



September 6-8, 2017 Edinburgh, Scotland

Edinburgh Quick Guide

We hope you enjoy your time in Edinburgh. September is generally the month with the most reliable weather but do bring a waterproof jacket or umbrella!

Arrival

From the airport you can travel to the town centre by tram, bus or taxi. All are clearly signposted. By tram buy a return fare for £8.50 (single is £5.50). Tickets are available from machines at the stops. The airport bus (Airlink 100) is slightly cheaper and quicker but a less comfortable. A taxi will be around £25 one way and usually seats 5.

If you are coming by train Waverley Station you will arrive at the east end of Princes Street. If you travel onwards by bus you pay an exact fare of £1.60 as you get on (no change is given).

<http://transportforedinburgh.com/> gives details and the mobile app for buses is particularly helpful

Restaurants

Edinburgh has some great eating- probably the best in UK outside London. There are a number of Michelin starred restaurants- if that's your thing, visit the *viamichelin* website and book early- it is rare to get a table as a walk in unless you are a regular. The Kitchin is my personal favourite but you won't leave any disappointed.

If you want something quick, there are the usual chains but here are some of my favourites as suggestions.

At the cheap and cheerful end:

<http://www.elcartelmexicana.co.uk/>

Small cantina serving Mexican street food- has a laid back vibe and excellent cooking. High likelihood of seeing my daughter and her friends in the back corner eating guacamole and fried plantain. No reservations and it gets busy, leave your cell phone number, enjoy a drink in the *Bon Vivant* opposite, and they'll text when your table is free.

<http://www.kanpaisushiedinburgh.co.uk/>

Quality Japanese cooking at reasonable prices. A clean and crisp aesthetic to match the skilled food preparation.

<http://www.kenjisushi.co.uk/>

Small Japanese restaurant in the 'village' of Stockbridge- my favourite area of Edinburgh a 15 min stroll from city centre. This place is 'cash only' but it won't break the bank. Combine it with a cocktail in the Last Word Saloon for a great evening out.

<http://bellsdineredinburgh.co.uk/>

You're not allowed to mention this burger joint without calling it an institution. Been open since 1972 and the menu and 'vibe' are unchanged from when my Dad would take my sister and me for a Christmas treat. If you still have space after a burger go for the Chocolate Cherry Wednesday.

<https://www.nandos.co.uk/restaurants/edinburgh-chambers-street>

The inclusion of the Nandos chain comes without any apology- sure it's a high street chain but it highlights all that is good about the developments in British cooking in the last decade.

<https://www.wagamama.com/restaurants/edinburgh-lothian-road>

Another chain- this time offering Japanese fusion cooking. Always a reliable choice if you're looking for something quick.

At medium prices:

<http://www.caferoyaledinburgh.co.uk/>

This stylish building has been knocking out fine booze and seafood since 1863. It is now listed as a historical monument, and more personally I had my wedding 'breakfast' here; the two facts are unconnected. Have a pint of Williams Brothers beer in the bar and then go next door for dinner.

<https://www.scranandscallie.com/>

A gastropub in the Stockbridge area owned by, for my money, Scotland's best chef Tom Kitchin. Although Tom cooks in his main restaurant he keeps a very close eye on the cooking here and the philosophy of highlighting natural local ingredients shows through. They keep some tables back for 'walk-ins' every night.

<http://www.cafesthonore.com/>

A neighbourhood style French influenced restaurant that's been going forever. The reason for longevity is they do what they do simply and well. It's the cafe you wanted to find when you went to Paris but couldn't.

<http://www.dishoom.com/edinburgh/>

An Indian restaurant with a hipster vibe that pays homage to the Irani cafes of Bombay. Try blackened lamb chops with house dhal. No booking in the evenings so you will get fed, but you may have to spend time slugging back the excellent anglo-indian cocktails served in the basement bar while you wait.

<https://www.taisteal.co.uk/>

One look at the website or the unlikely 'Scottish- pacific rim fusion menu' would have any self respecting diner fearing the worst. But, but the chef here has the technical skill to back it up and, for the money, this is outstanding cooking.

