



Tour Information



Mary Queen of Scots

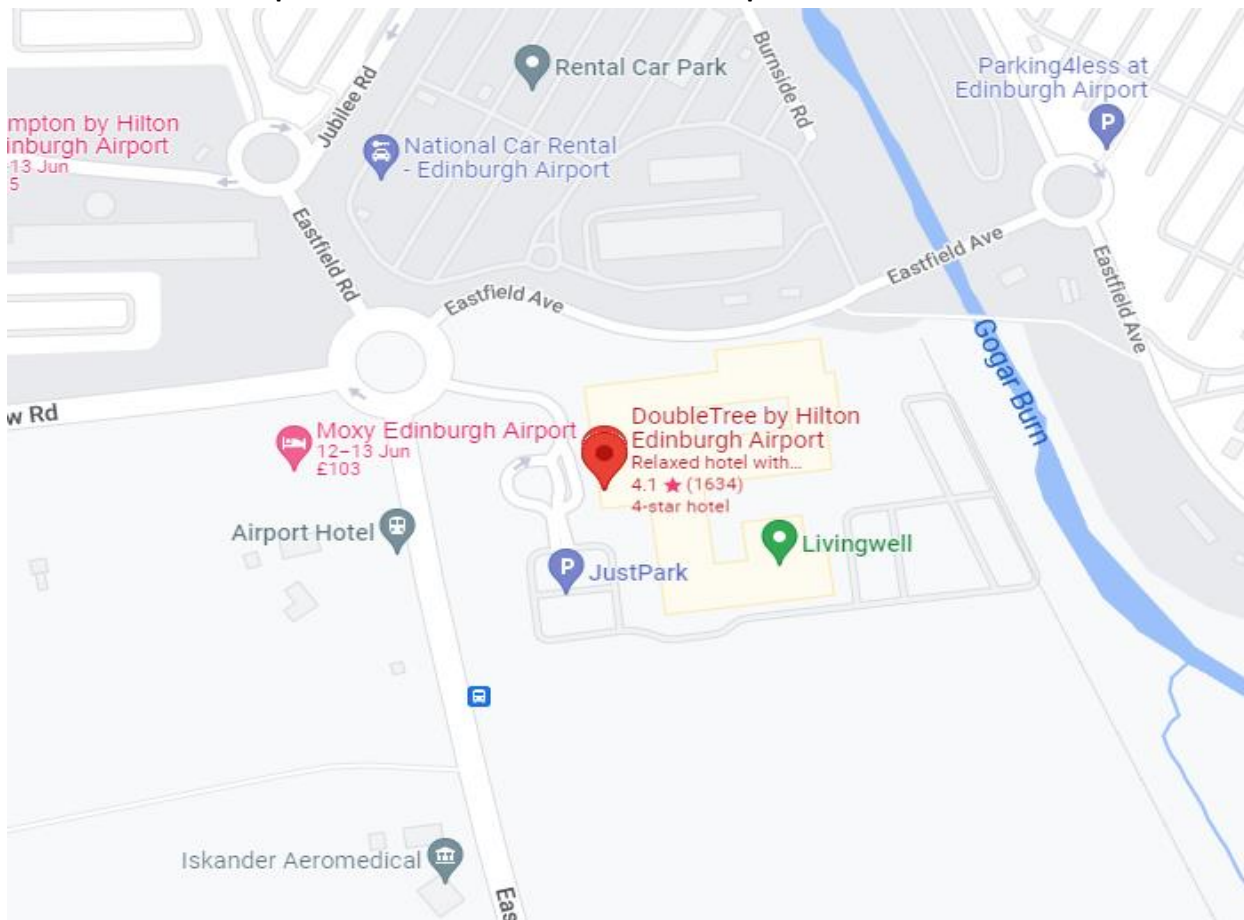




This tour starts and finishes at the **Doubletree by Hilton, Edinburgh Airport**.

100 Eastfield Road
Ingliston
Edinburgh
EH28 8LL
Tel: 0131 519 4400

Please note that transport to the hotel is not included in the price of the tour.



