



# EXPLORE ABERDEENSHIRE

Discover a diverse region packed with outstanding beauty, with expanses of wild, lush forests, winding rivers, rugged moorland and imposing mountains sweeping down to miles of unspoilt coastline.


As well as boasting fascinating royal connections and Scotland's only Castle Trail, there is a wealth of wonders to discover where Aberdeenshire meets the ocean.

The historic towns and villages which line the coast are a testament to this area's long-standing relationship with the sea and are perfect for exploring. Within these settlements, you'll find some great attractions which give you a unique insight into the maritime and industrial heritage.

The scenery is dramatic; experience this coastal combination of rocky cliffs, long stretches of golden beach, ever-changing sand dunes, remarkable geological formations, and powerful white waves, which roll in from the North Sea.

Start your journey at [www.visitabdn.com](http://www.visitabdn.com)

**37 Forvie NNR and Ythan Estuary, near Newburgh** E3



Walk through a breathtaking landscape of shifting sand dunes at Forvie National Nature Reserve and explore the heather moorlands, clifftops and a secluded bay which lie nearby – there's even the ruins of a half-buried 12th century church to explore. Birdlife is plentiful; waders and waterfowl feast in the mud in winter, and in summer you'll see a thousand breeding eider ducks in the Ythan Estuary. You're also virtually guaranteed to see basking grey and common seals.

Postcode: AB41 8RU

**38 Newburgh Beach** E3



Just a short trip north of Aberdeen, you can find yourself surrounded by a mesmerising sandy beach at the mouth of the Ythan River. The Newburgh beach is also home to extensive sand dunes. This is a good area for bird watching. Seals can also be spotted around the estuary. Parking is available near the beach.

Postcode: AB41 6AA


**39 Balmedie Beach** E4



Visit the expansive, award-winning beach at Balmedie and discover the perfect place to spend a sunny afternoon playing in the sand or kicking a ball around with the kids. Stroll across the long stretches of white sand or, if you feel like something more energetic, why not experience the exhilaration of cantering across miles of beach on horseback, or bring a body board and hit the waves? Trump International Golf Links is also nearby if you prefer to enjoy a round of exquisite links golf.

Postcode: AB23 8XG

**40 Donmouth Local Nature Reserve** E4



Where the River Don meets the sea, you can find the Donmouth Local Nature Reserve – a great place to see seals and a wide variety of sea birds. You can also witness some interesting plants that take root in the dunes and beach area, as well as the bird hide where you can watch the wildlife. Nearby there is car parking, cycle racks and also ranger led activities during the summer months.

Postcode: AB23 8DR  
Tel: 01224 326429

**41 The Beach Leisure Centre and Linx Ice Arena** E4



The Beach Leisure Centre has a leisure pool, including a wave machine, fountain, rapids and four flumes, a gym and health suite. There is also a sports hall, café and crèche. The Linx Ice Arena is a recognised NISA Skate UK Ice Rink offering skating tuition and public sessions. The arena is also home to figure skating, synchronised skating and ice hockey clubs.

Postcode: AB24 5NR  
Tel: 01224 507739/01224 507762

**42 Aberdeen Fun Beach** E4



Blow off some steam at fun-filled amusements, located on Aberdeen's beach promenade, only one mile from the bustling city centre. Challenge yourself on the Vertigo Aerial Assault Course, take a ride on the Crazy Train Rollercoaster, or test your skills on a round of adventure golf, all at Cadona's Amusement Park. Kids will have tons of fun in Smugglers Cove indoor play area. Enjoy a bracing walk along the beach before checking out the cafes and restaurants which line the esplanade.

Postcode: AB24 5NS  
Tel: 01224 595910


**43 Aberdeen Maritime Museum** E4



The Aberdeen Maritime Museum tells the fascinating story of the city's history with the sea. Admire the variety of collections, from shipbuilding to fishing to port history and fast sailing ships. Also get involved with the museum's interactive collections, such as touch screen consoles, computer visual databases, hands on exhibits and more. This award-winning museum, located in the heart of Aberdeen, is a great family day out.