<http://www.thehonours.co.uk/>

Brasserie run by Martin Wishart. High quality French cooking- with a particularly fine touch around the fish dishes. Who wouldn't love someone who offers a soufflé of the day.

<https://www.chophousesteak.co.uk/>

If you simply need a steak here is where to go. They do their own butchery and really understand that it is all about the quality of the meat that goes on the grill; if you want a tour of their fridges to see what's ageing, they'll be only too happy to oblige. Warm up with a martini then get down to business with a sharing cut of bone in rib, some béarnaise sauce and dripping chips- add a salad if you must. The original restaurant is down in Leith and well worth the taxi but there is a second branch in Market Street in city centre.

<https://www.thegardenerscottage.co/>

A personal favourite- high quality, seasonal Scottish cooking in the city centre. They grow their own veg and herbs in the restaurant garden. My wife gets slightly irritated by the relentlessly hipster vibe- so if no choice menus, communal tables and jazz on vinyl ain't your thing you might want to bypass, but for me this is what restaurants should be about.

Pubs and Bars

My three favourite pubs are

<http://www.cumberlandbar.co.uk/>

<http://www.kaysbar.co.uk/>

<http://www.caferoyaledinburgh.co.uk/>

They are all traditional Scottish pubs within walking distance of the city centre. Speak to the barmen and they'll be happy to give endless advice on local beer and whisky.

<http://www.bramblebar.co.uk/>

16A Queen St, Edinburgh EH2 1JE

I have to face facts- I m too old for this speakeasy style cocktail bar now, but I point our young visiting fellows in its direction and they all love it (or are just very polite). It is in a basement on Queens Street, on the south east side of the junction with Hanover Street. There is no signage so just walk confidently through the door for great drinks, vibe and beats

<http://www.lastwordsaloon.com/>

When Rona and I fancy a cocktail this is where we head- sister bar to Bramble, in the Stockbridge area, it's for the more senior amongst us who don't see or hear well enough for Bramble anymore. Try a *six cylinder* before you wander on to any of Stockbridge's restaurants.

www.sixdnorth.co.uk/

Refers to a group of Belgian beer enthusiasts opening a brewery six degrees north of Brussels, in Aberdeen. Thankfully they have opened a sister bar in Edinburgh city centre. If you like craft beer, and you really should, you'll love this place.

Other activities

If you simply need a walk or a run before or after a day of lectures try these routes for some inspiration. I'd head out to Holyrood park by choice. You can follow the road around as suggested on the first web site listed or if you think you have it- follow the path up into Hunters Bog and then when you see the road again turn left and up the hewn rock steps to the top. If your stomach contents are still in place head out across the other tops or down the other side to repeat.

If you are more sensible these runs will be equally delightful walks, or simply have a stroll down the Royal Mile or through Princes Street Gardens, or a little to the north of town centre (23 bus or 20 minute walk) are the Botanical Gardens in Inverleith Row. They are an oasis of tranquillity and a plant lovers paradise.

<https://theculturetrip.com/europe/united-kingdom/scotland/articles/the-most-scenic-running-routes-in-edinburgh/>

http://www.city-runs.co.uk/run/city/edinburgh_-_holyrod_park/

<http://edinburgh.org/blog/5-of-the-best-runs-in-edinburgh/>

If golf is your thing, the banks of the Firth of Forth are generally regarded as the home of golf. If you have never played on the narrow hard fairways of a links course with the wind changing every shot then you are in for a 'treat'. Many courses will allow guests on and clubs can be rented. The big name is of course St Andrews but for me the nearby Lundin Links is a true gem. For ease of access by train try North Berwick which has some delightful courses

<http://www.scotlandgolf.com/scotlandgolfcourses/east-lothian/>

<http://www.scotlandgolf.com/scotlandgolfcourses/fife.html>

If you want some advice on travelling further afield in Scotland don't be shy to contact Jon or I and we'll try to give you some pointers.

a.carson@ed.ac.uk

jon.stone@ed.ac.uk