



POCKET GUIDE TO

20

★ FAMILY ACTIVITIES ★

15

SUMMER IN SCOTLAND



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## GET READY FOR SUMMER!

With the school holidays typically stretching six weeks in the UK, summer usually means plenty of family time! Keep the kids busy and find some superb ideas for great days out, ranging from fun-filled museums, wildlife parks, science centres and attractions to thrilling indoor and outdoor activities, as well as exciting events for all ages.

Explore the ***dedicated family holiday section*** of our website and give the kids a Scottish summer break to remember.

### - Ancestry eBook -

You may not know it yet, but what if you belong to one of Scotland's clans? There are 50 million people across the world able to lay claim to ancestral ties to Scotland, but not everyone has uncovered their connection yet. If you have family bonds and a clan history in Scotland, a trip to your clan's homeland is an amazing and moving experience like no other.

Download our ***free guide*** for all the tips you need on researching your Scottish ancestry and start learning about your family's past today.

## OUTDOOR FAMILY FUN

Step into the great outdoors and you'll find that Scotland is really just one big natural playground. Thrill-seekers can spend days climbing, rafting, soaring, splashing, rolling, racing and paddling. For those who appreciate a slower pace in life, there are plenty of leisurely activities where half the enjoyment is breathing in the fresh air and soaking up the scenery - think walking, fishing, canoeing and golfing. Alternatively, try something different and have a go at geocaching or orienteering.

Find out about Scotland's amazing range of **outdoor activities**.

### - Golf -

The long summer days are perfect for fitting in a few rounds of golf, and with over 500 golf courses, there is plenty of choice when it comes to where to tee off, from glorious championship courses to some magical hidden gems. Follow a golf itinerary, or take advantage of one of the many golf passes.

But don't just take our word for it - listen to what the pros say about golf in Scotland and **watch our video!**

### - Tours -

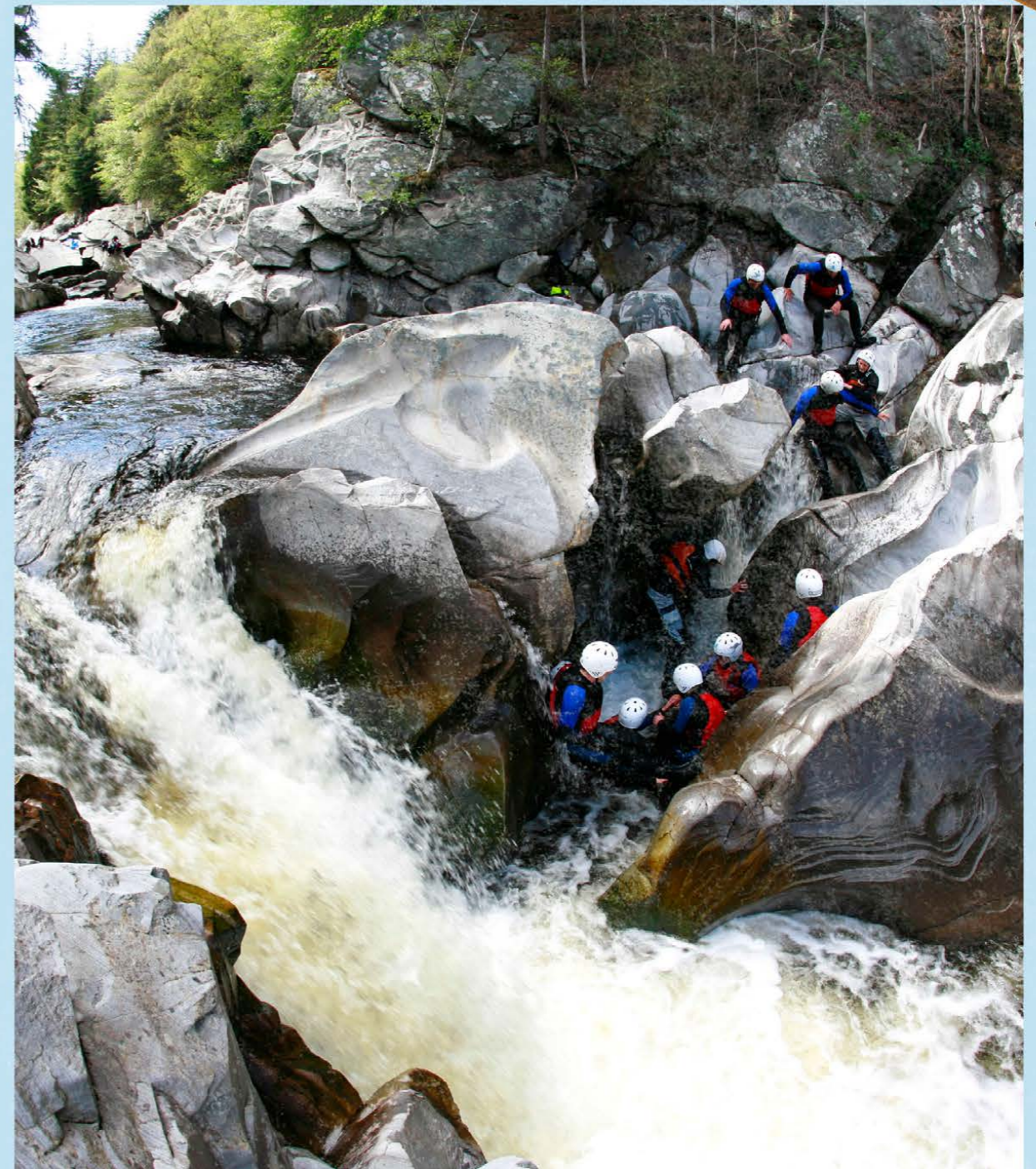
Whatever your interest, or wherever you want to explore, you'll find the perfect tour in Scotland. From sightseeing bus tours around historical cities, to great journeys across the Highlands by coach or train, or from a week-long Orkney walking tour to following Aberdeenshire's Castle Trail with a guide, there are endless possibilities and many incredible sights to behold.

