

Trip to Scotland 2022

Day 1

The 17th of June arrived with much excitement. We met at the airport in the morning, where I finally got to meet the others. We hit it off instantly, so the flight to Edinburgh felt like a short time and soon after we were at our hotel where we would be spending the following four days. After quickly settling into our comfortable rooms, we set out to explore the city.



The first thing that caught my attention was the tram line that ran all the way from the airport to the city centre. While travelling we could see the scenery change from the green suburbs of the city to the bustling heart of Edinburgh. I was blown away by the architecture, particularly the

older, historical buildings of the Georgian period. Going through the narrow streets invokes a feeling of travelling back in time, as there are buildings made of dark bricks adorned with neo-classical ornaments lining the roads. The image is only broken up by the stark contrast of the modern glass buildings peeking through the city landscape. Despite the difference in architectural styles, it all comes together to create an organic and beautiful town centre that is uniquely Edinburgh.



The Nelson Monument

Lastly, we hiked up to Calton Hill, which allowed us to look at the busy city from above and the surrounding green hills stretching all the way out to water of the Firth of Forth, which expands out to the North Sea. At the warm glow of the setting sun, we marvelled at the National



View from Calton Hill

Monument's antique columns and the towering Nelson Monument.

As the chilly winds of the evening sat in, we headed back to the hotel, stopping briefly to pick up some snacks at a nearby shopping centre. It was here where we first got our taste of the Scottish accent, as we struggled to understand the cashier. I can confidently say, however, that after spending a couple of days in Scotland our understanding of the accent improved drastically.

Day 2

On the 18th we visited Glasgow to meet the members of the committee preserving Jane Haining's memory.



Queen's Park Govenhill Church

The members of the church very kindly welcomed us with tea and biscuits and after that we learned a bit more about Haining's life and sacrifice, as well as looked at original letters written by her regarding her work in Budapest.



One of the ladies of the committee even invited us to have lunch in her home, where we had a chance to talk with her about life in Scotland over a delicious meal. After walking around Glasgow for a bit we parted ways with our tour guides, who not only introduced us to life in Scotland, but also provided us with some souvenirs to take home. We had a bit of time left before the bus ride back to Edinburgh, so we decided to explore the shopping area of Buchanan Street.

Once we arrived back at the hotel, we spent the evening playing card games and having fun, the ideal ending of a day well spent.

Day 3



Entrance to the Palace

The third day of our trip was the busiest, with lots of sightseeing and walking around the streets of Edinburgh. With the help of the hop-on hop-off sightseeing bus, we learned about iconic locations such as Princes Street, the Royal Mile and Greenside. My favourite part of the day was the tour of Holyrood Palace, full of historical rooms but still used by the royal family to host special events.



Holyrood Abbey

Throughout the day we encountered multiple buskers playing bagpipes in traditional kilts, which made for a lively atmosphere and also immersed us in the Scottish culture. For lunch, we decided to try some local food, but only after we managed to make sense of the menu written in Scottish slang. Eating Haggis with Stornoway pudding might sound intimidating at first, but it is actually a delicious, uniquely seasoned dish!



Just as we were about to head back to our accommodation, we stumbled upon a street concert held by Scottish band, the Spinning Blowfish. We joined the crowd to listen to the sound of bagpipes mixed with modern music and decided to stay for most of the performance. It was an eventful



The menu full of local dishes and slang



day and I feel that we really got a taste of the authentic Edinburgh, both the historical sights and the everyday life.

Day 4

Toolbooth Kirk



On the last day of our trip, we had only one sight left to visit, which was none other than the Edinburgh Castle. We have seen glimpses of it looming over the city as we walked on Princes Street, but now it was time to hike up and head inside. The stronghold, which stands on Castle Rock, has a history about 1100 years old! The first settlement here can be traced back all the way to the Iron Age and a castle for royal residency was used from the 12th century. In the 17th century the role of the castle changed, and it became a military station housing a large garrison. Nowadays it is an important part of Scottish heritage and is open to visitors.



Scottish National War Memorial



The castle is home to many attractions, such as the medieval Margaret's Chapel, The Royal Palace, The Great Hall and even the Scottish Crown Jewels!

Different parts of the fortress were visibly built during different times, so walking through it all feels like strolling through the maze of history.

With much new information about the history of Scotland, we ate lunch in the city enjoying the warm weather that graced us on the last day of our journey. Unfortunately, the time to go to the airport arrived and we gathered our belongings and took the tram one last time.

Even after shopping in the souvenir shops, nothing can compare to the memories and friends I made during this trip. I am very thankful for the opportunity to visit Scotland with a great group and learn more about its culture and history.



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