

A Guide for Disabled Visitors

# CASTLES & BATTLEFIELDS

ACCESSIBLE

HIGHLIGHTS

GUIDE

EUAN'S

# WELCOME TO CASTLES & BATTLEFIELDS!

All throughout Scotland there are remnants of the country's battle-scarred past, but what few people know is that many of these castles and battlefields can be unexpectedly accessible.

Inside this guide you'll find a Lochside ruin with an excellent visualisation guide; a mighty fortress with ramps wide and sturdy enough to move cannons; a haunted castle with wheelchair accessible gardens that seem to go on forever; battlefields brought to life by audio guides; and a hidden pine forest beach with a curious story to tell.

This collection of castles and battlefields is waiting to be explored, and we hope that it will give local and visiting disabled people a flavour for Scottish history; as well as practical information about accessibility before venturing out to these rural and urban ruins, castles and historic sites.

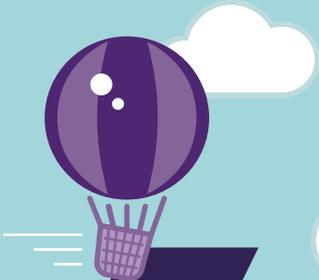
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**LOCH NESS**  
Urquhart Castle



**THE HIGHLANDS**  
Elgin Cathedral  
Duffus Castle  
Spynie Castle  
Culloden  
Brodie Castle  
Boath Doocot  
Fort George  
Roseisle Forest  
Clava Cairns  
Burghead Pict Fort

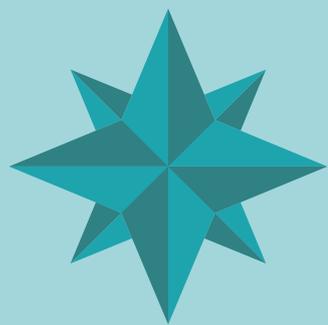


**ABERDEENSHIRE**  
Crathes Castle



**STIRLINGSHIRE**  
Bannockburn  
The Wallace Monument  
Stirling Castle  
Doune Castle

N



**SCOTLAND**

# A HAUNTING IN THE FRIENDLIEST OF CASTLES



**Whether you love wandering around castles or getting lost in walled gardens, Crathes Castle has something for everyone. Just watch out for its ghostly apparitions...**

Dusty pink in colour, with charming turrets, towers and intricately painted ceilings; Crathes Castle could have been plucked straight from a fairy tale. The 16th century tower house belonged to the Burnett family who kept their castle safe from the tumultuous conflicts sweeping across Scotland at

the time. As such, the castle and its acres of magical gardens remain beautifully intact. Not all is as it seems however, as reports of a ghostly Green Lady pacing the castle hint at a gloomier story beneath the friendly façade of Crathes Castle...

Upon arrival, there is a signpost directing visitors to a dedicated parking area for Blue Badge holders beside the ticket office, café and shop. From here, a short walk takes you to the castle entrance where attentive staff will swiftly unveil a portable ramp should you require it. Once inside, you can admire the intricate designs, ornate furniture and begin to explore and imagine the Burnett family home.



Credit: Paul J Ralph



### DON'T MISS...

Get a sense of the upper levels with the video footage on the ground floor of the castle.

The ground floor is accessible to wheelchair users, however there is more to see upstairs including the tower and its views across the gardens. If you plan to explore the ground floor only, there is a video in the final room which gives a sense of the rooms above.

The adventure doesn't end there though; there are one and a half hectares of walled garden waiting to be explored outside! Be sure to admire the old maze-like yew hedges, mature trees, exotic plants, lavender garden, and topiary art as you enter the various themed gardens overlooked by the castle.

If you want to go further, the woodland pathway to Caroline's Garden has been marked as an accessible trail.



### QUICK TIP

Look out for friendly volunteers in the walled gardens. They can point the way to accessible routes and shortcuts.



## LET THE BATTLE UNFOLD

**The site of a brutal, bloody war; this monumented parkland has a foreboding and eerie atmosphere that is felt by all who step out of the visitor centre and onto the battlefield.**

With barely a trace of war left behind, The Battle of Bannockburn visitor centre gives an essence of how the dramatic fight between Scots and English unfolded in 1314. With a combination of 3D technology and access to the site of the battle, you can choose to take the action head on in an electrifying 3D experience, or embrace the quiet and eerily calm battlefield outdoors.

