

Scotland looks ahead

VisitScotland is hopeful for what 2021 will bring

Visiting Scotland in 2021 will continue to look a little different. As tourism businesses across Scotland began to reopen their doors from 15th July 2020, many were putting in place protocols to adhere to health and safety guidelines, as well as creating new products and job roles to ensure guests and staff felt comfortable in their surroundings.

When travelling around Scotland, visitors should look out for the [Good to Go](#) logo which highlights the tourism businesses working hard to adhere to government and public health guidance in order to reopen safely.

Now is the time to look ahead to 2021 and discover how Scottish tourism businesses are embracing life as we know it for their guests and the communities they belong to, whilst continuing to offer the warm welcome Scotland is renowned for.

Extending the personal touch

Edinburgh's very own luxury floating hotel, [Fingal](#), reopened with its first Wellbeing Manager. The role was established to ensure that overnight guests and local diners continued to enjoy a unique, luxurious and seamless experience onboard the five-star hotel. As cities across the UK continue to move through varying restrictions, [The Balmoral](#) has introduced *The Curfew Club*, an exclusive series of new in-room, after 10pm experiences, to curb guests' cravings for the well-loved Edinburgh nightlife. From a virtual whisky tasting with the hotel's very own SCOTCH ambassador, to a complimentary movie night accompanied by an indulgent cinematic inspired menu, there is an option for everyone.

Nestled in The Cairngorms National Park, [The Fife Arms](#) offers the perfect rural retreat. In response to Covid-19, the hotel has implemented a series of changes designed to give guests peace of mind whilst embracing the hotel's distinctive setting. These changes include an expanded team of ghillies, a self-guided outdoors directory and a glorious Highland Picnic. The team of ghillies will be available to support all guests' needs throughout their stay, 24 hours a day.

Keep it Clean

Scotland's distilleries were perhaps one of the first industries to make a change in the face of the pandemic when they switched up whisky and gin production to make hand sanitiser back in March. Their efforts can still be seen today as their sanitiser can be found in restaurants and bars around the country including from Port of Leith Distillery, Isle of Harris Distillers, Leith Distillery, Pickering's Gin and many more.

More stories about how Scotland responded to the pandemic are here:

<https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus/inspirational-news>

Pop-Up Pods

While outdoor dining became the trend of summer 2020, hospitality businesses in Scotland wouldn't let the notoriously unpredictable Scottish weather prevent their guests from tucking in al fresco. Dining pods and marquees have been popping up across the country to ensure guests stay warm, dry and feel safe whilst enjoying a meal with loved ones.

[Meldrum House](#) in Aberdeenshire has launched the [Under The Stars Experience](#), where guests can dine in atmospheric domes and enjoy a romantic evening admiring Scotland's [dark skies](#).

[Fonab Castle](#) in Perthshire also introduced Pod Dining with a series of Pods situated in the grounds of the estate with stunning views over Loch Faskally. Each pod provides a relaxing space for eating and drinking with friends and family.

Find out more about the innovative ways Scotland's tourism businesses are reopening here: <https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus-recovery/reopening-tourism-stories>

Scotland Has You Covered

While exploring Scotland, it is essential to wear a face covering in public indoor spaces (e.g. shops, visitor attractions, public transport, restaurants unless seated at your table) to keep people safe. Why not make a fashion statement by choosing a covering designed and produced by some of the talented Scottish textile businesses?

Many are offering the latest must-have accessories in a range of fabrics and designs – from Harris Tweed to your family tartan. [Prickly Thistle](#) and [Totty Rocks](#) are just two examples of many.

Trends

In its latest insights paper, [Navigating the New Normal – Post-Covid19 Consumer Trends](#), VisitScotland identified that convenience, reassurance, value, inspiration and connection will be key to recovery, with responsible and sustainable tourism at its core. Here are many ways these trends can be enjoyed across Scotland.

Back to Nature

Clean air, stunning vistas and magical moments in nature – travellers are appreciating the health benefits of spending time in the Great Outdoors more than ever before. In Scotland, it could not be easier to follow the call of the wild...

- Wild swimming – Why not take the plunge in Scotland? For a small country, Scotland boasts some of the wildest places to swim, from deep lochs to roaring waterfalls and vast sandy beaches. For beginners, guided wild swimming adventures can be a great option to get

started (offered by a number of providers across the country, for example [Soak Up Skye](#) on the Isle of Skye, [SwimWild](#) in the Highlands and [Immerse Hebrides](#) in the Outer Hebrides).

- Foraging – Scotland’s natural larder is truly bountiful and delicious. From berries to wild mushrooms and coastal delights – visitors can find for themselves the ingredients inspiring the menus at some of Scotland’s top restaurants by joining foraging experts for an unforgettable culinary adventure. Workshops can be booked with a number of providers, for example [Galloway Wild Foods](#) in Dumfries & Galloway and [Wildwood Bushcraft](#) in the Highlands.
- Stargazing - While Scotland waits for its famous nightlife to return when the time is right, it’s time to look to the skies as they put on a spectacular nightly show (weather permitting). Scotland boasts some of the darkest places in Europe, which makes it perfect for stargazing – wrap up warm, look up and enjoy! Find out more about stargazing in Scotland, including the best spots, [here](#).

Live Like a Local

Everything has been a little different in 2020 and the year has been defined by embracing a new way of living. Perhaps 2021 is the year to embrace a new style of holiday and live like a local – either in Scotland’s cities or the more rural parts of the country.