Browse the **tours** section of the website to discover fun-filled day tours, island-hopping, tailored trips and guided excursions.

### - Watersports -

Are you looking for a new summer challenge? With over 10,000 km of coastlines and several sparkling rivers and lochs, it's safe to say that watersports are one of Scotland's favourite summer activities. And we're always thinking of new and inventive ways to enjoy the water!

Check out our list of **wonderful watersports** and make a splash during your time in Scotland. Don't forget your wetsuit!



## - Picnic -

A picnic is one of the quintessential summer time activities, and with countless scenic spots and a mouth-watering natural larder, Scotland is the place for the ultimate picnic. Did you know that Rothiemurchus in the Highlands was voted as being home to the best picnic spot in the UK?

Without a doubt, food tastes better when eaten outdoors, and Scottish produce is no exception – browse farmers' markets for the seasonal and quality cheese and meats and other tasty treats for your picnic basket. *Get planning your picnic today!*

## - Recipes -

Food always seems to taste so good when eaten outdoors. Whether it's a half an hour lunch break or relaxing for a whole afternoon, there's something unbridled about eating al fresco, and it adds a lively and enjoyable dimension to dining. With loads of great fruits and veg in season, it's easy to eat light, local and seasonal over summer.

Not sure what to pack into your picnic hamper? Browse our *recipes* for scrumptious, make-ahead masterpieces that are perfect for lazy summer days and ideal to create a moveable feast.

## - Farms -

With fantastic farm shops, 'pick-your-own' fruit experiences and the chance to see how your food and drink is made, Scotland's farms are the ideal places to stock up on tempting treats for a decadent summer picnic.

Read our *blog on farms* to visit to discover where you can fill a basket with mouth-watering local produce, pick juicy soft fruits straight from the plant or see cheese and ice cream being crafted before your very eyes.





### - Cycling -

With a choice of dedicated cycle routes, a cycling holiday is a great way to see Scotland. Bring your family or friends for a gentle ride and zip through Scotland's incredible landscapes or challenge yourself on the advanced tracks. The choice is yours. If you want to explore the country at your own pace, a cycling holiday is definitely for you!

Check our blog and find a great **cycling route** that suits you.

### - Jogging -

When the sun is shining (and even when it's not), Scotland offers some incredible terrains on which you can pick up the pace. Discover how exhilarating it feels to have the sea air blowing in your face as you jog, run or walk along a coastal path, or picture using prehistoric standing stones as your imaginary finishing line. From running alongside Loch Ness to scaling Edinburgh's Arthur's Seat, there are plenty of reasons to pack your trainers. Ready, steady, go!