Located a few miles outside of Stirling, The Battle of Bannockburn Visitor Centre is equipped with a car park fit for an army. Wide accessible parking bays are situated close to the Visitor Centre, but if you are arriving by public transport, be aware that it is a fair walk across the car park from the main road.

As you step through the automated doors to the centre, you will find that it is bright, modern and spacious with colourful banners and coats of arms adding a splash of colour up above. Here there is a café, shop, accessible toilet and the ticketed 3D exhibition. Wheelchair users keen to join the 3D experience are advised to contact the centre before visiting so that an alternative access route can be ready and waiting for you when you arrive. If the high intensity 3D display is not for you, head straight out onto the calmer tree-lined avenue that stretches toward the commemorative Rotunda and bronze Robert the Bruce statue beyond.



### QUICK TIP

As you approach the Rotunda, there is a lengthy, fairly steep ramp which some manual wheelchair users may prefer assistance with, however, the ascent is worth it!



Credit: Ian D Martin

## A LANDMARK FOR HEROES

**Whether you settle in the Legends Coffee House for a hearty breakfast or climb the 246 winding steps through Scotland's dramatic fight for freedom, The National Wallace Monument is an exhilarating place to be.**

The daunting landmark perched on top of volcanic outcrop is unmissable to those who set eyes upon the Stirling skyline. Striking, fearless and world-famous; The National Wallace Monument celebrates the story of Sir William Wallace, Guardian of Scotland.

The monument and visitor centre are both clearly signposted from the city below, leading to a large car park with accessible parking bays lining the path adjacent to the visitor centre. Inside the visitor centre, you'll find the ticket office, accessible toilet, gift shop and Legends Coffee House known for the friendliest of welcomes.



### DON'T MISS...

If you climb the monument, don't forget to visit The Wallace Sword in The Hall of Heroes.

For those who wish to ascend the monument, you can look forward to a journey through stained glass studded galleries all the way up to panoramic views of massive hills, distant mountains and the old city of Stirling below. The courtesy minibus is an excellent way to reach the entrance, and afterwards you can enjoy the woodcarvings on the Wallace Way walk back down.

If you would prefer to stay at ground level, Legends Coffee House inside the monument visitor centre is a welcome alternative with tasty Scottish produce; and it's one of Stirling's best breakfast spots!



### QUICK TIP

Taking the minibus up to the monument and walking back down is the best way to see everything.

# A HIDDEN GEM IN THE PALACE VAULTS



**Unicorns, tapestries, sculptures and countless lavish fixtures adorn its decadent stone buildings; but be sure to find your bearings before you get lost in the grandeur of Stirling Castle.**

Home to generations of Scotland's great monarchs, Stirling Castle has been elaborately decorated by the royalty who have lived there over the centuries. The latest building to be refurbished is the exquisite Royal Palace; once home to a young Mary Queen of Scots.

High above the city, Stirling Castle is reached by a narrow winding road up to the castle esplanade; but go early, the accessible parking bays fill up quickly. If you're not driving, there is a dedicated bus service between the city centre, The National Wallace Monument, and Stirling Castle that will drop you off where you need to be.

After parking, you'll cross a drawbridge beneath an arched gateway leading to the busy Guardroom Courtyard. Crowds at peak times can cause some disorientation, but if you pick up a visitor map in the courtyard and head straight for the Palace vaults you will find the Access Gallery. This fascinating space is in the vaults where the King once kept his lion, and it's where you'll get a clear understanding of how to find your way around the topsy turvy, yet captivating, Stirling Castle.

Be careful as you move between buildings as Stirling Castle is heavily cobbled. To reduce how many cobbles you have to negotiate, request the use of the castle mobility vehicle in advance. The castle has three accessible toilets; in the Guardroom Courtyard, the café and the quietest one beside the Access Gallery in the vaults.

The best way to experience the castle is to join one of the free guided tours that run throughout



the day. The tours are adapted for the group immediately, so if you're a wheelchair user your tour group will be led around step-free routes. There are visitor audio guides and guidebooks for self-led tours, and a Braille guidebook is also available at Stirling Castle.

