



Edinburgh Old Town Walking Tours

An Edinburgh Planning PDF

OutlandishScotland.com

A Novel Holiday Travel Guidebook

Outlandish Scotland Journey Edinburgh Old Town Walking Tours

As stated in the first chapter of *Outlandish Scotland Journey's* Part 5 (The City of Edinburgh and Edinburgh Castle), we suggest scheduling at least *two* days to enjoy the city of Edinburgh.

Spend one day touring Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Palace (Site #46). Visit the Royal Mile *Outlander* film sites and novel locations on another day—adding one or two other Edinburgh points of interest to that day's itinerary, such as the National Museum of Scotland.

<https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/stories/scottish-history-and-archaeology/the-jacobite-challenge/>

Perhaps join one of the evening walking tours of the Old Town on the night before your second day, as discussed in the Outlandish Edinburgh Planner.

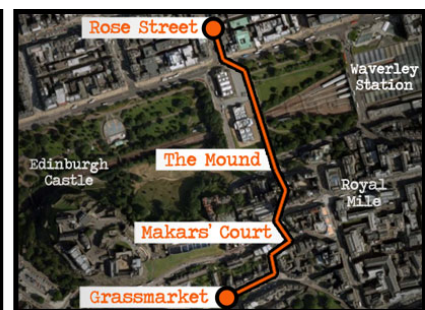
Several companies offer tours of historic Edinburgh Old Town. While some offer daytime treks through Edinburgh—or the surrounding countryside—the city's evening and nighttime tours can be great fun.

To explore the major Edinburgh tour companies before making your decision, go to the tours page of the official guide to Edinburgh's website:

<https://edinburgh.org/discover/must-see/edinburgh-tours/>

Below are the four Edinburgh tour companies we recommend—in order of our preference—followed by one that earns a resounding *Skip It* rating.

Please Note: Edinburgh's Old Town contains cobblestone inclines and declines, and many tours traverse flights of very steep and shallow steps. **Healthy, athletic, adult Outlanderites can signup for *any* of the Edinburgh walking tours—daytime or nighttime—without worry.** Seniors, young children, disabled or portly Outlanderites should be more careful when selecting a tour.



The Edinburgh Literary Pub Tour

<http://www.edinburghliterarypubtour.co.uk/>

This tour is an excellent Edinburgh Old Town Pub Crawl (aka "Bar Hop"), lasting approximately 2 hours. Guided by two hilarious characters, you'll stop at four pubs that were the favorite haunts of famous Scottish writers and poets, being entertained with literary history all along the way.

“The award winning Edinburgh Literary Pub Tour was the first literary tour launched in Edinburgh in 1996 ... It is regarded by many as a pioneer in its field, and a ‘Must-see’ cultural attraction in guide books throughout the world. Why does it stand out from all the rest?

“[Your guides are] professional actors, not academics or guides reciting from books, it represents great value for money and a very high entertainment factor.

“Join the intrepid duo, Clart (as in muck!) and our clean-hankied intellectual McBrain, who will lead you on a brilliant and witty dramatic romp through the wynds, courtyards and pubs of Edinburgh’s Old and New Town. A hilarious duel of wits across three hundred years of great writing and colourful characters!”

Below are a *few* of the Caveats for the Edinburgh Literary Pub Tour

(See the website for all of them.):

- Under 18s are not allowed to enter pubs. Scottish Licensing laws are very strict and actually quite non-European (sorry about that).
- Under 25s may be asked for ID so it’s a good idea to bring yours with you.
- The tour is not suitable for people with accessibility problems, due to several steps along the way and inside the pubs.
- Bad weather is just about the right clothing. We run in hail, rain, wind or snow, please wear warm clothing and comfortable foot wear.
- Drinking is not required (although it’s recommended!) and drinks are not included in the ticket price.



Mercat Tours

<https://www.mercattours.com/>

The Mercat Tours company offers the greatest number of daytime and nighttime Edinburgh tour options, and has an excellent reputation. That said, we feel that their most popular daytime “History Walks” (*Secrets of the Royal Mile* and *Royal Edinburgh Experience*) don’t allow nearly enough time inside Edinburgh Castle or Holyrood Palace.

The *Edinburgh Outlander Experience* Mercat Tour is only offered on Saturdays at 10:30am. Lasting 2 hours, it doesn’t visit all of the Outlandish sites between Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Palace, but those who prefer a live guide will enjoy it. After the tour, you can pop to the Outlandish Royal Mile sites that were skipped, or revisit those where you’d like to spend more time.

<https://www.mercattours.com/tours/history-walks/view-tour/edinburgh-outlander-experience>

The nighttime Mercat Tours are excellent.

<https://www.mercattours.com/tours/ghost-tours>

Be sure to also take a peek at the **Private Tours** available.

<https://www.mercattours.com/tours/private-tours>

Below are *two* of the Caveats for Mercat Tours:

(See the website for all of them.):

- Children under 5 years old are prohibited from all Mercat tours.
- The *Hidden & Haunted* tour and *Sin In The City* tour are limited to adults [over 18] only.



