

WELCOME TO ABERDEEN

“THE GRANITE CITY”

Aberdeen, in the Grampian region, is the third largest city in Scotland and the capital of the North East. With a population of approximately 255,000 Aberdeen dominates the region and as a focal point is expected to serve all the needs of a large diverse population beyond the city boundaries. It is a dynamic, modern city that has managed to retain its character, traditions and values. One therefore finds a very high standard of facilities from health care and sporting activity to education and entertainment. The range of available services often surprises the first time visitor.

Traditionally the area has derived its wealth from agriculture and its extensive fishing industry. More recently, the arrival of the oil industry has added a new dimension to the local economy and has, in turn, created a more cosmopolitan atmosphere.

The City has been ranked as one of the most prosperous in the UK. Whether through this prosperity or for other social reasons, Aberdeen has relatively little crime in comparison with the rest of the UK. Many overseas families are amazed that children can play outside and walk home from school in safety without being accompanied by an adult.

Aberdeen is large enough to have the amenities one would expect in a major British city but is small enough that one feels very much part of a community. Major rock & roll bands, touring theatre companies and orchestras, regularly visit. The city is well provided with a variety of excellent restaurants, cinemas, clubs, modern stores and shopping centres.

In Aberdeen you are never far away from the countryside with its richly wooded valleys, lonely lochs (lakes) and mountain roads, moors covered with purple and white heather and a magnificent series of castles. The area has more than 150 castle sites, most of them concentrated around the fertile valleys of the Rivers Dee and Don. Some are nothing but ruins, recalling turbulent centuries of Scottish history; others survive as massive stone forts still capable of withstanding a siege; others are fairy tale structures, composed of castigated towers with conical roofed turrets, such as Balmoral the summer home of the Queen.

Little fishing villages punctuate the coastline, where sandy beaches alternate with precipitous cliffs and sweeping bays with dunes, salt-flats or pebbles. Some, such as Stonehaven, have rapidly expanded due to the influx of people connected with the oil industry and are now large towns.

The clean and elegant city of Aberdeen itself, known locally as ‘The Granite City’ or ‘The Silver City’ is built mainly of sparkling grey granite. The city authorities have gone to great lengths to ensure that the Georgian part of the city, with its gracious terraces, squares and crescents, and the solid Victorian buildings that accompanied the 19th century prosperity brought to the city by astute merchants, has retained its character.

All over Aberdeen you will find a wide array of parks and gardens with what must be some of the most spectacular displays of roses in Britain. Aberdeen has now won the ‘Britain in Bloom’ title so often that it has stood down from the competition to allow other competitors the chance to win the title.

Climate

Although situated at latitude 57° North, (which is comparable to Goose Bay, Canada and Anchorage, Alaska) we have a temperate climate, which fortunately is not as extreme as would be found in the latter two countries.

The average mean temperature varies during January from - 0.4°C (23°F) to 5.6°C (41°F) and during July from 10°C (50°F) to 23°C (72°F). East winds from the North Sea are prevalent, thus the wind chill factor leaves one feeling colder than the actual ground temperature reading would indicate, especially during the winter months. During the summer months the wind brings to the coastal areas occasional damp sea mists, known locally as 'haars'. They generally disperse as the day progresses to produce lovely sunny weather.

To sum up, the weather can only be described as **unpredictable**. You will therefore find it useful to dress in layers to allow for the many climate changes that can occur in a day and to always have an umbrella close at hand!

Communications

Despite its northerly location, good communications exist with the rest of Britain. Flights from Aberdeen to London, for instance, number around thirteen per day, with a flight time of just over 1 hour. Direct flights to the following destinations operate from Aberdeen Airport:

Scottish Mainland

WICK

Scottish Islands

KIRKWALL, ORKNEY
SUMBURGH, SHETLAND
STORNOWAY, LEWIS

Elsewhere in the UK

BELFAST
BIRMINGHAM
BRISTOL
EXETER
NOTTINGHAM EAST MIDLANDS

HUMBERSIDE
LEEDS/BRADFORD
LONDON
(Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton)
MANCHESTER
NEWCASTLE
NORWICH
SOUTHAMPTON
DURHAM TEESIDE

European Destinations:

*ALICANTE, SPAIN
AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS
BERGEN, NORWAY
COPENHAGEN, DENMARK
*DALAMAN, TURKEY
DUBLIN, IRISH REPUBLIC
ESBJERG, DENMARK
*FARO, PORTUGAL
GRONINGEN, NETHERLANDS

**GRAN CANARIA, CANARY ISLANDS
*IBIZA, SPAIN
MALAGA, SPAIN
OSLO, NORWAY
PALMA, MAJORCA
PAPHOS, CYPRUS
PARIS CDG, FRANCE
STAVANGER, NORWAY
TENERIFE, CANARY ISLANDS

* Summer only

** Winter only

Rail and road links have recently been upgraded and are in general of a good standard. The travelling time by road to Edinburgh and Glasgow is now approximately 2 ½ hours, with dual carriageway all the way! There is also easy access to the Scottish countryside, historic sites and the Highlands.

Expected Travelling Time from the City Centre

	<u>Peak Hours</u>	<u>Normal</u>
Aboyne	50 mins	40 mins
Alford	45 mins	35 mins
Banchory	40 mins	30 mins
Bridge of Don	30 mins	20 mins
Cults	20 mins	15 mins
Ellon	35 mins	25 mins
Inverurie	40 mins	30 mins
Kemnay	35 mins	25 mins
Kingswells	25 mins	15 mins
Kintore	30 mins	20 mins
Maryculter	25 mins	15 mins
Newburgh	40 mins	30 mins
Oldmeldrum	45 mins	35 mins
Peterculter	30 mins	20 mins
Portlethan	20 mins	10 mins
Stonehaven	25 mins	20 mins
Westhill	30 mins	15 mins