Read more about **running and jogging in Scotland** in our blog.

Cyclists looking up the Queen's View in Perthshire  
Runners on Dumyat at the western end of the Ochil Hills, overlooking River Forth and the Forth Valley



## NATURE & WILDLIFE

Scotland is home to two spectacular National Parks, each offering hundreds of square miles of woodland, countryside, rivers and lochs. In the summer months, try watersports on the lochs and rivers of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, or climb Ben Arthur for incredible panoramic views. Have an adventure in the Cairngorms National Park and ride along conifer-lined mountain bike trails, or spot rare wildlife, such as the elusive wild cats.

Feeling inspired? *Discover more about Scotland's National Parks* on our website.

## - National Parks in numbers -

Before you head out to discover the wonders of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park or the Cairngorms National Park, get the lowdown on ***all the key facts and figures with our infographic***. Dine at the Ptarmigan Restaurant on the Cairngorm Mountain which, at 3,599 ft above sea level, is the UK's highest restaurant. Paddle out to one of Loch Lomond's 22 named islands, or hike to the peak of one of its 21 Munros.

*A Canadian canoe on Loch Lomond, with Ben Lomond visible beyond*





### - Moray Firth wildlife -

Thanks to a mixture of unspoilt habitats, Scotland guarantees wildlife enthusiasts some amazing opportunities to spot an interesting variety of species.

From bottlenose dolphins to osprey chicks and red squirrels, you're bound to spot something spectacular on your travels, so don't forget your camera or smartphone! Why not start your adventure by discovering the **wonderful wildlife of the Moray Firth**? Check out the blog for more.

### - Zoos -

If you go down to the zoo today, you're in for a big surprise. Lions, tigers and panda bears - oh my! Yes, Scotland's zoos have all the animals from reptiles to penguins, Giant pandas to polar bears and a lot more. Get up close and see how these animals live, learn about them and even get amongst them at some of Scotland's safari parks.

Check out all of our **zoos, wildlife parks and safari parks** and join the animals today!

### - Wildlife -

An exquisite array of birds call Scotland home. In the warmer months of the year, you can witness a huge variety of resident and migrant species, from thousands of seabirds on the coast to magnificent birds of prey soaring overhead. Remember to bring your binoculars!

Check out our handy **Scottish bird bingo checklist!**



*Bottlenose dolphin © Neil McIntyre  
Female Giant Panda, Tian Tian at Edinburgh Zoo*





## - Trees -

Whether you like your trees tall, old or just leafy, Scotland has the tree for you. Take a wander through the forests and you could discover four of the tallest trees in Britain in the Highlands, skip through the wild tree gardens of Perthshire or see the highest hedge in the world near Blairgowrie.

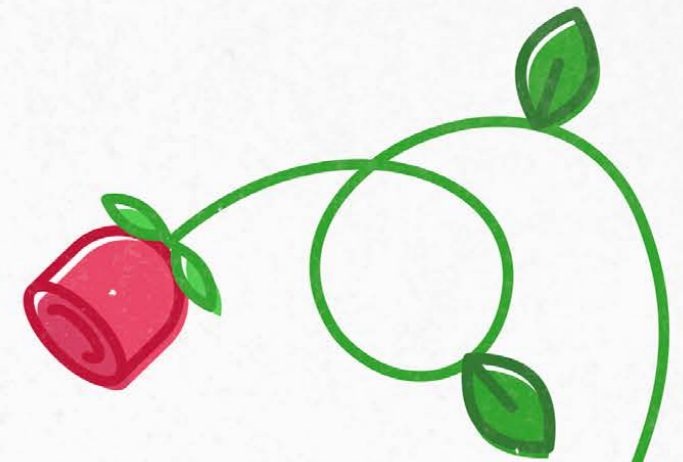
Check out our picks of **Scotland's terrific trees**, and enjoy a break with nature this summer.

## - Volcanoes -

Volcanoes aren't necessarily the first thing you'd think of to visit in Scotland. Not live ones at any rate. But believe it or not, Scotland was once strewn with violent active volcanoes, spewing ash and lava in what are today serene and beautifully rugged landscapes. You may have already visited a volcano but you just didn't know it at the time.

Check out our blog of **5 must-see volcanoes in Scotland**, from those hiding in cities to those that mark out some of Scotland's islands.





