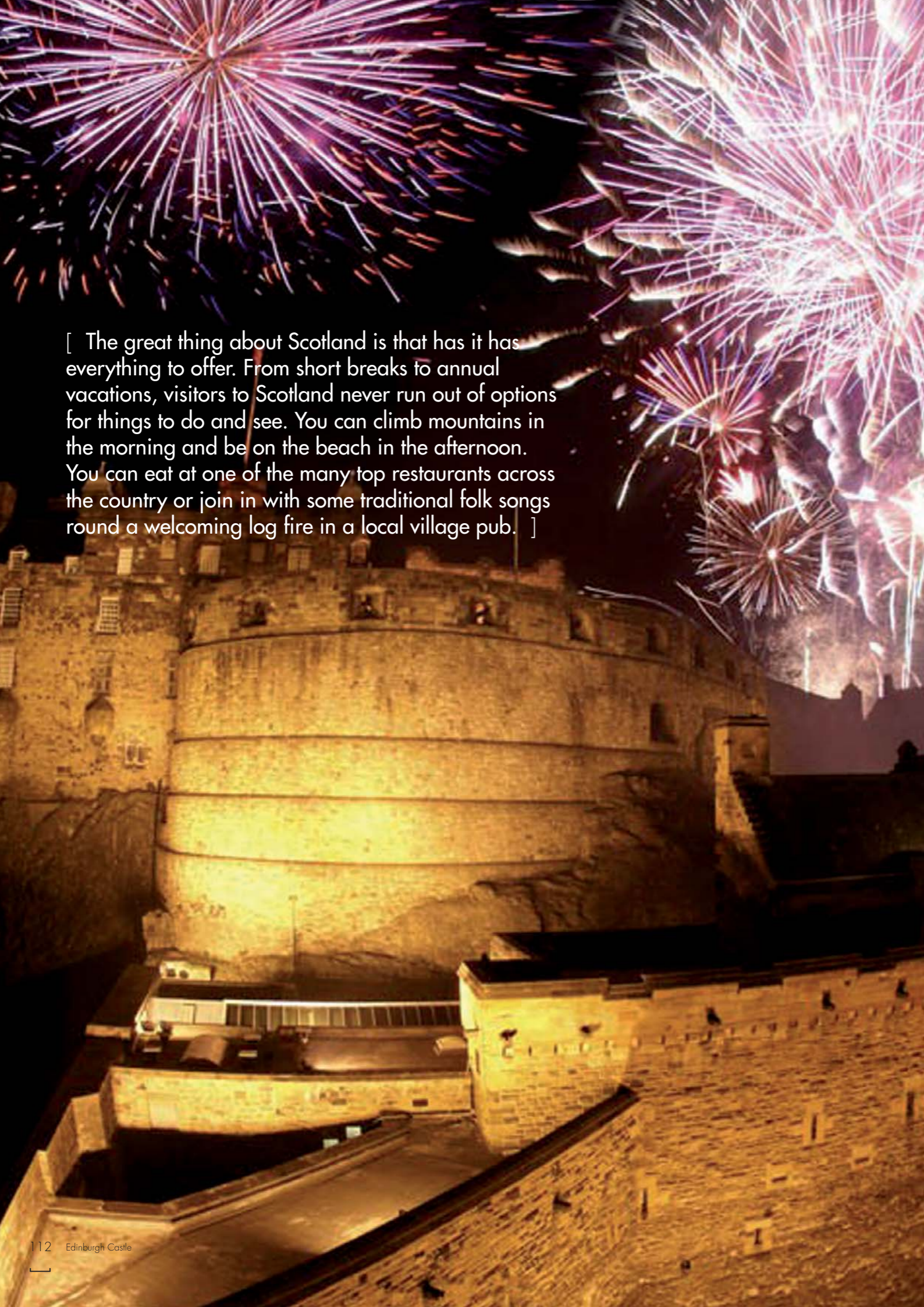


You're Welcome

[ TOURISM





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Philip Riddle

## You're Welcome Philip Riddle, Chief Executive, VisitScotland

Tourism is important to the Scottish economy and what is on offer for visitors and natives alike are exciting experiences and beautiful sights, all in close proximity.

A very warm, Scottish welcome to tourism as part of World Class Scotland 2010. We know that visitors are looking for an authentic experience and to meet the people of the country when they come to Scotland, and this is one of our strengths. If you have visited, I hope we more than exceeded your expectations and if you've not had the chance to visit, we'd be delighted to welcome you soon.

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Tourism is incredibly important to the Scottish economy. It is one of the country's largest industries, contributing approximately £4 billion each year to the Scottish economy and employing around 200,000 people.

