



Iona Abbey, Argyll

House for an Art Lover, Glasgow

Mount Stuart

Kilmartin Glen, Lochgilphead, Argyll

Ideas to inspire

Glasgow, Ayrshire & Arran, Dumfries & Galloway and Argyll & the Isles

In 2017 Scotland will celebrate and showcase its rich history, heritage and archaeology. From the remains of our earliest settlements going back thousands of years, through the turbulent times of the Middle Ages and on to the Scottish Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, every area of Scotland has its own tale to share with visitors.

The city of Glasgow has a stunning mix of architectural styles, not least the art nouveau buildings created by celebrated Glasgow architect and designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh. You can explore the area's rich industrial heritage at sites such as the Titan Crane, which recalls the heyday of the city's shipping industry, or New Lanark Mill, a beautifully restored 18th century cotton mill village, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The history and heritage of Ayrshire & Arran has many facets ranging from ancient stone circles to splendid castles. Culzean Castle was a favourite holiday spot of US President Eisenhower – there's even an apartment named after him within the Castle. This is also the birthplace of Scotland's celebrated national poet Robert Burns.

Some of Scotland's most magnificent castles also can be found in Dumfries & Galloway, from the unique moated Caerlaverock Castle to the impressive Drumlanrig Castle, seat of the Dukes of Buccleuch. Perhaps the most famous place of all is Gretna Green to which many couples have eloped since the 18th century.

Many places in Argyll give a special feeling of connection with the distant past. These include the peaceful sanctuary of Iona Abbey, Finlaggan - the ancient seat of the Lordship of the Isles, and Kilmartin Glen which includes 800 internationally significant prehistoric sites. Don't miss fairytale Inveraray Castle, seat of the Duke of Argyll and head of Clan Campbell, and Mount Stuart on the Isle of Bute, perhaps Scotland's most unusual stately home.

Events:

Celtic Connections – January – Taking place in 20 venues across Glasgow, Celtic Connections is an eclectic roots music festival that celebrates Scotland's Celtic roots as well as other inspirational types of music from across the globe. www.celticconnections.com

Big Burns Supper – January – Though Robert Burns was from Ayrshire he spent his last years in Dumfries & Galloway. The Big Burns Supper celebrates the area's connections with the bard with this nine day festival of his life and work. Expect haggis aplenty plus music, comedy, poetry and more. www.bigburnsupper.com

Burns an' a' that Festival – May – The words penned by Scotland's national poet Robert Burns will forever be a part of Scotland's history. His legacy is marked by this annual tribute featuring live music, visual and performance art, family entertainment, food and drink and much more. www.burnsfestival.com

Isle of Arran Mountain Festival – May – The Isle of Arran boasts some of Ayrshire's best known natural landmarks, including Goat Fell, Lochranza and Holy Isle. The festival allows visitors to experience them along with expert local guides to share the history of the area. www.arranmountainfestival.co.uk

Cowal Highland Gathering – August – Held in Dunoon on the Cowal Peninsula, Cowal Highland Gathering is renowned for its unique atmosphere, world-class competitors, beautiful Highland location and spine-tingling salute to the Chieftain as well as a wide range of family entertainment. www.cowalhighlandgathering.com

Mackintosh Festival – October – The influence of Charles Rennie Mackintosh on the architectural landscape of Glasgow is celebrated in this festival of walks, talks, exhibitions and performances inspired by his work. www.glasgowmackintosh.com/festival

Glasgow, Ayrshire & Arran, Dumfries & Galloway and Argyll & the Isles

Day 1 - Glasgow & Clyde Valley



1
NEW LANARK WORLD HERITAGE SITE – One of Scotland's six UNESCO World Heritage sites, New Lanark is a beautifully preserved Scottish cotton mill village established in the 18th century. Discover why it became known for its enlightened management and social pioneering during the Industrial Revolution.



2
HUNTERIAN MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY – The Hunterian is Scotland's oldest public museum (founded in 1807) and contains a fascinating range of exhibits, including Roman artefacts, scientific instruments used by James Watt, and the world's largest single holdings of works by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and John McNeill Whistler.



3
RIVERSIDE MUSEUM OF TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL – The multi-award winning Riverside Museum is home to over 3,000 objects that detail Glasgow's rich past from its days as a maritime powerhouse to a glimpse into daily Glasgow life in the 20th Century. The fine collection ranges from cars, bicycles, trams and locomotives to prams and skateboards!



4
TITAN CRANE – The Titan Crane stands as testament to the proud heritage of the area's shipping industry. Erected in 1907, it was used to help fit various ships including the Lusitania, the Queen Mary, the Royal Yacht Britannia and the QE2. Take the lift to the top to enjoy stunning views of the River Clyde and the surrounding countryside.



5
HOUSE FOR AN ART LOVER – House for an Art Lover was originally designed by Mackintosh as an 'elegant country retreat for a person of taste and culture', and it's a fabulous example of his distinctive art nouveau style. Follow the Mackintosh Trail to discover more about how his vision shaped many of Glasgow's most distinctive buildings.

