

# Scotland's Year of Food and Drink is hailed a success



*Ewing toasts industry after 'hugely successful' Year of Food and Drink.*

Scotland's tourism industry stands in good stead as the Year of Food and Drink draws to a close and the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design begins, Tourism Minister Fergus Ewing said today.

The industry is on a high with an increase in visitor numbers to Scotland and a successful Year of Food & Drink:

- Overseas and domestic tourism visitors to Scotland have both increased by seven per cent in the last year
- As the Year of Food & Drink ends, visitors consider trying local food to be one of the top activities, 66 per cent think that the quality of food is important when choosing Scotland as a destination and more than 1000 tourism businesses have received the Taste Our Best accreditation, which ensures visitors eat quality ingredients of Scottish provenance
- The industry is adapting to an increase in the number of visitors coming in the colder months – increasing from 4.7 million trips between October 2008 and March 2009 to 5.7 million in the same period in in 2014-15
- The marine tourism market is worth £360 million and – through the Marine Tourism Strategy – the industry is taking steps to grow this to £450m by 2020
- Further success in Scotland as a destination for business tourism, with the £2 million Conference Bid Fund delivering a gross return of up to £200 million
- Further work to promote accessible tourism for people with disabilities

- Significant investment by public, private and third sectors in tourist attractions, venues, hotels and accommodation
- Highlighting the enormous contribution of the caravan and holiday park sector to the economy – worth over £700m per annum
- Promotion of a planning framework to boost the importance of tourism to the economy and country
- Success in a further series of major events brought to Scotland bringing many more visitors to Scotland

Tourism Minister Fergus Ewing said:

“The Scottish tourism industry has finished 2015 on a high. Bolstered by a hugely successful Year of Food and Drink, businesses have continued to build on past successes, increasing the number of visitors from Europe, America and from crucial domestic markets.

“Visitors come for many reasons – and 2015 has shown the Scotland’s world leading food and drink is foremost among them, with hoteliers, restaurants and other operators across Scotland rising to the challenge and giving visitors experiences to remember – from the Scottish Borders to the Shetland Isles.

“The forthcoming Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design offers a further opportunity to showcase what Scotland has to offer – with the official programme of events an excellent starting point from which to explore the huge wealth of trips and experiences linked to this wide-ranging theme.

“I am keen to ensure the benefits of tourism are spread throughout the country, and have undertaken numerous visits, from Nairn in the Highlands to Glentress in the Scottish Borders, to listen to tourism businesses and how their views can help shape policy. I am particularly interested in changes to better capitalise on out-of-season visitors and to further develop our marine assets.

“As 2015 draws to a close, I would like to thank the industry for its hard work and achievements over the year and to highlight the huge opportunity that 2016 – the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design – will no doubt bring.”

*Our main photo shows Braised Borders shin of beef, pearl barley ragout, parsnip – puree, roasted and crisped courtesy of [Dine with Stuart Muir](#).*