Postcode: AB11 5BY  
Tel: 01224 337700


**44 Aberdeen Cruises** E4



Enjoy a harbour tour, dolphin adventure or fish and chip cruise, all fully narrated, to experience Aberdeen from a different perspective. Aberdeen Cruises gives you close up views of the numerous oil industry vessels in the harbour and docks, as well as venturing further from shore where you can keep an eye out for local bottlenose dolphins, minke whales and a variety of other marine wildlife!

Postcode: AB11 5SS  
Tel: 01475 721281

**45 Dolphins at Torry Battery, Aberdeen** E4



For many, the star attraction of Aberdeen's busy harbour is its pod of bottlenose dolphins, and Torry Battery is an excellent viewpoint to try and spot these playful creatures – make sure you bring your binoculars and camera! Take a stroll to this former fortified artillery battery, which was last used defensively in WWII. Standing nearby at the entrance of the River Dee is Gridlenses Lighthouse which was designed by Robert Stevenson and built in 1833.

Postcode: AB11 9DA

**46 Stonehaven Open Air Swimming Pool** E5



Make a splash at Stonehaven's open air heated swimming pool, located in the town's Queen Elizabeth Park. Beautifully designed in Art Deco style, this Olympic-sized public pool and lido is filled with clean sea water. With a water temperature of 29°C (84°F), it's perfect for a refreshing dip on a summer's day. Kids will love the fun sessions, and look out for the special night time openings where you can swim beneath the stars.

Postcode: AB39 2RD  
Tel: 01569 762134


**47 Auntie Betty's and Giulianotti's Ice Cream Shops** E5



Indulge your sweet tooth and sample some cool, creamy treats from Stonehaven's much-loved ice cream and sweet shops. Pop into Auntie Betty's and choose from a delicious array of ice creams, ice cream cakes, sweets and coffees. Experience old fashioned sweet shop charm at Giulianotti's, where Italian ice cream has been made to a secret recipe for generations.

Postcode: AB39 2EQ  
Tel: 01569 762444


**48 Stonehaven Harbour and Tolbooth Museum** E5



Stonehaven's pretty working harbour, busy with sailing yachts and fishing boats, makes the perfect subject for budding photographers. Visit the Tolbooth Museum, housed in the oldest building in the town, and uncover the fascinating heritage of both the town and the 16th century building itself. Historically, it served as a prison and has connections to nearby Dunnotar Castle. In the summer months, take a boat cruise to see the magnificent RSPB Fowlsheugh, a seabird cliff colony packed with 130,000 breeding seabirds.

Postcode: AB39 2JU  
Tel: 07512 466329


**49 Stonehaven Land Train** E5



From Market Square to the centre of Stonehaven, the Stonehaven Land Train allows passengers to visit Dunnotar Castle, Tolbooth Museum, and more. Around Market Square you can shop in the local shops, cafes and fish & chip shops, or enjoy the soft play centre at Stonehaven's open air sports centre.

Postcode: AB39 2BA  
Tel: 07415 060459

**50 Dunnotar Castle** E5



Ruined castles don't get much more dramatic than magnificent Dunnotar Castle, perched 180 ft above the North Sea. Nothing beats approaching the castle on foot along the coastal path from Stonehaven. This fortress has a long and enthralling history: it was besieged by Oliver Cromwell, has housed the Scottish Crown Jewels and also been graced by visits from Scottish icons William Wallace and Mary, Queen of Scots. If you're lucky, you'll also see dolphins and puffins from the castle ramparts.

Postcode: AB39 2TL  
Tel: 01569 762173


**51 RSPB Fowlsheugh, by Stonehaven** D5



Guillemots, razorbills and kittiwakes are some of the thousands of breeding birds which collectively form an awesome natural spectacle on the cliffs of Fowlsheugh in the spring and summer months. You might see comical-looking puffins and beady-eyed fulmars too. Put on your boots and follow one of the cliff-top paths and admire the breathtaking coastal vistas, and keep your eyes to the sea; grey seals, dolphins and minke whales are often spotted by walkers.