Day 2 - Ayrshire & Arran



1
BRODICK CASTLE – Brodick Castle on Arran is an example of Scottish baronial style dating from 1844, but in fact the history of the site goes back more than 800 years. Settlers have included ancient kings of Dalriada, the Vikings, and various Scottish clans. Today it's an opulent country house particularly notable for its stunning gardens and views across the Firth of Clyde.



2
ROBERT BURNS BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM – The Robert Burns Birthplace Museum comprises the famous Burns Cottage where Scotland's national poet was born, the historic landmarks where he set his greatest poems, and a modern museum housing the world's most important collection of his life and works.



3
CULZEAN CASTLE – With its dramatic clifftop setting, Robert Adam architecture and fascinating history, 18th century Culzean Castle is one of Scotland's most popular visitor attractions. The castle offers self-catering accommodation, including the Eisenhower Apartment named after the former US President who stayed here.



4
MACHRIE MOOR STONE CIRCLES – The Isle of Arran is rich in prehistoric sites, including these remains of six stone Bronze Age circles. Machrie Moor is strewn with standing stones, burial cairns and hut circles, some of which are thought to date back to more than 4,500 years ago. There are fine views to snow-capped Goat Fell and out to sea.



5
DUMFRIES HOUSE – Dumfries House was designed by the famous Adam brothers, and is a former home of the Marquesses of Bute. It was purchased for the nation by HRH Prince Charles in 2007, and visitors can now explore this grand stately home, including the outstanding collection of Chippendale furniture. There are also 2,000 acres of lovely grounds to explore.

Day 3 - Dumfries & Galloway



1
DRUMLANRIG CASTLE – Drumlanrig Castle, seat of the Dukes of Buccleuch, is one of Scotland's most important Renaissance buildings. The magnificent rooms contain spectacular collections of silver, porcelain, furniture and art, while the surrounding Queensberry Estate contains a country park and Victorian gardens, as well as a network of cycle trails and abundant wildlife.



2
ROBERT BURNS HOUSE – In this house, Scotland's national poet spent the last years of his life, writing some of his best known poems. Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats are known to have visited it. See original manuscripts and some of Burns' personal belongings, including his desk and chair in the study where he created some of his finest works.



3
GRETNA GREEN FAMOUS BLACKSMITH'S SHOP – This famous place is where couples have come to marry since 1754, when the introduction of stricter English marriage laws caused countless couples to flee across the border to take advantage of Scotland's more lenient laws. Find out why this unique venue is still popular with brides and grooms today.



4
SWEETHEART ABBEY – This splendid 13th century red-sandstone abbey was founded by Lady Devorgilla of Galloway, in memory of her husband Lord John Balliol, King of Scots (1292-1296). Concerns over his kingship gave rise to the famous 'auld alliance' treaty with France. Lady Devorgilla is buried here along with a casket containing her husband's heart.



5
CAERLAVEROCK CASTLE – With its moat, twin-towered gatehouse and imposing battlements, Caerlaverock Castle is the epitome of the medieval stronghold and one of the finest castle ruins in Scotland. Its turbulent history owes much to its proximity to England which brought it into border conflicts, recounted in the siege warfare exhibition.

Day 4 - Argyll & the Isles



1
KILMARTIN MUSEUM / KILMARTIN GLEN – Kilmartin Museum tells the story of Kilmartin Glen, Scotland's richest prehistoric landscape. The glen is home to over 800 internationally significant prehistoric sites dating back over 5,000 years, including rock art, standing stones, Neolithic and Bronze Age burial cairns and Dunadd Hill Fort, home to Scotland's earliest kings.



2
MOUNT STUART – Mount Stuart on the Isle of Bute, ancestral home of the Marquesses of Bute, is Scotland's most unusual stately home. The unique red sandstone Victorian Gothic exterior of the house is matched by its striking interior, which reflects the interests of its creator, the 3rd Marquess, including astrology, science, astronomy and nature.



3
IONA ABBEY – The serene Isle of Iona is home to one of the oldest and most sacred religious places in Western Europe. The tiny island has been a vibrant centre of Christian worship since St Columba arrived there in AD 563. The Abbey and Nunnery were founded around 1200. Today the Abbey is a lovely tranquil place with a tranquil, spiritual atmosphere.



4
INVERARAY CASTLE – Inveraray Castle is the ancestral home of the Duke of Argyll, Chief of Clan Campbell. The Campbells arrived in Argyll in 1220 to take charge of the King's lands and have played a prominent role in the area's history ever since. The castle's fairytale façade was developed in the 18th century and is based on a French chateau design.



5
FINLAGGAN – The islands of Loch Finlaggan on the Isle of Islay contain the remains of the Lordship of the Isles. These Macdonald Lords were descended from Somerled, a 12th century prince, and they chose Finlaggan as their home. The area's unique atmosphere and the interpretive centre add to the experience of visiting this magical place.