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Aberdeen(The Granite Cite) – A City Guide

By Maria Williams

Introduction

Aberdeen (The Granite City) is Scotland's third largest city. Aberdeen is the chief commercial centre and seaport in the north–east of Scotland. It boasts the title of Oil Capital of Europe thanks to the plentiful supply of crude oil in the North Sea, and stands on a bay of the North Sea, between the mouths of the rivers Don and Dee.

History

Aberdeen grew up as two separate burghs – Old Aberdeen at the mouth of the Don and New Aberdeen, a fishing and trading settlement where the Denburn entered the Dee estuary. The earliest charter was granted by King William the Lion about 1179, confirming the corporate rights granted by David I. The city received other royal charters later. In 1319, the Great Charter of Robert the Bruce transformed Aberdeen into a property owning and financially independent community. The city was burned by Edward III of England in 1336, but was soon rebuilt and extended, and called New Aberdeen. For many centuries the city was subject to attacks by the neighbouring lords, and was strongly fortified, but the gates were all removed by 1770. In the 18th century a new Town Hall was built, elegantly furnished with a marble fireplace from Holland and a set of fine crystal chandeliers and sconces. The 19th century was a time of considerable expansion. By 1901 the population was 153,000 and the city covered more than 6,000 acres (24 km²). In the late 18th century, the council embarked on a scheme of road improvements, and by 1805 George Street, King Street and Union Street were open, the latter a feat of extraordinary engineering skill involving the partial levelling of St Catherine's Hill and the building of arches to carry the street over Putachieside. The increasing economic importance of Aberdeen and the development of the shipbuilding and fishing industries brought a need for improved harbour facilities. During this century much of the harbour as it exists today was built including Victoria Dock, the South Breakwater and the extension to the North Pier.

Places of interest

The main places of interest for the tourists in Aberdeen are the museums, art galleries and the Scotland's castle trails. Here is a list of interesting places in Aberdeen:

- " Aberdeen Art Gallery
- " Aberdeen Maritime Museum

- " Castle Fraser
- " Craigievar Castle
- " Crathes Castle & Gardens
- " Dunnottar Castle
- " Fyvie Castle
- " Provost Skene House

Museums and Art Galleries

The city is blessed with amenities which cover a wide range of cultural activities and boasts a selection of museums. The Aberdeen Art Gallery houses a collection of Impressionist, Victorian, Scottish and 20th Century British paintings as well as collections of silver and glass. It also includes The Alexander Macdonald Bequest, a collection of late 19th century works donated by the museum's first benefactor and a constantly changing collection of contemporary work and regular visiting exhibitions. Some of the other Aberdeen's museums and art galleries are:

- " Aberdeen Art Gallery
- " Aberdeen Maritime Museum
- " Provost Ross' House
- " The Gordon Highlanders Museum
- " Marischal Museum
- " James Dun's House
- " Museum of Education Victorian Classroom
- " Tolbooth Museum
- " Aberdeen Arts Centre
- " His Majesty's Theatre 1906 (presently –2005– under renovation) is a fine granite theatre which provides a home for popular entertainments.

Shopping

The main shopping districts center on specialty shops on Chapel and Thistle streets and the well-known chains on George and Union streets. Of interest to collectors, Colin Wood, stocks furniture, wall clocks, and grandfather clocks from the 17th to the early 20th centuries. Someone may also want to browse through the eclectic mix of bric-a-brac antiques at Elizabeth Watts Studio, where items include glass, brass, antique jewelry, china, silver, and a few small furniture pieces. For one-stop gift shopping, drop in at Nova, which stocks china, silver jewelry, rugs, clothing, toys, cards, and gift paper.

Other interesting shops are Grandad's Attic, which specializes in Art Deco ceramics and antique pine furniture; Just Scottish, retailers of quality items — all made in Scotland, including ceramics, knitwear, textiles, silver, and jewelry; and Alex Scott & Co. the town's finest kiltmakers.

Food and Drinks

Although Aberdeen is a well renowned city, it does not have many restaurants in offer. Mainly all the restaurants and bars offer continental or British/Irish/Scottish cuisine. Some of the famous places for wine and dine are:

- " Elrond's Cafe Bar

- " Ferryhill House
- " Howies Aberdeen
- " Martha's Vineyard Bistro/The Courtyard Restaurant
- " Silver Darling

Education

The first of Aberdeen's two universities, the University of Aberdeen, was founded in 1495 by William Elphinstone, Bishop of Aberdeen and Chancellor of Scotland. The University of Aberdeen is Scotland's third oldest, and the UK's fifth oldest University.

Robert Gordon's College (originally Robert Gordon's Hospital) was founded in and in the 1990s became co-educational and a day-only school. It also produced the Robert Gordon Institute of Technology, which became The Robert Gordon University in 1992.

Gray's School of Art, founded in 1886, is one of the oldest established colleges of art in the UK. Aberdeen College has several campuses in Aberdeen and offers a wide variety of part-time and full-time courses leading to several different qualifications. Northern College was a teacher training college with campuses in Aberdeen and Dundee. In 2000, the Aberdeen campus of Northern College became the University of Aberdeen School of Education. Aberdeen Grammar School, (now

comprehensive, despite its name) founded in 1263 and one of the oldest schools in Britain.

