

Population: 448,624
55° 56' 58.4" N, 3° 9' 37.04" W



Aberdeen
Dundee
Edinburgh
Glasgow
Inverness
Stirling

Tourist Information

Princes Mall, 3 Princes Street
0845 225 5121 / visitscotland.com

Airport

0870 040 0007 / edinburghairport.com
Located 8 miles west of Edinburgh. An express bus service operates frequently to Edinburgh city centre. The journey time is approximately 25 minutes.

Bus Station

St Andrews Street
Lothian Buses 0131 555 6363
Located between George Street and the St James Centre.
(Note: A general number for buses all over Scotland: First Buses 08708 727271)

Train Station

Edinburgh Waverley Station, Princes Street
National Rail Enquiries 08457 484950.

Taxi Company

City Cabs
0131 228 1211



YONG A/W '08 at Liberty
Panos Davios

Capital Luxury: Reviving Edinburgh's Sense of Style

Caragh McKay

With its fine Georgian squares, handsome neo-classical architecture and distinct genteel air, Edinburgh is as elegant a city as you are likely to find this side of Paris. And just like its ultra-sophisticated European cousin, the Scottish capital boasts a rich style heritage. _____ So fashionable a place was Edinburgh in the late 1800s, in fact, that the eminent Scottish philosopher Thomas Carlyle was inspired to write *Sartor Resartus* (The Tailor Retailored). Carlyle considered the nature of our relationship with clothing, and is thought to be the first academic to take the subject of dress and fashion seriously: 'Clothes, as despicable as we think them, are so unspeakably significant', he wrote in 1869. _____ The issue of style has long been a serious business in Edinburgh. Today, the city is in a most fashionable position indeed, and its rapidly emerging reputation as the 'Knightsbridge of the North' proves just how intrinsic classic style is to Edinburgh's character. _____ The city's current style stature has been hard won, however. In 2002, Harvey Nichols moved into the heart of the city, spurring a Parliamentary-style national debate. According to many, Harvey Nichols, arguably Britain's most celebrated designer emporium, had no real place in the Scottish capital. Glasgow – a city that has long revelled in flashy designer names – was the place for this Scottish branch of London's most famous designer-led store, they argued. However, such arguments quite missed the point. For like Harrods and Harvey Nichols, Glasgow and Edinburgh have two distinct and equally pleasurable sartorial natures: expensive glitz and glamour as intrinsic to one as luxury and understatement is to the other. _____ Most of us, it must be said, are unlikely to gain entry into any of the great couture houses in our lifetimes, and remain unaware of the ancient skills of the couturiers, the painstaking methods, the deft cutting skills, the design tricks passed through century to century, from generation to generation. And so the designer clothing emporium becomes a contemporary museum, the place where we can see, up-close, the finely honed details, the odd angles that look as though they should not work, nor fit the body, but that magically transform and accentuate its shape. It is here that we understand why designer clothing is not merely fashion nor abject consumerism but a triumph of design. _____ The presence of Harvey Nichols, adding to the trusty legion of independent boutiques already present in the city, such as Cruise, Jane Davidson and Corniche, has confirmed Edinburgh as Scotland's premier destination for luxury goods. Now, the recent addition of haute fashion brands Mulberry, Louis Vuitton and Giorgio Armani just off St Andrew's Square, also serve to reveal a city now wearing its sartorial heart firmly on its exquisitely stitched sleeve. _____ Edinburgh, it must be said, has an inherent sense of richness, a quality most apparent in the strong design ethic emerging from Edinburgh College of Art's