City of the Dead Tours

<https://www.cityofthedeadtours.com/>

“Founded in 1999, Black Hart Entertainment runs the world famous City of the Dead walks in Edinburgh: The *Haunted Graveyard Tour*, *Underground City of the Dead*, and *Double Dead Tour*.

“All our walks are written and researched by the historical author and award winning novelist, J A Henderson—who has written non-fiction books on the Underground City, The Mackenzie Poltergeist, and Haunted Edinburgh. Signed copies of these, and his young adult and children’s novels, are available from our gift shop or can be ordered on this website. For more information see: <https://www.janandrewhenderson.com/>

“Our guides are a mixture of historians and professional entertainers, picked for their ability to improvise, entertain, and make each tour unique and individual. This is history brought to life through storytelling, rather than simply walking around and pointing out historical facts. As a result, Black Hart Entertainment’s tours have enjoyed years of rave media reviews.

“So if you want fun, good company and fascinating history, come along. But get ready to be terrified in the process!”

The two most popular City of the Dead tours—*Underground City of the Dead* and *Haunted Graveyard*—are each approximately 1 hour, 20 minutes long. The *Double Dead Walk* includes highlights from both and lasts approximately 1 hour, 45 minutes.

Below are a *few* of the Caveats for City of the Dead Tours:

(See the website for all of them.):

- No under 12s or unaccompanied children.

- No hen or stag parties. [Those who read TripAdvisor tour reviews will recognize this rule as a good thing!]
- For safety reasons, people under the influence of alcohol will be turned away.
- Limited numbers apply. [20 people, maximum, per tour group.]
- Please wear sensible foot gear.
- Not suitable for pregnant women, those with a heart condition, or people who have difficulty walking.

City of the Dead Tours also offers an Edinburgh Ghost Tour App

<https://www.cityofthedeadtours.com/haunted-edinburgh-app/>

“The Haunted Edinburgh App is the capital’s first self guided ghost tour, perfect for someone who wants to explore on their own. Or at their own leisure. Or during the day. Or more than once. It includes:”

- An audio guide covering all supernatural sites in the historic Old Town and the horrible history and spooky stories that go with them.
- An interactive map, colour pictures and text, with links to appropriate websites, giving more information.
- A free download of the E-book *Edinburgh: City of the Dead*—an exploration of Edinburgh’s bloody past and paranormal reputation by award winning novelist Jan-Andrew Henderson.
- £1.00 off any City of the Dead Tour booked online (£2.00 off if you pay the guide in cash).
- The App is available to download on both Apple and Android phones.



Cadies & Witchery Tours

<https://www.witcherytours.com/>

“The award-winning Cadies & Witchery Tours invite you to join our fearless phantoms for a suspenseful and mirth-filled tour of Edinburgh’s Old Town. Step back a few hundred years as Adam Lyal (deceased) and his spooky chums bring the Capital’s grisly past vividly to life.”

Cadies & Witchery tours garner consistently positive reviews. Led by a costumed actor (with several other characters showing up along the way), the *Witchery Murder & Mystery* tour is offered every evening, year round—except for December 24th to 26th. The *Witchery Ghosts & Gore* tour is added between the months of April and September. Both tours involve a mile or so of walking, but the walk is casually spread over 75 to 80 minutes.

“The routes of the tours are different, though they visit some of the same locations. The *Ghosts & Gore* tour has a slightly shorter (and much flatter) route, so we recommend it for those with mobility difficulties. [This tour is wheelchair-accessible—the *Murder & Mystery* tour is not.]

“The content is quite similar: all the major stories are covered on both tours, with just a couple of differences. The major difference is in how the ‘jumper-ooters’ behave. On the *Ghosts & Gore* tour, they will chat with the guide and tell the group about their character and historical background. You don’t get much of this on the *Murder & Mystery* tour: these ghosts are more interested in making you scream!”



Auld Reekie Tours *REEK*—as in *STINK*

<https://www.auldreekietours.com/>

You won’t find this company on the tours page of the official guide to Edinburgh’s website, and we think we know why. When researching the Novel Holiday *Harry Potter Places* travel guidebook in 2008, CD Miller personally experienced one of their tours:

“Auld Reekie tours are gratuitously and unpleasantly arduous. The pace is ridiculously rapid, and several times you’re forced to climb extremely steep steps at break-ankle speed. Seniors and portly Potterites [Outlanderites] cannot possibly follow along.

“The Reekie guides offer only the barest bones of historical information. And, although the silly theatrics staged in the underground vault might titillate a few folk, most people will be shaking their heads at the end—as I was—wishing they hadn’t wasted so much time and money.”

That said, however, many recent TripAdvisor reviews have been positive. Perhaps in the past few years they have made major changes to their tours. If you take one, let us know!

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g186525-d213398-Reviews-Auld_Reekie_Tours-Edinburgh_Scotland.html