If you're looking for a fun photo opportunity, head to the Great Hall where you can sit on the thrones and take a selfie! There is ramp access up to the dais where the thrones sit. On a nice day, make your way outside to Queen Anne's Gardens where the colours pop against the stone backdrop of the castle. This is one of the few places around the castle without cobblestones!



### **DON'T MISS...**

The Stirling Heads: 16th century large carved oak medallions above the Royal Palace. These are accessible by a lift with steward accompaniment if you require step-free access.



### **QUICK TIP**

Look out for costumed actors wandering around the castle.

# STORMING THE HOME OF SCOTLAND'S UNCROWNED KING



If Doune Castle looks familiar, that's because it's also Winterfell in *Game of Thrones*, Castle Leoch in *Outlander*, and various castles in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*.

If there was truly an A-list castle anywhere in Scotland, Doune Castle would be it. Built as the home of Scotland's uncrowned King, Robert Stewart, Doune Castle is an imposing fortress with a towering gatehouse and the ultimate medieval burglar alarm: a system of booby-traps, snares and hidden dangers designed to take down anyone who tried to storm the castle!

Built atop a small but steep hill on the edge of Doune, the castle is situated along a narrow track where there is a small car park for visitors. Designed to keep people out, the real adventure starts as you find your way into the castle. The cobbled slope at the entrance was once intended as a slippery obstacle to the castle, but today the upper section has been resurfaced and a handrail has been fitted for a little extra stability.

Once you're in, the atmosphere will astonish! Wheelchair users can enjoy the grass courtyard and the former guardroom and prison which is now the castle shop. Reach out and touch the stone structures, including the courtyard well, as you imagine the dramatic events that unfolded here. For those who can manage the thirteen stone stairs, the Great Hall of Doune Castle is one of the best preserved in Scotland.



## QUICK TIP

Opposite the castle is a cottage with an accessible toilet for visitors.



## DON'T MISS...

The hilarious and fact-filled audio guide voiced by Monty Python's Terry Jones!

# BEYOND CASTLES AND BATTLEFIELDS

## WHILE IN STIRLING...

Part of the Central Belt, Stirling is well connected to major transport routes. The train station is mostly accessible, but be aware that there is currently no wheelchair access to platform nine which affects journeys coming from Alloa. There is an accessible bus fleet and station beside the city's main shopping mall, but if you prefer to use a taxi service there are Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle taxis operating in the city. Don't forget that a shuttle bus operates between Stirling Castle and The National Wallace Monument.

The historic attractions in Stirling have excellent on-site cafes and restaurants, but these can get very busy. For something different, try The Birds and Bees which is a converted farm steading close to The National Wallace Monument. The award-winning gastropub also has two beer gardens and a pétanque court.

If you're heading towards Doune Castle from Stirling, Blair Drummond Safari Park is en route and is popular with families. The park also has a Changing Places Toilet. More outdoor activities to explore in the area include wheelchair accessible Alpaca trekking at The Alpaca Trekking Centre, and a walk around Flanders Moss. If you'd like to go further, Stirling is a short drive from Falkirk where you can visit massive steel water horses known as The Kelpies, or the structurally impressive Falkirk Wheel.

## WHILE IN BANCHORY...

While Crathes Castle is a top picnic spot in summer, it's worth a trip into Banchory during the colder months to enjoy its many restaurants, pubs and hotels. The castle is located at the end of a long driveway, but public transport to the area is possible if coming by rail from Aberdeen and then by using the local bus service.

In Banchory, The Cowshed is a family-owned Michelin Guide featured restaurant that's all about simple cooking. Scotch beef is their speciality, but it's also where you'll find the Cowshed Chipper, a fish 'n' chip shop loved by locals!

If you're feeling adventurous and want to travel further, you can follow the River Dee north towards the charming towns of Ballater and Braemar. Ballater is known as the 'Jewel of the Cairngorms' and is a quaint Victorian-style village. At certain times of the year it's also possible to visit the Queen's holiday home, Balmoral Castle.

## LOOKING FOR MORE



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# DRAMA ON THE SHORES OF LOCH NESS

One thousand years of turbulence, dramatic sieges and the possibility of a monster lurking in the waters just offshore, make Urquhart Castle a most alluring Scottish ruin.