Transport

If you are travelling by car: The Doubletree by Hilton at Edinburgh Airport is accessed by following the A702/Edinburgh Bypass/A720. At Abington Interchange take the 4th exit onto A702, and then the 2nd exit and stay on A702. At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit and stay on A712. At the roundabout take the 1st exit onto Carlops Road/A702 and continue to follow the A702. Use the left lane to merge onto The City of Edinburgh Bypass/A720 via the slip road to Forth Rd Bridge/Glasgow/Stirling/Airport. At the roundabout take the 1st exit onto A8 slip road to Glasgow/M8/Forth Rd Bridge/A90/Stirling/M9/Livingston. Merge onto Glasgow Rd/A8. Take the exit towards Royal Highland Centre, and at the roundabout take the 4th exit onto Eastfield Road, at the next roundabout take the 2nd exit and remain on Eastfield Road. At the roundabout take the 4th exit and your destination will be on the left.

If you are travelling by train: The closest railway station is Edinburgh Waverley Station, about 20 minutes by taxi to the hotel.



Accommodation

Doubletree by Hilton, Edinburgh Airport

The four-star Doubletree by Hilton Edinburgh Airport is located half a mile from Edinburgh Airport and approximately 30 minutes drives from the centre of Edinburgh. The hotel recently underwent a £2 million refurbishment and offers a restaurant, bar, lounge, indoor pool, spa and fitness centre. Bedrooms are comfortable with en-suite bathroom, TV, telephone, wifi and hairdryer. Please note, if arriving at Edinburgh Airport the hotel provides a free airport shuttle.

Car parking is available at the hotel at £15 per night, payable directly at the hotel.

Additional details can be found via the hotel website:

https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/ediapdi-doubletree-edinburgh-airport/?SEO_id=GMB-EMEA-DI-EDIAPDI

Check-in and departure from the hotel

On the day of arrival you will be able to check-in at the hotel from 15.00, and the tour manager will meet you in the evening at the welcome reception.

On the last day of the tour, the tour will not finish until approximately 17.30 so you should check with your tour manager, or the hotel reception, where luggage should be stored until your departure.

Extra nights

If you have booked to stay an extra night at the hotel, this is on bed and breakfast basis and check out from the hotel is 11.00.

Special requests

If you haven't already done so, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.

Dining

On the first night of your stay, a private dinner with wine is provided. On the second evening, a private dinner with wine will be at the hotel, followed by a short selection of music that was played at pageants and balls during Mary's time. Breakfast on both days of your stay is included in the price but meals other than these stated are not included.

If you have booked to stay an extra night, dinner is not included on your final evening. However, there is the option to eat at the hotel restaurant.



Places Visited

Linlithgow Palace

James I ordered work on a palace to begin in 1424, following a fire that severely damaged the earlier residence. The elegant, new 'pleasure palace' became a welcome rest stop for royals on the busy road between Edinburgh Castle and Stirling Castle. The Stewart queens especially liked the peace and fresh air, and Linlithgow Palace served as the royal nursery for: James V – born 1512, Mary Queen of Scots – born 1542, Princess Elizabeth – born 1596. But the palace fell quickly into decline when James VI moved the royal court to London in 1603, following his coronation as James I of England. The palace's north quarter, which probably housed the queen's apartment where Mary was born, fell to the ground in 1607. It was rebuilt around 1620, on the orders of James VI. The end came in 1746, when a great fire swept through the palace.

Note that this visit will be exterior viewing only due to ongoing restoration work.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/linlithgow-palace/>