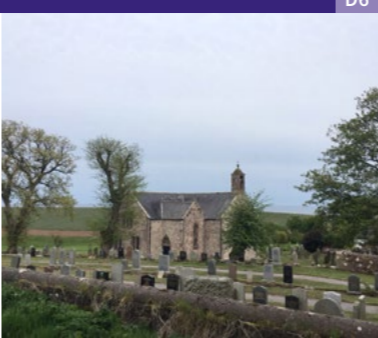
Postcode: AB39 2TP  
Tel: 01346 532017

**52 Catterline** D5



The historic fishing village of Catterline is perched on cliffs overlooking the bay and harbour. It has been said that in the late 5th century St Ninian used to land here as he faced the challenge of converting the Picts to Christianity. Through the 1900s a number of artists including Joan Eardley, formed what some have referred to as the Catterline School: artists drawn by the atmosphere and the light of this intriguing little village.


**53 Kinneff Old Church** D6



In 1652, Kinneff Old Church played an important part in history when it became the hiding place of the Crown Jewels after they were rescued from Dunnotar Castle during Oliver Cromwell's siege. Today there are displays in the church that depict both its history and that of the surrounding fishing villages. The church is open daily and is located just south of Cawton.

Postcode: DD10 0TJ  
Tel: 01561 362412

**54 Inververbie** D6



The shore has an attractive pebble beach. One of Inververbie's most famous residents was Hercules Linton who designed the notable tea clipper the 'Cutty Sark' – a memorial to him stands next to the Jubilee Bridge, featuring 'Nannie Dee' – the witch from Robert Burns' poem *Tam O'Shanter* – holding a grey horse's tail in her hand, a replica of the figurehead of the ship.

**55 The Quayside Restaurant and Fish Bar, Gourdon** D6



Gourdon is around ten miles south along the coast from Stonehaven and is one of the few harbours where fishing boats are still sailing from on a regular basis. Gourdon has a strong sense of being a working fishing port with lobster pots piled around the harbour. Overlooking the harbour, taste fresh seafood at the Quayside Restaurant and Fish Bar. Parking is available in the harbour area for coaches and cars.

Postcode: DD10 0TJ  
Tel: 01561 360111


**56 Maggie Law Maritime Museum** D6



The Maggie Law was one of the first inshore lifeboats, built in 1890 and rowed by six men she was in service for 40 years and saved 36 lives. If you are interested in maritime heritage you will be amazed at what's on display at the Maggie Law Maritime Museum which caters for all ages. The old two-storey coastguard building, which sits beside the old harbour and slipway (the Gully) can be found in the centre of Gourdon.

Postcode: DD10 0LW  
Tel: 01569 750730


**57 Benholm and Johnshaven Heritage Centre** D6



Benholm and Johnshaven Heritage Museum, based in the village lifeboat shed, overlooks the quaint Johnshaven harbour and features historic information about the old industries that supported the locals in the past. You can also see the village as it was then and wander around the streets to enjoy it as it is today.

Postcode: DD10 0EU


**58 Starfish Studio, Johnshaven** D6



Enjoy a relaxed afternoon in this arts and crafts haven. Starfish Studios, is packed with original art and beautiful crafts, ceramics, jewellery, glass, textiles, and more. The shop is also a working artist's studio for Kate MacKenzie, who sews with a variety of traditional and beautiful fabrics using bright, vibrant colours. Nearby, explore lovely coastal walks, rockpools and keep an eye out for seals and dolphins.

Postcode: DD10 0EN  
Tel: 01561 360118

**59 St Cyrus NNR** C6



Feel like you're miles from the hustle and bustle of urban life as you wander along the cliffs and dunes of St Cyrus National Nature Reserve. In the summer months, this protected area is awash with colour and life, from pretty purple bellflowers dotted across the grassy dunes to the constant movement of fluttering butterflies. Keep your eyes to the skies, where you might spot circling peregrine falcons, or in the winter months look out for feeding waders on the shoreline.

Postcode: DD10 0AQ

**Image Credits**

Front cover image: Buchan Ness Lighthouse.  
Publication: 2017/18

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