made it clear to the wealthy Scottish merchants and stockholders that the only way they could gain access to the lucrative markets of developing colonies was through union with England. The English parliament favoured union through fear of Jacobite sympathies in Scotland being exploited by its enemies, the French.

On receiving the Act of Union in Edinburgh, the chancellor of Scotland, Lord Seafield – leader of the parliament that the Act of Union abolished – is said to have murmured under his breath, 'Now there's an end to an auld sang'. Robert Burns later castigated the wealthy politicians who engineered the Union in characteristically stronger language: 'We're bought and sold for English gold – such a parcel of rogues in a nation!'

THE JACOBITES

The Jacobite rebellions of the 18th century sought to displace the Hanoverian monarchy (chosen by the English parliament in 1701 to succeed the house of Orange) and restore a Catholic Stuart king to the British throne.

James Edward Stuart, known as the Old Pretender, was the son of James VII/II. With French support he arrived in the Firth of Forth with a fleet of ships in 1708, causing panic in Edinburgh, but was seen off by English men-of-war.

The earl of Mar led another Jacobite rebellion in 1715 but proved an ineffectual leader better at propaganda than warfare. Once again the Old Pretender made his way to Scotland and Mar, who met him, demonstrated his propaganda skills by sending news to encourage his army and the people: 'Without any complements to him and to do him nothing but justice, set aside his being a Prince, he really is the finest gentleman I ever knew... and has the sweetest temper in the world.' His campaign fizzled out soon after the inconclusive Battle of Sheriffmuir.

Jacobite is a Latin term derived from 'James', which is used to describe the political movement committed to the return of the Stuart kings to the thrones of England and Scotland.

'The Scots had had enough – Mary's enemies finally confronted her at Carberry Hill and Mary was forced to abdicate in 1567'

1328

Continuing raids on northern England force Edward II to sue for peace and the Treaty of Northampton gives Scotland its independence, with Robert I, the Bruce, as king.

1371

The last of the Bruce dynasty dies to be succeeded by the Stewards (Stewarts), who are to rule Scotland and Britain for the next three centuries.

1468–69

Orkney and then Shetland are mortgaged to Scotland as part of a dowry from Danish King Christian I, whose daughter is to marry the future King James III of Scotland.

1488–1513

The Scottish Renaissance produces an intellectual climate that is fertile ground for the rise of Protestantism, a reaction against the perceived wealth and corruption of the medieval Roman Catholic Church.

1560

The Scottish parliament creates a Protestant Church that is independent of Rome and the monarchy, as a result of the Reformation. The Latin Mass is abolished and the pope's authority denied.

1603

James VI of Scotland inherits the English throne in the so-called Union of the Crowns – after Queen Elizabeth I of England dies childless in 1603 (having executed Mary in 1587) – becoming James I of Great Britain.

The Old Pretender's son, Charles Edward Stuart, better known as Bonnie Prince Charlie or the Young Pretender, landed in Scotland for the final uprising. He had little military experience, didn't speak Gaelic and had a shaky grasp of English. Nevertheless, supported by an army of Highlanders, he marched southwards and captured Edinburgh, except for the castle, in September 1745. He got as far south as Derby in England, but success was short-lived; a Hanoverian army led by the duke of Cumberland harried him all the way back to the Highlands, where Jacobite dreams were finally extinguished at the Battle of Culloden in 1746 (p323).

Although a heavily romanticised figure, Bonnie Prince Charlie was partly responsible for the annihilation of Highland culture, given the crackdown and subsequent clearances following his doomed attempt to recapture the crown. After returning to France he gained a reputation for mistreating his subsequent mistresses and at the age of 52 married a young princess, but she fled his drunken violence and he never got the heir he wanted.

THE HIGHLAND CLEARANCES

In the aftermath of the Jacobite rebellions, Highland dress, the bearing of arms and the bagpipes were outlawed. The Highlands were effectively put under military control and private armies were banned. The relationship of Highland chief to clansman changed dramatically and landowners were tempted by the easy profits to be made from sheep farming.

The clansmen, no longer of any use as soldiers and uneconomical as tenants, were evicted from their homes and farms to make way for the flocks – in Easter Ross the year 1792 was known for decades afterwards as the Year of the Sheep. A few stayed to work the sheep farms; many more were forced to seek work in the cities, or to eke a living from crofts (small holdings) on poor coastal land (see p360). And many thousands emigrated – some willingly, some under duress – to the developing colonies of North America, Australia and New Zealand.

If you do much walking in the Highlands and islands, you are almost certain to come across a ruckle of stones among the bracken, all that remains of a house or cottage. Look around and you'll find another, and another, and soon you'll realise that this was once a crofting settlement. It's one of the saddest sights you'll see in Scotland – this emptiness, where once there was a thriving community. The Mull of Oa on the island of Islay, for example, once supported a population of 4000, but today there are barely 40 people living there.

THE SCOTTISH ENLIGHTENMENT

During the period known as the Scottish Enlightenment (roughly 1740–1830) Edinburgh became known as 'a hotbed of genius'. The philosophers David Hume and Adam Smith and the sociologist Adam Ferguson emerged as influential thinkers, nourished on generations of theological debate. Medic

William Cullen produced the first modern pharmacopoeia, chemist Joseph Black advanced the science of thermodynamics and geologist James Hutton challenged long-held beliefs about the age of the Earth.

After centuries of bloodshed and religious fanaticism, people applied themselves with the same energy and piety to the making of money and the enjoyment of leisure. There was a revival of interest in Scottish history and literature. The writings of Sir Walter Scott (see p159) and the poetry of Robert Burns (see p176), a true man of the people, achieved lasting popularity.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The development of the steam engine ushered in the Industrial Revolution. The Carron Ironworks near Falkirk, established in 1759, became the largest ironworks and gun factory in Britain, and the growth of the textile

Most clan tartans are in fact a 19th-century creation (long after the demise of the clan system) inspired by the brilliance of wordsmith Sir Walter Scott.

RADICALS & REDS

Scotland, and especially Glasgow, has a long history of radical politics. These were founded on the emergence of a well-educated, literate and articulate working class in the late 18th century, and the long-held belief in self-improvement.

James Keir Hardie (1856–1915) first went down the mines at the age of 10, but was an avid reader and self-improver. By the age of 22 he had become an active campaigner for better wages and working conditions, and was blacklisted by the mine owners. He founded the Scottish Labour Party in 1888 and its successor, the Independent Labour Party, in 1893, specifically to represent the interests of the working classes in parliament.

By the early years of the 20th century, Scotland had a fully fledged alternative political culture. The Independent Labour Party was joined by Marxist organisations such as the Social Democratic Federation and the Socialist Labour Party, who advocated class war and direct action. The Glasgow schoolteacher and socialist revolutionary John Maclean (1879–1923) delivered lectures on Marxist theory to audiences of thousands. Maclean was appointed 'Bolshevik consul in Scotland' by Lenin following the Russian Revolution of 1917, and was an outspoken critic of Britain's involvement in WWI; he was arrested for sedition on half a dozen occasions.

The most notorious event in the history of Scottish radicalism was the Bloody Friday Riot of 1919. Fearing mass unemployment after WWI, the Clyde Workers Committee called a strike in support of a shorter working week. Strikers demonstrating in Glasgow's George Sq began a riot and fearing a Bolshevik-style revolution, the government sent in tanks, a howitzer and machine-guns; fortunately, no-one was hurt.

Glasgow and the west of Scotland's socialist sympathies earned it the nickname of 'Red Clydeside'. Backed by the influx of Clydeside Reds at Westminster following the 1922 election, Lossiemouth-born James Ramsay Macdonald (1866–1937) was elected leader of the Labour Party and became Britain's first Labour prime minister in 1924.

Keir Hardie would barely recognise his party's present incarnation, the centre-left New Labour, which took power in Westminster in 1997.

John Prebble's wonderfully written book *The Highland Clearances* tells the terrible story of how the Highlanders were driven out of their homes and forced into emigration.

1707

Despite popular opposition, the Act of Union, which brings England and Scotland under one parliament, one sovereign and one flag, takes effect on 1 May 1707.

1745–46

The culmination of the Jacobite rebellions sees Bonnie Prince Charlie land in Scotland, gather an army and march southwards – however, he is eventually defeated at the Battle of Culloden.

1740s–1830s

Following the loss of the Scottish parliament in 1707, Edinburgh declines in political importance, but its cultural and intellectual life flourishes during a period known as the Scottish Enlightenment.

Late 18th century

Scottish industry flourishes during the Industrial Revolution and Scotland becomes a world leader in the production of textiles, iron, steel and coal, and above all in shipbuilding and marine engineering.

1914–1932

Scottish industry slumps during WWI, and collapses in its aftermath in the face of new Eastern production and a contraction in world trade culminating in the Great Depression. About 400,000 Scots emigrate between 1921 and 1931.

1941–45

Clydebank is blitzed by German bombers in 1941 with 1200 deaths; and by 1945 one out of four males in the workforce is employed in heavy industries to support the war effort.

industry saw the construction of huge weaving mills in Lanarkshire (see p164), Dundee, Angus and Aberdeenshire. The world's first steamboat, the *Charlotte Dundas*, sailed along the newly opened Forth and Clyde Canal in 1802, and the world's first sea-going steamship, the *Comet*, was launched on the Clyde in 1812.

Glasgow, deprived of its lucrative tobacco trade following the American War of Independence (1776–83), developed into an industrial powerhouse, the 'second city' of the British Empire (after London). Cotton mills, iron and steelworks, chemical works, shipbuilding yards and heavy-engineering works proliferated along the River Clyde in the 19th century, powered by the coal mines of Lanarkshire, Ayrshire, Fife and Midlothian.

WAR & PEACE

Scotland largely escaped the trauma and devastation wrought by WWII on the industrial cities of England. Indeed, the war brought a measure of renewed

prosperity to Scotland as the shipyards and engineering works geared up to supply the war effort. But the postwar period saw the collapse of shipbuilding and heavy industry, on which Scotland had become over-reliant.

After the discovery of North Sea oil, revenues were siphoned off to England and this, along with takeovers of Scots companies by English ones (which then closed the Scots operation, asset-stripped and transferred jobs to England), fuelled increasing nationalist sentiment in Scotland. The Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) developed into a third force in Scottish politics, taking 30% of the popular vote in the 1974 general election.

DEVOLUTION

In 1979 a referendum was held on whether to set up a directly elected Scottish Assembly. Fifty-two per cent of those who voted said 'yes' to devolution, but the Labour prime minister James Callaghan decided that everyone who didn't vote should be counted as a 'no'. By this devious reasoning, only 33% of the electorate had voted 'yes', so the Scottish Assembly was rejected.

From 1979 to 1997 Scotland was ruled by a Conservative government in London for which the majority of Scots hadn't voted. Separatist feelings, always present, grew stronger. Following the landslide victory of the Labour party in May 1997, another referendum was held on the creation of a Scottish parliament. This time the result was overwhelmingly and unambiguously in favour.

Elections to the new parliament took place on 6 May 1999 and the Scottish parliament convened for the first time on 12 May in Edinburgh; Donald Dewar (1937–2000), formerly the Secretary of State for Scotland, was nominated as first minister (the Scottish parliament's equivalent of prime minister).

The Scottish National Party recently won power in Scotland's third election and wants full independence from England. It is making plans for a referendum on the issue which will also give voters an option of more devolved powers from London (such as control over North Sea oil and gas revenues).

Between 1904 and 1931 around a million people emigrated from Scotland to begin a new life in North America and Australia.

EXPLORING YOUR SCOTTISH ROOTS

Genealogy is a hugely popular pastime, and many visitors to Scotland take the opportunity to do some detective work on their Scottish ancestry.

One of the best guides is *Tracing Your Scottish Ancestry* by Kathleen B Cory, and there are many useful websites; **GenUKI** (www.genuki.org.uk) is a good starting point.

At the **Scotland's People Website** (www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk) you can search the indexes to the Old Parish Registers and Statutory Registers up to 100 years ago (75 years ago for deaths), and the indexes to the 1881, 1891 and 1901 census returns, on a pay-per-view basis. The **International Genealogical Index** (www.familysearch.com), compiled by the Mormon Church, includes freely searchable records of Scottish baptisms and marriages from 1553 to 1875.

The following places in Edinburgh can help out:

General Register Office for Scotland (☎ 0131-314 4433; www.gro-scotland.gov.uk; New Register House, 3 West Register St, Edinburgh EH1 3YT; per full-/half-day £17/10; ☎ 9am-4.30pm Mon-Fri) The main records used in Scottish genealogical research – the Statutory Registers of births, marriages and deaths (1855 to the present), the Old Parish Registers (1533–1854) and the 10-yearly census returns from 1841 to 1901 – are held here. The registration of births, marriages and deaths became compulsory in Scotland on 1 January 1855; before that date, the ministers of the Church of Scotland kept registers of baptisms and marriages. The oldest surviving parish registers date back to 1553, but these records are far from complete, and many births and marriages before 1855 went unrecorded.

National Archives of Scotland (☎ 0131-535 1334; www.nas.gov.uk; Register House, 2 Princes St, Edinburgh EH1 3YY; admission free; ☎ 9am-4.45pm Mon-Fri) You will need to ask for a reader's ticket (free) – bring some form of ID bearing your name and signature (eg passport, driving licence, bank card). Use of the Historical Search Room is free, and is first come, first served.

Scottish Genealogy Society Library & Family History Centre (☎ 0131-220 3677; www.scotsgenealogy.org; 15 Victoria Tce, Edinburgh EH1 2JL; ☎ 10.30am-5.30pm Mon, Tue & Thu, to 8.30pm Wed, 10am-5pm Sat) Maintains the world's largest library of Scottish gravestone inscriptions. Entry is free for society members, £5 for nonmembers.