- Gardens -

Over the summer months, nature reveals some of its best displays, so where better to admire them than in Scotland's gardens? Each bursting with colour and curious wildlife, get some close-up snaps of flowers in bloom or breathe in the intoxicating scent from the rose gardens which fills the air.

Whether you want to escape the buzz of urban life or have a garden picnic in castle grounds, check out our blog for ***gardens ideas and inspirations***.



*Looking across to a footbridge across a stream at the Crarae Glen Gardens*



## EVENTS & FESTIVALS

### - Events -

Get your little adventurers out of the house and spend some fantastic family time together. From thrilling days out at theme parks to puppetry shows, fruit picking to saying hello to baby animals at animal farms, there are plenty of great events to have fun with your loved ones.

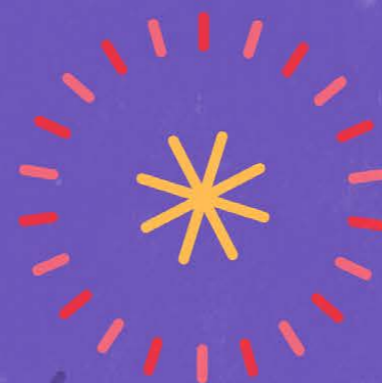
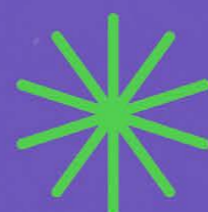
Browse our listings and find ideas and inspirations on *events for all the family* to enjoy.

### - Edinburgh Festivals -

Thinking of visiting the Scottish capital this summer? Then we're guessing that Edinburgh's famous summer festivals will be high on your to-do list!

The world-famous Edinburgh Festivals draw in visitors from around the globe in June, July and August, filling Edinburgh's streets and performance spaces with colour, energy and excitement.

Plan your visit to the eight summer festivals using our *Edinburgh Festivals Survival Guide* and find plenty of hints and tips for navigating them when you're here.





Heavy athletics events at the Atholl Gathering, held at Blair Castle in Blair Atholl, Perthshire  
A crowd watching performers at Hebridean Celtic Festival on the Isle of Lewis,  
Outer Hebrides © Leila Angus/BrighterStill



### - Highland games -

No summer holiday in Scotland would be complete without attending at least one Highland games! Expect to witness an enthralling range of traditional events, including spirited Highland dancing, skilful piping and impressive displays of strength in the heavy events, such as caber tossing and shot put.

As well as watching, sometimes you can even get involved, with tug o' wars, hill races and children's competitions, or relax and browse stalls and tuck into tasty local produce.

Read our **Highland games guide** and plan a fantastic day out with the family.

### - Music -

There's always a song in the air in Scotland, especially in the summer months, with outdoor music events taking place almost every week. Experience one of Scotland's renowned music festivals, such as Wickerman in Dumfries & Galloway or the Hebridean Celtic Festival on the Isle of Lewis, or watch the Royal Military Tattoo Edinburgh Castle for a mesmerising feast of sound and spectacle.

**Watch our video** and get a flavour of some of Scotland's best-loved music events.



## BEACH LIFE

White sands, sparkling waters and gorgeous scenery make Scotland's beaches the perfect place to spend a sunny summer's day. In addition to building sandcastles, fishing in rock pools or tucking into a tasty picnic, you might find a few more unusual things on your beach to-do list here - such as touching down on the world's only beach runway, or coming face-to-face with a Highland cow or two!

Check out our suggestions for **things to do on Scotland's beaches**, and start planning a fantastic family day out.

*Exploring the rock pools beside the beach by Dunure Castle, Dunure, Ayrshire  
Sands of Wright, South Ronaldsay, Orkney © Iain Sarjeant/VisitScotland*



## - Beaches -

Oh we do like to be beside the seaside - and we know you do too! Scotland's beautiful beaches regularly come out top in beach awards and voters' polls, and it's easy to see why. Long stretches of golden or white sands and sparkling crystalline waters are all part of their special allure.

When the sun shines, there's no better place to be, so why not discover which **Scottish beaches and islands** have been voted some of the best by Tripadvisor?

