

Top five scones in Edinburgh



Sometimes they come in plastic packets, sometimes they are the size of a teeny thing. Sometimes – heaven forbid! – they are toasted in a panini machine or defrosted in a microwave. I have been served all of these atrocities, and none of them passes the test. Fortunately, there are places in Edinburgh where the offerings prove that Scotland is the home of good scones. Here are my personal favourites:

5 **Cafe Modern One**

The scones in all of the Scottish National Galleries' cafes are good, but somehow the Modern One baking beats the rest. Fresh, tasty and served with lots of jam, I especially like the way that the chef tries new recipes – the apricot and chocolate scones are divine – but the standard fruit and plain scones are also reliably good. If (for some strange reason) you don't want a scone, the cafe serves lots of other yummy cakes, lunches, snacks and ice creams and it is licensed. It can sometimes be a bit noisy, and I would prefer the butter not to come in little packets, but eating outside on the terrace of the beautiful garden is a true pleasure. The cafe is run by Heritage Portfolio.

4 **Mimi's Bakehouse, 63 The Shore, Leith**

We first encountered Mimi's one freezing January day soon after it had first opened. It was virtually empty so we were pleasantly surprised to see a counter stuffed with the most amazing cakes – everything from deep Victoria sandwiches to cup cakes, rocky road, cookies and of course scones. Mimi's

serves breakfasts, full lunches and spectacular afternoon teas with champagne, but it's the scones I go for every time – huge, melt-in-the-mouth concoctions served with lots of butter and jam. These days Mimi's is extremely popular and it can sometimes be hard to get a table (though you can book ahead) - its popularity is a little bit of a drawback as the screams of children do occasionally echo round it at peak times of the weekend, but the staff are unfailing cheerful and friendly, and the baking is as good as ever. Walk there along the Water of Leith, then you'll feel slightly less guilty about your calorie intake... (Mimi's also have a lovely cafe on the Royal Mile)

3 The Haven, 8/9 Anchorfield



This small and pretty cafe was opened by Edinburgh University graduate Natalie Kwek, who decided to try to turn her hobby into a job. She most certainly succeeded – within a short time it was one of Trip Advisor's top-rated cafes in Edinburgh, and deservedly so. The Haven serves great breakfasts, light lunches, and magnificent warm scones that crumble deliciously as you pop them into your mouth.

The cheery exterior paintwork and the eclectic mirrors, lights and furniture inside create a cosy, welcoming atmosphere, the staff are lovely, and if I lived nearer to the Haven I would be the size of a house by now.

2 The Piecebox, 2 Polwarth Crescent

The Piecebox is my local cafe, and I love it dearly. The counter heaves with enticing cakes – loaves smothered in berries, cakes dripping with chocolate, brownies bursting with brownie-ness. Chandeliers dangle from the ceiling, armchairs await you, newspapers are provided.



The scones are fabulous, the butter (masses of it, hoorah!) is especially creamy, and the jam is the best I have tasted in a cafe. The staff are very jolly and helpful, the cafe is dog-friendly, and somehow both dogs and small children seem to behave perfectly. The Piecebox also serves breakfasts and lunches, offers an outside catering service, and is licensed. As I do live extremely near to this cafe, I am indeed well on the way to house-like proportions.

1 Bon Papillon, 15 Howe Street



Stuart Allan is a picture framer who also makes the best scones in the New Town. Ingrid Nilsson is an artist who also delivers these masterpieces to your table. Bon Papillon is a great little gallery of contemporary art with a regularly changing exhibition – the next one, which opens with a preview at 5.30pm on 1st August, showcases work by **Evelyn Buchanan** and **Kathleen Mullaniff**. The cafe is beautifully peaceful and spacious; it serves soups, sandwiches, light lunches and fantastic cakes – naturally the scones are for me the star turn, with daily specials (the raspberry ones are particularly mouth-watering) and standard favourites, all of them huge, warm and irresistible. And the butter is never in packets: Bon Papillon gets everything right. (**NB** – the cafe is closed for Stuart and Ingrid's holiday from today until **23rd July**. It's usually open **Wednesday to Sunday**.)

So that's what's in my little floury scone book – how about yours?