1970s

The discovery of oil and gas in the North Sea brings new prosperity to Aberdeen and the surrounding area, and also to the Shetland Islands.

1999–2004

Scottish parliament is convened for the first time on 12 May 1999. After plenty of scandal and huge sums of money, a stunning new parliament building is opened by Queen Elizabeth II in October 2004 at Holyrood in Edinburgh.

2007

Scottish National Party wins the third general election of the devolved Scottish parliament. This victory means the issue of Scottish independence is once again back on the political agenda.

The Culture

THE NATIONAL PSYCHE

Having lived next door to a large and powerful neighbour for so long, it is hardly surprising that a considerable part of the Scottish national identity lies in simply not being English. Throughout history England – still regularly referred to as ‘the Auld Enemy’ – was often seen as standing for power, greed, arrogance and oppression, and in reaction to that Scots have regarded themselves, collectively, as the plucky underdog, a freedom-loving David to England’s imperialist Goliath.

Historically, the Scottish character has been shaped by the harsh climate, the Protestant work ethic and a strong sense of social justice. A good, broad-based education has always been part of a Scots upbringing – Scotland introduced tax-subsidised education for all as long ago as 1696, resulting in one of the most literate and best-educated populations in 18th-century Europe – and doing well at school and university is still much admired.

This background has created a people who are shrewd, meritocratic and outward looking, with a sceptical, inquiring nature – it’s no accident of history that Scots have been responsible for many of the Western world’s most important inventions and innovations (see boxed text, p50). The flipside of the national character is a deep-seated sense of insecurity that occasionally sees Scots talk themselves down rather than celebrate their successes.

Robert Louis Stevenson wrote that the mark of a Scot is that ‘there burns alive in him a sense of identity with the dead even to the twentieth generation’. Scotland’s unofficial anthem – ‘Flower of Scotland’, written by the late Roy Williamson and sung with gusto at football and rugby matches – harks back to the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314 when the Scots, outnumbered 10 to one, defeated the English; in the words of the song, they ‘stood against him, proud Edward’s army, and sent him homewards to think again’.

This historical baggage weighs heavily on the Scots, and has led to a long-standing resentment of English cultural and political domination. This reached a peak during the Thatcher government (1979–90), when a Conservative administration used the Scots as guinea pigs for the hugely unpopular poll tax, imposing it on Scotland a full year before it was extended to England and Wales – so much for a United Kingdom.

Although much of the resentment has dissipated since 1997, when a Labour government replaced the Conservatives, it still simmers under the surface. Just let a TV commentator once refer to a Scot as English, as occasionally happens when Scottish sportsmen and women are doing well in international competitions, and you can guarantee that a hundred hands will be reaching for the phone to complain to the BBC, while the next day’s papers will be spluttering with outrage.

Today the Scotland–England rivalry is generally good-natured, and the conflict has long since moved from battlefield to sports stadium. A Scottish win over England at football or rugby is often seen as more important than winning an entire competition. There are few things Scots sports fans enjoy as much as an England team getting a good hiding, no matter who they are playing against.

But the rivalry runs both ways. Asked whether he would support the Scottish football team if England were eliminated from the World Cup, an English fan replied: ‘I have no problem at all in supporting the Scottish team. By doing so I am showing support for my fellow Britons and building on our common historical and cultural ties. Also, it really annoys them.’

It is illegal to import haggis into the USA, as the US government has declared that sheep lungs are unfit for human consumption.

In June Shetland enjoys four hours more daylight each day than London.

LIFESTYLE

Scotland consistently rates highly in quality-of-life surveys. It’s an attractive place to live, with excellent social, cultural and leisure amenities. There is still a strong sense of community in rural areas, and even in parts of the big cities. Like many places in the UK, the Scottish social scene often centres upon the local pub.

Just as the Eskimos are supposed to have 40 different words for snow, it seems as if the Scots have 40 different words for drunk – bevviied, blootered, hammered, guttered, fleelin’, fou, steamin’, stotious, paralytic, plastered and just plain pished, to name but a few.

There’s no denying that, like most northern Europeans, the Scots enjoy a drink. For the vast majority that means a few pints of beer down the pub or a few glasses of wine with a meal, but for a significant minority the attitude is: if a thing’s worth doing, it’s worth overdoing. As a result, the level of alcohol-related deaths in Scotland is twice the UK average (27.4 deaths per 100,000 people in Scotland in 2002–04, compared with 12.8 for the UK as a whole).

Things ain’t much better when you look at the Scottish diet. Favourite foods such as chips, pies, sweets and fizzy drinks have resulted in obesity levels that are the second highest in the developed world (after the USA), and death rates from heart disease that are higher than in the rest of the UK and Western Europe.

On the positive side, the ban on smoking in enclosed public spaces (including pubs) that came into force in March 2006 appears to be having an effect – in the year following the ban there were 17% fewer hospital admissions for heart attacks. Apart from a few forlorn smokers puffing away in the rain outside pub doors, the ban has been overwhelmingly popular and its success has caused several European countries to think about following suit.

ECONOMY

Scotland once led the world in shipbuilding, steel-making and engineering, but its days as a centre of heavy industry are long gone. In 2007, as the country celebrated the 40th anniversary of the launch of the QE2 – the last great ship to be built on the River Clyde – most of Scotland’s coal mines and all of its steel works had closed, and the shipbuilding industry hung by a thread.

They have been replaced by energy, finance, services, life sciences, and hi-tech engineering and electronics. The service sector now accounts for around 67% of the Scottish economy, manufacturing 22%, construction 6%, agriculture, fishing and forestry 3% and mining a mere 2%.

Financial and business services have provided more new jobs in Scotland than electronics and North Sea oil combined, and Edinburgh is the fifth-largest financial centre in Europe. Tourism is one of the most important contributors to the Scottish economy, injecting £4 billion annually and employing one in 15 of the workforce. The biggest single employer in Scotland, however, is the government – almost one in four Scots works in the public sector.

The majority of Scotland’s manufacturing output is accounted for by electronics, textiles, clothing (especially woollen knitwear), and food and drink – Scotch whisky is one of the country’s most lucrative exports. Some traditional cottage industries, like the weaving of Harris Tweed, survive and thrive on a small scale.

In the Highlands some sheep and cattle farming continues, boosted by salmon and shellfish farming on the west coast, but tourism is the main income provider here.

Since 2006 smoking has been banned in all enclosed public places in Scotland; see www.clearingtheairscotland.com.

TARTANALIA TOP FIVE

Here's a quick guide to the top five icons of Scottish culture.

Bagpipes

Highland soldiers were traditionally accompanied into battle by the skirl of the pipes, and the Scottish Highland bagpipe is unique in being the only musical instrument ever to be classed as a weapon. The playing of the pipes was banned – under pain of death – by the British government in 1747 as part of a scheme to suppress Highland culture in the wake of the Jacobite uprising of 1745 (p33). The pipes were revived when the Highland regiments were drafted into the British Army towards the end of the 18th century.

The bagpipe consists of a leather bag held under the arm, kept inflated by blowing through the blowstick; the piper forces air through the pipes by squeezing the bag with the forearm. Three of the pipes, known as drones, play a constant note (one bass, two tenor) in the background. The fourth pipe, the chanter, plays the melody.

Ceilidh

The Gaelic word *ceilidh* (pronounced *kay-lay*) means 'visit'. A *ceilidh* was originally a social gathering in the house after the day's work was over, enlivened with storytelling, music and song. These days, a *ceilidh* means an evening of traditional Scottish entertainment including music, song and dance.

Tartan

The oldest surviving piece of tartan – a patterned woollen textile now made into everything from kilts to key rings – dates back to the Roman period. Today tartan is popular the world over, and beyond – astronaut Al Bean took his MacBean tartan to the moon and back. Particular setts (tartan patterns) didn't come to be associated with particular clans until the 17th century, although today every clan, and indeed every Scottish football team, has one or more distinctive tartans.

Kilt

The original Scottish Highland dress was not the kilt but the plaid – a long length of tartan cloth wrapped around the body and over the shoulder. The wearing of Highland dress was banned after the Jacobite rebellions but revived under royal patronage in the 19th century. George IV and his English courtiers donned kilts for their visit to Scotland in 1822. During the same century Sir Walter Scott, novelist, poet and dedicated patriot, did much to rekindle interest in Scottish ways. By then, however, many of the old setts had been forgotten, and as a result some tartans are actually Victorian creations. The modern kilt only appeared in the 18th century and was reputedly invented by Thomas Rawlinson, an Englishman!

Kilts don't have pockets, so kilted Scotsmen keep their beer money in a sporran, a pouch made of leather or animal skin that hangs in front of the kilt, suspended from a chain around the waist.

Scottish Flag

Scottish football and rugby supporters can never seem to make up their minds which flag to wave, the Saltire or the Lion Rampant. The Saltire or St Andrew's Cross – a diagonal white cross on a blue ground – is one of the oldest national flags in the world, dating from at least the 12th century. Originally a religious emblem – St Andrew was crucified on a diagonal cross – it became a national emblem in the 14th century. According to legend, white clouds in the form of a saltire appeared in a blue sky during the battle of Nechtansmere between Scots and Saxons, urging the Scots to victory. It was incorporated in the Union Flag of the UK following the Act of Union in 1707.

The Lion Rampant – a red lion on a golden-yellow ground – is the Royal Banner of Scotland. It is thought to derive from the arms of King William I the Lion (r 1143–1214), and strictly speaking should only be used by a Scottish monarch. It is incorporated in the British Royal Standard, quartered with the three lions of England and the harp of Ireland.

Unemployment is fairly low (4.8% in September 2007) and average income is reasonable (around £24,000 a year, about 92% of the UK average). However, Scotland shares in the UK's culture of long working hours: a third of people work more than 48 hours a week, and one in six works more than 60 hours. The EU average is 40.3 hours.

POPULATION

The internationally recognised image of Scotland is of crofts and castles and wild mountain scenery, but the country's population of 5.1 million is in fact overwhelmingly urban, with 80% living in the cities and towns of the Central Lowlands.

The Highland region is one of Europe's most sparsely populated areas, with an average of only nine people per square kilometre – a mere one-thirtieth of the UK average. A major problem since WWII has been the depopulation of the rural Highlands and, especially, the Western Isles, as younger people leave to find jobs. This movement of people from rural to urban areas, which began in the 18th century, is still going on – the population of the Outer Hebrides has fallen by 8% in the last decade.

Scotland's total population has increased slightly in recent years, due mainly to people moving from other parts of the UK and overseas (there are an estimated 86,000 Poles living in Scotland, having moved after Poland joined the EU in 2004). The age profile of the Scottish population is getting older (more than half of Scots are aged 40 or over), mainly as a result of a decreasing birth rate.

There are an estimated 60 million people around the world who claim Scottish ancestry.

SPORT Football

Football (soccer) in Scotland is not so much a sport as a religion, with thousands turning out to worship their local teams on Wednesdays and weekends throughout the season (August to May). Sacred rites include standing in the freezing cold of a February day, drinking hot Bovril and eating a Scotch pie as you watch your team getting gubbed.

Scotland's top 10 clubs play in the **Scottish Premier League** (www.scotprem.com), but two teams – Glasgow Rangers and Glasgow Celtic – dominate the competition. On only 18 occasions since 1890 has a team other than Rangers or Celtic won the league; the last time was when Aberdeen won in 1985. Celtic was Premier League champion in 2006 and 2007.

Glasgow Celtic was the first British team to win the European Cup (1967) and, so far, the only Scottish club to have done so. The team that won back then was made up entirely of Scots players from the Glasgow area. In comparison, Rangers made history in 2000 by being the first to field a team composed entirely of non-Scottish players, and today half the players in the Premier League are of non-Scottish origin, a situation that angers many grassroots supporters and bodes ill for the future of the national team.

If supporting local teams is like a religion, supporting the Scottish national team is more like a penance. The beginning of each European Championship and World Cup is filled with hope, but usually ends in despair.

Despite their team's often poor results, Scotland fans – known as the Tartan Army – are famed for their friendliness and good behaviour abroad, to the extent that some English and French football fans have joined them. The non-Scottish contingent has been dubbed the 'Sporran Legion'.

Rugby Union

Traditionally, football was the sport of Scotland's urban working classes, while rugby union (www.scottishrugby.org) was the preserve of agricultural workers from the Borders and middle-class university graduates. Although

this distinction is breaking down – rugby’s popularity soared after the 1999 World Cup was staged in the UK, and the middle classes have invaded the football terraces – it persists to some extent.

Each year, starting in January, Scotland takes part in the Six Nations Rugby Union Championship. The most important fixture is the clash against England for the Calcutta Cup – it’s always an emotive event, though Scotland has only won once in the last 12 years.

At club level, the season runs from September to May, and among the better teams are those from the Borders such as Hawick, Kelso and Melrose. At the end of the season, teams play a rugby sevens (seven-a-side) variation of the 15-player competition.

Golf

Scotland is the home of golf (www.scottishgolfunion.org). The game was probably invented here in the 12th century, and the world’s oldest documentary evidence of a game being played (dating from 1456) was on Bruntsfield Links in Edinburgh.

Although St Andrews claims seniority in having the oldest golf course in the world, it was at Edinburgh’s Leith Links in 1744 that the first official rules of the game were formulated by the Honorable Company of Edinburgh Golfers (now the famous Muirfield Golf Club). Rule number 9 gives some insight into the 18th-century game – ‘If a ball be stop’d by any person, Horse, Dog or anything else, the Ball so stop’d must be played where it lyes’.