## - Coast -

When the sun breaks through, there's only one place you should want to be, and that's beside the sea. Round up your friends and family and together explore miles upon miles of unspoilt coastlines and uncrowded, pristine beaches. You can sleep under the stars, swim with dolphins or soak up dramatic views on horseback - the possibilities are endless.

Check out our blog on **inspiring ideas on how to enjoy a few days by the coast**.



## - By the sea -

Are you a landlubber or a salty sea dog? Either way, the summer is a great time to enjoy our beautiful, vast oceans. Plan a boat trip to spot some remarkable species, such as sea eagles, dolphins or basking sharks, or try some scuba diving and see what lies under the water. Alternatively, enjoy the sea from the coastline, be it a clifftop walk to a historic lighthouse, or simply watching bobbing fishing boats from a harbour side café.

Check out our illustration to discover what you can expect to see *by the sea*.

## - Sea -

Scotland's waters might not be the warmest, but that doesn't stop the beautiful sparkling sea being home to some delicious treats. All around the coast, you'll find tasty seafood from mussels and oysters to salmon, trout and herring,

Argyll is just one of the regions in Scotland that is blessed by the sea. It even has its own *Seafood Trail* for you to follow around restaurants, bars and hotels.

Find out more about *Argyll and its seafood* in our video.

## - Under the sea -

Discover some of Scotland's deepest darkest secrets, many of which are hidden beneath the surface. If you fancy yourself as a bit of an intrepid explorer, *check out our blog* and find out what new discoveries can be found under the sea, under the ground, under a rock or even under a bridge.





**- Islands -**

Whether you're drawn to Islay for the peaty flavours of its *whiskies*, to Skye for its breathtaking geological wonders, or to the white, deserted sands of Harris for peace and solitude, you'll find a million reasons to fall in love with Scotland's islands. Each has its own distinct character, shaped by its dramatic coastline, fascinating heritage, spectacular wildlife and unique culture.

Plan an *island hopping trip* and experience the magic of the Scottish islands for yourself.

*Sty Wick, Sanday, Orkney © Iain Sarjeant/VisitScotland*



## CAMPING

Experience the freedom of a touring trip, where you can wake up in a different part of the country every day. Or enjoy a bit of luxury at a holiday park and spend a restful week in the comfy surrounds of a state-of-the-art static caravan, or pack in some fun activities with the kids. There's a camping and caravanning holiday in Scotland to suit every preference and budget.

Start planning a break today and find your perfect **camping or caravanning** destination.

### - Stunning views -

Summer is the time to be spontaneous – pack the tent into the car, head out onto the open road, and pitch up in some beautiful locations. You'll find campsites set below breathtaking mountain ranges, overlooking pristine beaches, or in the middle of lush, open countryside. Best of all, the views come free of charge!

Be inspired and check out some of the best **views you could enjoy from a tent in Scotland**.



### - Campsites near castles -

Why not combine your camping or caravanning trip with a bit of history and book a pitch in the grounds of a castle? You'll find such camping grounds in many parts of the country, from the impressive 18th century Culzean Castle which dominates the Ayrshire clifftops to the fairytale vision of Blair Castle, set amidst the wonderfully verdant mountain landscape of Highland Perthshire.

Check out some ***campsites near castles in Scotland***.

### - Glamping -

Try the wild in comfort, and glamp it up on a holiday to Scotland. Sleep beneath a canvas roof or the stars, stay in a tipi or a wooden pod, or have a snooze in a hammock – it's something everyone should try at least once. You can enjoy the smells and sounds of nature, and be as active or relaxed as you like.

