

# A Nation in a Bowl

## SCOTLAND'S PORRIDGE

For centuries, oats have been Scotland's go-to fuel - simmered into porridge and stirred with a trusty spurtle. From ancient hearths to modern kitchens, this humble grain has powered farmers, shepherds, and travellers alike.

Today, it's still the perfect fuel for exploring Scotland - hearty, healthy, wholesome, and full of history - but there are more ways to enjoy the amazing oat than just a warming bowl of porridge. Check out our porridge map for some inspiration as you visit Sc-oat-land!

**1 Skibhoul Bakery**  
Isle of Unst, Shetland Islands  
The UK's most northerly bakery, family-owned Skibhoul has been baking since 1885. Don't miss their unique oceanic oatcakes - made using seawater!

**2 Barony Mill**  
Birsay, Orkney Island  
Orkney's last working watermill still stone-grinds traditional grains - just as it has for centuries.

**3 Neolithic Porridge**  
Outer Hebrides  
Studies show that wheat-based porridge was eaten here over 5,000 years ago. Try some oat-based delights from the porridge menu at Broad Bay House on the Isle of Lewis.

**4 Black Isle Brewery**  
Munlochy, Highlands  
Follow the humble oat from field to glass on a tour of this iconic Highland brewery - and taste the end result with a pint of their Oatmeal Stout.

**5 Portsoy Ice-Cream**  
Aberdeenshire  
Oats shine in this family-run parlour's popular Cranachan ice-cream. Swirled with honey, whisky, and raspberries, it's a scoop of Scottish tradition.

**6 Carrbridge**  
Cairngorms National Park  
Each October, the village of Carrbridge hosts the world's quirkiest culinary contest - the Golden Spurtle World Porridge Making Championship.

**7 The Bread Maker**  
Aberdeen  
This artisan bakery offers breadmaking courses - why not try an oat-based loaf to take home and enjoy?

**8 Blair Atholl Watermill**  
Perthshire  
This working mill produces traditional oatmeal - the key to Atholl Brose, a tasty whisky-and-oats liqueur dating back centuries.

**9 Barry Mill**  
By Carnoustie, Angus  
Explore this working watermill where clever engineering eased the 'daily grind' of producing oatmeal for more than 800 years.

**10 Bonerbo Farm**  
Anstruther, Fife  
Stay in a luxury cabin on a farm that's been run by the same family for over 100 years, growing oats for porridge producers.

**11 Scottish Wild Food Festival**  
Balfron, Stirling & Forth Valley  
Forage for wild berries and herbs to crown your morning porridge at this annual festival, held each May.

**12 National Museum of Scotland**  
Edinburgh  
See historic spurtles and discover how a simple stick became a porridge icon.

**13 Belhaven Brewery**  
Dunbar, East Lothian  
From porridge to pint - discover how oatmeal becomes a rich Scottish stout at this local brewery.

**14 The Tenement House**  
Glasgow  
Peek inside a traditional porridge drawer in this perfectly preserved early 20th-century home.

**15 Glenegedale House**  
Isle of Islay, Argyll & The Isles  
On Islay, Scotland's whisky island, porridge gets the five-star treatment - served with a dram of local whisky.

**16 Arran Oatcakes**  
Brodict, Isle of Arran  
Wooleys of Arran has been baking these iconic oatcakes since the mid-1800s.

**17 Eden Valley Organic Oats**  
By Kelso, Scottish Borders  
Wake up on a working oat farm and follow the journey of versatile oats - from your porridge bowl to natural skincare products.

**18 The Devil's Porridge Museum**  
Eastriggs, Dumfries & Galloway  
Forget breakfast - "The Devil's Porridge" was explosive cordite mixed by World War I munitions workers. Explore their story.







## A Timeline of **SCOTLAND'S PORRIDGE**

### Settling In (600)

When farming takes root, so do oats. Scotland's cool, damp weather is paradise for the humble grain, and it soon becomes an everyday staple.