Today, there are more than 550 golf courses in Scotland – that’s more per capita than in any other country. The sport is hugely popular and much more egalitarian than in other countries, with lots of affordable, council-owned courses. There are many world-famous championship courses too, from Muirfield in East Lothian and Turnberry and Troon in Ayrshire, to Carnoustie in Angus and St Andrews’ Old Course in Fife.

In the realm of professional golf, Colin Montgomerie has been Scotland’s top golfer for over a decade, consistently finishing in the top five in international tournaments. In the 2005 British Open Championship at St Andrews, Montgomerie was runner-up to Tiger Woods, and he lost the 2006 US Open by a single shot – he’s widely regarded as the best golfer never to have won a major tournament.

Highland Games

Highland games are held in Scotland throughout the summer, and not just in the Highlands. You can find dates and details of Highland games held all over the country on the website **VisitScotland** (www.visitscotland.com/libr ary/highlandgamescalendar).

The traditional sporting events are accompanied by piping and dancing competitions, and attract locals and tourists alike. Some events are peculiarly Scottish, particularly those that involve trials of strength: tossing the caber (heaving a tree trunk into the air), throwing the hammer and putting the stone. Major Highland games are staged at Dunoon (p281), Oban (p299) and Braemar (p256).

Shinty

Shinty (*camanachd* in Gaelic) is a fast and physical ball-and-stick sport similar to Ireland’s hurling, with more than a little resemblance to clan warfare. It’s an indigenous Scottish game played mainly in the Highlands, and the most prized trophy is the Camanachd Cup. The cup final, held in September, is a great Gaelic get-together. The Kingussie team has dominated in recent times, winning the cup every year from 1997 to 2003, then again in

2006, though Inveraray broke their winning streak in 2004 and Fort William won in 2005 and 2007.

Each year in October there’s an international match between Scotland and Ireland, played under composite shinty/hurling rules, and held alternately in Ireland and Scotland.

Curling

Curling, a winter sport which involves propelling a 19kg granite stone along the ice towards a target, was probably invented in Scotland in medieval times. Though traditionally Scottish, it was very much a minority sport in Scotland until it got an enormous publicity boost when the British women’s team (all Scots) won the gold medal in the 2002 Winter Olympics. Scottish teams took the Men’s World Curling Championships in 2006, and came third in the Women’s World Curling Championships in 2007.

MEDIA

Although London dominates the UK media industry, Scotland has a flourishing media sector of its own, the legacy of a long tradition of Scottish publishing. The *Herald* (formerly the *Glasgow Herald*), established in 1783, is one of the oldest English-language newspapers in the world.

BBC Scotland, with its headquarters in a shiny new building next to the Science Centre in Glasgow, is the Scottish arm of the UK’s public-service TV and radio broadcaster. It produces and broadcasts programmes that reflect Scotland’s distinctive cultural identity. Funded by an annual TV licence, the BBC doesn’t carry advertising.

There are two Scottish-based commercial TV broadcasters. Scottish Television (STV) covers southern Scotland and some of the western Highlands, while STV North transmits to the Highlands from Perth to the Western Isles and Shetland. All three broadcasters produce some Gaelic-language programming.

There’s a healthy newspaper sector too. Sales figures for Scotland (excluding the rest of the UK) show that the highest-selling dailies are the tabloids the *Sun* (a Scottish edition of the London-based paper) and the home-grown *Daily Record*, based in Glasgow. The three main, home-published quality newspapers – the *Scotsman*, *Herald* and *Press & Journal* – easily outsell all five London-produced quality dailies (*Telegraph*, *Times*, *Guardian*, *Independent* and *Financial Times*).

RELIGION

Although the Christian church has played a hugely important role in Scottish history, religious observance in Scotland has been in decline since the 20th century. Today only 6.5% of the population regularly attend church on Sunday. Church attendance is highest in the Outer Hebrides (almost 40%) and lowest in the cities. For more on religion in the Outer Hebrides, see the boxed text, p392.

The two largest religious denominations are the Presbyterian Church of Scotland (47%) and the Roman Catholic Church (16%), with 28% claiming no religious affiliation at all. Non-Christian religions account for only 2% of the population, mostly small communities of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Jews.

ARTS Literature

Scotland has a long and distinguished literary history, from the days of the medieval makars (‘makers’ of verses, ie poets) to the modern ‘brat pack’ of Iain Banks, Irvine Welsh, Ian Rankin and Christopher Brookmyre.

For more information on curling, see www.royalcaledoniancurlingclub.org.

The Falkirk Tartan is a piece of cream and brown cloth that was found with a hoard of Roman coins dating from around AD 320. It is now in the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh.

For news stories and information on religion in Scotland, check out the Hot Topics list on the *Scotsman* website (<http://news.scotsman.com/topics.cfm>), and click on Religious Issues.

You can search for your own clan tartan at www.tartansauthority.com.

For more information on shinty, see www.shinty.com.

BURNS & SCOTT

Scotland's best-loved and most famous literary figure is, of course, Robert Burns (1759–96). His works have been translated into dozens of languages and are known and admired the world over (see the boxed text, p176).

In 1787 Burns was introduced to a 16-year-old boy at a social gathering in the house of an Edinburgh professor. The boy grew up to be Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832), Scotland's greatest and most prolific novelist. The son of an Edinburgh lawyer, Scott was born in Guthrie St (off Chambers St; the house no longer exists) and lived at various New Town addresses before moving to his country house at Abbotsford (p159). Scott's early works were rhyming ballads, such as *The Lady of the Lake*, and his first historical novels – Scott effectively invented the genre – were published anonymously. He almost single-handedly revived interest in Scottish history and legend in the early 19th century, and was largely responsible for organising King George IV's visit to Scotland in 1822. Plagued by debt in later life, he wrote obsessively – to the detriment of his health – in order to make money, but will always be

ESSENTIAL SCOTTISH READS

- *Waverley* (1814, Sir Walter Scott) English literature's first historical novel, a romantic account of a Scottish soldier caught up in the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. Hard to get into but worth the effort.
- *Kidnapped!* (1886, Robert Louis Stevenson) A rip-roaring adventure tale for all ages, following 16-year-old Davie Balfour as he escapes through the Highlands with Jacobite rebel Allan Breck Stuart.
- *The Silver Darlings* (1941, Neil M Gunn) A moving and mystical novel set in 19th-century Caithness, following the attempts by Highlanders dispossessed by the Clearances to wrest a living from the herring fishery.
- *A Scot's Quair* (1946, Lewis Grassic Gibbon) A trilogy set in rural northeast Scotland that follows heroine Chris Guthrie as she tries to resolve the conflict between her love of the land and her desire to escape a constricting peasant culture.
- *Para Handy Tales* (1955, Neil Munro) A much-loved collection of humorous stories about the crew of a steampuffer as it cruises the sea lochs of Argyllshire and the Crinan Canal.
- *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1962, Muriel Spark) The story of a charismatic teacher in a 1930s Edinburgh girls school who leads her chosen girls – her *crème de la crème* – in the pursuit of truth and beauty, with devastating consequences.
- *Greenoe* (1972, George Mackay Brown) A vivid evocation of life in an Orkney fishing village in the 1960s; it is warm, funny, poetic and ultimately very, very moving.
- *Laidlaw* (1977, William McIlvanney) A gritty detective story set in the mean streets of 1970s Glasgow, following in the footsteps of unorthodox policeman-cum-philosopher Jack Laidlaw.
- *Trainspotting* (1993, Irvine Welsh) A disturbing and darkly humorous journey through Edinburgh's junkie underworld, pulling no punches as it charts hero Renton's descent into heroin addiction.
- *Black & Blue* (1997, Ian Rankin) Stars hard-drinking detective John Rebus, Edinburgh's answer to Laidlaw, as he re-examines the notorious Bible John murders of the late 1960s. Gripping noir-style writing.
- *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* (1999, Janice Galloway) Follows a young drama teacher, ironically named Joy, as she slips over the edge into depression and madness. Fluent, witty writing and comic minor characters keep the pages turning.
- *Indelible Acts* (2003, AL Kennedy) A collection of mesmerising short stories on the theme of love and longing by a master (or rather mistress) of the form writing at the very top of her game.

best remembered for classic tales such as *Waverley*, *The Antiquary*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *Ivanhoe*, *Redgauntlet* and *Castle Dangerous*.

THE 19TH CENTURY

Along with Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–94) ranks as Scotland's best-known novelist. Born at 8 Howard Pl in Edinburgh into a family of famous lighthouse engineers, Stevenson studied law at Edinburgh University but was always intent on pursuing the life of a writer. An inveterate traveller, but dogged by ill-health, he finally settled in Samoa in 1889, where he was revered by the natives as 'Tusitala' – the teller of tales. Stevenson is known and loved around the world for those tales: *Kidnapped*, *Catriona*, *Treasure Island*, *The Master of Ballantrae* and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. The Writers' Museum (p82) in Edinburgh celebrates the work of Burns, Scott and Stevenson.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930), the creator of Sherlock Holmes, was born in Edinburgh and studied medicine at Edinburgh University. He based the character of Holmes on one of his lecturers, the surgeon Dr Joseph Bell, who had employed his forensic skills and powers of deduction on several murder cases in Edinburgh. There's a fascinating exhibit on Dr Bell in Edinburgh's Surgeons' Hall Museums (p95).

THE 20TH CENTURY

Scotland's finest modern poet was Hugh MacDiarmid (born Christopher Murray Grieve; 1892–1978). Originally from Dumfriesshire, he moved to Edinburgh in 1908, where he trained as a teacher and a journalist, but spent most of his life in Montrose, Shetland, Glasgow and Biggar. His masterpiece is 'A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle', a 2685-line Joycean monologue.

Born in Edinburgh, Norman MacCaig (1910–96) is widely regarded as the greatest Scottish poet of his generation. A primary school teacher for almost 40 years, MacCaig wrote poetry that is witty, adventurous, moving and filled with sharp observation; poems such as 'November Night, Edinburgh' vividly capture the atmosphere of his home city.

The poet and storyteller George Mackay Brown (1921–96) was born in Stromness in the Orkney Islands, and lived there almost all his life. Although his poems and novels are rooted in Orkney, his work, like that of Burns, transcends local and national boundaries. His novel *Greenoe* is a warm, witty and poetic evocation of everyday life in an Orkney community.

Lewis Grassic Gibbon (born James Leslie Mitchell; 1901–35) is another Scots writer whose novels vividly capture a sense of place – in this case the rural northeast of Kincardineshire and Aberdeenshire. His most famous work is the trilogy of novels called *A Scot's Quair*.

Dame Muriel Spark (1918–2006) was born in Edinburgh and educated at James Gillespie's High School for Girls, an experience that provided material for perhaps her best-known novel, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, a shrewd portrait of 1930s Edinburgh. Dame Muriel was a prolific writer; her last novel, *The Finishing School*, published in 2004, was her 22nd.

CONTEMPORARY SCENE

The most widely known Scots writers today include the award-winning James Kelman (1946–), Iain Banks (see the boxed text, p46), Irvine Welsh (1961–) and Ian Rankin (1960–). The grim realities of modern Glasgow are vividly conjured up in Kelman's short story collection *Not Not While the Giro*; his controversial novel *How Late It Was, How Late* won the 1994 Booker Prize.

The novels of Irvine Welsh, who grew up in Edinburgh's working-class district of Muirhouse, describe a very different world from that inhabited

'The grim realities of modern Glasgow are vividly conjured up in James Kelman's short story collection *Not Not While the Giro*'

AUTHOR PROFILE: IAIN BANKS

One of Scotland's most successful contemporary authors, Iain Banks (1954–) is also one of its most prolific. He has published 21 novels since 1984, 10 of them science fiction written under 'the world's most penetrable pseudonym', Iain M Banks.

Hailed as one of the most imaginative writers of his generation, Banks burst on the Scottish literary scene with his dazzling debut novel *The Wasp Factory* (1984), a macabre but utterly compelling exploration of the inner world of Frank, a strange and deeply disturbed teenager. Though violent and unsettling, its dark humour and sharp dialogue keep the pages turning right to the bitter (and twisted) end.

Banks' most recent novel, *The Steep Approach to Garbadale* (2007), is a tale of lost love with a none-too-subtle subtext that is highly critical of US imperialism. Though enjoyable, it has a hard time living up to the impossibly high standard set by earlier books such as *Complicity* (1993), a gruesome and often hilarious thriller-cum-satire on the greed and corruption of the Thatcher years, and the immensely likable *The Crow Road* (1992), a warm, witty and moving family saga based in the fictional Argyllshire town of Gallanach (a thinly disguised Oban transplanted to the shores of Loch Crinan). The latter provides one of Scottish fiction's most memorable opening sentences: 'It was the day my grandmother exploded.'

by Miss Jean Brodie – the modern city's underworld of drugs, drink, despair and violence. Best known for his debut novel *Trainspotting*, Welsh's most accomplished work is probably *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, in which a soccer hooligan, paralysed and in a coma, reviews his violent and brutal life.

Ian Rankin's Edinburgh-based crime novels, featuring the hard-drinking, introspective Detective Inspector John Rebus, are sinister, engrossing mysteries that explore the darker side of Scotland's capital city. Rankin's novels are filled with sharp dialogue, telling detail and three-dimensional characters; he attracts a growing international following (his books have been translated into 22 languages). Rankin seems to improve with every book – his latest, *Exit Music* (2007), is one of his best.