Agritourism has gone from strength to strength with holidaymakers looking to get their hands dirty down on the farm. Guests at [Arnprior Farm](#) near Stirling or [Newton Farm Holidays](#) in Angus can enjoy the freshest produce, from field to fork, experience farming life first-hand and, during lambing season, even help welcome the new arrivals – all while staying in luxurious, modern accommodation. More ideas for farm stays in Scotland: <https://www.visitscotland.com/holidays-breaks/farm-stays/>.

Equally in cities, 2021 is the year to discover the local favourites from quirky neighbourhoods like [Stockbridge](#) in [Edinburgh](#) and [Finnieston](#) in [Glasgow](#), to stand-alone eateries and independently-owned boutiques in [Dundee](#) and [Inverness](#). Now is the time to see the city from a local’s perspective, be it the [gardens](#) perfect for a picnic in [Aberdeen](#), the [family-run record store](#) in [Perth](#) or the go-to coffee shop for [a morning flat white](#) in [Stirling](#).

2021 is also the year to discover new stories; from the [BLM Mural Trail](#) to the [Invisible Cities Walking](#) tours, Scotland’s cities are showcasing voices that for too long have gone unheard. Art, history, culture, green spaces and mouthwatering food and drink, Scotland’s seven cities offer the perfect city break package.

Responsible Tourism

2021 is the year of renewed tourism, as travellers embrace a new world view. Both visitors and locals love Scotland’s stunning natural environments and want to preserve its beauty for generations to come. Everyone can enjoy Scotland responsibly, by spending more time in one destination, using public transport where possible, choosing to stay in environmentally friendly accommodation,

visiting off-season and committing to one simple rule: “Leave no trace.” Read [here](#) how to become a responsible tourist in 10 easy steps.

All those who actively seek to make a positive contribution to the environment while on holiday should consider a range of volunteering opportunities in Scotland. [Trees for Life](#) offer Conservation Weeks which allow participants to play their part in restoring the ancient Caledonian Forest. And working holidays with [The National Trust for Scotland](#) offer the chance to live and work in some of the most remote places of Scotland while making a real difference to the country’s natural heritage.

Opening in 2021

Following the bicentenary year of Johnnie Walker, Diageo continues its investment in whisky tourism in Scotland in 2021 with the opening of the flagship [Johnnie Walker Princes Street](#) in Edinburgh as well as revealing extensive renovations at brand homes including [Glenkinchie Distillery](#) in East Lothian.

[The Great Tapestry of Scotland](#) will get a new home in 2021 as the Great Tapestry of Scotland Visitor Centre opens its doors in Galashiels in the Scottish Borders. The new visitor attraction tells the story of Scotland through one of the world’s largest tapestries, created by more than 1000 stitchers in communities across Scotland.

The relaunch of the [David Livingstone Centre](#) in South Lanarkshire in 2021 will re-interpret his life for a new generation, telling his story from multiple perspectives, from his humble beginnings as a Blantyre mill-worker to becoming a world-famous adventurer.

The team behind Scotland’s carbon neutral gin and vodka will be opening their doors to visitors with the launch of [The Arbikie Distillery Experience](#) in Angus in 2021.

Inspired by the legend of Jan de Groot, [8 Doors Distillery](#), mainland Scotland’s most northerly distillery is set to open its doors in 2021 in John O’Groats.

[The Red Carnation Hotel Group](#) is set to open its first hotel in Scotland with the renovation of 100 Princes Street in Edinburgh. Opening summer 2021.

[The Treehouses at Lanrick](#) in Perthshire opened their doors in October 2020 inviting guests to enjoy a tree-top escape in luxury eco-friendly lodging.

[111 by Modou](#) is one of the newest additions to the restaurant scene in Glasgow and is set to delight diners into 2021. Head Chef Modou Digne first joined 111 in 2014 as a Kitchen Porter and is now leading the team to create pioneering foodie experiences.

[St James Quarter](#) a new world-class retail-led, mixed use destination will open in 2021 transforming Edinburgh’s East End into a vibrant destination for people to live, shop, experience and play.

[Cameron House Hotel](#) will reopen in 2021 following a sensitive restoration project at the luxury five-star resort Cameron House on Loch Lomond.

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Celebrations for Scotland's [Year of Coasts and Waters](#) continue into 2021. From the country's beautiful natural features, including coasts, lochs and rivers to the industrial heritage of the canals and mills, Scotland's culture, stories and way of life have been shaped by its coasts and waters.

Ends

For further ideas, stories, images or advice, please contact:

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Notes to editors

Covid-19 update

Scotland is gradually reopening as restrictions ease and new measures are put in place to ensure everyone's safety. However we continue to live in uncertain times and so, while we are delighted to be providing our media with a regular update once more, we ask that responsible travel is considered paramount for anyone planning a trip to Scotland.

- All visitors to Scotland must consult the Scottish Government website at www.gov.scot, VisitScotland's website www.visitscotland.com, the local destination website and contact their accommodation providers, transport providers and any attractions they plan to visit to ensure they are aware of all rules, restrictions and safety procedures relating to Covid-19.
- We recommend that visitors look for the [Good to Go logo](#). This is a new industry-wide standard and consumer mark developed to demonstrate that the business has completed a Covid-19 risk assessment to ensure they have everything in place to open safely.
- International visitors should check current quarantine and [government-imposed travel restrictions](#).

Responsible travel:

VisitScotland encourages visitors to respect local communities and plan ahead with the help of www.visitscotland.com. Helpful guidance can be found in VisitScotland's new [Visitor Charter](#) and the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#), which offers practical advice for all when enjoying Scotland's beautiful countryside.