St Michael's Kirk

Although it is undoubtedly of earlier origin the first mention of "the great church of Linlithgow" is in a charter of 1138 in which King David I gifted it "with all its chapels, lands and other rights" to the Cathedral of St Andrews. All the Stewart kings from James I to V donated revenue to St Michael's "kirk werk" and not until 1540 was the church's completion celebrated with the granting of a new royal charter and, with it, the right to appoint a town Provost. The man chosen was Henry Forrest of Magdalenes who had himself been active in the "kirk werk" and had personally ensured that the masons received their "drinksilver". They certainly earned it for under their expert hands emerged the beautiful Medieval church we have today. First the nave and transepts were transformed; then the chancel and the apse. Outside, twenty niches were filled with carvings of saints and, inside, each of the 8 bays was graced with an altar, attended by a staff of chantry priests. The solid, square tower was furnished with a magnificent stone crown, topped with a weathervane, bearing the favourite emblem of King James III. The church was further adorned with the erection of a beautiful oak roof bearing the arms of George Crichton, vicar of St Michael's and later Bishop of Dunkeld. The ecclesiastical masterpiece which resulted was much favoured as a place of worship by the Scottish monarchs, most notably Mary Queen of Scots who was born in Linlithgow Palace on December 8th 1542 and was baptised in St Michael's church. The font which carried the holy water used to baptise the royal baby did not survive for many years longer. In 1559 the Protestant Lords of the Congregation arrive to obliterate all traces of the Roman Catholic religion from the Church. They smashed the holy water stoop along with the statues and altars. Occasionally fragments of this orgy of destruction are found in and around the church.

<https://www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk/>

Stirling Castle

Stirling Castle was the key to the kingdom of Scotland, dominating a vast volcanic rock above the river Forth at the meeting point between Lowlands and Highlands. Its origins are ancient and over the centuries it grew into a great royal residence and a powerful stronghold. During the Wars of Independence, which were civil wars among the Scots as well as a struggle between Scotland and England, the castle changed hands eight times in 50 years. And it is no accident that famous battles such as Stirling Bridge and Bannockburn took place within sight of its walls. In times of peace Scottish royalty came to Stirling to enjoy its comforts, the superb hunting and to hold court – the castle was often the centre of government. Royal building projects like the Great Hall, the Chapel Royal and the Palace of James V, marked it out as one of the most important places in all Scotland. It was also a childhood home of some of the most famous people in Scottish and British history, such as Mary Queen of Scots and James VI and I.

<https://www.stirlingcastle.scot/>

Alloa Tower

Alloa Tower in Alloa, Clackmannanshire in central Scotland is an early 14th century tower house that served as the medieval residence of the Erskine family, later Earls of Mar. Retaining its original timber roof and battlements, the tower is one of the earliest, and largest, of Scottish tower houses, with immensely thick walls. It was designated as a scheduled monument in 1960 and is now owned by the National Trust for Scotland. The building has been extensively re-fenestrated during its history, but retains some internal medieval features. It was originally built as part of a line of fortifications defending the north shore of the Firth of Forth. Several 19th century works, including Groome's Gazetteer, date the tower to the year 1223. Archaeological investigations from the early 1990s date the original fortified house to the early 14th century, where it had a cellar that sometimes served as a pit prison. By the mid-14th century it had been enlarged with a great hall and rose to three storeys in height, with the entrance on the first floor. In the 15th century it was further enlarged to four/five levels while retaining its first-floor access. Late in the 16th century ground-floor access was probably added.

<https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/alloa-tower>

Lochleven Castle

The tower house where Mary was held is one of Scotland's oldest, built in the 1300s. It was here that she suffered a miscarriage and was forced to abdicate in favour of her son, James VI. On a previous visit, as a guest, Mary had had one of her long religious debates with Protestant reformer John Knox here. And long before Mary's time, Robert the Bruce had visited Lochleven.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/lochleven-castle/>

Holyrood Palace

According to medieval legend, the Abbey was founded around 900 years ago in 1128 by David I of Scotland. While out hunting, the king had a vision of a stag with a glowing cross between its antlers. Seeing this as a message from God, he had an abbey built on the very same spot. 'Holy Rood', the name of the Abbey, and subsequently the Palace, means 'Holy Cross'. We can never verify if David I did have a vision of a stag. But the history of the Palace of Holyroodhouse does lie in the creation of an Augustinian abbey in 1128 by David I. This church proved too small for the requirements of the community. Over 35 years from around 1195, extensive monastic buildings were added, including cloisters, a chapter house, a refectory and guest houses. The enlarged abbey prospered, and from an early date contained royal chambers for use by the sovereign. It was James IV who decided to convert these royal chambers into a palace at the time of his marriage to Margaret Tudor, sister of Henry VIII of England in 1503. Although virtually nothing survives today of the early Palace buildings, it appears that they were laid out around a quadrangle. Main rooms, including the royal lodgings and the chapel were on the first floor, and a tower was added on the south side. Today the Palace was recognised as the official residence of the Sovereign in Scotland.

