

How to Experience Edinburgh Like a Local?

Are you looking for a genuine experience of Edinburgh, Scotland's beautiful and historic capital city? If so, then get ready to be a local! Edinburgh's rich culture and vibrant atmosphere can truly be experienced when you immerse yourself in the city's unique customs and hidden gems.

Whether you're a first-time traveler or a local looking to explore, this guide will take you from the city center to secret spots and through the heart of Edinburgh. So get ready to uncover the charm and culture of Scotland's beloved capital.



Photo by [Alex Tai](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Explore the neighborhoods

When in Edinburgh, exploring the neighborhoods is a must-do! Seeing each part of town unfold is like an adventure as you

journey through the winding cobblestone roads. With vibrant culture and architecture, Edinburgh has so much to offer.

The Old Town is the perfect place to start your neighborhood exploration. Home to the Royal Mile, you can visit fascinating attractions such as Edinburgh Castle or Holyrood Palace. Feed your inner historian by visiting some historic sites, and then take some time to explore the many shops, restaurants, and cafes that line the streets.

If you want to keep the adventure going, head to the Southside. The University of Edinburgh's campus can be found here, making it a great spot to explore student life. Check out the diverse dining options; you can even find unique music venues to explore.

If you want something different, head to the West End. This area is home to the fashionable District and Grassmarket. Here you'll find an abundance of boutiques, cafes, and bars. Depending on when you travel, you may even find street performers and colorful markets.

Leith is a great neighborhood for those who like a relaxed atmosphere. You can soak in the stunning harbor views, stroll along the promenade, and wander around the historic areas. Stop by Leith Walk, the area's main shopping street.

No matter which neighborhood you explore, keep an eye out for hidden gems. Spend time talking to locals and get insider tips on the best places to check out. This will enhance your experience, ensuring you get a true feel for each area.

Visit local markets

The most famous market in Edinburgh is the Edinburgh Farmer's Market, which is held in Castle Terrace every Saturday morning. Here you will find some of the freshest and best local produce from farmers and producers from throughout Scotland. The market boasts a large selection of vegetables,

fruits, meats, seafood, cheeses, and other artisan products, such as handmade pottery, jewelry, and furniture. Additionally, there is often live entertainment, like street performers and buskers.

The Stockbridge Market is another great option for tasting some of the best local produce. Held in the cobbled courtyard of Thomas Morton Hall every Sunday, you'll find a vast selection of burgers and other BBQ food, loaves of artisan-baked bread and cakes, and a variety of local cheeses, meats, and vegetables. The market also has a range of stalls selling artwork, crafts, and jewelry.

The Grassmarket on the weekends is a great place to explore the city's arts, crafts, and vintage markets. It is home to several independent traders selling various items, including clothes, books, handmade crafts, and jewelry. There are also various street food stalls where you can sample various flavors from around the globe while soaking up the atmosphere.

Attend local events

If you want to explore the city like a local, one of the best ways to do that is to attend the Beltane Fire Festival. This festival celebrated first held in 1988, is held in the heart of the city every April 30th. It celebrates the coming of summer and celebrates an array of beliefs and practices, usually related to the transition from spring to summer. The highlight of this festival is the procession that makes its way through the city to Calton Hill, where the culmination of the event takes place. Here, the May Queen and the Green Man will lead the celebration and the torch-bearing procession. There is also music, dancing, art, and plenty of fun for all involved.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival is another fantastic event to go to if you want to experience Edinburgh like a

local. This event takes place annually, and it brings together writers and readers from around the world. During the weekend of this event, literary fans, writers, and artists gather to socialize, participate in workshops, and discuss pressing issues related to books and authors. This event is open to everyone, and it's always a great opportunity to meet new people and immerse yourself in the intellectual culture of Edinburgh.