Cinema

Scotland has never really had its own film industry, but in recent years the government-funded agency **Scottish Screen** (www.scottishscreen.com) has been created to nurture native talent and promote and develop all aspects of film, TV and new media in Scotland. Despite criticism from within the industry, in recent years its backing has helped to create award-winning films such as *Red Road* (2006), *The Last King of Scotland* (2006) and *Hallam Foe* (2007).

Perthshire-born John Grierson (1898–1972) is acknowledged around the world as the father of the documentary film. His legacy includes the classic *Drifters* (about the Scottish herring fishery) and *Seaward the Great Ships* (about Clyde shipbuilding). Filmmaker Bill Douglas (1934–91), the director of an award-winning trilogy of films documenting his childhood and early adult life, was born in the former mining village of Newcraighall just south of Edinburgh.

Glasgow-born writer-director Bill Forsyth (1946–) is best known for *Local Hero* (1983), a gentle comedy about an oil magnate seduced by the beauty of the Highlands, and *Gregory's Girl* (1980), about an awkward, teenage schoolboy's romantic exploits. The directing credits of Gillies MacKinnon (1948–), another Glasgow native, include *Small Faces* (1996), *Regeneration* (1997) and *Hideous Kinky* (1998). Michael Caton-Jones (1958–), director of *Memphis Belle* (1990) and *Rob Roy* (1995), was born in West Lothian and is a graduate of Edinburgh University.

In the 1990s the rise of the director-producer-writer team of Danny Boyle (English), Andrew Macdonald and John Hodge (both Scottish) – who wrote

the scripts for *Shallow Grave* (1994), *Trainspotting* (1996) and *A Life Less Ordinary* (1997) – marked the beginnings of what might be described as a home-grown Scottish film industry. Writer and director David McKenzie hit the headlines in recent years with *Young Adam* (2003), which starred Ewan McGregor and Tilda Swinton, and won BAFTAs for best actor, best actress, best director and best film. McKenzie recently gave us *Hallam Foe* (2007).

Other Scottish directorial talent includes Kevin Macdonald who made *Touching the Void* (2003), *The Last King of Scotland* (2006) and *State of Play* (2008), and Andrea Arnold who directed *Red Road* (2006).

Scotland's most famous actor is, of course, Sir Sean Connery (1930–), the original and best James Bond, and star of dozens of other hit films including *Highlander* (1986), *The Name of the Rose* (1986), *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989), *The Hunt for Red October* (1990) and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (2003). Connery started life as 'Big Tam' Connery, sometime milkman and brickie, born in a tenement in Fountainbridge, Edinburgh.

Other Scottish actors who have achieved international recognition include Robert Carlyle, who starred in *Trainspotting* (1996), *The Full Monty* (1997) – the UK's most commercially successful film – *The World Is Not Enough* (1999) and *28 Weeks Later* (2007); and Ewan McGregor, who appeared in *Trainspotting*, *Moulin Rouge* (2001) and the most recent Star Wars films.

It's less widely known that Scotland produced some of the stars of silent film, including Eric Campbell (the big, bearded villain in Charlie Chaplin's films) and Jimmy Finlayson (the cross-eyed character in Laurel and Hardy films); in fact English-born Stan Laurel grew up and made his acting debut in Glasgow.

Music**FOLK MUSIC**

Scotland has always had a strong folk tradition. In the 1960s and 1970s Robin Hall and Jimmy MacGregor, the Corries and the hugely talented Ewan McColl worked the pubs and clubs up and down the country. The Boys of the Lough, headed by Shetland fiddler Aly Bain, was one of the first professional bands to promote the traditional Celtic music of Scotland and Ireland. It has been followed by the Battlefield Band, Runrig (who writes songs in Gaelic), Alba, Capercaillie and others.

The Scots folk songs that you will often hear sung in pubs and at *ceilidhs* draw on Scotland's rich history. A huge number of them relate to the Jacobite rebellions in the 18th century and, in particular, to Bonnie Prince Charlie – *Hey Johnnie Cope*, the *Skye Boat Song* and *Will Ye No Come Back Again*, for example – while others relate to the Covenanters and the Highland Clearances.

ROCK & POP

It would take an entire book to list all the Scottish artists and bands that have made it big in the world of rock and pop. From Glasgow-born King of Skiffle, Lonnie Donegan, in the 1950s, to the Glasgow-bred kings of guitar-pop Franz Ferdinand today, the roll call is long and impressive.

The 1960s saw Lulu shout her way into the charts, alongside Donovan and the Incredible String Band, while the 70s produced the Average White Band, Nazareth, the Sensational Alex Harvey Band, John Martyn and – God help us – the Bay City Rollers, a global phenomenon whose allure remains a mystery to all except those who were teenage girls in the early 1970s.

The punk era produced the short-lived but superb Rezillos, plus the more durable Big Country, followed by a long roll call of other chart-toppers in the 80s – Simple Minds, the Waterboys, Primal Scream, Jesus and Mary Chain, Blue Nile, Lloyd Cole and the Commotions, Aztec Camera, the Associates,

Despite dodgy Scottish accents from Liam Neeson and Jessica Lange, *Rob Roy* is a witty and moving cinematic version of Sir Walter Scott's tale of the outlaw MacGregor.

For a guide to Scottish film locations check out www.scotlandthemovie.com.

Deacon Blue, the Cocteau Twins, the Proclaimers, Wet Wet Wet, Texas, Hue and Cry, Runrig, the Bluebells – where do you stop?

The 90s saw the emergence of three bands that took the top three places in a vote for the best Scottish band of all time – melodic indie-pop songsters Belle and Sebastian, like-Oasis-only-better Brit-rock band Travis, and indie rockers Idlewild, who opened for the Rolling Stones in 2003 – as well as the Delgados, Trashcan Sinatras and Teenage Fanclub.

Scottish artists who have made an impression in the last five years include Dogs Die in Hot Cars, whose bouncy, melodic, 80s-style pop is reminiscent of XTC and Dexy's Midnight Runners; Mylo, a DJ from the Isle of Skye; and the latest darlings of indie rock, the View. The bespectacled twin brothers Craig and Charlie Reid from Auchtermuchty in Fife, better known as the Proclaimers, produced a new album in 2005 (*Restless Soul*), which is as passionate and invigorating as the songs that first made them famous back in the late 80s, 'Letter From America', and 'I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles)'; there was yet another new album in the pipeline at the time of research.

The airwaves have been awash with female singer-songwriters in recent years, but few are as gutsy and versatile as Edinburgh-born, St Andrews-raised KT Tunstall. Although she's been writing and singing for the last 10 years, it was her 2005 debut album *Eye to the Telescope* that introduced her to a wider audience. And then there's Glasgow-born Angela McCluskey, whose husky vocals have been compared to Billie Holiday and Cerys Matthews.

Painting

If asked to think of a Scottish painting, most people probably picture *Monarch of the Glen*, a romanticised portrait of a magnificent Highland red deer stag by Sir Edwin Landseer (1802–73). Landseer was not a Scot but a Londoner, though he did spend a lot of time in Scotland, leasing a cottage in Glen Feshie and visiting the young Queen Victoria at Balmoral to tutor her in drawing and etching.

Perhaps the most famous Scottish painting is the portrait *Reverend Robert Walker Skating on Duddingston Loch* by Sir Henry Raeburn (1756–1823), in the National Gallery of Scotland (p88). This image of a Presbyterian minister at play beneath Arthur's Seat, with all the poise of a ballerina and the hint of a smile on his lips, is a symbol of Enlightenment Edinburgh, the triumph of reason over wild nature.

Scottish portraiture reached its peak during the Scottish Enlightenment in the second half of the 18th century with the paintings of Raeburn and his contemporary Allan Ramsay (1713–84). You can see many fine examples of their work in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (p89). At the same time, Alexander Nasmyth (1758–1840) emerged as an important landscape painter whose work had an immense influence on the 19th century. One of the greatest artists of the 19th century was Sir David Wilkie (1785–1841), whose genre paintings depicted rustic scenes of rural Highland life.

In the early 20th century the Scottish painters most widely acclaimed outside of the country were the group known as the Scottish Colourists – SJ Peploe, Francis Cadell, Leslie Hunter and JD Fergusson – whose striking paintings drew on French postimpressionist and Fauvist influences. Peploe and Cadell, active in the 1920s and 1930s, often spent the summer painting together on the Isle of Iona, and reproductions of their beautiful landscapes and seascapes appear on many a print and postcard. Aberdeen Art Gallery (p248), Kirkcaldy Museum & Art Gallery (p207) and the JD Fergusson Gallery in Perth (p219) all have good examples of their work.

In the 1930s a group of modernist landscape artists called themselves the Edinburgh School. Chief among them were William Gillies (1898–1978),

Sir William MacTaggart (1903–81) and Anne Redpath (1895–1965). Following WWII, artists such as Alan Davie (1920–) and Sir Eduardo Paolozzi (1924–2005) gained international reputations in abstract expressionism and pop art. The Dean Gallery (p90) in Edinburgh has a large collection of Paolozzi's work.

Among contemporary Scottish artists the most famous – or rather notorious – are Peter Howson and Jack Vettriano. Howson (1958–), best known for his grim portraits of Glasgow down-and-outs and muscular workers, hit the headlines when he went to Bosnia as an official war artist in 1993 and produced some disturbing and controversial works. *Croatian and Muslim*, an uncompromising rape scene, sparked a debate about what was acceptable in a public exhibition of art. More recently his nude portraits of Madonna – the pop icon, not the religious one – garnered even more column inches in the press. His work is much sought after and collected by celebrities such as David Bowie and Madonna herself. You can see examples of Howson's work at Aberdeen Art Gallery (p248) and Glasgow's Gallery of Modern Art (p125).

Jack Vettriano (1954–) was formerly a mining engineer, but now ranks as one of Scotland's most commercially successful artists. An entirely self-taught painter, his work – realistic, voyeuristic, occasionally sinister and often carrying a powerful erotic charge – has been compared to that of the American painters Edward Hopper and Walter Sickert. You can see reproductions of his work in coffee-table books and posters, but not in any Scottish art gallery. The Scottish art establishment looks down its nose at him, despite – or perhaps because of – the enormous popularity of his work.

ARCHITECTURE

There are interesting buildings all over Scotland, but Edinburgh has a particularly rich heritage of 18th- and early-19th-century architecture, and Glasgow is noted for its superb Victorian buildings.

Prehistoric

The northern islands of Scotland have some of the best surviving examples of prehistoric buildings in Europe. The best known are the stone villages of Skara Brae (from 3100 BC) in Orkney (p417) and Jarlshof (from 1500 BC) in Shetland (p431). The characteristic stone defensive towers known as brochs that can be seen in the north and west, including Glenelg (south of Kyle of Lochalsh; p378), Dun Carloway (Lewis; p395) and Mousa (Shetland; p430), are thought to date from the Iron Age (2nd century BC to 1st century AD).

Romanesque (12th Century)

The Romanesque style – with its characteristic round arches and chevron decoration – was introduced to Scotland via the monasteries that were founded during the reign of David I (1124–53). Good examples survive in Dunfermline Abbey (see the boxed text, p208), and St Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall (p408).

Gothic (12th to 16th Centuries)

The more elaborate Gothic style, with its tall, pointed arches, ornate window tracery and ribbed vaulting, was brought to Scotland and adapted by the monastic orders. Examples of Early Gothic architecture can be seen in the ruins of the great Border abbeys of Jedburgh (p160) and Dryburgh (p159), at Holyrood Abbey in Edinburgh (p84) and in Glasgow Cathedral (p128). The more decorative Middle and Late Gothic styles appear in Melrose Abbey (p158), the cathedrals of Dunkeld (p226) and Elgin (p260), and the parish churches of Haddington (St Mary's; p116) and Stirling (Church of the Holy Rude; p194).

The Living Tradition is a bimonthly magazine covering the folk and traditional music of Scotland and the British Isles, as well as Celtic music, with features and reviews of albums and live gigs. See also www.folkmusic.net.

'The northern islands of Scotland have some of the best surviving examples of prehistoric buildings in Europe'

SCOTTISH INVENTIONS & DISCOVERIES

The Scots have made a contribution to modern civilisation that is disproportionate to the size of their country. Although Scotland accounts for only 10% of Britain's population, it has produced more than 20% of leading British scientists, philosophers, engineers and inventors. Scots established the modern disciplines of economics, sociology, geology, electromagnetic theory, anaesthesiology and antibiotics, and pioneered the steam engine, the pneumatic tyre, the telephone and the TV.

Given the weather in Scotland perhaps it's not surprising that it was a Scot – the chemist Charles Macintosh (1766–1843) – who invented the waterproof material for the raincoat that still bears his name.

James Watt (1736–1819) didn't invent the steam engine (that was done by an Englishman, Thomas Newcomen), but it was Watt's modifications and improvements – notably the separate condenser – that led to its widespread usefulness in industry.

The chemical engineer James Young (1811–83), known as 'Paraffin' Young, developed the process of refining crude oil and established the world's first oil industry, based on extracting oil from the oil shales of West Lothian.

Not only did John Logie Baird (1888–1946) from Helensburgh invent TV, but it was his own company that produced (with the BBC) the world's first TV broadcast, the first broadcast with sound and the first outside broadcast. He also developed the concept of colour TV and took out a patent on fibre optics.

Alexander Graham Bell (1847–1922) was born in Edinburgh and emigrated to Canada and the USA, where he made a series of inventions, the most famous being the telephone in 1876.

In 1996 a team of Scottish embryologists working at the Roslin Institute near Edinburgh scored a first when they successfully cloned a sheep, Dolly, from the breast cell of an adult sheep. They added to this success when Dolly was mated naturally with a Welsh ram; in April 1998 she gave birth to a healthy lamb, Bonnie.

