



Travelexonline **West Side Tour**

Our Edinburgh Westside tour will give you a small taste of history and architecture in and around the west side of Edinburgh.

South Queensferry

First we will travel north from Edinburgh to the historic town of South Queensferry, it sits on the south shore of the narrowest part of the Forth Estuary east of Grangemouth, the road and rail bridges that lie either side of it define South Queensferry. But it is so much more as well, looking across to North Queensferry, its twin on the Fife shore. As an obvious place to cross the river when heading into Fife from Edinburgh it is likely that settlements either side of the river here, and ferries between them, date back into antiquity. The "Queen" in Queensferry was Queen Margaret, the wife of Malcolm III. She set up a church in Dunfermline, where she had married Malcolm in 1070. This rapidly became a place of pilgrimage leading to increasing demand for transport across the Forth Estuary. The Queen's Ferry paid for by Margaret and operated by monks from Dunfermline was the result. This had no fixed southern terminal, using a variety of landing places in or near the village depending on the tide and weather.

In 1879 construction began on a railway suspension bridge across the narrows here. Thomas Bouch, builder of the Tay Railway Bridge that opened in 1878, had designed this. The collapse of the Tay Bridge with large loss of life on 28 December 1879 brought a halt to work on Bouch's Forth Bridge. The Forth Rail Bridge that was finally built between 1883 to 1890 was designed by Sir John Fowler and Benjamin Baker and is a testament to conservative over-engineering

Dalmeny House

Next we head for Dalmeny House. Built in 1817. This building houses many Napoleonic memorabilia Dalmeny was the first Tudor-revival house to be built in Scotland, featuring octagonal towers, mullion and transom windows and carved chimney pots. Inside, the rooms adopted the regency fashion of the time, but the hammer-beamed hall, stained-glass windows and fan-vaulted corridors are distinctly Gothic Dalmeny was damaged by a fire during World War II, but was sympathetically restored, and played a part in the conception of the Edinburgh Festival, thanks to the enthusiasm of both the 6th Earl and Countess. Today, Dalmeny remains the home 7th Earl of Rosebery, having been opened to the public in 1979.

Hopetoun House

Undoubtedly one of the finest Stately Homes in Scotland, Hopetoun House epitomises all that was great in the 18th century. The oldest part of the house was designed by Sir William Bruce at the beginning of the 18th century and William Adam a renowned Scottish Architect enlarged the house around 1721. Today Hopetoun remains the Hope family home, in the form of the 4th Marquis of Linlithgow, and its apartments are replete with 18th Century furniture and paintings, including works by Canaletto and Gainsborough. Several rooms have silk wall coverings and magnificent rococo coved ceilings. Features from William Bruce's original interior remain,

including the panelled main staircase and the *Bruce Bedchamber*. The Hopetoun House Preservation Trust was created by the 3rd Marquis to maintain the house for future generations, with corporate entertaining ensuring an income stream.

House of the Binns

The House of Binns is on the A904 road, half way between Edinburgh and Falkirk. It was rebuilt by Thomas Dalyell, an Edinburgh butter merchant who had made his fortune at the court of King James VI in London when he purchased the property in 1612. His son, the Royalist Sir Thomas Dalyell, (better known as "Sir Tam") defeated the Covenanters at the Battle of Rullion Green in the Pentland Hills in 1666. He also raised the Royal Scots Greys regiment at the House of Binns in 1681. The House of Binns is still occupied by the same family - Sir Tam Dalyell is a Member of Parliament at Westminster.

Blackness Castle

Blackness Castle looks across the River Forth to the naval dockyards of Rosyth, and along it to the Forth rail and road bridges. The castle is first mentioned in 1449, although there had been a port at nearby Blackness serving the royal burgh of Linlithgow since the thirteenth century. Built in the 15th century by one of Scotland's most powerful families, the Crichtons, Blackness was never destined as a peaceful lordly residence; its enduring roles were those of garrison fortress and state prison.

In the 16th century, the castle's defences were strengthened to make it one of the country's most formidable artillery fortifications. Besieged and damaged in 1650 by Cromwell's army, it was used, after its restoration, to incarcerate Covenanters.

After the 1707 Treaty of Union, Blackness ceased to be a state prison and became a minor garrison. During the wars with France between 1759 and 1815 it held prisoners of war, and then in 1870 was converted to an ammunition depot. Finally in the 1920s, the castle was conserved as an ancient monument.

Linlithgow Palace

As a palace the building served not only as a place of accommodation for hundreds of staff, retainers, footmen, guards and friends and visitors, but also as a carefully controlled environment for regulation access to the monarch. Rooms were arranged in sequence to reinforce a sense of hierarchy and to create an almost theatrical effect of splendour and power. Today the splendid internal decoration has gone, but it is easy to imagine intricately painted plaster ceilings, embossed and gilded leather covered walls, tapestries depicting hunting scenes or stories from Greek mythology, heraldic emblems such as unicorns and lions, paintings and carved furniture. James V's queen, Marie de Guise-Lorraine is said to have compared the palace to the most splendid in France.

Mary Queen of Scots

In 1542 Mary and James's daughter, also Mary, known to us as Mary Queen of Scots, was born at the palace. At seven months she was taken to Stirling castle. The English king Henry VIII thought he could unite the two countries by arranging the marriage of his son Edward to Mary, but pro French and Catholic Scots opposed his plan. He tried to force his will by invading, ("The Rough Wooing"), defeating the Scots at the battle of Pinkie in 1547. French help was sought and granted but only in return that the infant Queen be sent for safekeeping and education to France. At the age of 6 Mary sailed from Dumbarton outside Glasgow, not to return until some 13 years later. By that time her young French husband, the king of France,

François II, had tragically died. During the time when she was Queen, in Scotland, Mary visited Linlithgow on numerous occasions. But during her captivity in England, and after the succession of her infant son, James VI, the palace became somewhat neglected. On his coming of age repairs were made, but when he succeeded to the throne of England in 1603 he didn't visit again

As you can see there is so much history to absorb and lots to view within our Westside Tour.

This is a full day tour consisting of approximately eight hours; the cost excluding any entry fees would be £280.00 up to a maximum of eight persons.