

Moray & Banffshire



Front cover: Strathisla Distillery
This page: Cullen

The very definition of 'off the beaten track', the northeast corner of Scotland casts a spell on first-time visitors that causes them to return time and time again. It could be the unique light which makes the whitewashed fishing villages sparkle alluringly, the tempting array of single malt whiskies which seem to stem organically from the heather-strewn soil or simply the warmth and welcome of the local people. In this region rich in heritage and traditional culture, you'll soon feel the magic that inspired the film 'Local Hero'.

welcome

BASE YOURSELF IN

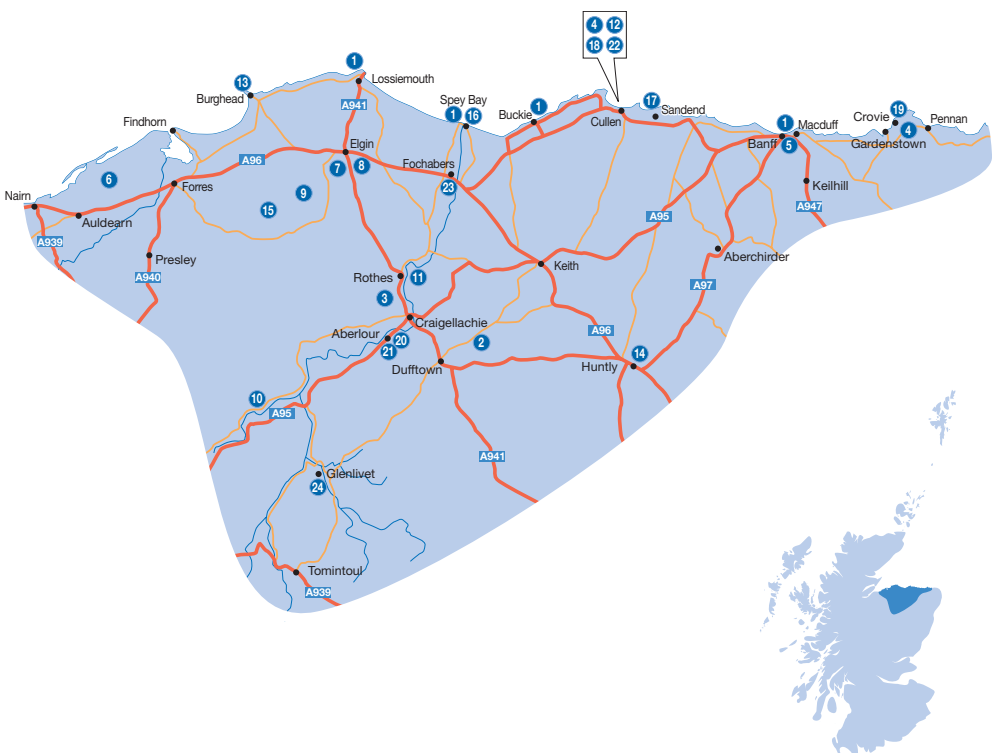
- Banff
- Cullen
- Elgin
- Forres
- Huntly

IDEAL FOR

- Whisky
- Castles
- Gardens
- Coastal villages

To find out more about accommodation in these areas, call 0845 22 55 121 or click on visitscotland.com

LOCATION MAP



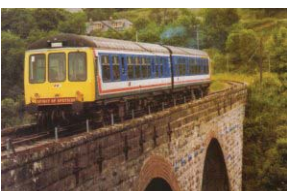
Principal photography: Paul Tomkins/Scottish Viewpoint
All information checked in August 2005. VisitScotland can accept no responsibility for errors.

