

12 spectacular Scottish festivals

Culture in Scotland is electric and palpable, a statement never truer than when you're in the middle of a buzzing Scottish festival. Full of exciting events, new exhibitions, talks and performances to see and experience, there's bound to be a festival or event that will make your trip to Britain truly unforgettable!

MUSIC

A) HebCelt Outer Hebrides



If you want to experience a slice of traditional Gaelic culture in an ultra-Scottish location, this is the festival for you. Presenting Gaelic culture and heritage in the shadow of Lewis Castle, The Hebridean Celtic Festival is a celebration of all things traditionally Scottish. Located in the Outer Hebrides, off the north-west coast of Scotland, this festival celebrates Celtic music, both old and new.

B) Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival

For jazz fans, experiencing the Edinburgh Jazz Festival is an exciting prospect – full of world premieres, fresh new names and unique collaborations performed in various interesting locations across Edinburgh. Venues for this festival range from plush Victorian auditoriums to cosy jazz bars and atmospheric churches. Highlights from this year's line-up include a performance by Jools Holland and his Rhythm & Blues Orchestra, the Melissa Aldana Quartet and the Soweto Kinch Quartet, to name just a few.

C) Celtic Connections

Fancy trying a slice of Celtic music in Glasgow? The Celtic Connections festival is the largest winter festival of its kind. Each year sees over 300 events around the city, including ceilidhs (a traditional Scottish dance event), talks, art shows, workshops and concerts, so there are many kinds of Scottish culture to soak up!

D) Orkney Folk Festival



If you love the idea of enjoying some rustic folk music in the charmingly rugged Northern Isles of Scotland, this is the festival for you! Known for bringing together never-to-be-seen-again collaborations, The Orkney Folk Festival is a must for lovers of authentic folk culture and traditions.

FILM

E) Scottish Queer International Film Festival

For an exciting glimpse into the world of LGBTQ+ film, look no further than Glasgow's Scottish Queer International Film Festival (SQIFF)! Raising awareness and discussion surrounding LGBTQ+ film in Scotland, the festival is a non-profit event, showing rare material from the LGBTQ+ community. An annual film festival, the organisation also offers one-off showings throughout the year.

F) Glasgow Film Festival

Here's one for the film buffs! If you love international and world film, there's bound to be something you'd enjoy at Glasgow Film Festival. Showcasing new blockbusters, avant-garde arthouse, live talks and rare cult classics, the festival would be a cool addition to any winter trip to the Scottish city!

CULTURE

G) Edinburgh Art Festival

When it comes to art, Edinburgh is a city with its finger on the pulse. It's home to some of the best art galleries and museums in Britain which come alive with brand new exhibitions, talks, workshops and tours during the Edinburgh Art Festival, held annually during July and August. With 140 events, highlights include world premieres of work from international and UK artists such as Samson Young, Joana Vasconcelos, Hanna Tuulikki and Caroline Achaintre.

H) Edinburgh International Festival

If you want to experience the crème de la crème of Edinburgh's cultural festivals, grab some tickets to the events at Edinburgh International Festival. With performances from some of the world's best theatre, music and dance acts, this is a culture vulture's dream!

For three weeks each August, the Scottish capital transforms into an internationally renowned hub for performing arts, with cutting-edge theatre, talks, workshops, music and dance. This year's highlights include *Ian McKellen on Stage*, *The Crucible* by the Scottish Ballet, a rendition of *West Side Story*, a modernisation of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* and a trilogy performed by Stephen Fry adapted from his best-selling novel *Mythos: The Greek Myths Retold*. Live music performances include Jarvis Cocker presenting JARV IS, Kate Tempest and Sharon Von Etter.

I) Edinburgh Festival Fringe



If you love things that are a little different from the norm, you'll love the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Founded in 1947 when several acts were refused a spot at Edinburgh's main festival and instead took to the streets, the Fringe is now internationally known and each year aims to push the limits of creative freedom. Bursting at the seams with new and boundary-pushing theatre, comedy, dance, music and cabaret, it attracts every type of talent imaginable. Amongst the thousands of acts performing in 2019, a few highlights include shows from Eddie Izzard, Phil Wang and Rosie Jones.

Happening across various range of venues across Edinburgh, many shows will also be free!

J) Edinburgh International Book Festival

Calling all bookworms! One part of August's cultural explosion in Edinburgh is the city's International Book Festival (EIBF), which brings together writers and book lovers for events based around discussion and learning. Each year 900 authors from 60 countries participate in over 800 thought-provoking events, including Nobel and Booker Prize winners. The themes for the EIBF this year include homelessness, equality in race and a hard look at the word 'citizen'. The range of events are aimed at both adults and children, so if you or your little ones love getting your nose stuck into a good book, this is a fantastic festival to visit!

Top tip: You can enjoy literary cabaret each night in the Spiegeltent with 'Unbound with Edinburgh Gin', a free event in Edinburgh's beautiful Charlotte Square.

K) Scottish International Storytelling Festival

One of Scotland's greatest traditions is oral history and storytelling, and every October there's the chance to experience this first-hand, at the Scottish International Storytelling Festival! 2019 will see the 31st Scottish International Storytelling Festival (SISF), which this year explores how music and dance can communicate experiences 'beyond words'. Celebrating the art of storytelling in all its forms, the SISF will comprise performances in multiple venues across Edinburgh, including the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, the National Library of Scotland and Scottish Storytelling Centre.

Tickets for the paid performances go on sale 7 September, whilst others are free.

L) Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo



If you like the drama and pageantry behind the British Army drills, you can't miss The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo! This impressive military performance takes place in the atmospheric esplanade of Edinburgh castle every August. Presenting impressive military performances from around the world, along with the addition of pipers and drummers, this amazing show concludes with fireworks! This year the British Army, plus pipers, drummers and dancers, will perform a show inspired by the kaleidoscope, a Scottish invention dating back to 1816.

Answer the questions by writing the correct letter in the boxes.

1. There are workshops. ☐ ☐ ☐
2. It is held outside Edinburgh Castle. ☐
3. It lasts for three weeks. ☐
4. It takes place in October. ☐
5. There are 140 events. ☐
6. There is Celtic music. ☐
7. It takes place at different venues. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
8. It can be attended by the whole family. ☐
9. It is held over two summer months. ☐
10. There are ceilidhs. ☐
11. There is a firework display. ☐
12. There are events based around discussion and learning. ☐
13. It started with street performers. ☐
14. It takes place in winter. ☐ ☐
15. The festival is a non-profit event ☐
16. It is known for bringing together never-to-be-seen-again collaborations. ☐