The lavish banquets, ferocious kitchens and romantic splendour of this large castle came to a crumbling end when it was blown up by government troops during the Jacobite Risings in 1692. Today, Urquhart Castle is a jagged lochside beauty brought to life by a modern visitor centre and friendly stewards in the Great Glen.





Credit: Ian D Martin

As you arrive, nine accessible parking bays are situated outside of the main entrance to the visitor centre. These spots can fill up quickly, so plan to visit early. Walking through the turret-shaped entrance, visitors to Urquhart Castle will be met with the warmest of welcomes. Here you collect your tickets and follow either the stairs or lift down to the main visitor centre. Prepare to meet even more exceptional stewards who will point you in the direction of the accessible toilets, café and shop. They will also direct wheelchair users towards the easy access entrance into the centre's strategically situated audio-visual theatre. This is the best place to start your visit!

When you're ready to make your way down to the castle, you are welcome to borrow one of the centre's mobility scooters. This may be a good option if you're concerned about managing the long, sloping path down to the ruin. At about 300 metres in length, the tarmac path is fairly steep but can be taken with care and caution. Take a moment to admire the scenery as you descend.

Once you reach the castle, friendly stewards can assist you with directions, accessible routes and advice for finding the best viewpoints. Mobility impaired guests may be offered a visualisation book with excellent drawings, pictures and compass orientation keys to get a sense of how the castle once appeared. What you do next is up to you!

Explore the grassland, be entertained by the costumed performers, marvel at the reconstructed trebuchet, and if you're up for the climb, don't miss the best-preserved part of the castle: Grant Tower.



**QUICK TIP**

Enjoy a hot drink on the terrace overlooking the ruin and Loch Ness beyond.



## THE LANTERN OF THE NORTH

**This dramatic shell of a cathedral saw its own battles in a different way. Elgin Cathedral has faced fires, politics, revolution and the 'Wolf of Badenoch' to become the gold-flaked skeleton it is today.**

Affectionately named 'Lantern of the North', even as a ruin Elgin Cathedral is one of the most architecturally ambitious and beautiful buildings to have ever been built in Scotland. While the chapter house and tower are accessed by steps, this fire-struck beauty can be easily admired from the surrounding lawn and accessible path.

The cathedral lies near the centre of Elgin and is easy to reach by foot, public transport or by car. To explore the grounds, visitors must enter through the Keeper's Cottage where there is also an accessible toilet.

Beyond the Keeper's Cottage, the grounds are a combination of hard surface paths and a well kempt lawn. You'll be wandering between gravestones, among them Scotland's tallest at five metres. There is a short accessible path that gives a good vantage point of the ruin, but if you are feeling energetic and can manage the steps, the tower can be climbed for a higher viewpoint. The daunting scale of the building is best felt at ground level where you can get up close to marvel at the stone.



### **DON'T MISS...**

The 13th century West Front of Elgin Cathedral is one of Scotland's greatest architectural accomplishments.

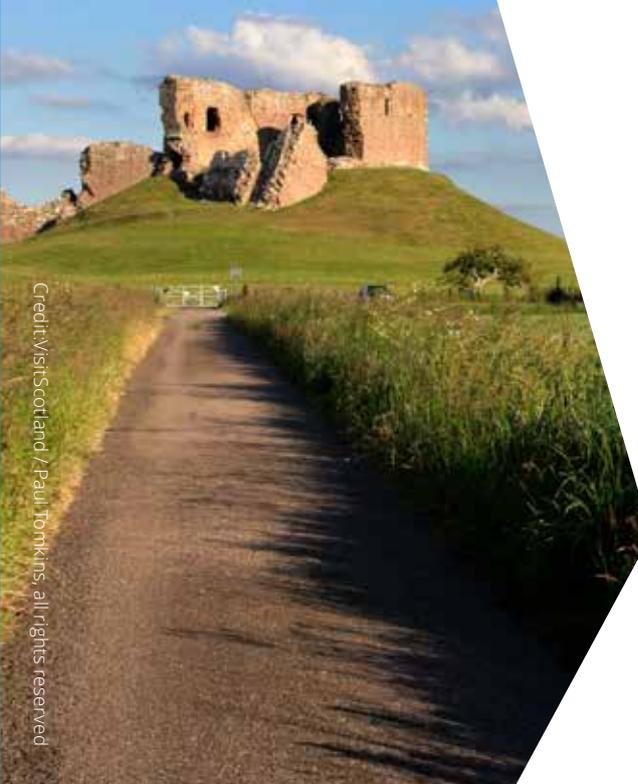
## AN ABANDONED CASTLE

**This motte and bailey castle was the medieval stronghold of the Moray family, but today it is an abandoned, sensory friendly ruin that can be roamed and explored by people of all ages.**