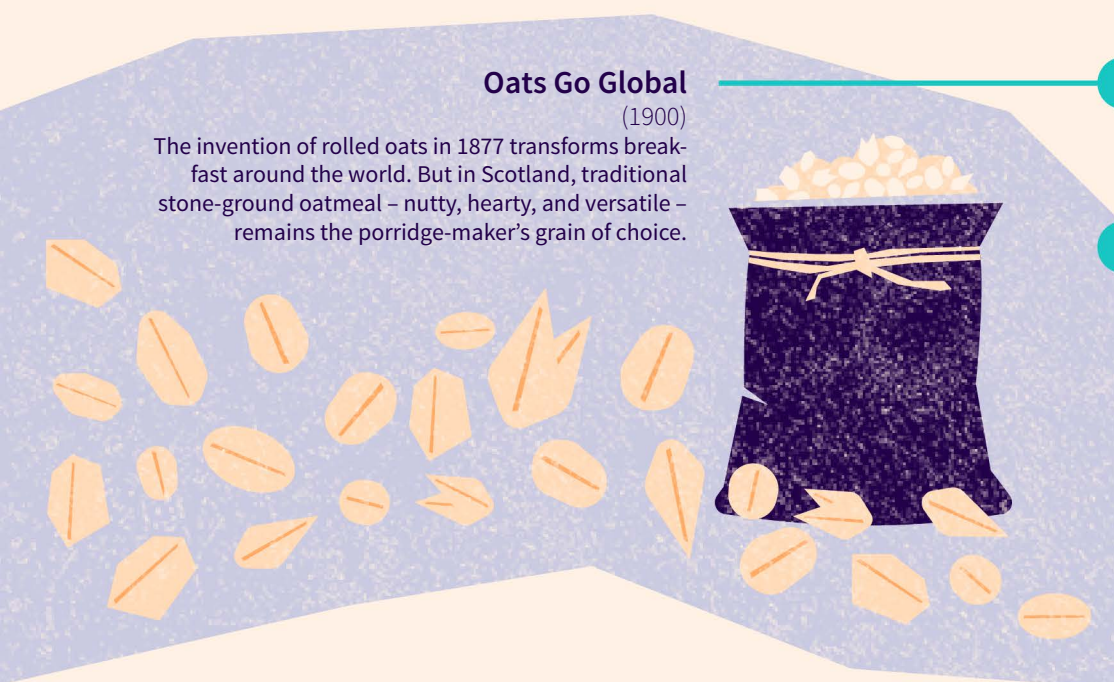
### Brose on the Go (1700)

Brose – a hearty, no-cook blend of oatmeal and water – becomes the food of choice for shepherds, crofters, and travellers. Quick and filling, it fuels long days on the move.



### Oats Go Global (1900)

The invention of rolled oats in 1877 transforms breakfast around the world. But in Scotland, traditional stone-ground oatmeal – nutty, hearty, and versatile – remains the porridge-maker's grain of choice.



### Porridge on screen

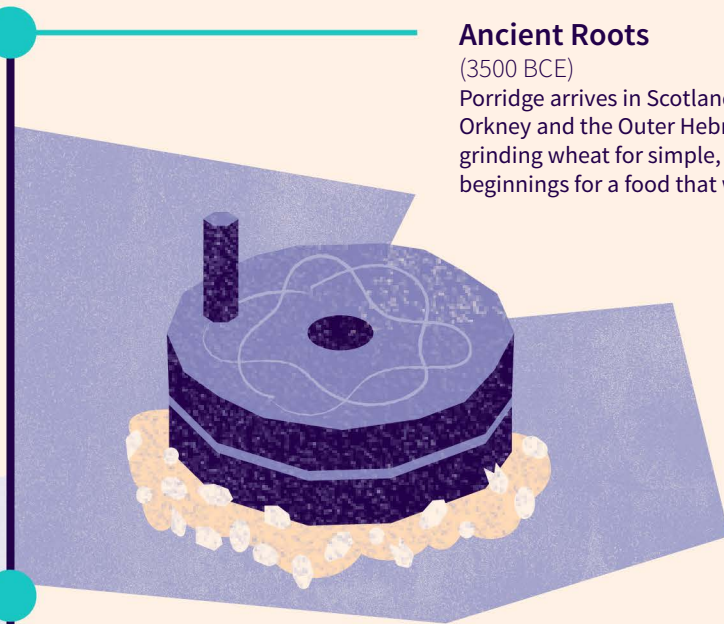
Scan here to watch **The Golden Spurtle** movie trailer and see it in UK cinemas from 12 September 2025



### Ancient Roots

(3500 BCE)

Porridge arrives in Scotland. Archaeological finds in Orkney and the Outer Hebrides show early communities grinding wheat for simple, porridge-like meals – humble beginnings for a food that would come to define a nation.



### From Hearth to Hearts

(1100)

By medieval times, porridge bubbles on hearths in homes across Scotland. Served with water, salt and a healthy pinch of superstition: stir clockwise for good fortune; anti-clockwise at your peril!



### Spurtles and Streams

(1800)

Watermills like Barry and Blair Atholl revolutionise oat-milling, turning groats into meal and flour. Meanwhile, the iconic spurtle is perfected – the simple wooden tool every porridge pot needs.



### The Golden Age

(1994 – Present Day)

The quirky Golden Spurtle World Porridge Making Championship in Carrbridge draws competitors from across the globe, celebrating both tradition and innovation with every stirring spoonful.

A modern renaissance sees porridge reborn as a “superfood,” praised for its gut-healthy and cholesterol-lowering goodness. But oats in modern Scotland are used for far more than porridge: they're brewed into beers, shaken up into creamy cocktails, and even churned into luxurious face creams.