The list of famous Scots goes on and on: James Gregory (1638–75), inventor of the reflecting telescope; John McAdam (1756–1836), who developed road-building and surfacing techniques; Thomas Telford (1757–1834), one of the greatest civil engineers of his time; Robert William Thomson (1822–73), who patented the pneumatic tyre in 1845; John Boyd Dunlop (1840–1921), who reinvented the pneumatic tyre in 1888; and Sir Robert Watson-Watt (1892–1973), a direct descendant of James Watt, who developed the radar system that helped Britain to victory in WWII.

Other Scottish inventions and discoveries:

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| ■ antiseptic | ■ golf | ■ postage stamp (adhesive) |
| ■ bicycle | ■ grand piano | ■ refrigeration |
| ■ breech-loading rifle | ■ iron and steel ships | ■ speedometer |
| ■ carbon dioxide | ■ iron plough | ■ steam-powered ship |
| ■ colour photography | ■ kaleidoscope | ■ telescope |
| ■ decimal point | ■ lawnmower | ■ ultrasound |
| ■ electric light | ■ logarithm | ■ vacuum flask |
| ■ fire alarm | ■ marmalade | ■ water softener |
| ■ gas mask | ■ morphine | |

Scotland has also produced a significant number of Nobel Prize winners. Sir William Ramsay (1852–1916), whose work helped in the development of the nuclear industry, received the chemistry prize in 1904. Sir Alexander Fleming (1881–1955), codiscoverer of penicillin, received the prize for medicine in 1945. Other prize winners include Charles Wilson, John Orr, Alexander Robertus Todd and Sir James Black.

Post-Reformation (16th & 17th Centuries)

After the Reformation many abbeys and cathedrals were damaged or destroyed, as the new religion frowned on ceremony and ornament.

During this period the old style of castle, with its central keep and curtain wall such as Dirlleton Castle (p117), was superseded by the tower house. Good examples include Castle Campbell (p205), Loch Leven Castle (p217) and Neidpath Castle (p163). The Renaissance style was introduced in the royal palaces of Linlithgow (p117) and Falkland (p207).

Georgian (18th & Early 19th Centuries)

The leading Scottish architects of the 18th century were William Adam (1684–1748) and his son Robert Adam (1728–92), whose revival of classical Greek and Roman forms influenced architects throughout Europe. Among the many neoclassical buildings they designed are Hopetoun House (p115), Culzean Castle (p176) and Edinburgh's Charlotte Sq (p88), possibly the finest example of Georgian architecture anywhere.

The New Town of Edinburgh, and other planned towns such as Inveraray (Argyll) and Blair Atholl (Perthshire), are characterised by their elegant Georgian architecture.

Victorian (Mid- to Late 19th Century)

Alexander 'Greek' Thomson (1817–75) changed the face of 19th-century Glasgow with his neoclassical designs. Masterpieces such as the Egyptian Halls and Caledonia Road Church in Glasgow combine Egyptian and Hindu motifs with Greek and Roman forms.

In Edinburgh, William Henry Playfair (1790–1857) continued Robert Adam's neoclassical tradition in the Greek temples of the National Monument (p89) on Calton Hill, the Royal Scottish Academy (p87) and the National Gallery of Scotland (p88), before moving on to the neo-Gothic style in Edinburgh University's New College on The Mound.

The 19th-century boom in country-house building was led by architects William Burn (1789–1870) and David Bryce (1803–76). The resurgence of interest in Scottish history and identity, led by writers such as Sir Walter Scott, saw architects turn to the towers, pointed turrets and crow-stepped gables of the 16th century for inspiration. The Victorian revival of the Scottish Baronial style, which first made an appearance in 16th-century buildings such as Craigmillar Castle (p258), produced many fanciful abodes such as Balmoral Castle (p255), Scone Palace (p218) and Abbotsford (p159).

The 20th Century

Scotland's best known 20th-century architect and designer is Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928), one of the most influential exponents of the Art Nouveau style. His finest building is the Glasgow School of Art (1896; p126), which still looks modern more than a century after it was built. For more on Charles Rennie Mackintosh, see the boxed text, p128. The Art Deco style of the 1930s made little impact in Scotland; the few examples include St Andrews House in Edinburgh and the beautifully restored Luma Tower in Glasgow.

During the 1960s Scotland's larger towns and cities suffered badly under the onslaught of the motor car and the unsympathetic impact of large-scale, concrete building developments. However, modern architecture discovered a new confidence in the 1980s and 1990s, exemplified by the impressive gallery housing the Burrell Collection (p130) in Glasgow and the stunning modern buildings lining the banks of Glasgow's River Clyde (p123).

Scotland's most controversial new structure is the Scottish parliament building in Edinburgh (see boxed text, p85).

Scotland's Castles by Chris Tabraham is an excellent companion for anyone touring Scottish castles – a readable, illustrated history detailing how and why they were built.

Food & Drink

Traditional Scottish cookery is all about basic comfort food: solid, nourishing fare, often high in fat, that would keep you warm on a winter's day spent in the fields or out fishing, and sweet treats to come home to in the evening.

But a new culinary style known as Modern Scottish has emerged over the last two decades. It's a style that should be familiar to fans of Californian Cuisine and Mod Oz. Chefs take top-quality Scottish produce – from Highland venison, Aberdeen Angus beef and freshly landed seafood, to root vegetables, raspberries and Ayrshire cheeses – and prepare it simply, in a way that enhances the natural flavours, often adding a French, Italian or Asian twist.

Scotland's traditional drinks – whisky and beer – have also found a new lease of life in recent years, with single malts being marketed like fine wines, and a new breed of micro-breweries springing up all over the country.

A Caledonian Feast

by Annette Hope is a fascinating and readable history of Scottish cuisine, providing a wealth of historical and sociological background.

STAPLES & SPECIALITIES

Haggis may be the national dish that Scotland is most famous for, but when it comes to what Scottish people actually cook and eat most often, the hands-down winner has to be mince and tatties (potatoes). Minced beef, browned in the pan and then stewed slowly with onion, carrot and gravy, is served with mashed potatoes (with a splash of milk and a knob of butter added during the mashing) – it's tasty, warming and you don't even have to chew.

Breakfast

Surprisingly few Scots eat porridge for breakfast – these days a cappuccino and a croissant is just as likely – and even fewer eat it in the traditional way; that is, with salt to taste, but no sugar. The breakfast offered in a B&B or hotel usually consists of fruit juice and cereal or muesli, followed by a choice of bacon, sausage, black pudding (a type of sausage made from dried blood), grilled tomato, mushrooms and a fried egg or two.

Fish for breakfast may sound strange, but was not unusual in crofting and fishing communities where seafood was a staple; many hotels still offer grilled kippers (smoked herrings) or smoked haddock (poached in milk and served with a poached egg) for breakfast – delicious with lots of buttered toast.

HAGGIS – SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL DISH

Scotland's national dish is often ridiculed by foreigners because of its ingredients, which admittedly don't sound promising – the finely chopped lungs, heart and liver of a sheep, mixed with oatmeal and onion and stuffed into a sheep's stomach bag. However, it actually tastes surprisingly good.

Haggis should be served with *champit tatties* and *bashed neeps* (mashed potatoes and turnips), with a generous dollop of butter and a good sprinkling of black pepper.

Although it's eaten year-round, haggis is central to the celebrations of 25 January, in honour of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns. Scots worldwide unite on Burns Night to revel in their Scottishness. A piper announces the arrival of the haggis and Burns' poem *Address to a Haggis* is recited to this 'Great chieftan o' the puddin'-race'. The bulging haggis is then lanced with a dirk (dagger) to reveal the steaming offal within, 'warm, reekin, rich'.

Vegetarians (and quite a few carnivores, no doubt) will be relieved to know that veggie haggis is available in some restaurants.

Soups

Scotch broth, made with mutton stock, barley, lentils and peas, is nutritious and tasty, while cock-a-leekie is a hearty soup made with chicken and leeks. Warming vegetable soups include leek and potato soup, and lentil soup (traditionally made using ham stock – vegetarians beware!).

Seafood soups include the delicious *Cullen skink*, made with smoked haddock, potato, onion and milk, and *partan bree* (crab soup).

Meat & Game

Steak eaters will enjoy a thick fillet of world-famous Aberdeen Angus beef, and beef from Highland cattle is much sought after. Venison, from the red deer, is leaner and appears on many menus. Both may be served with a wine-based or creamy whisky sauce. Then there's haggis, Scotland's much-maligned national dish...

Fish & Seafood

Scottish salmon is famous worldwide, but there's a big difference between the now-ubiquitous farmed salmon and the leaner, more expensive, wild fish. Also, there are concerns over the environmental impact of salmon farms on the marine environment.

Smoked salmon is traditionally dressed with a squeeze of lemon juice and eaten with fresh brown bread and butter. Trout, salmon's smaller cousin –

Popular Scottish TV chef Nick Nairn's book *Wild Harvest* contains over 100 recipes based on the use of fresh, seasonal Scottish produce.

SSSSSMOKIN'!

Scotland is famous for its smoked salmon, but there are many other varieties of smoked fish – plus smoked meats and cheeses – to enjoy. Smoking food to preserve it is an ancient art that has recently undergone a revival, but this time it's more about flavour than preservation.

There are two parts to the process – first the cure, which involves covering the fish in a mixture of salt and molasses sugar, or soaking it in brine; and then the smoke, which can be either cold smoking (at less than 34°C), which results in a raw product, or hot smoking (at more than 60°C), which cooks it. Cold-smoked products include traditional smoked salmon, kippers and Finnan haddies. Hot-smoked products include *bradan rost* ('flaky' smoked salmon) and Arbroath smokies.

Arbroath smokies are haddock that have been gutted, beheaded and cleaned, then salted and dried overnight, tied together at the tail in pairs, and hot-smoked over oak or beech chippings for 45 to 90 minutes. Finnan haddies (named after the fishing village of Findon in Aberdeenshire) are also haddock, but these are split down the middle like kippers, and cold-smoked.

Kippers (smoked herring) were invented in Northumberland, in northern England, in the mid-19th century, but Scotland soon picked up the technique, and both Loch Fyne and Mallaig were famous for their kippers.

There are dozens of modern smokehouses scattered all over Scotland, many of which offer a mail-order service as well as an on-site shop; here are a few recommended ones:

Hebridean Smokehouse (☎ 01876-580209; www.hebrideansmokehouse.com; Cladach, North Uist, Outer Hebrides; ☎ 8am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat) Peat-smoked salmon and seatrout.

Inverawe Smokehouse & Fishery (☎ 01866-822274; www.smokedsalmon.co.uk; Inverawe, Dalmlaly, Argyllshire; ☎ 8am-5.30pm Mar-Oct) Delicate smoked salmon, plump juicy kippers.

Marrbury Smokehouse (☎ 01671-840241; www.visitmarrbury.co.uk; Carluith Castle, Creetown, Dumfries & Galloway; ☎ 11am-4pm Thu & Fri, 10am-2pm Sat) Supplier to Gleneagles Hotel and other top restaurants.

Salar Smokehouse (☎ 01870-610324; www.salar.co.uk; Lochcarnan, South Uist, Outer Hebrides; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) Famous for its flaky, hot-smoked salmon.

Spey Valley Smokehouse (☎ 01479-873078; www.speyvalleysmokedsalmon.com; Achgonagonalin, Grantown-on-Spey, Inverness-shire; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, plus 10am-1pm Sat & Sun Easter-Oct) Established 1888; now owned by Ian Anderson, lead singer of rock group Jethro Tull.

whether wild, rod-caught brown trout or farmed rainbow trout – is delicious fried in oatmeal.

As an alternative to kippers (smoked herrings) you may be offered Arbroath smokies (lightly smoked fresh haddock), traditionally eaten cold. Herring fillets fried in oatmeal are good, if you don't mind picking out a few bones. Mackerel pâté and smoked or peppered mackerel (both served cold) are also popular.

Juicy langoustines (also known as Dublin Bay prawns), crabs, lobsters, oysters, mussels and scallops are also widely available throughout Scotland.

Puddings

Traditional Scottish puddings are irresistibly creamy, high-calorie concoctions. *Cranachan* is whipped cream flavoured with whisky, and mixed with toasted oatmeal and raspberries. *Atholl brose* is a mixture of cream, whisky and honey, flavoured with oatmeal. *Clootie dumpling* is a rich steamed pudding filled with currants and raisins.

VEGETARIANS & VEGANS

Scotland has the same proportion of vegetarians as the rest of the UK – around 8% to 10% of the population – and vegetarianism has moved away from the hippie-student image of a few decades ago and is now firmly in the mainstream. Even the most remote Highland pub usually has at least one vegetarian dish on the menu, and there are many dedicated vegetarian restaurants in the cities. If you get stuck, there's almost always an Italian or Indian restaurant where you can get meat-free pizza, pasta or curry. Vegans, though, may find the options a bit limited outside of Edinburgh and Glasgow.

One thing to keep in mind is that lentil soup, a seemingly vegetarian staple of Scottish pub and restaurant menus, is traditionally made with ham stock.

EATING WITH KIDS

Sadly, the majority of Scotland's eating places make no effort to welcome children, and many are actively hostile. In a recent survey nine out of 10 families thought the majority of UK restaurants were not family friendly. There's no way of gauging restaurant attitudes other than by asking.

This situation is changing, albeit slowly, especially in the cities and more popular tourist towns where several restaurants and pubs now have family rooms and/or play areas. However, in many smaller towns and country areas kids will still get a frosty reception.