What makes tourism stand out most is that it is a sustainable industry, inextricably linked to our natural and built environment, and central to Scotland's future economic development and growth. This industry has been here for hundreds of years and will be here for many years to come.

We know this is also an industry in good shape. We are outperforming tourism trends around the world - showing that our Homecoming initiative, combined with the 'staycation' effect with more people holidaying at home, the strength of the Euro and the hard work of tourism businesses have all combined for this industry to ride the recession better than most.

I expect we will see the 'staycation' trend continue in 2010 and we will be encouraging everyone in Scotland and the rest of the UK to experience more of what is on their doorstep. And we will continue to ensure our marketing hits the right targets internationally - we saw growth in 2009 in some of our key international markets including Canada, the US, Australia, Spain, Germany, France and Spain.

Homecoming Scotland 2009 was an inspirational programme of events running from Burns Night to St Andrew's Day to motivate people with Scottish ancestry, and those who simply love Scotland, to "Come Home" in 2009, and for Scots to join in with the celebration of their country and heritage.

Homecoming definitely made a difference in 2009 and is something we can build on as a model for best practice. We saw an unprecedented mix of private, public and voluntary sector organisations unite around shared goals in the context of a national celebration.

Investment will continue to be key for getting back to growth and Scotland is a great place to invest. We have continued to see new projects develop in spite of the economic climate. The likes of Glentress, Scotland's largest mountain bike centre, and the new Missoni Hotel in Edinburgh are positive indicators, and we know of many more great projects in planning and development.

We have weathered a difficult year in 2009 and 2010 will still be challenging. Tourism can lead economic recovery if we build on the successes of 2009 by working together, ensuring continued investment and providing a visitor experience that beats expectations based on quality and service. Tourism is everyone's business; we have to share the responsibilities and reap the rewards together.



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For information on VisitScotland, Scotland's national tourism organisation, visit: [www.visitscotland.org](http://www.visitscotland.org)  
For all holiday information and bookings go to: [www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com)  
For business tourism information go to: [www.conventionscotland.com](http://www.conventionscotland.com)

# The Secret Castle

Dundas Castle was once known as the 'Secret Castle', but it is certainly not a secret anymore. Secluded within its own 1000 acre estate, few even knew it was there. And while the tranquility of this location has not changed, the reputation that Dundas Castle has garnered over the last 10 years has put it firmly on the venue searching map.



Dundas Castle is only 20 minutes from the centre of Edinburgh and 15 minutes from Edinburgh International Airport – guests from near and far have access to one of Scotland's most beautiful castles.

Sir Jack Stewart-Clark inherited the castle in 1995 and along with his wife Lady Lydia, an accomplished interior designer, oversaw renovations to restore the castle to its former glory. Now one of only five 5-star exclusive-use venues in Scotland, the time and care that was taken in this refurbishment is evident in this revered private stately home.

This refurbishment saw the original silks being replaced in the library, magnificent chandeliers installed in the dining room and drawing room, and the fourteen bedrooms and bathrooms being tended to. The original baths were retained where possible and the rooms were turned into suites, which come complete with original paintings, family heirlooms and many of the modern facilities that are expected in a leading residential venue. The estate was also cultivated and now boasts 'Tracks' its own 4x4 course, a quad-biking course and abseiling quarry to accompany the 9-hole golf course, all of which may be used by guests staying at the castle.

The Auld Keep was the first building built on the current Dundas estate. Built in 1416, this medieval tower was used as a fortress in times of war and a home in times of peace. The now adjoining main house was built in 1818 by renowned Scottish architect, William Burn. When Sir Jack took ownership of the castle, the Auld Keep had not been inhabited in over 300 years and, among other chambers, a dungeon, guardroom and two staircases were uncovered. These have since been renovated into a banquet room, a Great Hall, a prayer room and five breakout rooms.

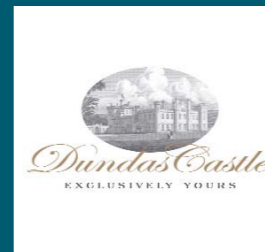
The castle opened its doors for business in 1997 and since then has welcomed guests who have enjoyed 'owning' the



Orchid bedroom, Dundas Castle

[ The castle opened its doors for business in 1997 and since then has welcomed guests who have enjoyed 'owning' the castle for the duration of the event. With only the discreet yet attentive staff in the castle, leisure groups, corporate events and fairytale weddings take place totally uninterrupted. ]

castle for the duration of the event. With only the discreet yet attentive staff in the castle, leisure groups, corporate events and fairytale weddings take place totally uninterrupted. Within the main house the elegant Georgian Croquet Room can hold up to 60 people for a dinner and the Stag Chamber in the Auld Keep is perfect for a medieval banquet for up to 26. For up to 180 people, the Pavilion on the lawn provides a spectacular dining experience. Only metres from the main house and with glass walls along two sides, the Pavilion offers breathtaking views over the estate and floodlit castle. As a member of the established consortiums Luxury Edinburgh and Unique Venues of Edinburgh, Dundas Castle is committed to providing the best hospitality and first class catering with the charm and flair that is unique to Scotland.