Sports

Aberdeen Football Club was founded in 1903. Its major success was winning the European Cup Winners Cup in 1983 and three League Championships between 1980 and 1986. The club's stadium is Pittodrie which holds the distinction of being Britain's first all-seater stadium. Aberdeen F.C. holds the distinction of being the last team to have won the Scottish Premier League Championship outside the Old Firm and is the only Scottish team to have won two European trophies adding to their European Cup Winners Cup success by winning the European Super Cup also in 1983. Well known footballers who have played for the club include Gordon Strachan (Current Celtic manager), Alex McLeish (Current Rangers manager) and club legend Willie Miller. Denis Law, the joint top scorer for the Scotland national team was also born in the city, but spent his professional career playing for English and Italian clubs.

Aberdeen Golf Club was founded in 1815. It has two 18-hole courses at Balgownie, north of the River Don. There are other golf courses at Auchmill, Balnagask, Hazlehead and King's Links.

Tours and Sightseeing

The Aberdeen Tourist Information Centre, where the staff can usually find just the right way to visit Aberdeen. Some other organized tours and travel agencies are there in the city. These tours are organized by the operators and vary from its contents, theme and price. The tours mainly feature the museums, art galleries, Scottish Castles etc.

Hotels and Accommodations

Because of increasing numbers of tourists and business travelers to the Granite City — Europe's

offshore oil capital and less number of hotels compare with tourists — hotels are likely to be heavily booked any time of year. So reservation in advance is a must before stepping to the city. Some of the Hotels in Aberdeen (ranging from Affordable to Luxury) are listed below:

- " Antrim Guest House
- " Station Hotel
- " Royal Hotel
- " Express by Holiday Inn Aberdeen
- " Thistle Aberdeen Caledonian
- " Copthorne Hotel Aberdeen
- " The Edwardian Hotel
- " Bimini Guest House
- " The Spires Serviced Suites
- " Thistle Aberdeen Altens
- " Summerhill Hotel and Suites
- " Macdonald Ardoe House Hotel
- " Britannia Hotel Aberdeen
- " Waterwheel Inn
- " Dyce Skean Dhu

Transport

There are four main roads serving the city: A90, A96, A93, A92, A90 now used as a tourist route.

The city's original ring road, Anderson Drive, which was built in the 1930s has long since been engulfed by the expansion of the city, and is inadequate for dealing with today's traffic. To this end, a

new main bypass road, the Western Peripheral Route, is planned to divert through traffic away from the city centre. The road is due to open in 2010.

The city is well served by the national railway network. Aberdeen has regular rail services to Glasgow and Edinburgh as well as long distance trains to London via Edinburgh. It is possible to take the longest scheduled rail journey in the whole of the UK from Aberdeen. Regular trains also run north westerly towards Inverness and north to Dyce for the airport.

Aberdeen also has an airport in the neighbouring town of Dyce, which is operated by BAA plc. As well as connecting the city to the rest of the UK, Aberdeen Airport (sometimes referered to as Dyce Airport) is the largest helicopter terminal in the world, serving the many North Sea oil installations. The IATA airport code for the airport is ABZ.

Biography

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Granite Kitchen Countertops

By Daniel Roshard

Granite kitchen counters are making an impressive come back these days, many people understand the perfect usability of a granite counter in the bathroom, kitchen, or any other place in your house, granite counter tops make a great addition to any living space.

The granite counters offer great visual appeal and are also very durable. If you have not made up your mind yet if you are ready to spend the big price for this wonderful counter top, this will give you a great opportunity to see many of the advantages they bring.

With granite prices more affordable than ever, this market is experiencing a bloom in business and interest, the unique qualities of granite are now more available to the general public. Granite kitchen countertops are more affordable than ever. Previously you could easily spend a small fortune on buying the granite and then paying a professional to install the new counter. There have even been cheaper alternatives that look like granite but are made of various other materials that completely take away from the earthenware feel of your granite counter.

Because of the new easiness of installation and the lower price you can find more professionals to install your granite counter top and you can buy the granite slab that you need and anyone with a fair amount of carpentry skills can even install their new counter top for a fraction of the price that it would have cost just a few years ago.

The granite counters offers quality, durable and very elegant features to your kitchen of bathroom, the durability of the granite allows you to assign many different tasks to it once installed in the kitchen. Whether you need to roll dough, cut meat, or just need another place to set that hot pot, you will not have to worry because granite is just the perfect material to handle these kitchen tasks, and while other materials may be a cause of worry once working in the kitchen, granite is almost always a perfect working tool in the kitchen. So not only do you have a great looking counter top but it also functions location to do all of your kitchen tasks.

Granite counter tops make a great addition to any kitchen or bathroom or really any place that you see fit. Hard to damage and easy to maintain, this is really what you have been looking for in the likes of counter top replacement. The only real problem is looking and finding a granite counter that you like and then thinking of how you want it installed and placed. Once you have added this functional yet stylish addition to your home, it will definitely be hard to you to imagine life without it.

Daniel Roshard is a interior designer fascinated by garden architecture, he is currently studying garden design and integration of house appliances to the outdoors. Daniel writes tips and advice on Granite use at

<http://granite.zupatips.com/>



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