You should be aware that children under the age of 14 are not allowed into the majority of Scottish pubs, even those that serve bar meals; even in family-friendly pubs (those in possession of a Children's Certificate), under-14s are only allowed in between 11am and 8pm, and must be accompanied by an adult aged 18 or above.

COOKERY COURSES

There are two principal places that offer courses in Scottish cookery:

Kinloch Lodge Hotel (☎ 01471-833333; www.claire-macdonald.com; Kinloch Lodge, Isle of Skye IV43 8QY) Cookery demonstrations using fresh, seasonal Scottish produce given by Lady Claire Macdonald, author of *Scottish Highland Hospitality and Celebrations*.

Nairns Cook School (☎ 01877-389900; www.nairnscookschool.com; Port of Menteith, Stirling FK8 3JZ) Two-day courses in modern Scottish cooking at the school owned by Scotland's top TV chef Nick Nairn, author of *Wild Harvest* and *Island Harvest*.

The classic work on traditional Scottish cooking is *The Scots Kitchen* by F Marian McNeill, first published in 1929 but still going strong in various reprints.

The most ever paid for a bottle of whisky was US\$75,000 for a 1926 Macallan (bought by a South Korean collector in 2005). But high prices reflect rarity rather than quality – that Macallan probably tastes no better than the distillery's more recent bottlings.

HOW TO BE A MALT WHISKY BUFF

'Love makes the world go round? Not at all! Whisky makes it go round twice as fast.'

From Whisky Galore by Compton Mackenzie (1883–1972)

Whisky-tasting today is almost as popular as wine-tasting was in the yuppie heyday of the late 1980s. Being able to tell your Ardbeg from your Edradour is *de rigueur* among the whisky-nosing set, so here are some pointers to help you impress your friends.

What's the difference between malt and grain whiskies?

Malts are distilled from malted barley – that is, barley that has been soaked in water, then allowed to germinate for around 10 days until the starch has turned into sugar – while grain whiskies are distilled from other cereals, usually wheat, corn or unmalted barley.

So what is a single malt?

A single malt is a whisky that has been distilled from malted barley and is the product of a single distillery. A pure (vatted) malt is a mixture of single malts from several distilleries, and a blended whisky is a mixture of various grain whiskies (about 60%) and malt whiskies (about 40%) from many different distilleries.

Why are single malts more desirable than blends?

A single malt, like a fine wine, somehow captures the essence of the place where it was made and matured – a combination of the water, the barley, the peat smoke, the oak barrels in which it was aged, and (in the case of certain coastal distilleries) the sea air and salt spray. Each distillation varies from the one before, like different vintages from the same vineyard.

How should a single malt be drunk?

Either neat, or preferably with a little water added. To appreciate the aroma and flavour to the utmost, a measure of malt whisky should be cut (diluted) with one-third to two-thirds as much spring water (still, bottled spring water will do). Ice, tap water and (God forbid) mixers are for philistines. Would you add lemonade or ice to a glass of Chablis?

Give me some tasting tips!

Go into a bar and order a Lagavulin (Islay) and a Glenfiddich (Speyside). Cut each one with half as much again of still, bottled spring water. Taking each one in turn, hold the glass up to the light to check the colour. Then stick your nose in the glass and take two or three short, sharp sniffs. By now, everyone in the pub will be giving you funny looks, but never mind.

For the Lagavulin you should be thinking: amber colour, peat smoke, iodine, seaweed. For the Glenfiddich: pale white-wine colour, malt, pear drops, acetone, citrus. Then taste them. Then try some others. Either you'll be hooked, or you'll never touch whisky again.

Where's the cheapest place to buy Scotch whisky?

A French supermarket, unfortunately. In the UK, where a bottle of single malt typically costs £25 to £35, taxes account for around 72% of the price, making Scotland one of the most expensive places in Europe to enjoy its own national drink.

Where can I learn more?

If you're serious about spirits, the **Scotch Malt Whisky Society** (☎ 0131-554 3451; www.smws.com) has branches all round the world. Membership of the society costs from £70 per year and includes use of members' rooms in Edinburgh and London.

See the boxed text, p263, for our 10 favourite single malts.

DRINKS

Scotland's most famous soft drink is Barr's Irn Bru: a sweet fizzy drink, radioactive orange in colour, that smells like bubble gum and almost strips the enamel from your teeth. Many Scots swear by its restorative effects as a cure for a hangover.

Scotch whisky (always spelt without an 'e' – whiskey with an 'e' is Irish or American) is Scotland's best-known product and biggest export. The spirit has been distilled in Scotland at least since the 15th century. See the boxed texts, p55 and p263 for more information.

As well as whiskies, there are whisky-based liqueurs such as Drambuie. If you must mix your whisky with anything other than water, try a whisky-mac (whisky with ginger wine). After a long walk in the rain there's nothing better to put a warm glow in your belly.

At a bar, older Scots may order a 'half' or 'nip' of whisky as a chaser to a pint or half-pint of beer (a 'hauf and a hauf'). Only tourists ask for 'Scotch' – what else would you be served in Scotland? The standard measure in pubs is either 25mL or 35mL.

Scottish breweries produce a wide range of beers. The market is dominated by multinational brewers such as Scottish & Newcastle, but smaller local breweries generally create tastier brews, some of them very strong. The aptly named Skullsplitter from Orkney is a good example, at 8.5% alcohol by volume.

Many Scottish beers use old-fashioned shilling categories to indicate strength (the number of shillings was originally the price per barrel; the stronger the beer, the higher the price). The usual range is from 60 to 80 shillings (written 80/-). You'll also see IPA, which stands for India Pale Ale, a strong, hoppy beer first brewed in the early 19th century for export to India (the extra alcohol meant that it kept better on the long sea voyage).

Draught beer is served in pints (usually costing from £2 to £3) or half-pints; alcoholic content generally ranges from 3% to 6%. What the English call bitter, Scots call heavy, or export – Caledonian 80/-, Maclays 80/- and Belhaven 80/- are all worth trying, but Deuchar's IPA from Edinburgh's Caledonian Brewery is our favourite.

The website www.scottishbrewing.com has a comprehensive list of Scottish breweries, both large and small.

In the early 1900s Edinburgh was a major beer-brewing centre with no fewer than 28 breweries. As recently as the 1960s the city still had 18 breweries, but today there is only one. Fortunately it produces one of Scotland's finest beers: Deuchar's IPA.

SCOTTISH ALES

The increasing popularity of real ales and a backlash against the bland conformity of globalised multinational brewing conglomerates has seen a huge rise in the number of specialist brewers and microbreweries springing up all over Scotland. They take pride in using only natural ingredients, and many try to revive ancient recipes, such as heather- and seaweed-flavoured ales.

These beers are sold in pubs, off-licences and delicatessens. Here are a few of our favourites to look out for:

Black Isle Brewery (☎ 01463-811871; www.blackislebrewery.com; Old Allangrince, Munloch, Ross-shire) Range of organic beers.

Colonsay Brewery (☎ 01951-200190; www.colonsaybrewery.co.uk; Scalasaig, Isle of Colonsay) Produces lager, 80/- and IPA.

Islay Ales (☎ 01496-810014; www.islayales.com; Islay House Sq, Bridgend, Isle of Islay) Refreshing and citrusy Saligo Ale.

Isle of Skye Brewery (☎ 01470-542477; www.skyebrewery.co.uk; The Pier, Uig) Distinctive Hebridean Gold ale, brewed with porridge oats.

Traquair House Brewery (☎ 01896-830323; www.traquair.co.uk/brewery.html; Traquair House, Innerleithen, Peeblesshire) Traquair House Ale, at 7.2% alcohol, is rich, dark and strong.

Williams Bros (☎ 01259-725511; www.fraoch.com; New Alloa Brewery, Alloa) Produces historic beers flavoured with heather flowers, seaweed, Scots pine and elderberries.

Outdoor Activities

Scotland is a brilliant place for outdoor recreation and has something to offer everyone, from those who enjoy a short stroll to full-on adrenaline junkies. Although hiking, golf, fishing and cycling are the most popular activities, there is an astonishing variety of things to do.

Most activities are well organised and have clubs and associations that can give visitors invaluable information and, sometimes, substantial discounts. **VisitScotland** (www.visitscotland.com) and **VisitBritain** (www.visitbritain.com) have brochures on most activities.

Detailed information can be found in the regional chapters throughout this guide.

WALKING

Scotland's wild, dramatic scenery and varied landscape has made walking a hugely popular pastime for locals and tourists alike. There really is something for everyone, from after-breakfast strolls to the popular sport of Munro bagging (p62).

The best time of year for hill walking is usually May to September, although snow can fall on the highest summits even in midsummer. Winter walking on the higher hills of Scotland is for experienced mountaineers only, requiring the use of ice axe and crampons.

Highland hikers should be properly equipped, and cautious, as the weather can become vicious at any time of year. After rain, peaty soil can become boggy; always wear stout shoes or boots and carry a map and compass, waterproof clothing, a head-torch, whistle, bivouac bag, and extra food and drink – many unsuspecting walkers have had to survive an unplanned night in the open. On longer hill walks, always make sure that someone knows where you are going, and when you expect to return – don't depend on mobile phones (although carrying one with you is a good idea, and can be a life-saver if you can get a signal). If necessary, leave a note of your route and expected time of return in the windscreen of your car.

There is a tradition of relatively free access to open country in Scotland, especially on mountains and moorlands. You should, however, avoid areas where you might disrupt or disturb wildlife, lambing (generally mid-April

You can buy walking maps of Scotland online from the Ordnance Survey website (www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk) – click on the Map Shop link.

The ultimate guidebooks for Scottish hill-walkers are the six district guides produced by the Scottish Mountaineering Club, which cover the Scottish hills in great detail – see www.smc.org.uk for further information.

SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE

Access to the countryside has been a thorny issue in Scotland for many years. In Victorian times, belligerent landowners attempted to prevent walkers from using well-established trails. Moves to counter this led to successful legislation for the walkers and the formation of what later became the Scottish Rights of Way & Access Society.

In January 2003, the Scottish parliament formalised access to the countryside and passed the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill, creating statutory rights of access to land in Scotland for the first time. Basically, the Scottish Outdoor Access Code states that everyone has the right to be on most land and inland water providing they act responsibly. As far as wild camping goes, this means that you can pitch a tent almost anywhere that doesn't cause inconvenience to others or damage to property, as long as you stay no longer than two or three nights in any one spot, take all litter away with you, and keep well away from houses and roads. Full details can be found at www.outdooraccess-scotland.com.

More information on rights of way can be obtained from the **Scottish Rights of Way & Access Society** (☎ 0131-558 1222; www.scotways.com; 24 Annandale St, Edinburgh EH7 4AN).

to the end of May), grouse shooting (from 12 August to the third week in October) or deer stalking (1 July to 15 February, but the peak period is August to October). You can get up-to-date information on deer stalking in various areas through the **Hillphone** (www.hillphones.info) service.

Rights of way exist but local authorities aren't required to list and map them so they're not shown on Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of Scotland, as they are in England and Wales. However, the Scottish Rights of Way & Access Society (see boxed text, p57) keeps records of these routes, provides and maintains signposting, and publicises them in its guidebook, *Scottish Hill Tracks*.

Some official long-distance footpaths:

Walk	Distance	Features	Duration	Difficulty	Page
Fife Coastal Path	78 miles	Firth of Forth, undulating country	5-6 days	easy	p210
Great Glen Way	73 miles	Loch Ness, canal paths, forest tracks	4 days	easy	p327
Pilgrims Way	25 miles	Machars peninsula, standing stones, burial mounds	2-3 days	easy	boxed text, p152
St Cuthbert's Way	62 miles	follows life of famous saint	6-7 days	medium	boxed text, p152
Southern Upland Way	212 miles	remote hills & moorlands	9-14 days	medium-hard	boxed text, p152
Speyside Way	66 miles	follows river, whisky distilleries	3-4 days	easy-medium	boxed text, opposite
West Highland Way	95 miles	spectacular scenery, mountains & lochs	6-8 days	medium	boxed text, p280

Every tourist office has leaflets (free or for a nominal charge) of suggested walks that take in local points of interest. Lonely Planet's *Walking in Scotland* is a comprehensive resource, covering short walks and long-distance paths; its *Walking in Britain* guide covers Scottish walks too. For general advice, VisitScotland produces a *Walking Scotland* brochure, describing numerous routes in various parts of the country, plus safety tips and other information.

Other useful sources:

Mountaineering Council of Scotland (☎ 01738-638227; www.mountaineering-scotland.org.uk; The Old Granary, West Mill St, Perth PH1 50P)

Ramblers' Association Scotland (☎ 01577-861222; www.ramblers.org.uk/scotland; Kingfisher House, Auld Mart Business Park, Milnathort, Kinross KY13 9DA)

GOLF

Scotland is the home of golf. The game has been played in Scotland for centuries and there are more courses per head of population here than in any other country. Most clubs are open to visitors – details can be found on the web at www.scotlands-golf-courses.com.

St Andrews is the headquarters of the game's governing body, the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, and the location of the world's most famous golf course, the Old Course (see boxed text, p211). There are several major championship courses around the country including those at Royal Troon (p176) and Turnberry (p177).

VisitScotland publishes the *Official Guide to Golf in Scotland*, a free annual brochure listing course details, costs and clubs with information on where

VisitScotland's website dedicated to walking is <http://walking.visitscotland.com>.

VisitScotland's website dedicated to golf (<http://golf.visitscotland.com>) has a course directory and online booking.