Duffus Castle sits atop a man-made mount, or motte, on the Laich of Moray. Before Spynie Loch was drained, the castle held a strongly defensive position for centuries until it was abandoned and left to ruin.

The castle can be marvelled at from a distance, but to get up close you must negotiate a kissing gate which will be impassable for many wheelchair users. For those who can get through, the ruin is vastly open, quiet and vacant making it the perfect place for families to run, shout, explore and have fun. Otherwise, it's a good opportunity to appreciate the stillness and calm of a remnant castle. Look up every once in a while, and you might spot military aircraft coming and going from the nearby RAF Lossiemouth!

Credit: VisitScotland / Paul Tomkins, all rights reserved



## A GUESTHOUSE FOR KINGS AND QUEENS

**This peaceful tree-shrouded palace was a place where bishops of Moray relaxed and entertained royalty.**

For centuries the bishops of Moray would retreat from nearby Elgin Cathedral to relax in this grand palace, surrounded by woodland, greenery and wildlife. Today, visitors can explore the tranquil grounds and even climb David's Tower to take in the scenery for miles.

There is a small visitor car park, but for close proximity parking drive a little further along the track towards the palace. Be aware that this space is limited to one or two cars at a time. Inside the grounds, much of the exploring surface is gently undulating short grass where you can enjoy the woodland and admire the ruins.



Credit: Paul J Ralph

# AN AUDIO GUIDE TO ARMY TACTICS



## DON'T MISS...

Take a wander along the wheelchair accessible rooftop walkway.

## Heather and moorland, the flutter of flags and an evocative visitor centre have transformed Culloden Battlefield into a place where history is brought to life.

The short and bloody Battle of Culloden brought an end to the Jacobite Rising on 16th April, 1746, when in one hour, over one-thousand Jacobean lives were lost. The Culloden Battlefield and visitor centre tells the story using artefacts from both sides of the battle, an impressive exhibition and by sending you out onto the battlefield itself.

Upon arrival visitors can park in a large section of car park reserved for Blue Badge holders. A 50-metre walk from this point will take you to the modern visitor centre and its moody, dark and cavernous reception where you can collect tickets, visit the shop or café. Accessible toilets can be found as a separate unit inside the male and female toilets.

There is an expertly curated, self-guided exhibition area which uses real artefacts, stories and a cinema experience to give you a sense of the battle.

From here you can head out onto the moorland following hard surfaced, wide pathways. Don't forget to pick up an audio guide before you begin!

On the battlefield, flags represent the battle lines of the Scottish and English armies, and around 500 metres into the centre of the field a stone monument marks the grave sites of many clans. Fresh flowers are often laid by clan markers giving a sense of the modern world connecting with the past.

You may spot a tiny cottage on the edge of the battlefield; this is 'Black House', and while you can't go inside you can wander around it and imagine what it must have been like to live there in the 1700s.



## QUICK TIP

Prepare for the elements and wrap up warm!



Credit: Paul J Ralph

## A ROSEY CASTLE FULL OF CURIOS

**The ancestral home of Clan Brodie, Brodie Castle is filled to the brim with weird and wonderful artefacts, including a quirky library.**

A very visually appealing visit awaits those who visit this eclectic castle, but be aware that Brodie Castle is not easily accessible to wheelchair users.

As you drive into the grounds, the gravel car park does not appear to have accessible parking bays; but drive a little further as if to leave and there are a few small signs directing Blue Badge holders to a few spaces at the side of the castle. Take care on the loosely gravelled surfaces.



## A TINY STOP OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

**If you don't mind a little bit of countryside trekking, a quick stop at Boath Doocot and Auldearn Battlefield is an interesting way to get a breath of fresh air.**

Built on the site of the Old Castle of Eren and the spot where the Battlefield of Auldearn took place, Boath Doocot is a restored 17th century dovecote where you can read an information board about the location's history.