DON'T MISS



1. For the ultimate opportunity to 'get back to nature' take a wildlife cruise along the **Moray Firth**. Sailingwild from Lossiemouth, Gemini Explorer from Buckie, North 58° from Banff and Puffin Cruises from Macduff are just some of the boat operators offering the chance to spot dolphins, porpoises, seabirds and seals in stunning surroundings. Pop into the Moray Firth Wildlife Centre at Spey Bay to learn more. £

£ Paid Entry



2. An eleven-mile stretch of **railway** track from the malt whisky capital of Dufftown to the market town of Keith will take you through some of the most picturesque scenery in the area. Leave the car behind and enjoy the train journey which will reward you with an adventure into the heart of Speyside. Pre or post journey, grab a bite to eat at the Buffer Stop on the platform at Dufftown. £

\$ Seasonal

♿ Disabled Access

🐕 Dogs Allowed

☕ Tea-Room

🛍 Gift Shop

WC WC



3. The Malt Whisky Trail incorporates eight distilleries and the Speyside cooperage. This is an excellent way to find out all about Scotland's National Drink. Indeed, two annual celebrations of whisky take place each year at the **Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival** in late April/early May and the **Autumn Speyside Whisky Festival** in late September. Fine malts such as Glenlivet and Glenfiddich can be savoured as well as kilt-making demonstrations and tours of nearby distilleries. £ \$ ☕ 🛍 WC



4. A succession of unique and wonderfully picturesque **fishing villages** lines the coast of the region. Many are situated below steep sandstone cliffs, with little room for traffic along their narrow waterfront streets. Particularly renowned is the community of **Pennan**, east of Macduff, which doubled as 'Ferness' in Bill Forsyth's much-loved film 'Local Hero'. Other villages well worth visiting are **Crovie**, **Cullen** and **Gardenstown**. £ ♿ ☕ 🛍 WC



5. Built as the seat of the Earl of Fife between 1735 and 1740, **Duff House, Banff**, has been welcoming visitors for over two and a half centuries and is now an outpost of the National Galleries of Scotland. The house has in previous years taken the form of a palm court hotel, a sanatorium and a prisoner of war camp. Today it stands as a country house gallery, following extensive renovation. £ ♿ ☕ 🛍 WC

FCS: Forestry Commission Scotland
NTS: National Trust for Scotland
HS: Historic Scotland



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Malt Whisky Trail

DRIVES

The north-eastern corner of Scotland prides itself on its wealth of themed car trails, and the three within this area take in some truly world-class attractions. The Whisky Trail, signposted throughout Speyside, offers the opportunity to visit eight of the most famous distilleries on earth, along with the Speyside Cooperage. To the south and east, the Castle Trail winds its way between some of Scotland’s finest fairytale homes and fortresses. Meanwhile, all around the shoreline, the Grampian Coastal Trail incorporates some of the prettiest fishing communities in Britain, rich in character and heritage. Between these communities, you’ll encounter unspoilt beaches and spectacular cliffs which make for a memorable touring holiday.

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HERITAGE & GARDENS

6. Built in the 16th century, **Brodie Castle** is located 4½ miles west of Forres in a peaceful wooded setting. The castle contains a magnificent collection of paintings and art. The gardens, open year round, include woodland walks, a nature trail and a unique collection of daffodils which carpet the grounds in spring. A haven for wildlife, specially constructed hides can be found throughout the grounds. Nearby Brodie Countryfare is ideal for a lunch stop post-visit. (NTS) £ \$ ♿ 📖 WC

7. One of the most awe-inspiring ruins in Scotland, **Elgin Cathedral** contains the country’s finest octagonal chapter house. The infamous ‘Wolf of Badenoch’ (otherwise known as Bishop Alexander Stewart) set fire to the church in 1390, forcing much modification in the architectural style. (HS) £ ♿ 📖 WC

8. Incorporating all 110 plants mentioned in the Bible, the **Biblical Garden**, adjacent to Elgin Cathedral, is a unique attraction which depicts the different parables. Open May to September, this garden will appeal to those who study the scriptures and also those who simply enjoy gardens and gardening. \$

9. **Pluscarden Abbey** is the only medieval monastery in Britain still inhabited by monks and being used for its original purpose. This beautiful abbey, founded in 1230 by Alexander II, is found 6 miles west of Elgin in tranquil surroundings. Striking architecture and a restful atmosphere combine to make this a must-visit attraction. ♿ 📖 WC