THE SPEYSIDE WAY

This long-distance footpath follows the course of the River Spey, one of Scotland's most famous salmon-fishing rivers. It starts at Buckie and first follows the coast to Spey Bay, east of Elgin, then runs inland along the river to Aviemore in the Cairngorms (with branches to Tomintoul and Dufftown). At only 66 miles, the main walk can be done in three or four days, although including the branch trails to Dufftown and Tomintoul will push the total walking distance to 102 miles (allow seven days).

This route has also been dubbed the 'Whisky Trail' as it passes near a number of distilleries, including Glenlivet and Glenfiddich, which are open to the public. If you stop at them all, the walk may take considerably longer than the usual three or four days!

The Speyside Way guidebook by Jacquetta Megarry and Jim Strachan describes the route in detail; there's also a *Speyside Way* leaflet produced by the **Speyside Way Ranger Service** (☎ 01340-881266). Check out the route at www.speysideway.org.

to stay. Some regions offer a **Golf Pass** (<http://golf.visitscotland.com/golf-passes>), costing between £50 and £100 for five days (Monday to Friday), which allows play on a range of courses.

FISHING

Fishing – coarse, sea and game – is enormously popular in Scotland, whose lochs and rivers are filled with salmon, trout (sea, brown and rainbow), pike, arctic char and many other species. Fly-fishing in particular is a joy in Scotland's many lochs and rivers – it's a tricky but very rewarding form of fishing, closer to an art form than a sport.

For wild brown trout the close season is early October to mid-March. The close season for salmon and sea trout varies between districts; it's generally from early November to early February.

Fishing rights to most waters are privately owned and you must obtain a permit to fish in them – these are often readily available at the local fishing-tackle shop or hotel. Permits cost from around £15 per day but some salmon rivers – notably the Tweed, the Tay and the Spey – can be much more expensive.

There are numerous fish farms throughout Scotland with stocked ponds where you can hire equipment and have a couple of lessons; they are a particularly good option for the kids. Examples include the Orchill Loch Trout Fishery (p221) and Inverawe Smokehouse & Fishery (p314).

The VisitScotland booklet *Fish Scotland* is a good introduction and is available from tourist offices. Other organisations that can provide information include the following:

Scottish Anglers National Association (☎ 01577-861116; www.sana.org.uk; The National Game Angling Academy, The Pier, Loch Leven, Kinross KY13 8UF)

Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers (☎ 01592 657520; sfsasec@sfsacu.com; Unit 62, Evans Business Centre, Mitchelston Drive, Mitchelston Industrial Estate, Kirkcaldy, Fife KY1 3NB)

CYCLING

Cycling is an excellent way to explore Scotland. There are hundreds of miles of forest trails and quiet minor roads, and dedicated cycle routes along canal towpaths and disused railway tracks. Depending on your energy and enthusiasm you can take a leisurely trip through idyllic farm country, stopping at the numerous pubs along the way, or head off-road for some serious, mud-spattered trail-riding. Cyclists in search of the wild and remote will enjoy northwestern Scotland and the Outer Hebrides, which offer peaceful pedalling through breathtaking landscapes. The beautiful forests, lochs, glens and

The UK record for a rod-caught salmon is 29kg, caught by a Miss Ballantyne in 1922 on the River Tay in Perthshire.

hills in the central and southern areas of Scotland are more easily accessible and, like the gentle, undulating countryside in the beautiful Borders region, make for excellent cycling country.

Hardcore mountain-bikers will also find plenty of challenges, from long off-road routes such as the Great Glen Mountain Bike Trail (p327) to world-class downhill courses such as those at Laggan Wolftrax (p337) and Nevis Range (p344). The latter hosts the **UCI Mountain Bike World Cup Finals** (www.fortwilliamworldchamps.co.uk).

VisitScotland publishes a useful free booklet, *Cycle Scotland*, and has a dedicated website (www.cyclingscotland.com). Many regional tourist offices have information on local cycling routes and places to hire bikes. They also stock cycling guides and books.

For up-to-date, detailed information on Scotland's cycle-route network contact **Sustrans** (☎ 0845 113 0065, 0131-539 8122; www.sustrans.org.uk; 16a Randolph Cres, Edinburgh EH3 7TT).

Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC; ☎ 0870 873 0060; www.ctc.org.uk; Cotterell House, 69 Meadrow, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3HS) is a membership organisation offering comprehensive information about cycling in Britain.

BIRD-WATCHING

Scotland is a bird-watcher's paradise. There are more than 80 ornithologically important nature reserves managed by **Scottish Natural Heritage** (SNH; www.snh.org.uk), the **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds** (RSPB; www.rspb.org.uk) and the **Scottish Wildlife Trust** (SWT; www.swt.org.uk).

Scotland is the best place in the British Isles (and in some cases the only place) to spot bird species such as the golden eagle, white-tailed sea eagle, osprey, corncrake, capercaillie, crested tit and ptarmigan, and the country's coast and islands are some of Europe's most important seabird nesting grounds.

Further information can be obtained from the **Scottish Ornithologists Club** (☎ 01875-871330; www.the-soc.org.uk; Waterson House, Aberlady, East Lothian EH32 0PY).

HORSE RIDING & PONY TREKKING

Seeing the country from the saddle is highly recommended, even if you're not an experienced rider. There are riding schools catering to all levels of proficiency throughout the country.

For more information:

British Horse Society (☎ 08701-202244; www.bhs.org.uk; British Equestrian Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2XZ)

Trekking & Riding Society of Scotland (☎ 01567-820909; www.ridinginscotland.com; Bruach na h'Abhainne, Maragowan, Killin, Perthshire FK21 8TN)

ROCK CLIMBING

Scotland has a long history of rock climbing and mountaineering, with many of the classic routes on Ben Nevis and Glen Coe having been pioneered in the 19th century. The country's main rock-climbing areas include Ben Nevis (p345), with routes up to 400m in length, Glen Coe, the Cairngorms, the Cuillin Hills of Skye (p379), Arrochar and the Isle of Arran (see p170), but there are also hundreds of smaller crags situated all over the country. One unusual feature of Scotland's rock-climbing scene is the sea stacks found around the coast, the most famous of these being the 140m-high Old Man of Hoy (p418).

Rock Climbing in Scotland, by Kevin Howett, and the Scottish Mountaineering Club's regional *Rock & Ice Climbs* guides are excellent guidebooks that cover the whole country.

It was a Scotsman, John Boyd Dunlop (1840-1921), who in 1888 patented the first successful pneumatic tyre for bicycles.

There's lots of useful information on rock climbing at www.ukclimbing.com.

More information:

Mountaineering Council of Scotland (☎ 01738-638227; www.mountaineering-scotland.org.uk; The Old Granary, West Mill St, Perth PH1 5QP)

Scottish Mountaineering Club (www.smc.org.uk)

SKIING & SNOWBOARDING

There are five ski centres in Scotland, offering downhill skiing and snowboarding:

Cairngorm Mountain (☎ 01479-861261; www.cairngormmountain.com) 1097m; has almost 30 runs spread over an extensive area; see p332.

Glencoe (☎ 01855-851226; www.ski-glencoe.co.uk) 1108m; has only five tows and two chairlifts; see p338.

Glenshee (☎ 01339-741320; www.ski-glenshee.co.uk) 920m; situated on the A93 road between Perth and Braemar; offers the largest network of lifts and the widest range of runs in all of Scotland; see p230.

Lecht (☎ 01975-651440; www.lecht.co.uk) 793m; the smallest and most remote centre, on the A939 between Ballater and Grantown-on-Spey; see p258.

Nevis Range (☎ 01397-705825; www.nevisrange.co.uk) 1221m; near Fort William; offers the highest ski runs, the grandest setting and some of the best off-piste potential in Scotland; see p344.

The high season is from January to April but it's sometimes possible to ski from as early as November to as late as May. It's easy to turn up at the slopes, hire some kit, buy a day pass and off you go.

VisitScotland's *Ski Scotland* brochure is useful and includes a list of accommodation options. General information can be obtained from **Snowsport Scotland** (☎ 0131-445 4151; www.snsdemon.co.uk; Hillend, Biggar Rd, Edinburgh EH10 7EF).

For the latest weather and snow condition reports phone your resort or check the websites www.ski-scotland.com and www.winterhighland.info.

WATER SPORTS

Canoeing

Scotland, with its islands, sea lochs and indented coastline, is ideal for sea-kayaking, while its inland lochs and Highland rivers are great for both Canadian and white-water canoeing.

For information contact the **Scottish Canoe Association** (☎ 0131-317 7314; www.canoescotland.com; Caledonia House, South Gyle, Edinburgh EH12 9DQ). It publishes coastal navigation sheets as well as organising tours, including introductory ones for beginners.

Diving

It may lack coral reefs and warm, limpid waters but Scotland offers some of the most spectacular and challenging scuba diving in Europe, if not the world. The sea bed around St Abbs (p152) is Scotland's first voluntary marine nature-reserve.

There are also hundreds of fascinating shipwrecks, the most famous of which are the seven remaining hulks of the WWI German High Seas Fleet, scuttled in 1919, which lie on the bed of Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands (see boxed text, p412).

For more information on the country's diving options contact the **Scottish Sub Aqua Club** (☎ 0141-425 1021; www.scotsac.com; The Cockburn Centre, 40 Bogmoor Place, Glasgow G51 4TQ).

Sailing

The west coast of Scotland, with its myriad islands, superb scenery and challenging winds and tides, is widely acknowledged to be one of the finest yachting areas in the world.

'with its islands, sea lochs and indented coastline, Scotland is ideal for sea-kayaking'

Experienced skippers with suitable qualifications can charter a yacht from one of dozens of agencies; prices for bareboat charter start at around £1500 a week in high season for a six-berth yacht; hiring a skipper to sail the boat for you will cost £120 a day or £700 a week. Sailing dinghies can be rented from many places for around £50 a day.

Beginners can take a Royal Yachting Association training course in yachting or dinghy sailing at many sailing schools around the coast; for details of charter agencies, sailing schools and water-sports centres, get hold of VisitScotland's *Sail Scotland* brochure, or check out the website www.sailscotland.co.uk.

Surfing

Even with a wetsuit on you definitely have to be hardy to enjoy surfing in Scottish waters. That said, the country does have some of the best surfing breaks in Europe.

The tidal range is large, which means there is often a completely different set of breaks at low and high tides. It's the north and west coasts, particularly around Thurso (p365) and in the Outer Hebrides, which have outstanding, world-class surf. Indeed, Lewis has the best and most consistent surf in Britain, with around 120 recorded breaks and waves up to 5m. For more information contact **Hebridean Surf** (☎ 01851-705862; www.hebrideansurf.co.uk; 28 Francis St, Stornoway, Lewis HS1 2ND).

HANG GLIDING & PARAGLIDING

There's a well-established hang-gliding and paragliding scene in Scotland. The Highlands offer many impressive flying spots, complete with stunning scenery and challenging conditions. For information and details on clubs and training schools contact the **British Hang Gliding & Paragliding Association** (www.bhpa.co.uk).

THE ANCIENT ART OF MUNRO BAGGING

At the end of the 19th century an eager hill walker, Sir Hugh Munro, published a list of 545 Scottish mountains measuring over 3000ft (914m) – a height at which he believed they gained a special significance. Of these summits he classified 277 as mountains in their own right (new surveys have since revised this to a total of 284), the rest being satellites of lesser consequence (known as 'tops'). Sir Hugh couldn't have realised that his name would one day be used to describe any Scottish mountain over the magical 3000ft mark. Many keen hill-walkers now set themselves the target of reaching the summit of (or bagging) all 284 Munros.

The peculiar practice of Munro bagging started soon after the list was published – by 1901 the Reverend AE Robertson had become the first person to bag the lot. Between 1901 and 1981, only 250 people managed to climb all the Munros, but the huge increase in the popularity of hill walking from the 1980s onward saw the number of officially declared 'Munroists' soar to 4000 (see www.smc.org.uk/Munros) by 2007. Many people have completed the round more than once; the record for single-minded Munro bagging is held by Edinburgh's Steven Fallon, who was halfway through his 14th round in 2007.

To the uninitiated it may seem odd that Munro baggers see a day (or longer) spent plodding around in mist, cloud and driving rain to the point of exhaustion as time well spent. However, for those who can add one or more ticks to their list, the vagaries of the weather are part of the enjoyment, at least in retrospect. Munro bagging is, of course, more than merely ticking names on a list – it takes you to some of the wildest, most beautiful parts of Scotland.

Once you've bagged all the Munros you can move onto the Corbetts – hills over 2500ft (700m), with a drop of at least 500ft (150m) on all sides – and the Donalds, lowland hills over 2000ft (610m). And for connoisseurs of the diminutive, there are the McPhies: 'eminences in excess of 300ft (90m)'.

CANAL BOATING

Scotland's canal network is pretty limited compared with England's or Ireland's, but still offers interesting cruising opportunities.

The Millennium Link project (completed in 2002) restored the 35-mile Forth and Clyde Canal (running between Grangemouth in the east and Bowling near Dumbarton in the west) and the 31-mile Union Canal (joining central Edinburgh with Falkirk) to full working order, and linked the two by means of the mighty Falkirk Wheel (see the boxed text, p206). The Linlithgow Canal Centre (p118) rents out day boats on the Union Canal. Holiday narrow boats can be hired by the week from **Capercaillie Cruisers** (☎ 0131-449 3288; www.capercailliecruisers.co.uk; 2 Lanark Rd West, Currie, Midlothian EH14 5ER).