Approaching by car, you might wonder if you're going the right way; but off the beaten track is what to expect here as you arrive in a gravel car park at the end of a narrow drive. Here stands a story board about Boath Doocot, and depending on your level of energy and willingness to go for a trek, you can follow the rough footpath uphill to see it up close.

Credit: diego\_cue

# HOLD THE FORT!

Built to keep people out, this red-stoned, star-shaped fortress has never come under attack, but it is surprisingly easy to access. Where canons must be rolled, ramps must be made...



A mighty fortress on a lone spit of land, Fort George was built to put an end to Highland unrest once and for all. Taking twenty-two years to complete, the Jacobite threat had already subsided, and Fort George has functioned as a working military base ever since.

Remotely situated east of Inverness, Fort George is best reached by car. Four accessible parking bays can be found beside the welcome sign in the visitor car park; and from here, you'll follow a hard-surfaced pathway on a zig-zag trail towards the large drawbridge marking the entrance to the fort.

Crossing the bridge with wooden planking underfoot, the suspense grows as you approach the large archway into the first building. Take care here, as there will be around fifteen metres of cobbles to negotiate as you make your way through the arched entrance. They may feel a little uncomfortable to wheelchair users, but go slow and it becomes manageable.

Exiting the archway, a large courtyard will appear before you. A ticket building with audio guides and a gift shop can be found here, as well as a platoon of mobility scooters available for loan. Don't be deterred by the step into the ticket office, a portable ramp will be swiftly deployed if required! In the courtyard, be sure to examine the excellent 3D scale model of Fort George. The bronze sculpture gives a good sense of the scale and layout of the village-like setting.

Designed to feel like a town, the fort was built to hold buildings such as a chapel, a bake house, social spaces and more. You can still explore the peaceful chapel, meander through the buildings, see the barrack rooms and the Grand Magazine where thousands of gunpowder barrels were to be stored. Today the magazine displays an immense collection of weaponry. Don't miss the cakes in the tearoom, and if you're on the lookout for accessible toilets, there are two well-signposted facilities in the centre of the site.



A real highlight of Fort George is its massive ramparts which give unbeatable views of the surrounding coastline. The giant green spaces can be reached by wide hand-railed ramps which were originally designed to roll canons up and down. These look deceptively steep, but they have sufficient grip and can be managed with a good pusher or a strong motor on a powerchair. The climb is worth it! Do take care as you explore the ramparts, as some parts of the fort have unfenced edges which could result in an accidental fall if approached without caution.



#### QUICK TIP

Look out for playful dolphins as you peer over the ramparts to the Moray Firth.



#### DON'T MISS...

Fort George has one of Scotland's two dog cemeteries. It was intended as a resting place for officers' dogs.

# WE SHALL FIGHT ON THE BEACHES



Credit: Paul J. Ralph



## DON'T MISS...

Pick up a forest trail map at the information point beside the toilets.

**In the summer of 1940, British defence was ramped up due to the threat of German invasion. For one pine forest beach in Moray, that threat was very real...**

Once an island overthrown by a ferocious storm, this stretch of coastline was drained and farmed for many years before its next identity as a pine forest. Corsican and Scots pine were planted to stabilise drifting sand dunes, and today visitors to Roseisle Forest are met with a strange clash of sweet pine and salty, chilled air.

The forest is signposted from the main road where a 500-metre drive will take you to the visitor car park beneath a canopy of trees. Look out for the amenity block, as this is linked by a pathway to the section of accessible parking bays. The block has an accessible toilet, and a visitor information point.

Roseisle Forest is an enchanting blend of sea and pine, so you can choose whether you're in the mood for a beach stroll, a forest walk, or both! A firm tarmac path leads you into the forest, and where it meets sand the surface turns to solid boardwalk. Stay on the upper path to reach the raised coastal viewpoint, or follow the lower boardwalk to sit on a wheelchair accessible viewing platform right on the beach. You'll notice on the sand thick concrete blocks and bunkers, reminiscent of British shoreline defence during WWII.



