

Ten popular Scottish pub walks

It's the perfect combination of fresh air, invigorating exercise and well-earned relaxation and now tourism bosses have revealed that walking to the pub is among the most popular pastimes for visitors in Scotland.

VisitScotland statistics show that walking and hiking is the number one intended activity for visitors – and the majority sample a Scottish pub during their visit.

The national tourism organisation has listed some of Scotland's most stunning "pub walks" – featuring great walking and hiking routes each with the reward of a pub at the end.

The list features picturesque walks and welcoming hospitality from Orkney and Shetland down to the Borders.

It has been viewed hundreds of times by people planning a pub walk in Scotland from throughout the UK and as far afield as the USA and Australia.

Steve Duncan, VisitScotland's outdoor tourism marketing lead, said: "Our research shows that walking and food and drink experiences are two of the most popular activities for visitors to Scotland.

"Pub walks offer a great way to combine these, encouraging

people to explore an area on foot and enjoy our natural landscapes as well as sampling locally produced food and drink.

“There are pub walks to discover all across Scotland and many of these can be reached by public transport. We’d encourage people to seek out roads less travelled to discover lesser-known locations and authentic experiences.

“Some pubs offer accommodation too, providing opportunities for visitors to extend their stay, helping to support communities and contribute to the country’s economy.”

VisitScotland highlighted its most recent Scotland Visitor Survey, which shows that long haul visitors in particular are engaging with food and drink as a way to experience Scotland.

Almost half of visitors participated in at least one food and drink experience whilst on their trip, rising to 62% for long haul visitors.

One in five long haul visitors now name food and drink as the reason for choosing Scotland as a destination.

VisitScotland’s latest Domestic Sentiment Tracker showed walking and hiking to be the most popular intended activity for domestic overnight visitors this summer, closely followed by trying local food and drink.

Outdoor activities such as walking and food & drink both appear in the top five activities for day trips.

Meanwhile, a survey showed that 58% of international visitors to Scotland visited a pub.

Mr Duncan added: “These walks are ideal for Scots and visitors from further afield alike, to enjoy our great outdoors, explore new areas and experience the hospitality of local pubs.”

Ten pub walks in Scotland

1) Sand to Applecross Bay and Applecross Inn in Wester Ross:

This 2 hour route follows a route from the pebbly bay at Applecross out to the spectacular beach at Sand, with atmospheric views and shifting vistas across the water to Skye, Rona and Raasay. Overlooking Applecross Bay is the famous Applecross Inn.

2) Arthur's Seat and Sheep Heid Inn in Edinburgh:

This 1.5-2 hour pub walk takes in Arthur's Seat, the ancient volcano that dominates the Edinburgh skyline with views of the city, across to Fife and down the east coast on route to Duddingston Village and the Sheep Heid Inn, one of Scotland's oldest pubs, dating back to the 14th century.

3) Heaval and Castlebay Hotel Barra on the Isle of Barra:

A 2-3 hour pub walk up Heaval, the highest summit on the Isle of Barra, to enjoy the views across Castlebay to Vatersay, before enjoying a drink at the Castlebay Hotel and Bar, which look out over the harbour and 15th century Kisimul Castle, the historic seat of the Clan MacNeil.

4) Beinn Dubh and Loch Lomond Arms, in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs:

This 3.5-5 hour pub walk starting in the village of Luss involves an adventurous climb up Beinn Dubh and the Glen Striddle horseshoe with views over Loch Lomond and the surrounding Arrochar Alps followed by a rewarding visit to the former 17th century coaching inn, the Loch Lomond Arms.

5) Keiloch Crag and The Flying Stag at Fife Arms in Braemar, Aberdeenshire:

At 1.5-2 hours, the Keiloch Crag walk is a circular route around the Invercauld estate through pinewood trees to views

across the hills of the Cairngorms and down onto the River Dee, completed with a visit to the Fife Arms and its cosy pub, The Flying Stag.

6) Wideford Hill and Helgi's in Kirkwall, Orkney:

This 2.5-3 hour hike up Wideford Hill features panoramic views of Kirkwall and the surrounding islands from the top as well as the ancient Wideford Cairn, a 5000 year old underground communal burial site, completed with a visit to Helgi's, a traditional pub inspired by Orkney's Viking past.

7) Burns Circular Walk and the Globe Inn, in Dumfries & Galloway:

A 2-2.5 hour walk following in the footsteps of Robert Burns, who would often walk along the banks of the River Nith, and connecting with places associated with the bard including Burns House Museum and his mausoleum, finishing at The Globe Inn – Burns favourite pub, or “howff” as he called it.

8) Gullane and the Bonnie Badger, in Gullane, East Lothian:

A 2-2.5 hour circular walk around the rugged coastal location takes in the beach and forest past remnants of WWII tanks, views over the Firth of Forth, the famous golf course and St Patrick's Chapel, which dates back to the 16th century, finishing up in The Bonnie Badger.

9) Eildon Hills and The Ship Inn, in the Scottish Borders:

A 3-4 hour route in the Eildon Hills, which have captured the imagination of writers including Sir Walter Scott, James Hogg and Thomas the Rhymer and show signs of occupation back to the Bronze Age. The route starts in Melrose and follows signs for St Cuthbert's Way before turning off to reach the peaks before returning to the Ship Inn pub.

10) Lerwick Explorer and the Douglas Arms in Lerwick, Shetland:

A 2 hour walk around Shetland's historic capital that also takes in coastal views around the headland of Knab. Starting in the 17th century harbour, the route weaves through the old streets of the Lodberries, then leads out of town, with spectacular views across the Sound to the Ward of Bressay and back to the town for a drink in the Douglas Arms.



Scott's View



Our Lady of the Sea statue on Barra



Kirkwall Harbour



The Fife Arms



Gullane Beach



Walkers on Salisbury Crags



The Globe Inn



Applecross Bay Wester Ross



Lerwick Harbour



Loch Lomond from Luss