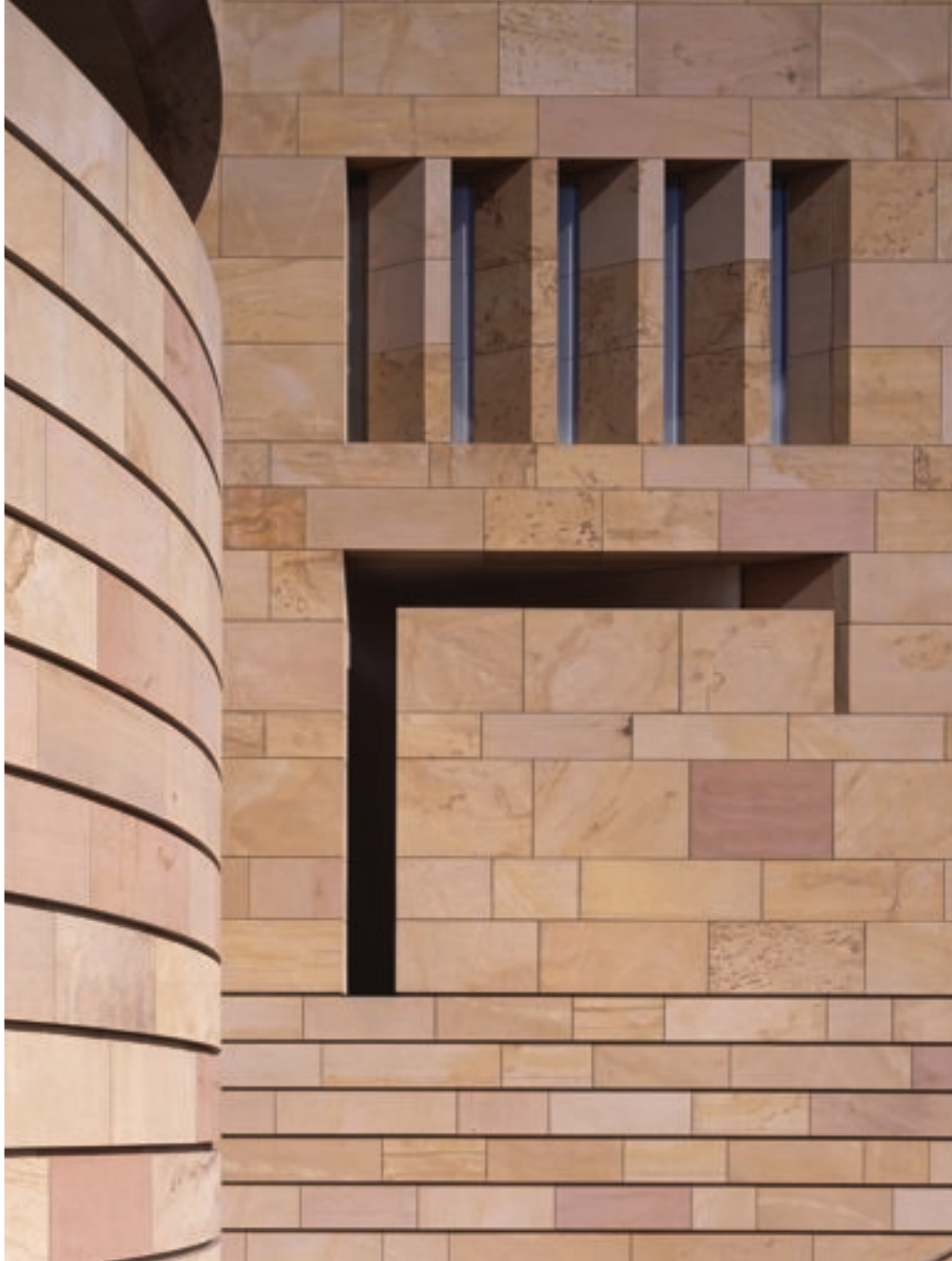


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Caragh McKay is a writer, editor and fashion consultant. She has been a regular contributor to international style titles, including *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*. She was commissioning editor for *Nova*, and has also contributed to *Wallpaper*, *The Sunday Times Magazine* and *The Daily Telegraph*. Under the Mongrel Creative Communication brand she has produced several style-related publications and websites for commercial clients and worked on a selection of photographic and promotional campaigns.