<https://www.rct.uk/visit/palace-of-holyroodhouse>

John Knox House

John Knox House on Edinburgh's Royal Mile has been described by one architectural historian as 'improbably picturesque'. It is actually a matter of debate whether the firebrand preacher ever lived there. Ironically, when Knox was at the height of his fame, the owner of the building was on the other side of the political debate – as the goldsmith to Mary Queen of Scots. The house is certainly one of the oldest in Edinburgh, mostly built in the mid-16th century, but with parts dating back to 1470. Investigate the ground floor and you can see the remnants of medieval 'luckenbooths', or locked booths, once rented out as shops. The Oak Room on the top floor is particularly atmospheric, with wood panelling and a painted ceiling from the early 17th century. It is the exterior though which gives John Knox House its romantic image. Timber galleries project out from the first floor, and forestairs give access from the street directly into the upper rooms. In the 16th and 17th centuries, these features would have been a very common sight along the High Street.

<https://ewh.org.uk/iconic-buildings-and-monuments/john-knox-house/>

St Giles Cathedral

Dauíd mac Maíl Choluim (King David I) founded St Giles' in 1124, during which time the bond between Rome and the Scottish church was becoming closer. St Giles' was built on the very eastern edge of Edinburgh and pre-dates most of the Old Town. When David I later founded the Abbey of Holyrood he gave the abbot permission to build houses up the ridge towards St Giles', establishing the Canongate burgh and forming what is now known as the Royal Mile.

<https://stgilescathedral.org.uk/>

Falkland Palace

A fine Renaissance palace with an extensive formal garden and one of Britain's oldest tennis courts. Inspired by the grand châteaux of France, successive Stuart royals transformed this favoured retreat into the Balmoral of its day, now one of the finest surviving examples of Renaissance architecture in Scotland.

One of Falkland's most famous royal residents – Mary, Queen of Scots – was enchanted with the palace, and took advantage of Falkland's vast estate to pursue falconry and hunting, while also enjoying a game of tennis in what is now the oldest surviving real (or royal) tennis court in the world.

<https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/falkland-palace>

Your Guides

Robin and Karen Cairns are your hosts for this weekend exploration into the romantic but tragic life story of Mary, Queen of Scotland. Karen is a practising architect. Robin Cairns is a poet, writer, performer and compere of the iconic Last Monday at Rio poetry event which he hosted for ten years until 2017. From this experience came his recent volume Please Don't Punch the Poets – The Aggro and the Ecstasy of a Glasgow Poetry Night. He was the creator of the National Poetry Slam in Scotland and has appeared at the Fringe as his comic invention 'Morningside Malcolm'.


Robin and Karen have led our Charles Rennie Mackintosh tour to general acclaim for a number of years and have now extended their portfolio to include this new tour.

Practical Information






Tour Manager – Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operates according to plan. If you have any problems or questions please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.

Tipping – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.

Walking Content – This tour has been graded a 4 out of 5 for walking difficulty.

Walking difficulty: 

Please see the key below for an explanation of the footprint symbols:

Very little walking involved	
Relaxed easy pace, mainly walking from coach to site	
Some walking between sites, good, flat walking surfaces	
Walking between sites, lots of standing for viewings	
On your feet all day, uneven terrain (cobblestones etc)	



Insurance

Although this is a UK holiday please note that, should you cancel your holiday, the amount paid is non-refundable. For this reason you may wish to take out insurance just in case an unforeseen event caused you to have to cancel the tour. As well as covering cancellations, your travel insurance will also cover your baggage and personal belongings in case they are lost or stolen.



Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

020 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 1000-1600), telephone our emergency staff on:

07841 023807 or 07831 133079

PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.

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IT IS MEANT AS A GUIDE ONLY AND WE CANNOT ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ERRORS OR SUBSEQUENT CHANGES