

Lothians blessed by top tourist attractions



Tourism businesses in Edinburgh and the Lothians are preparing for a busy tourism season and VisitScotland's Regional Director, Manuela Calchini, looks ahead to a number of exciting new events as well as the celebration of some returning favourites this year.

Manuela said: "As the 2017 tourism season gets into full swing across the region, we have much to be excited about, especially as we began celebrations for the 70th anniversary of Edinburgh as the Festival City.

"With an array of actors, authors, singers, dancers, street performers, comedians, and musicians, Edinburgh will once again come alive with an atmosphere which simply cannot be matched anywhere in the world.

"Established to create 'a flowering of the human spirit' after World War II with the first Edinburgh International Festival, the capital has blossomed into the world's leading festival city.

"From the Edinburgh International Film Festival in July, to the International Storytelling Festival in October and Hogmanay in December, the festivals will no doubt mark this special year in style.

"Major events and festivals, like the Edinburgh festivals, don't just provide some of the best entertainment anywhere in the world either – they also represent a multi-million pound

benefit – generating jobs and enhancing the whole region’s economy.”

This year is also Scotland’s Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology with a host of exciting events taking place across Edinburgh and the Lothians to celebrate the themed year.

Manuela said: “With over one third of visitors drawn to Scotland for its history and culture, the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology is an exciting opportunity to relive Edinburgh and the Lothians fascinating past. Already home to two UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the Edinburgh Old and New Town as well as The Forth Bridge, the region is simply bursting with history and heritage.



At the Georgian House on Charlotte Square.

“The capital has already embraced the themed year with last month’s Edinburgh’s Georgian Shadows proving a hit with locals and visitors alike.

“The event, which light up the New Town, was a fantastic way to kick off Year of History, Heritage and Archeology in the area, commemorating the 250th anniversary of James Craig’s New Town plan in style.

“There is plenty more to come too with Tradfest later this month, a vibrant twelve-day showcase of Scotland’s thriving traditional arts while, in September, Musselburgh will host East Lothian Battle weekend. The two day event will see the drama of Battle of Pinkie Cleugh in 1574 come to life through a spectacular reenactment.

“Over in Midlothian the themed year will be celebrated with the first ever Midlothian Heritage Week (1-7 May). From a tour of the pithead at the National Mining Museum of Scotland to medieval music at Rosslyn Chapel, the week-long celebration of Midlothian’s rich history and heritage is another great

example of the region taking advantage of the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology.”

There are also a number a top-class sporting events to look forward to across the region.



Scotland v Wales Photo John Preece

Manuela added: “Edinburgh and the Lothians will host some really great sport events this season too. After the drama of the Six Nations games earlier this year, the capital will play host to two showpiece matches in May with final of both the European Rugby Challenge Cup and the Champions Cup being held at Murrayfield.

“For those looking to get more involved in the sporting action, IRONMAN 70.3 should provide quite the challenge in July. The endurance event, taking place for the first time in Edinburgh and the Lothians, will start with a 1.2 mile sea swim from Gosford Sands on the Firth of Forth before a 56 mile bike road through East Lothian is rounded off with a multi-lap, 13.1 mile, run within Holyrood Park.”

“It’s not just events that look set to be a big hit with visitors this season, Edinburgh and the Lothians’ world-class attractions will also be on hand to provide some unforgettable experiences.



Monkey Business at the National Museum of Scotland was a very successful exhibition which ran until 23 April 2017. Monkey Business featured more than 60 spectacular new taxidermy specimens of monkeys, apes, lemurs, lorises and bush-babies, and is the most comprehensive exhibition on primates ever. The taxidermy was specially commissioned for the exhibition, which was the first to show

primates behaving as if they were in the wild.

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Manuela said: “We are truly blessed with some of the world’s best visitor attractions right here on our doorstep. Recent figures have shown that the attractions in Edinburgh and the Lothians continue to draw more and more visitors every year. From the National Museum of Scotland and Edinburgh Castle to the Five Sisters Zoo and the Scottish Seabird Centre there is a fantastic spread of attractions to enjoy right across the region.

“I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a fantastic tourism season – I look forward to working with you all to make it one of our best yet.”