

## Inverness Area - 50 Interesting Facts

- 1 The Gaelic name for **Inverness** is Inbhir-nis, inbhir or inver means the mouth of the river.
- 2 Situated by the River Ness on Huntly Street, Inverness, **Balnain House** was built by a merchant in 1726. It was used as a field hospital for Hanoverian troops during the Battle of Culloden in 1746 and in the 1880s it became the Highland base of the Ordnance Survey.
- 3 Linking Loch Lochy, Loch Oich and Loch Ness, the **Caledonian Canal** forms a waterway through the Great Glen that provides a safer and shorter route to the north of Scotland than navigating coastal route via The Minch and Pentland Firth. Built by the engineer **Thomas Telford**, it was opened in October 1822.
- 4 Caledonian Stadium is home to **Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club**. In February, 2000 the team made the headlines in more ways than one after beating leading team Celtic 3 goals to 1. The headline read: "SUPER CALEY GO BALLISTIC CELTIC ARE ATTROCIOUS"
- 5 **Castle Stuart**, built in 1625 by James Stuart, 3rd Earl of Moray has a secret billiard room.
- 6 The ancient burial mounds of Clava Cairns are between **three and four thousand** years old.
- 7 The last battle to be fought on British soil was at **Culloden Moor** on 16th April, 1746.
- 8 The **Great Glen Way** is a long-distance walkway which runs through some of the most spectacular of Highland scenery. The route, which takes 4 or 5 days to walk in its entirety, was opened on the 30th April 2002 by **HRH Prince Andrew**.
- 9 Built in 1794 as a **Gaelic** church, **Greyfriars Free Church** is located on Church Street, Inverness. It now has a secular use as a bookshop and cafe.
- 10 **Inverness Museum and Art Gallery** is home to fine collections of Highland memorabilia, including bagpipes, fiddles, weapons and fishing rods. Pictish stones and examples of Highland silver are also on display. It is free to go in.
- 11 The new Mercat cross in Falcon Square was commissioned from **Gerald Laing** of Kinkell Castle. Gerald was also the creator of a memorial sculpture to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle of Sherlock Holmes situated in Picardy Place Edinburgh.
- 12 Loch Ness contains **more fresh water than** the lakes of England and Wales combined in its 23 miles (37 km) length.
- 13 St Andrew's Cathedral lies beside the River Ness within Inverness, Highland and was built by Alexander Ross in the period 1866-69 and was the **first new Cathedral** to be completed in Britain since the Reformation.
- 14 Whin Park is one of the principal parks of the City of Inverness, Highland. Located to the south west of the city and on the western bank of the River Ness, this park has a play area, boating pond and riverside walks. To the north lies Bught Park with dedicated areas for rugby, athletics, curling and crazy golf.
- 15 Located on Church Street, Abertarff House is the **oldest secular building** in Inverness. Dating from 1593, it was built as a town house for the **Frasers of Lovat**. It is now the regional headquarters of the National Trust for Scotland.
- 16 Inverness is located at latitude 57degrees 29 minutes North and longitude 4 degrees 14 minutes West.
- 17 The 24-bedroomed **Beaufort Castle** was bought by Stagecoach bus tycoon Anne Gloag in 1995.
- 18 Boleskine House on the shores of Loch Ness was once owned by **Jimmy Page**, lead guitarist of the rock band Led Zeppelin. The house was made famous by the psychic experiments of Aleister Crowley in the late 19th century.
- 19 Foyers Hydro Power Scheme was the **first large scale commercial hydro-electric** scheme in the UK. Water is pumped to a high reservoir during off-peak periods and released later to generate additional power during times of peak demand.
- 20 One of the major geological features of Scotland, the **Great Glen Fault** cuts through Inverness the result being the most extensive valley in Scotland, the Great Glen (Glen Mor).
- 21 Also known as Glen Mor or Glen Albyn, the Great Glen forms a valley 60 miles (96 km) long that extends from Inverness in the northeast to Fort William in the southwest.

