



Travelexonline East Coast Tour

Our East coast tour will give you a glimpse of what East Lothian has to offer. The scenic coast has everything from castles, bird sanctuaries, fishing villages, whisky distilleries and much more.

From Edinburgh you will travel east through the town of Musselburgh. It was created a burgh of barony (1355-28) and later became a burgh of legality (1562); in 1632 it attempted to become a royal burgh but this was blocked by Edinburgh burgesses who wanted to control the area's trade. Rivalry between the two towns is evident in the old rhyme, "Musselburgh was a burgh when Edinburgh was nane / And Musselburgh will be a burgh when Edinburgh has gane."

Originally a fishing town, Musselburgh later made textiles, paper, fishing nets and wire; today it is a dormitory and market town. There are several sights and buildings, including The Links at the east end, where horse races have taken place since 1816 and where King James IV supposedly played golf in 1504. Loretto School (18th/19th-centuries) was named for the now-ruined 16th-century chapel and hermitage of Our Lady of Loretto, which served as a hospital following the Battle of Pinkie in 1547. After its destruction in the Reformation its rubble was used to build the Tollbooth. Pinkie House, where Bonnie Prince Charlie stayed, now forms part of Loretto School.

From here we shall travel southeast across to the town of Pencaitland. The River Tyne separates Easter and Wester Pencaitland though they are joined by an early 16th Century bridge notable for its three arches. The Mercat Cross is located in Wester Pencaitland and is actually a sundial, while the parish church is on the other side and includes a chapel which is thought to be dated from the late 13th century Both sides also have pantiled cottages from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The school, built from a donation by Lady Ruthven, is built in a heavily ornate style.

Nearby are two 17th century estate houses, Winton House and Fountainhall (also known as 'Penkaet'). The first is a superb example of the Anglo-Scots Renaissance and was forfeited in 1715 by the Setons. Fountainhall lies some 1½ (2½ km) miles SW of the town and was built, under the name of Woodhead, by the Pringles but in 1685 was sold to Sir John Lauder, later Lord Fountainhall.

Only a five-minute drive and we find the Glenkinchie distillery, a whisky distillery that dates back to 1837. Glenkinchie produces 10yr old single malt, there is a visitor centre which will enable guests to take a tour and see the distillers at work employing the excellent Scottish barley and pure clear water from the nearby Lammermuir hills in making of a capital malt in every aspect. An exhibition of malt whisky is housed in the listed red brick buildings and the dram in the distillery bar usually satisfies any further thirst for knowledge. Tours average one hour and cost four pounds per person.

From here we shall travel east and down the coast to North Berwick. North Berwick is a picturesque town situated on the shores of the Firth of Forth. Enjoy the Scottish Seabird Centre where you can see live pictures of the seabirds through remote controlled cameras on Fidra and the famous Bass Rock. Visit the 14th century Tantallon Castle, Scottish Museum of Flight where Concord can or enjoy a leisurely sail round the bays and islands. (Prices available on request)

Then a leisurely drive heading west up the scenic coast to Edinburgh, passing through many small fishing villages and the golfing burgh of Gullane. The blowing sands contributed to the 12th Century parish church of St Andrews being abandoned in 1612. In the 19th century Gullane became a favourite site for horse racing and golf, with several Open Championships played on the Muirfield Course. The above tour would normally consist of a five-hour duration.

The total cost of our East coast tour would be £180.00 excluding entrance fees and up to a maximum of eight persons.