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# The Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa in Edinburgh

Undergoes multi-million pound refurbishment, celebrating its 25th birthday

In its 25th year since opening, the Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa is undertaking a multi-million pound refurbishment of all its bedrooms and suites, increasing the number of rooms to 268 and creating an opulent Grand Suite and exclusive 'Club' floor.



The refurbishment started in January 2010 and the first phase will be completed by April, with all rooms completed by July 2010. Each of the bedrooms will undergo a complete transformation, becoming a contemporary, state-of-the-art stylish room. All will feature beautiful spacious bathrooms encapsulated in glass, creating a sense of space with bath and separate walk-in showers. The work will be undertaken in two phases, in two separate wings of the hotel, ensuring minimal disruption to guests.

General Manager of the Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa, J P Kavanagh, explained: "Over the years we have continually invested in the hotel including the creation of Europe's most advanced city spa, One Spa, in 2001. However, it is time to completely improve and enhance the rooms' product with this sizeable investment in Edinburgh's largest conference hotel. As the economy begins to recover, the Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa will be in an enviable position, poised to leverage our renovated product and offer guests Sheraton's signature brand offerings at one of Scotland's leading hotels. We are already starting to see growth in occupancy, particularly in the important corporate market, which is very encouraging. We look forward to welcoming both former and new guests as we celebrate our 25th year in the city."

Guest feedback and staff input formed a vital part of the planning process. Hotel management involved everyone from the front desk teams to housekeeping and this feedback has been incorporated into the final design concept.

The design of the new rooms will be both warm and comforting, as well as being at the forefront of contemporary design, featuring mood lighting and state of the art technology, such as a media hub. Each room will feature the Sheraton Sweet Sleeper Bed, natural materials, simple colours and soft fabrics with a delicate reference to our local environment with a plaid bed throw and Edinburgh artwork, creating an enhanced environment to work, relax and sleep.

In addition to the refurbished 268 bedrooms a Club floor will be created on the top floor of the hotel, providing guests with an enhanced level of service and a "hotel within a hotel" concept. All Club floor rooms will include continental breakfast and evening drinks and canapés in the private Club lounge, complimentary wi-fi and Escape at One – use of One Spa's exclusive top floor facilities including the unique rooftop Hydropool. The exclusive Grand Suite will be the hotel's most luxurious offering with spectacular views of the iconic Edinburgh Castle.

The design of the Sheraton Grand's new rooms has been undertaken by MKV Design, a leading interior design company

exclusively servicing the international hospitality sector. The company's portfolio includes Luxury Collection properties The Romanos in Costa Navarino, Greece, scheduled for opening in 2010, and the Blue Palace Resort & Spa, Crete, as well as the Palmerston Elea Golf Club in Cyprus.

Scottish-based Ogilvie Construction is the main contractor and the project manager is Currie & Brown. Ogilvie has considerable experience delivering high-level building projects in the hotel sector, from budget to five-star properties.

Sheraton Hotels & Resorts has invested \$6 billion in a global revitalisation effort as part of a three-year global overhaul. Sheraton has invested more than \$4 billion in new hotels, renovations and signature brand initiatives in North America and another \$2 billion in new hotels overseas. Highlights include 70,000 new or newly renovated guestrooms, more than 300 new lobbies featuring the brand's innovative Link@SheratonSM and more than 100,000 brand new Sheraton Sweet Sleeper all-white, high thread count beds in 211 hotels and 83,000 guestrooms worldwide.

[ All Club floor rooms will include continental breakfast and evening drinks and canapés in the private Club lounge, complimentary wi-fi and Escape at One – use of One Spa's exclusive top floor facilities including the unique rooftop Hydropool. The exclusive Grand Suite will be the hotel's most luxurious offering with spectacular views of the iconic Edinburgh Castle. ]



[ The Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa  
For more information on the  
Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa visit  
[www.sheratonedinburgh.co.uk](http://www.sheratonedinburgh.co.uk)