## QUICK TIP

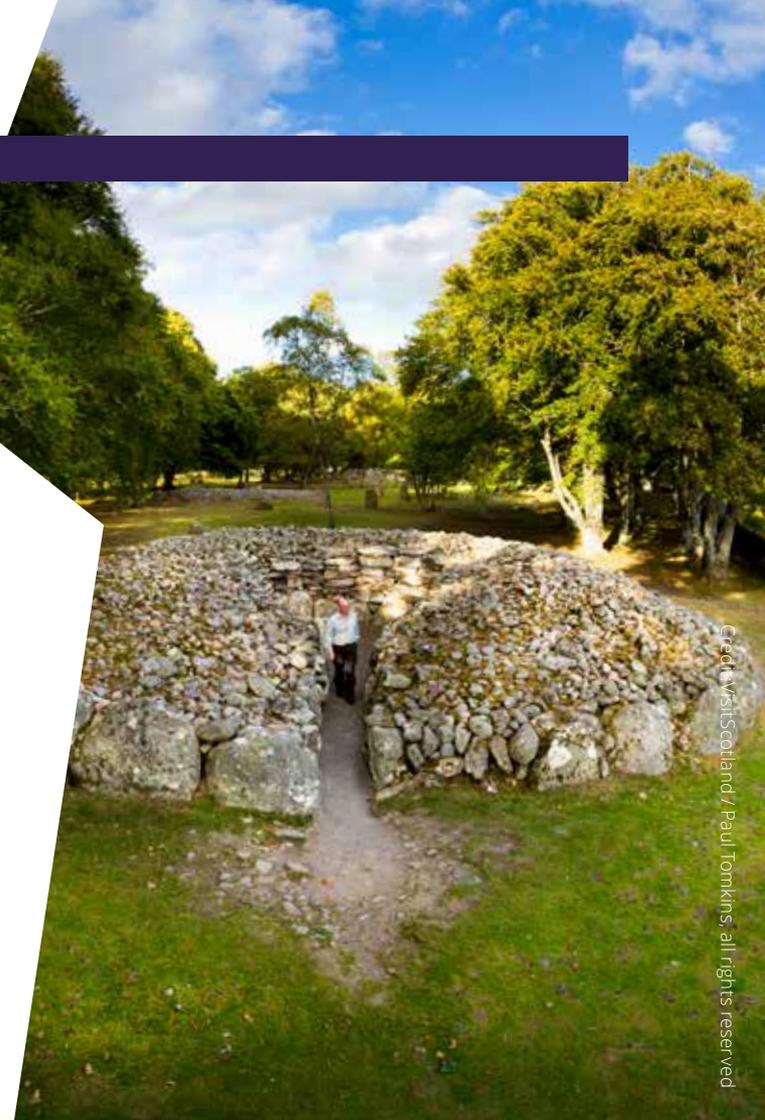
Toilets remain open between the end of March to the end of October.

## A SACRED BRONZE AGE CEMETERY

**At 4,000 years old, Clava Cairns is a tree-circled ancient place that may give you goose bumps... the good kind.**

This prehistoric site is a hidden place that escapes the attention of many tourists. The sacred ground sits above the River Nairn and is an excellent place to see remnants of a Bronze Age cemetery. To get there means driving along an exciting labyrinth of country lanes, but once you arrive the atmosphere becomes incredibly still.

There is a rough car park for visitors, but no public facilities at this ancient site. From the car park, you'll pass through a metal gateway where you can admire the entire picture in front of you or make your way right up to the stones for a closer look. The ground is undulating and a little rocky in places, but by moving slowly and cautiously you can get as close as you choose.



Credit: visitscotland / Paul Tomkins, all rights reserved

## MAKE WAY FOR SIGURD THE POWERFUL

**Stormed by Vikings in dragon boats, Burghead Fort and its former coastguard visitor centre tell the incredible story of this Pictish Kingdom stronghold.**

In the year 884, dragon ships descended on this promontory fort at the heart of the Pictish Kingdom of Fortriu. Picture the terrifying sight of Sigurd the Powerful and his expedition of Vikings as they captured Burghead!

The best place to begin your exploration is at the curious visitor centre, a former Storm Signal, where you can view one of the rare Pictish bull stones unique to this part of Scotland. The wheelchair accessible centre contains an accessible toilet and is reached by a paved pathway from parking bays beside the grassy archaeological site.

Most of your exploration will be outdoor, and you can roam over the banks of the headland following worn grass trails to excellent viewpoints of the Moray Firth.