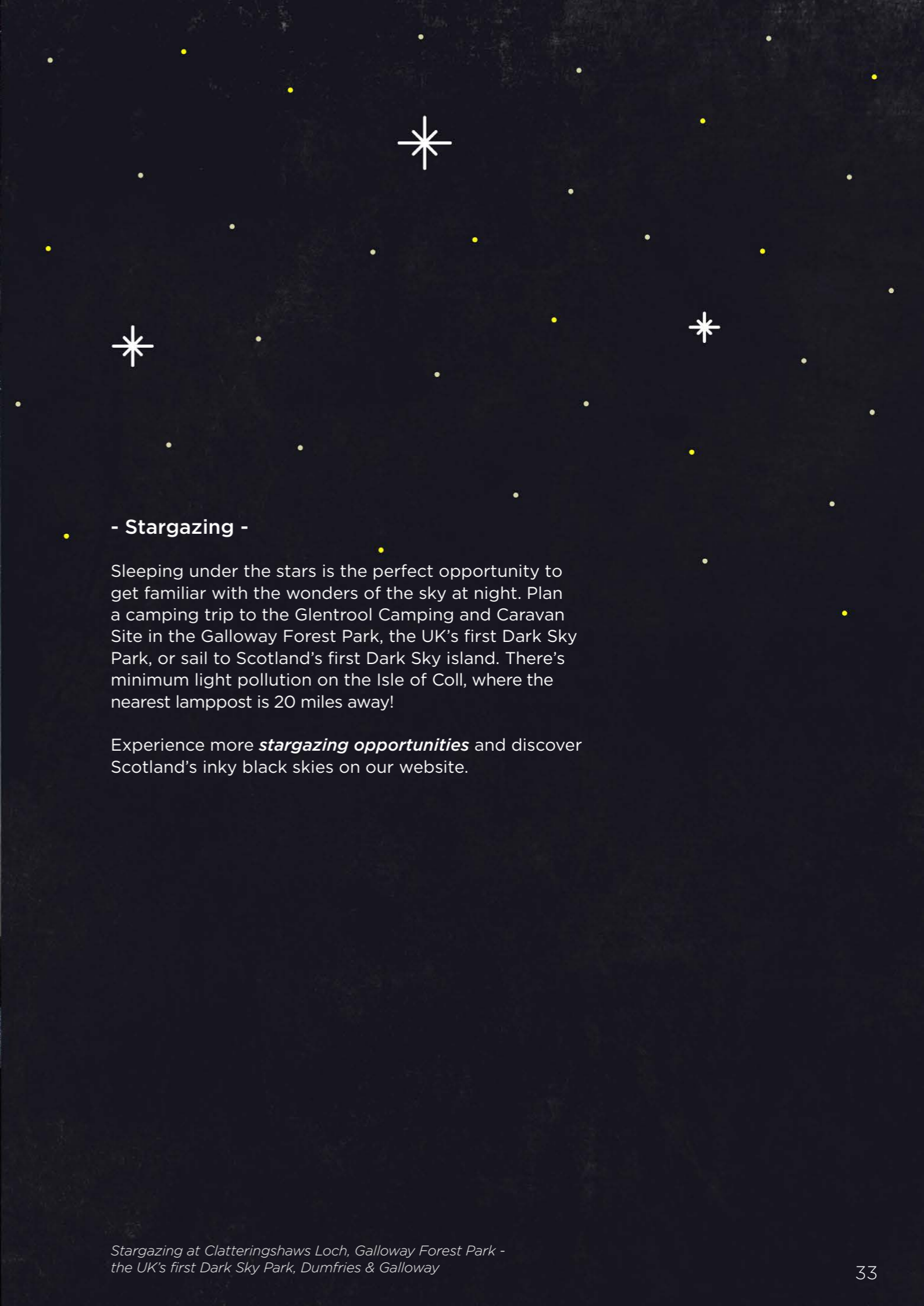
Discover ***unique accommodation*** located in outstanding natural settings across the country.



*A view from the fore shore of the Firth of Clyde looking over to Culzean Castle*

*A view inside a traditional Mongolian yurt at Great Glen Yurts, Torlundy near Fort William, Highlands*





### - Stargazing -


Sleeping under the stars is the perfect opportunity to get familiar with the wonders of the sky at night. Plan a camping trip to the Glentroot Camping and Caravan Site in the Galloway Forest Park, the UK's first Dark Sky Park, or sail to Scotland's first Dark Sky island. There's minimum light pollution on the Isle of Coll, where the nearest lamppost is 20 miles away!

Experience more *stargazing opportunities* and discover Scotland's inky black skies on our website.



## COME RAIN OR SHINE ....

### - Rain -



With balmy days and lush green scenery, summer in Scotland is a magical time. But yes, even in the summer it sometimes rains. Where do you think all the lovely lochs, luscious woodlands and world famous whisky comes from?

Usually a wet day on holiday means sheltering inside with not much to do, but luckily we're used to having a rainy day or two in Scotland and you'll find lots to keep you entertained, even if it's a bit wet outside!