The 60-mile Caledonian Canal, which slices through the Great Glen from Fort William to Inverness, has a mixture of canal reaches, open lochs and stunning scenery, making it fully geared to boating holidays. The main operator here is **Caley Cruisers** (☎ 01463-236328; www.caleycruisers.com; Canal Rd, Inverness IV3 8NF), which has a fleet of 40 motor cruisers ranging from two to eight berths available for hire from March to October.

Scotland's canals are owned and operated by the **British Waterways Board** (☎ 0141-332 6936; www.scottishcanals.co.uk; Canal House, 1 Applecross St, Glasgow G4 9SP), which publishes the free *Skippers' Guides* to all the canals (available online). It also publishes a list of boat-hire and canal-holiday companies.

'The 60-mile Caledonian Canal has a mixture of canal reaches, open lochs and stunning scenery'

Environment

Scotland's environment is a major attraction of the country. Visitors from all over the world revel in the solitude and dramatic scenery encompassing much of the country. Soaring peaks with veins of snow trickling down their summits, steely blue lochs, deep inlets, forgotten beaches and surging peninsulas are a taste of the astonishing natural diversity. The best wildlife in Britain – from the mighty osprey to the red deer, its bellow reverberating among large strands of native forest – is found throughout the wild places of Scotland. Large chunks of land moored just offshore or miles out into the raging northern Atlantic Ocean, offer environmental gems for those with the inkling to explore island life.

THE LAND

The Scottish mainland can be neatly divided into three parts – the Southern Uplands, the Central Lowlands and the Highlands.

The Southern Uplands, a range of rounded hills covered with grass and heather, bounded by fertile coastal plains, form the southern boundary to the Central Lowlands. The geological divide – the Southern Uplands Fault – runs in a line from Girvan in Ayrshire to Dunbar in East Lothian.

The Central Lowlands lie in a broad band stretching from Glasgow and Ayr in the west to Edinburgh and Dundee in the east. This area is underlaid by sedimentary rocks, including the beds of coal and oil shale that fuelled Scotland's industrial revolution. Most of the country's industry, its two largest cities and 80% of the population are concentrated here.

Another great geological divide – the Highland Boundary Fault – runs from Helensburgh in the west to Stonehaven on the east coast, and marks the southern edge of the Scottish Highlands. These Highland hills – most of their summits reach to around the 900m to 1000m mark – were deeply dissected by glaciers during the last Ice Age, creating a series of deep, U-shaped valleys: the long, narrow sea lochs that today are such a feature of Highland scenery.

Remember that, for all their pristine beauty, the wild, empty landscapes of the western and northern Highlands are artificial wildernesses. Before the Highland Clearances (see the boxed text, p360) many of these empty corners of Scotland supported sizable populations.

WILDLIFE

Scotland's wildlife is one of its big attractions and an organised safari (p224) geared towards wildlife-watching can be the best way to see it. Many species that have disappeared from, or are rare in, the rest of Britain survive here, including red deer, golden eagles, otters, wildcats and ospreys.

Scotland's flowering plants are an attractive feature of the landscape, especially for walkers, and its precious areas of native forest a highlight for visitors.

Animals

Red deer are in large numbers in Scotland, but the reindeer (apart from a herd of introduced domestic reindeer living in a semiwild state in the Cairngorms), beaver and aurochs (wild ox) are all long extinct; the last wolf was shot in Sutherland in 1700. In mid-2007 the Scottish government signalled plans to reintroduce the beaver on a trial basis, probably in Argyll. A small population of wildcats survives in parts of the Highlands but they are extremely shy and rarely seen in the wild.

Otters are found in most parts of Scotland, around the coast and along salmon and trout rivers. The best places to spot them are in the northwest, especially in

Skye and the Outer Hebrides. The piers at Kyle of Lochalsh and Portree are otter 'hot spots', as the otters have learned to scavenge from fishing boats.

Bred for their quality beef, Highland cattle are Scotland's most distinctive bovine breed. They are fierce looking (with their horns) but docile-natured, with long reddish-brown coats.

The blue mountain hare dwells in high mountain environments, and swaps a grey-brown summer coat for a pure white winter one.

The waters off Scotland's west coast are rich in marine mammals, including whales. Dolphins and porpoises are fairly common, and in summer minke whales are regular visitors. Growing up to 10m long, they make an impressive sight when they breach through a shoal of herring fry. (Minke whales have also been spotted around the Isle of May in the Firth of Forth.) Both the Atlantic grey (identified by its roman nose) and the common seal (with a face like a dog) can be seen along the coast of Scotland, including Arran's shoreline (p169).

BIRDS

Scotland has an immense variety of bird species and this is one of its premier wildlife attractions. For bird-watchers, the Shetland Islands (see p432) are paradise. Twenty-one of the British Isles' 24 seabird species are found here and being entertained by the clownish antics of the puffin is a highlight for visitors.

Large numbers of grouse – a popular game bird – graze the heather on the moors. The ptarmigan (a type of grouse) is a native of the hills, seldom seen below 700m, with the unusual feature of having feathered feet. It is the only British bird that plays the Arctic trick of changing its plumage from mottled brown in summer to dazzling white in winter, the better to blend in with the snowfields. In heavily forested areas you may see a capercaillie, a black, turkey-like bird and the largest member of the grouse family. Birds of prey, such as the golden eagle, osprey, peregrine falcon and hen harrier, are protected. Millions of greylag geese winter on Lowland stubble fields.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Scotland is home to many endangered mammals and birds that are constantly threatened by the changing environment.

The habitat of the once common corncrake, for example, was almost completely wiped out by modern farming methods. Farmers now receive a subsidy for mowing in a corncrake-friendly fashion and there are good prospects for the bird's survival. Listen for their distinctive call – like a thumbnail drawn along the teeth of a comb – on the Isle of Coll (p310) and at Loch Gruinart Nature Reserve on Islay (p292).

In early 2007 the squirrelpox virus, spread by the introduced grey squirrel, was found in Lockerbie. Grey squirrels are unaffected by the disease, but red squirrels die about 15 days after infection; Scotland is home to 75% of Britain's red squirrel population and if this deadly disease is allowed to spread it could wipe out the country's remaining red squirrels.

On a more optimistic note, wildlife species that were slaughtered to the point of extermination in the 19th century – golden eagles, buzzards, pine martens, polecats and wildcats among them – are now protected by law and are slowly recovering. Both the red kite and the white-tailed sea eagle, absent from Scotland since the 19th century, have been successfully reintroduced.

The majestic osprey (absent for most of the 20th century) nests in Scotland from mid-March through to September, after migrating from West Africa. There are around 200 breeding pairs and you can see nesting sites throughout the country, including at Loch Garten (p335) and Loch of the Lowes (p227). White-tailed sea eagles, the fourth largest eagle in the world and distinguishable by their yellow beak and talons, are found along the

Scotland accounts for one third of the British mainland's surface area, but it has a massive 80% of Britain's coastline and only 10% of its population.

One of the best-loved pieces of Scottish wildlife writing is *Ring of Bright Water* by Gavin Maxwell, in which the author describes life on the remote Glenelg peninsula with his two pet otters in the 1950s.

A beautifully written book about Scotland's wildlife, penned by a man who lived and breathed alongside the country's critters in a remote part of the Highlands, is *A Last Wild Place* by Mike Tomkies.

Scottish Natural Heritage (www.snh.org.uk) is the government agency responsible for the conservation of Scotland's wildlife, habitats and landscapes. A key initiative is to reverse biodiversity loss.

west coast and in the Hebrides – visitors can see them (via closed-circuit TV cameras at a secret nesting site) at the Aros Experience on Skye (p384). Galloway Forest Park (p184) is a good place to spot red kites.

Plants

Although the thistle is commonly associated with Scotland, the national flower is the Scottish bluebell, which carpets the floor of native woodlands in spring. Heather, whose tiny pink and purple flowers emerge in August, covers much of the hills and moors. Other conspicuous flowering plants include the introduced vivid pink rhododendrons – which grow vigorously but tend to displace native trees and shrubs – and bright yellow gorse (or whin), which both flower in May and June. Only 1% of Scotland's ancient woodlands survive, but regeneration forests are slowly covering more of the landscape – especially in the Highlands. Perthshire (p216) is home to many woodlands (and a 5000-year-old yew tree; p225) and forest walks.

NATIONAL PARKS

Scotland has two national parks – **Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park** (www.lochlomond-trossachs.org) and the **Cairngorms National Park** (www.cairngorms.co.uk). Plans for the country's first national marine park were shelved by the Scottish Executive in 2007. Instead, priority is being given to a dedicated Marine Bill with a focus on sustainability to manage Scotland's coastlines and seas.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Wind farms and the use of alternative power sources for electricity generation are hot topics on Scotland's environmental front. Essentially concentrations of giant, electricity-generating windmills, wind farms are a key element of the government's commitment to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and meeting climate-change targets. The Scottish Executive has set a target of generating 40% of electricity in Scotland from renewable sources by 2020.

Although this involves a mix of green sources – plans to build a wave farm on Orkney are back on track after setbacks in 2005 – it appears wind is top of the list. The problem is, although everyone agrees that wind power is clean and economical, there's a powerful NIMBY (not in my back yard) element who don't want the windmills spoiling their view. There are also concerns that wind farms could have a detrimental effect on tourism, birdlife and nearby airport radar stations.

Small community wind farms are seen as a way forward. The island of Gigha was the first community wind farm in Scotland, its three turbines supplying all the power the island needs and selling its surplus to the National Grid. However, the escalating cost, and increased global demand for turbines has made them difficult to acquire. Communities in Westray, Tiree, North Harris and Melness in Sutherland are all waiting for turbines.

But for large scale commercial farms it's full steam ahead: there are large-scale wind farms around the country in, for example, Orkney and Braes Doune in Stirlingshire. Currently the most controversial large-scale project is a proposed wind farm on the Isle of Lewis. The massive 181-turbine proposal is under heavy fire from local crofters with a decision pending from the Scottish Executive.

There has been much debate in government and community circles on whether to increase reliance on nuclear power for electricity generation. Although the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has signalled his government's intent to build a new generation of nuclear power stations to help cut greenhouse gas emissions, the SNP-led Scottish Executive has ruled out the construction of new nuclear power stations in Scotland.

Friends of the Earth Scotland (www.foe-scotland.org.uk), a voluntary organisation campaigning on all kinds of environmental issues, has about 10 local groups based around the country.

Scottish Environment LINK (www.scotlink.org), the umbrella body for Scotland's voluntary environmental organisations, includes 36 bodies committed to environmental sustainability.

When Braes of Doune wind farm recently came online it made the UK one of only seven countries able to produce more than two gigawatts of power from wind.

PROTECTED AREAS

Park	Features	Activities	Best time to visit	Page
Balranald Nature Reserve	lochans (small lochs), moor & marsh: corncrakes, red-necked phalaropes	bird-watching	Apr-Aug	p399
Caenlochan National Nature Reserve	mountain & glen: rare alpine flora	hill walking	Jul & Aug	p243
Cairngorms National Park	subarctic mountain plateau, native pine forests: ospreys, ptarmigans, pine martens	hill walking, climbing, skiing	Aug	p329
Craigellachie Nature Reserve	pine forest, crags: capercaillies, peregrine falcons	walking	May-Sep	p331
Galloway Forest Park	hills, forests, lochs: red deer, red kites	walking, mountain biking	Oct	p184
Glen Affric National Nature Reserve	mountain, loch, native pine forest: golden eagles, red deer, pine martens, wildcats	hill walking	Jul-Oct	p324
Hermaness Nature Reserve	coastal cliffs: puffins	bird-watching	Apr-Aug	p434
Inverpolly Nature Reserve	mountain, loch & moorland: red deer, wildcats, otters, golden eagles, peregrine falcons, red-throated divers	walking	Apr-Oct	p371
Isle of Rum National Nature Reserve	dramatic rocky mountains & coast: red deer, wild goats, golden eagles, white-tailed sea eagles, Manx shearwaters	walking, hill walking, bird-watching	Apr-Oct	p350
Loch Druidibeg National Nature Reserve	freshwater loch, farmland, machair: dunlins, redshanks, ringed plovers, greylag geese, corncrakes	bird-watching, walking	Apr-Oct	p400
Loch Gruinart Nature Reserve	farmland, tidal flats: corncrakes, migrating geese & waders	bird-watching	Apr-Oct	p292
Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park	scenic lochs, forests, hills	hill walking, angling, water sports	Sep-Nov	p267
Noss National Nature Reserve	spectacular coastal cliffs: nesting seabirds	bird-watching	May-Aug	p428
St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve	coastal cliffs: nesting seabirds	walking, bird-watching	Apr & May	p152

In Caithness, the Dounreay nuclear-waste-reprocessing plant (p367) had a poor safety record over several decades. Following a series of accidents and disclosures about errors and cover-ups – around 170kg of weapons-grade uranium remains unaccounted for – the British government decided to close it down in 1998. However cleaning up the site and storing the waste safely will take until 2036 and cost £2.7 billion; after that it'll take until 2095 to dismantle the plant safely and encase the remains in concrete.

With rapidly declining fish stocks, especially cod, the viability of Scotland's fishing industry is in doubt and strict quotas imposed by the EU to sustain the industry are controversial. The new Scottish Executive is trying to find ways of sustaining the fishing industry by the introduction of the Marine Bill (see opposite); and by considering a proposal involving voluntary real-time closures of sea areas, instigated by skippers at sea when juvenile cod are encountered.

Sustainable Scotland (www.sustainable-scotland.net/climatechange) is a local government initiative to combat climate change and address sustainability in Scotland. Learn about community efforts to tackle a global problem.

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