



Meet Britain's green stars of the show: Scotland

Scotland is home to Britain's two largest national parks: the Cairngorms and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs. Between them, they cover over 3,600 square miles of mountains, lochs and cinematic scenery – and they've got the film credits to prove it. One is all rugged peaks and whisky-fuelled adventures (James Bond fans, take note), the other's a feast of lochside eats, forest trails and five-star hideaways. Whether visitors are into paddleboarding at dawn, red squirrel spotting at dusk, or sipping single malt somewhere in between, Scotland's national parks deliver drama, flavour and fresh-air by the bucketload. No CGI required – just a pair of comfortable boots and perhaps a well-timed picnic blanket.

Bring an appetite to Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park

Saunter, splash and perhaps even sunbathe at Britain's largest lake, or explore the Trossachs' trails by two feet or two wheels. There are heaps of top-notch gastropubs and seafood spots to refuel at after a busy day exploring [Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park](#), each with their own twist on Scottish classics.

Bonnie Barns at Lennox of Lomond, Luss

All the fun of the farm awaits at Lennox of Lomond, with quad bike trailer tours and lambing experiences to get stuck into. Embrace the rural lifestyle with a stay at the on-site [Bonnie Barns](#) – each with a private hot tub overlooking Loch Lomond. Guests can hire mountain bikes, delivered directly to the barns, for a pedal-powered tour of their surroundings.

Loch Venachar Lodges, Callander

[Loch Venachar Lodges](#) bring a slice of Scottish cool to the heart of the Trossachs. Guests of Coorie lodge (sleeps four) can soak up views of the loch – made for wild swimming and stand up paddleboarding – from their private lakeside deck or admire the spectacular dark skies from the lodge's huge windows. Carsaig lodge (sleeps six) has its very own pétanque court, plus a fairy trail leading to a secret den.

Monachyle Mhor, Balquhider

Foodies flock to the family-run [Monachyle Mhor](#), overlooking Loch Voil, for its farm-to-fork cooking. Chef Marysia Paszkowska has been at the helm since 2010, serving up elegant Scottish food that's largely sourced from the hotel's own farm. Sign up to a Mhor wine safari for a vino-fuelled wander through the Great British outdoors or embrace the elements on a sauna and swim experience at the loch.

The Treehouses, Lanrick

High above the Scottish countryside are [Lanrick's luxurious treehouses](#), each with its own unique design: think hand-crafted furniture and sumptuous fabrics. Naturally, these treetop spots are perfect for wildlife-watching, so don't forget those binoculars and you might be lucky enough to spot a red squirrel. There are bucketloads of other outdoorsy activities to get stuck into too, from fly fishing and riverside walking to photography.

Cameron Grill at Cameron House, Loch Lomond

Feast on fine Scottish produce with a side of amazing views at the [Cameron Grill](#), part of the Cameron House Hotel on the shores of Loch Lomond. Visitors can indulge in a whole West Coast lobster, or how about a rack of Ayrshire lamb to share? Even the desserts here have a Scottish flair, like the cranachan baked Alaska or the burnt pine ice cream.

The Oak Tree Inn, Balmaha

For the ultimate introduction to Scotland's classic dishes, the [Oak Tree Inn](#) has it covered. There's traditional fare such as haggis and Cullen skink (a thick haddock and potato soup), plus something a little different: the Jimmy Krankie pizza, topped with Stornoway black pudding, Lorne sausage, smoked bacon and BBQ sauce.

Loch Fyne Oyster Bar, Clachan

The [Loch Fyne Oyster Bar](#) has been delighting tastebuds since the 1970s with its inventive oysters. Sample its star shellfish with lemon, chilli and mint vinegar or cucumber and jalapeno granita – or try the hot oyster selection. There's lots more seafood on the menu, from hand-dived Shetland scallops to Loch Fyne mussels. In the neighbouring deli, the home-smoked salmon is a must-try.

The Old Mill, Killearn

Once a weaving mill, the [Old Mill](#) is enjoying a new lease of life as a gastropub. Think pub classics with a modern Scottish twist, like Scottish venison burgers or slow-braised beef short rib with a BBQ blackberry sauce. Vegetarians and vegans are also well catered for, with celeriac steaks and orange, courgette and polenta burgers also on the menu.

Get shaken and stirred in the Cairngorms National Park

Home to five of Britain's six tallest mountains, the [Cairngorms National Park](#) is full of thrills – mountain carting, anyone? It's no wonder this is James Bond's stomping ground in Skyfall and No Time to Die.

Ardverikie House, Ardverikie

Cosy up in a cottage (sleeps from three to 13) on the [Ardverikie Estate](#) for an authentic taste of rural Cairngorms life. The location of a spectacular car crash in *No Time to Die*, rest assured Ardverikie is far more tranquil off screen. Cottage guests can enjoy exclusive guided tours of the Victorian Gothic house and can indulge in a range of rural adventures during their stay, from wildlife photography to trout fishing.

Cairngorm Mountain Carting

Scotland's first [mountain carting ride](#) is a thrill-seeker's dream – powered by gravity, and full of exhilaration. The three-wheel carts whizz down the 1.9km track, with plenty of twists and turns to keep things interesting. At over 900m above sea level, the views over the Cairngorms taking some beating, even at speed.

Fife Arms, Braemar

Within easy reach of the royal residence of Balmoral, the five-star [Fife Arms](#) has been a Braemar stalwart since the 19th century. There are plenty of nods to its royal neighbours – spend a night in luxury in one of its Royal Suites, each inspired by a different British royal figure. Experience wood-fire cooking in the Clunie Dining Room or sample a few snifters in Bertie's Whisky Bar. Get the adrenaline flowing with off-roading and snowsports experiences or spend the evening under the stars on [The Hunt for the Dark Sky](#) (available October to April).

Blair Athol Distillery and Visitor Centre, Pitlochry

Since 1798, [Blair Athol Distillery](#) has used the waters of the ancient Allt Dour to craft its smooth and mellow whisky. Lift the curtain on the whisky-making process on a guided tour, offering an insight into the distillery's centuries-old story. At the Mash Tun Bar, the expert bartenders whip up cocktail creations where Blair Athol's spirit is the star of the show.