Credit: Paul J Ralph

# BEYOND CASTLES AND BATTLEFIELDS

## WHILE IN DRUMNADROCHIT...

Urquhart Castle has an excellent café with unbeatable views over the ruin and Loch Ness. While very remote, look out for the accessible viewing point across the loch as you drive from Inverness; it has two wide parking bays, a dropped wall and lowered information boards.

If you aren't driving, you can reach Urquhart Castle by bus from Inverness, or take a trip on a Jacobite cruise ship straight to the ruin. They even have Loch Ness Monster spotting sonar on board! The cruises are wheelchair accessible, but it's best to get in touch with them first to discuss your requirements.

## WHILE IN INVERNESS...

Close to many of the castles and battlefields in the north is the city of Inverness. If you're exploring Culloden Battlefield, Inverness is just over a fifteen-minute drive west, or half an hour from Fort George. You can also reach the city via a picturesque train journey on the Caledonian Sleeper if arriving from the south.

You'll find an excellent Visit Scotland information centre in the city, the 'Inverness iCentre', where you can book cruises on Loch Ness. Inverness is also a top spot for dolphin watching, or a bit of golfing on the traditional coastal links at Castle Stewart. If you'd like to explore the city, give the Ness Islands Walk a go; the trail takes you across the Victorian footbridges that thread along the river. Look out for Eden Court Theatre and Cinema as you walk; this is the largest combined arts venue in Scotland with various signed, captioned, audio described and relaxed performances! Opposite Eden Court Theatre is the Glenmoriston Hotel, a good place to try afternoon tea in the Highlands.

## WHILE IN ELGIN...

If you're looking for ways to reach Spynie Palace or Elgin Cathedral, follow the coastal railway line or bus from Inverness. Both are wheelchair accessible, but it's recommended that you contact Stagecoach Bluebird beforehand if bus is your preferred mode of transport. Once there, A2B Cabs and Moray Taxis can accommodate wheelchair users in their vehicles and will be able to take you to the surrounding sites.

Opposite Elgin Cathedral is the Biblical Garden which is a curious place to visit and suitable for wheelchair access. If you want to explore the town, stop off at Johnstons of Elgin, famed for its cashmere and home baking!

## WHILE IN LOSSIEMOUTH...

Head to the beaches of Lossiemouth after visiting Duffus Castle and if you're feeling hungry take a trip to The Harbour Lights for top seafood. For more adventure, there's a wheelchair accessible walkway along the old coastal railway line in Burghead, around twenty minutes away by car.

## WHILE IN FORRES...

To get to Brodie Castle via public transport, hop onboard a train or bus from Inverness or Elgin, and request a vehicle from Mundole Taxis. Here you can also visit nearby Brodie Countryfare to shop for gifts or enjoy locally sourced ingredients in their popular restaurant. Whisky enthusiasts might also enjoy a visit to Dallas Dhu Historic Distillery. There's an audio guide and audio-visual presentation for visitors, not forgetting a wee dram to finish off your visit!

## LOOKING FOR MORE



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The Scottish castles and battlefields highlighted in this collection represent a handful of the places that are available to discover on Euan's Guide, the disabled access review website.

As a powerchair user, I am familiar with the time and effort that is involved in planning everything from nights out with friends to football matches with the kids, and my Motor Neurone Disease (MND) diagnosis in 2003 was the start of a new journey for me, my family and friends.

In 2013, along with my sister Kiki, we created Euan's Guide, a charity that is all about sharing. As my access requirements changed, we built up a list of 'go to' places in and around Edinburgh which we knew had good disabled access. We weren't the only ones doing this in their home town, but there was no platform for anybody to share their knowledge.

Euan's Guide now has disabled access reviews and listings for thousands of places around the UK and beyond.

The website is used by disabled people, their friends, families and carers to review, share and discover accessible places to visit. You can review anywhere from hotels and concert venues, to train stations and coffee shops. You can write about anything from wheelchair accessible parking and toilets, to audio description and staff welcome. The possibilities are endless.

Visit [www.euansguide.com](http://www.euansguide.com) to join in and start reviewing your favourite accessible places. You could always start with one of the castles or battlefields in this guide!

**Euan**

Co-founder of Euan's Guide





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