## Magical Mystery Tours with



- 22 In the mid 12th century King David built the first stone castle of Inverness, which was destroyed in the Wars of Independence.
- 23 The present **Inverness Castle** was built in the 1830s. Built as a courthouse and jail, it was in part designed by William Burn.
- 24 The Kessock Bridge links Inverness with North Kessock on the Black Isle. It was modelled on a bridge over the **River Rhine near Dusseldorf** and has a span of 1052m (1150 yards). Work began in 1976 and the bridge was opened in 1982.
- 25 **Beers** from The Black Isle Brewery are produced from **organically** produced barley and hops and are packaged in recycled materials.
- 26 Inverness is 100 miles from Aberdeen, 109 miles from Glasgow, 113 miles from Edinburgh and 562 miles from London.
- 27 A deep hollow on the high ridge between Carrbridge and Inverness, the **Slochd Pass** is traversed by the main northbound road and railway line which rise to 405m (1328 feet) at its summit.
- 28 John Fraser, 1750-1811, was appointed botanical collector by the **Czar of Russia**. He is remembered at the Scottish Plant Hunter's Garden in Pitlochry and also in the names of *Abies fraserii*, the Fraser Fir, *Ficus fraserii* and *Magnolia fraserii*.
- 29 Author and playwright Jessie Kesson was born in Inverness in 1916. Her works include *The White Bird Passes* (1958), *Glitter of Mica* (1963), *Another Time, Another Place* (1983) and *Where the Apple Ripens* (1985), together with *The Jessie Kesson Omnibus* (1991).
- 30 The Royal Brackla whisky distillery, located to the east of Cawdor, was founded in 1812 by William Fraser. In 1835 it was the first distillery to be awarded the royal warrant by order of King William IV.
- 31 **Clachnaharry**, a former fishing village on The Aird peninsula just to the west of Inverness is where the Caledonian Canal enters on the south shore of the Beaully Firth. The village is said to derive its name from the 'watchman's stone' which refers to nearby rocks used as a look out post by the townsfolk of Inverness.
- 32 North Kessock is the site of an **ancient ferry route** between Inverness and the Black Isle. This ferry ran, with various changes and modernisations, **for 700 years**, up until 1982, when the Kessock Bridge was opened.
- 33 The only U.K. Cabinet meeting **ever to meet outside London** was called at Inverness Town House in 1921 by Lloyd George (who was in Scotland on holiday). Out of this crisis meeting arose the 'Inverness Formula' which created the basis of the discussions at the seminar where the Treaty creating the Irish Free State was agreed.
- 34 Columba visited King Brude, converting the community to **Christianity**. The remains of the Pictish King's fort can be seen on Craig Phadrig.
- 35 Inverness was a winner of the "Most Beautiful Large Town" award of the Britain in Bloom competition.
- 36 **Eden Court Theatre** is currently undergoing a £2 million building development and will fittingly re-open for the 2007 celebrations, **Year of Highland Culture**.
- 37 The population of Inverness is around 65,000 and is one of the **fastest growing** in Scotland.
- 38 The headquarters of the University of the Highlands and Islands is in Inverness.
- 39 Built in a Gothic Revival style, it was originally intended that the twin towers of St Andrew's Cathedral in Inverness be topped with 30m (98 feet) spires. The building funds were exhausted prior to completion.
- 40 The new Eastgate shopping centre in Inverness has 66 retailers.
- 41 The main football team of Inverness is Inverness Caledonian Thistle. The team was formed in 1994 with the **amalgamation** of Highland league sides Inverness Caledonian and Inverness Thistle.
- 42 In December 2000, Inverness was declared **Scotland's newest city** in an announcement, which marked the new millennium and the Queen's golden jubilee.
- 43 Inverness was established as a **Royal Burgh** by King David of Scotland in **1158**
- 44 In 1562 Mary Queen of Scots had the **governor** of Inverness castle **hung** from the ramparts for his temerity in refusing her entry.

## Magical Mystery Tours with



- 45 The Great Glen Cycle route extends the full length of the Great Glen, some 60 miles (96Km).
- 46 Inverness is the **administrative centre** of development agency, Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Highland Health Board, Northern Constabulary, the Highland and Islands Fire Board, Scottish Water, and many other key agencies and businesses.
- 47 HRH **Prince Andrew**, also carries the title of the Earl of Inverness.
- 48 Geologically, Inverness is situated on an outcrop of old red sandstone, which is why there are so many sandstone buildings located in the town.
- 49 The River Ness Riverside Walk in central Inverness has **seven** crossing places.
- 50 The **Inverness Courier**, founded in 1817, is today published by Scottish Provincial Press Ltd. They publish a number of highland local newspapers.