

Six FREE Things To Do In Edinburgh This Weekend!

It may not be possible to have a completely free weekend (starvation, anyone?) but you can certainly be entertained for nothing. Each of the following events offers free admission – but *Free Fringe* performers have lots of expenses, so do contribute to their end-of-show collections if you can.

☒ **Suggestion 1: go to the market at the seaside! Portobello** is a mere bus ride from town, and when you get there you can stroll along the prom, make sandcastles on the beach, trawl the many charity shops, admire the art in [Velvet Easel](#) – and visit the amazing monthly market. Traders this time include **Windsheil Organic Farm**, **Alplings** (mountain food!), **The Caffeine Fix**, **the Woodland Trust**, **Vintage Vibes** (a service helping to tackle loneliness in Edinburgh's local communities), **Woods Brownie Company**, **Laceys Jams**, **Scoff Street Food** and at least 15 more. Local trader **BG Cycles** will be ☒ back on site offering a free bicycle check and **Caleerie Buskers** will provide the music, with a selection of traditional tunes and reels to enjoy whilst shopping. Gates open 9.30am and close 1.30pm on Saturday at [Brighton Park](#), Brighton Place, Portobello.

☒ **Suggestion 2: try a some Family Surrealism!** Join in the fun at the **Scottish Gallery of Modern Art's** second **Surrealist Saturday Family Day**. An entire afternoon full of *free* activities for children – be transformed into a real-life Dalí or Magritte with surreal face-painting, invent new colours with the *Colour Collectors*, marvel at the roaming circus performers or have a Surreal Adventure in the themed play area. Picnic lunches and ice-cream will be on sale, and the Gallery is also offering a special £10 family ticket for its **Surreal Encounters: Collecting the Marvellous** exhibition. 1-4pm Saturday, [Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art ONE](#),


Bedord Road.

Suggestion 3: experience some Ayrshire Opera! Want to hear some opera in Scots? **Ayrshire Opera Experience** is a new and exciting arts organisation based on the west coast of Scotland; its soloists are all young professional musicians. This summer the company is bringing ***The Descent o' Orpheus tae the Underwarl*** – 'an owresettin o an auld French opera fae 1686, *La descente d'Orphée aux enfers* bi Marc-Antoine Charpentier, intil Scotts' to the Fringe, and today you can have a little preview of their show. 12.15pm Saturday, [St Giles' Cathedral](#), High Street. All welcome, free (voluntary collection).

Suggestion Four: go to the Olympics! Well maybe not THE Olympics, but these ones could be just as much fun! **North Merchiston Club's Brazil Olympics Day** includes fencing, a bouncy castle, capoeira, a fun run, samba and lots of games, plus Brazilian food, a barbecue and the club's own **Pingado Coffee Shop** (bet they haven't got *that* in Rio...). 10am-4pm on Sunday at [Harrison Park](#), West Bryson Road, EH11 1EH and [North Merchiston Club](#), Watson Crescent (next to the park).

Suggestion Five: St John's Festival Pulpit. This weekend and for the next three Sundays, St John's – which is handily situated at the west end of Princes Street – is hosting some outstanding speakers. This year's theme is the intersection of public life and religion in the UK, and tonight none other than **Baroness Julia Neuberger DBE**, Senior Rabbi to the West London Synagogue, will be addressing this fascinating subject. Come along for **St John's Choral Evensong** at 6pm, then stay on for the talk and a Q & A session. **Festival Pulpit** is part of the **2016 Just Festival**, which aims to challenge perceptions, celebrate differences and promote respectful dialogue through a range of conversations, talks, exhibitions and performances. Read more in The Edinburgh Reporter [here](#). 6pm on Sunday, [St John's Episcopal Church](#), corner of Princes St and Lothian Road. All

welcome.

Suggestion Six: get locked in at the cabaret! Hosted by  pioneers of slapdash magic **Griffin and Jones**, and starring some of the best comedy, magic, burlesque and variety acts on the Fringe, ***The Lock-in Cabaret*** is on every night (except Mondays) until 28th August, and admission is *free*. There's a different line-up every time. 'Among its loyal fans *The Lock-In Cabaret* is fast becoming a Fringe Institution'. Over 18s only. 1am Sunday (ie technically 1am Monday, but the Fringe day doesn't start till 5am, so this show is actually on the night of Sunday/Monday – see Fringe website [here](#) for clarification!), [The Voodoo Rooms](#), West Register Street.

Have a fabulous weekend – and don't spend all that money you've saved too soon, there's still another 21 days of Fringe frenzy to go....