Discover a diverse region packed with outstanding beauty, with expanses of wild, lush forests, winding rivers, rugged moorland and imposing mountains sweeping down to miles of unspoilt coastline.

As well as boasting fascinating royal connections and Scotland’s only Castle Trail, there is a wealth of wonders to discover where Aberdeenshire meets the ocean.

The historic towns and villages which line the coast are a testament to this region’s long-standing relationship with the sea and are perfect for exploring. Within these settlements, you’ll find some great attractions which give you a unique insight into the maritime and industrial heritage of the past.

The scenery is pure drama; experience this coastal combination of rocky cliffs, long stretches of golden beach, ever-changing sand dunes, remarkable geological formations, and powerful white waves, which roll in from the North Sea.

Explore Aberdeenshire

The Aurora Borealis over Cullen Beach

Findlater Castle, near Cullen

The Banffshire Coast, also known as ‘Scotland’s Dolphin Coast’, is brimming with wide sweeping beaches, welcoming towns and villages and abundant wildlife. Scratch below the surface of this remarkable area and you’ll find the Banffshire Coast Harbour Trail.

The stories and folklore around these nine seafaring safe havens underpin the heritage of this part of the Aberdeenshire coast and these historic ports have in the past, and continue today, to play a pivotal role in daily life and are well worth exploring.

Find out about the fascinating historic trading, active smuggling and herring fishing heydays of this beautiful coast. Come and watch traditional boat building in operation at the new Boatshed in Portsoy harbour. Hear tales of dramatic storms and nature’s impact on tiny seaside hamlets, visit pretty fishing villages that have inspired Hollywood directors and much more. Walk, cycle or drive along one of the many coast paths from these ancient anchorages.

Historic Banffshire Harbours

An area of outstanding natural beauty and a designated area of exceptional coastal countryside.

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Explore Aberdeenshire
ONE OF THE FINEST COASTS IN THE WORLD!

Did you know that parts of Aberdeenshire’s coastline were hit by the legendary ice ages? After these glacial events, the land was covered in ice and the sea level fell dramatically, exposing a series of shelves that are now the coastal landscape. This unique coastline is part of the stunning Aberdeenshire coastline, which is home to a rich diversity of wildlife and breathtaking scenery.

WONDERFUL WILDLIFE

Nature lovers will adore Aberdeenshire’s striking beaches and reserves, which are home to a diverse range of wildlife, from seals and seabirds to dolphins and whales.

1. RSPB Troup Head near Pennan on the Banffshire coast, renowned for its seals, eider ducks and an occasional king of the waves.
2. RSPB Forvie National Nature Reserve, one of the most important wetlands in Scotland and also home to species such as guillemots, razorbills and golden plovers.
3. RSPB Loch of Strathbeg near Stonehaven and Cullen, perfect for gentle strolls and wildlife watching.

Traditional Beach Holidays

When was the last time you had a fun family day at the beach? Aberdeenshire offers some of the cleanest bathing seas in Europe, along with dramatic cliff scenery and sandy beaches.

1. New Aberdour Beach near Glenrothes, one of 19 sites on Scotland’s only National Nature Reserve.
2. Cullen Beach, which is named after the saint who is said to have settled here.
3. Balmedie Beach, also find some of the cleanest bathing seas in Europe.

TRADITIONAL BEACH

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**WHY VISIT ABERDEENSHIRE?**

Aberdeenshire is a land of contrasts: from the grandeur of its heritage sites to the serenity of its coastal stretches. It’s a land of history, culture, and natural beauty, offering a wealth of experiences for every visitor. Whether you’re seeking adventure or relaxation, you’ll find it here. 

**OUTDOOR ADVENTURES**

With a variety of gardens and trails, including 17th and 18th-century gardens and vast forested areas, outdoor activities are plentiful in Aberdeenshire.

- **Birdwatching**: The RSPB 16 Loch of Strathbeg and Rattray Head is a birdwatcher’s paradise, offering fantastic views of migratory birds like Eiders, Ringed Plovers, and Shelducks. The entire bay is a designated European Bird Watching Area, attracting thousands of bird species.
- **Fishing**: Aberdeenshire is a prime location for salmon and sea trout fishing, with the Spey River being particularly popular. The Salmon Fishings at the historic Salmon Fish House at Catterline are a must-visit for fishing enthusiasts.
- **Walking**: The Coast and Castles Coastal Path offers stunning views and historic sites. The Booth Of Dees and Cullen are particularly popular.
- **Surfing**: The beaches of Banff and Tentsmuir are perfect for surfing, with waves ideal for both beginners and experienced surfers. The Tollbooth near Sandend is a great spot for surfing and kite surfing.
- **Kayaking**: Paddling on the Moray Firth in the kelp forests of the Moray Firth offers a unique experience, with sightings of porpoises and dolphins common.
- **Beachcombing**: The beaches of Balmedie and Tentsmuir are perfect for beachcombers, with seashells, driftwood, and fossils often washed up on the shores.

**LOCAL CUISINE**

Aberdeenshire is famous for its seafood, with fresh catches from the Moray Firth served up in local restaurants.

- **Seafood Restaurant**: The Bay Fish & Chips in Portsoy is a local favorite, offering freshly caught fish and chips.
- **Coastal Larder**: Aberdeenshire is known for its locally-sourced produce, with Aberdeen Angus beef available at farmers’ markets and farmshops.
- **Glenglassaugh Distillery**: Aberdeenshire is home to the Glenglassaugh Distillery, offering tours and tastings of its award-winning whisky.
- **The Tollbooth Restaurant**: In Sandend, enjoy a meal in a charming coastal setting.

**VISITORS' INFORMATION**

Visit Scotland's Aberdeen website for more information: [visitscotland.com/aberdeenshireevents](visitscotland.com/aberdeenshireevents)
Castle, perched 160 ft above the North Sea. Ruined castles don’t get much more dramatic than magnificent Dunnottar. Besieged by Oliver Cromwell, has a history as long as its stone walls. Dawson’s story of maritime life at Stonehaven Heritage Centre and the Museum of Scottish Lighthouses, where Scotland’s first lighthouse is actually built in both Gourdon and Stonehaven. Hurricane people-level walks and coastal sessions at Maggie’s Hoosie in Huntly and worked on capital sessions at Maggie’s Hoosie is reported by the Southern Highlands and Grampians.

Find out more at: golfaberdeen.com