Check out our game for ideas on *what to do on your holiday whatever the weather!*


*Glasgow University and Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow*

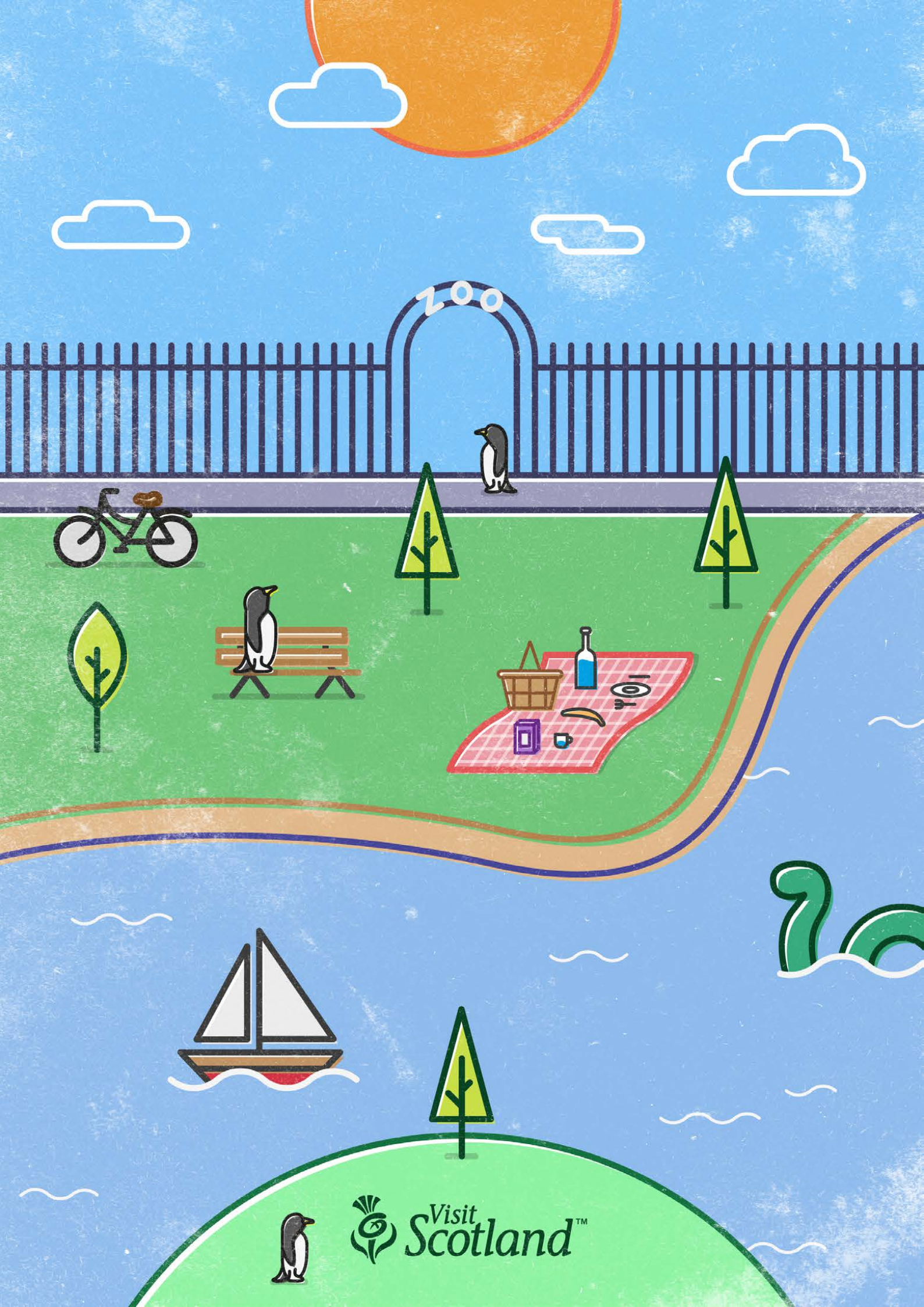


### - Sun -

It has been said in the past, that the sun doesn't shine in Scotland and it always rains. Well, we're here to tell you that's not true - the sun does shine, and actually we have some pretty sunny places with many cities vying for the title of Scotland's sunniest city...

Anyway, you don't need to just believe us - see for yourself with our collection of *fab fan photos of the sun shining in Scotland!* Why not share your photos with us too?





ZOO

Visit Scotland™