Another local event worth checking out is the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, which is the largest arts festival in the world. This event is held every August and brings together thousands of performers from around the globe. It combines world-class theatre, comedy, dance, music, visual arts, and more. What makes this event even more special is that all the performances are free, making it easy for everyone to join and enjoy the atmosphere. And finally, the Hogmanay Street Party should be on your list of events to attend. Celebrated for centuries, Hogmanay is Scotland's version of the New Year and is an all-night street party in the heart of the city. Here, you can listen to live bands, enjoy local food, watch the fireworks show, and join in all night's festivities.

Enjoy the outdoors

Edinburgh is perhaps one of the most naturally beautiful cities in the United Kingdom and experiencing it like a local means making the most of the outdoors. So whether you're walking the Royal Mile, or wandering around the parks, or hiking, the fresh air will add a special touch to your visit.

For starters, you can explore the iconic cobblestone streets of the Royal Mile, lined with souvenir shops, bars, and restaurants. As you wander along the road, take in the breathtaking views of Edinburgh Castle and the Scottish Parliament. Don't forget to take in the grassy lawns, open green spaces filled with flowers, and even a few hidden secret gardens tucked away.

If you want to spend more time amongst nature, there are plenty of trails around Edinburgh to explore. Here are a few popular ones:

- **The Water of Leith** is a river trail that winds through the city, dividing it into two. The trail has invigorating streams and lush greenery ideal for leisurely strolls or for longer hikes or runs.
- **The Pentland Hills** – located slightly outside the city, this trail offers stunning views of the surrounding area, from valleys and lochs to serene woods. Make sure to check out Blackford Hill for a birds-eye view of the capital.
- **The John Muir Way** – the Scottish Coast to Coast is the longest continuous trail in Scotland, hitting a wide range of sights from beaches to historical sites and from rolling country sides to fishing villages.

Without a doubt, you should take time to explore the parks of Edinburgh. Princes Street Gardens (taking over Edinburgh's old Nor' Loch) are filled with quaint benches and attractive flowerbeds and offer gorgeous views of the Castle and surrounding hills. Edinburgh Zoo is a great place to go with kids, with a huge variety of animals and a large, colorful play area. Whether you want to enjoy a picnic or just go for a leisurely stroll, these parks will give you a chance to feel closer to nature and relax with friends.

Try traditional Scottish cuisine

If you want to indulge in true Scottish cuisine, Edinburgh has no shortage of delectable traditional dishes. Much of traditional Scottish cuisine consists of hearty ingredients such as mutton, beef, fish, and potatoes. The classic dishes of Edinburgh seafood and haggis are a must try for any traveler.

Seafood is especially a plenty in Scotland and is a must-try for visitors. Many dishes consist of fish cooked in a rich,

creamy sauce, such as fish pie or haddock in a white sauce, alongside vegetables such as peas, carrots, and even the occasional potato. You could also try some fried fish and chips or the “fish supper,” which is a savory deep-fried fish served with a side of chips.

When most people think of Scotland, haggis is the first thing that comes to mind, and there are plenty of places to sample this hearty dish. The traditional dish of haggis, neeps, and tatties consists of haggis served with mashed turnips and potatoes. This dish is hearty, flavorful, and easy to find in restaurants throughout Edinburgh. Another Scottish delicacy is Cullen skink, a thick, creamy soup. It is made with smoked haddock, potatoes, and onions. The soup can be served as an appetizer or a main course.

For dessert, a traditional Scottish flavoring is the Dundee cake. This is a rich, moist cake filled with nuts and sultanas, then covered with a layer of marzipan and almonds. It pairs perfectly with a cup of tea, or even a dram of whisky, to help you finish off your traditional Scottish culinary experience.

Edinburgh has a wide variety of traditional British and Scottish cuisine, from seafood to haggis, making it easy to sample the local food and experience the tastes of Scotland.

Conclusion

You can do these things after using [luggage storage in Edinburgh](#) to free up your hands. It doesn't matter what you're into; you can have a total blast discovering the city and all its delights like a local. Always travel with an open mind and keep your eyes and ears open for hidden gems and inside tips from the locals. After all, that makes an experience like this so special and unique.