10. Set in magnificent grounds between the River Spey and the River Avon, the gardens of **Ballindalloch Castle** include a walled garden which was redesigned in 1996 to mark the 350th anniversary of the castle. Still a much loved family home, the castle dates back to at least the 16th century. £ \$ ♿ 📖 WC

11. A Victorian garden, the **Glen Grant Distillery Garden** has been renovated meticulously using historical evidence, old maps and memories of the local people. The garden includes mature orchards, old woodland walk and Major Grant’s Dram Hut. \$ ♿ 📖 WC



LOW LEVEL WALKS

12. Cullen – Logie Head – Findlater Castle – Sandend – This unspoilt coastline boasts cliffs and bays interspersed with traditional fishing villages. The walk from Cullen to the quaint village of Sandend arrives at a beautiful sandy bay – Sandside beach – and, just beyond it, Findlater Castle, an ancient ruined fortress built on a narrow promontory. The first stage of the walk is along good paths with sections of beach but the second half is less developed, so may be less manageable for some. Allow 3 hours for the full 4-mile route. 📖 WC

13. Burghead – Hopeman Circular Walk – This is another coastal walk between two peaceful villages on the coast of Moray. The walk passes several quiet sandy beaches and has extensive views across the Moray Firth. You can start at either end, and shops, food and drink are available in either village. From Burghead the path follows the track of a long disused and removed railway line, a spur line linking the two villages. You can return by the same path or instead follow a path alongside the shore. Allow 3 – 3½ hours for the 4-mile route. 📖 WC

14. Huntly and the Banks of the River Deveron – Starting in the centre of Huntly, this walk leads to Huntly Castle (HS) along an avenue of lime trees. It then passes through a picnic area, past a dry cross-country ski centre, and follows a riverside walk out into the countryside before returning to the town centre in a circular route. This 3-mile route should take no more than 2 hours. 📖 WC

15. Black Burn Trail, Torrieston Forest – This 1-mile ‘all abilities’ trail south-west of Elgin winds through the woods to the delightful meandering Black Burn. Resting places and a picnic area make this an ideal walk for less active visitors and wheelchair users. Perfect for seeing a wide variety of woodland birds, including siskins and warblers or even a roe deer. (FCS) ♿ WC



VIEWS



16. Spey Bay is a haven for wildlife and popular among walkers for the magnificent views available. Situated on the east side of the Spey estuary, the site also offers a number of walks to suit all ranges of ability. Fantastic views of the Moray Firth can be enjoyed from Kingston.

17. Findlater Castle and **Sandend**, situated 2 miles east of Cullen, provide fantastic coastal views (see walks).

18. 30 minutes drive from Elgin, the town of **Cullen** and its surroundings epitomise north-east coastal scenery. Disused railway viaducts make for extremely interesting photographs of the vicinity and are best viewed looking up at the town from the seafront.

19. East of Macduff on the B9031, **Crovie** viewpoint is home to stunning views of a remarkable coastal village. This clifftop vantage point also contains a picnic area and is ideal for a lunchtime stop.

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Brodie Castle

FOOD & DRINK

20. In the centre of Aberlour, the **Old Pantry Restaurant** offers fresh, local produce to ensure that high quality food is served throughout the day. Noted for its homemade scones and cakes, this is an ideal place to stop for a snack or lunch while exploring Speyside. WC

21. Also in Aberlour is the renowned **Walkers Shortbread Factory**, complete with a shop offering all your favourite varieties. Ideal for stocking up or for purchasing gifts to take home! 📖

22. While in the area ensure you try **Cullen Skink** – a thick soup made with the morning’s catch of smoked haddock. This local speciality is sure to warm you up before setting off to explore the coastal village of Cullen.

23. Renowned for use of fresh ingredients in their quality soups and sauces, **Baxters Highland Village** is situated beside the small village of Fochabers. There’s a range of gift shops and a restaurant to sample Baxters’ local produce. ♿ 📖 WC

24. Discover how the different elements of Scottish life affect the taste of a whisky. Each distillery produces different tasting malts, while taking influences from their surroundings and using different distilling equipment. The **Glenlivet Distillery** is on the B9008 and has a visitor centre well worth a visit. \$ ♿ 📖 WC



Baxters Highland Village