(ECA) fashion design department. Consider the designs of former ECA student Yong Hei Fong: his goddess-like dresses and separates seem to form naturally, emerging from rich, opulent folds of silk jersey fabric. The sophisticated draping techniques and exquisite detailing that define his look, meanwhile, are distinctly reflective of the city's own classical signature. Since graduating from ECA's fashion-design course a few years ago under the inspired direction of Robert Gillan, Fong has worked with some of the biggest names in fashion. Having created designs for the TopShop Unique brand, Fong is now focusing on his own label. Gillan agrees that Edinburgh fashion design has a tendency towards luxury, and that Fong's approach is a superb example: 'Yong always had a couture-like approach to fashion,' he recalls. 'His designs make great use of expensive, quality fabrics, such as silk crepe, which hang beautifully. He's also got a great eye for detail so his designs feature a high level of hand-finishing.' _____ Other former ECA fashion graduates with a feel for sophisticated shapes and fine finishes include Shonagh K and Jenny Williamson. The former's instinct for muted palettes and sculptural cutting, and the latter's talent for classic tailoring combined with playful sweeps of colour, also pay homage to the school's arch approach to clothing design. _____ And what of the current crop of city-based designers? While the city's graduates must migrate to the couture houses of London, Paris and Italy to hone their skills and learn from the master couturiers, there are some who still prefer a home base. _____ She may traverse the globe on a weekly basis, but designer and textiles artist Beca Lipscombe still prefers to work from her studio in Edinburgh's upcoming Leith district. Lipscombe, who has designed for labels such as Chloe and Stella McCartney, formed the hip 'Beca' label in 2002. More recently, she has been collaborating on art-related projects and is applying her unique vision to interior design. _____ Another local label, Totty Rocks, which sells its designs at a one-off Grassmarket boutique, is more in keeping with the string of fashion boutiques that continues to lace throughout London's East End. Like those hip Hoxton stores, Totty Rocks offers home-grown streetwear at a reasonable price, and a quirky Edinburgh take on high-street staples. _____ One Edinburgh designer who is making an impact on a more commercial level is 'Queen of Cashmere' Belinda Dickson, who created the Belinda Robertson cashmere brand in 1992. Dickson rebranded a traditional fabric, setting cashmere free from its staid twinset-and-pearls image and imbuing it with fresher, modern-luxe appeal. In keeping with the design sensibility of the best classic Italian labels, Dickson's collections have the principles of classic fashion design knitted into the very fabric of the company: simple structures, classic palettes and the finest materials. A true homage to Edinburgh's enduring style sensibility.

National Museum of Scotland
Keith Hunter



Design must-see or design landmark

Forth Bridge

South Queensferry
forthbridges.org.uk

Not actually in Edinburgh but nine miles west, crossing the Firth of Forth at South Queensferry. The railway bridge is a massive red steel cantilevered construction, an engineering marvel and recognised the world over. You can take the train from Waverley Station to Dalmeny and walk to the shore to see it, or stay on the train and get off at North Queensferry if you want to ride over the bridge.

George Square Theatre

George Square, Buccleuch Place, EH8 9LH
0131 662 8740

Basil Spence's Edinburgh buildings are not well-loved, but this theatre is a big stone box sitting on four slender columns, and cantilevered out over the walkways below. The spaces around it also deserve more credit than they get from New Urbanists.

Landform Ueda

Gallery of Modern Art, 75 Belford Road, EH4 3DR
0131 225 7534/nationalgalleries.org

The landform in front of the Gallery of Modern Art designed by Charles Jencks looks amazing covered in snow, and it never, ever dates. It's a great example of public sculpture that can be enjoyed by all.

National Museum of Scotland

Chambers Street, EH1 1JF
0131 225 7534/nms.ac.uk

Two iconic buildings: the more recent Museum of Scotland telling the story of Scotland in a stunning building by Benson and Forsyth, with great rooftop views; and The Royal Museum building, with its magnificent glass-topped atrium space that's about to be redeveloped by Gareth Hoskins Architects. While you are there, look out for the Whale chairs, located in the atrium space, designed and made by Walter Jack. They very nicely pick up on the natural history exhibits in the museum. They also strike a very good balance between the human scale and the vast space of the atrium.

The Scottish Parliament

Horse Wynd, EH99 1SP
0131 348 5000/scottish.parliament.uk

You can't visit Edinburgh without going to see the Parliament designed by EMBT/RMJM. It's impossible to do it justice in a few words, conceived as a building 'growing out of the land', it's imposing in a subtle way with beautifully-crafted interiors that are unique and inspirational. So amazing that after my first visit I even dreamed about it.

Waverley Station

Access from Waverley Bridge and Princes Street, EH1 1BB

0131 550 2031/networkrail.co.uk

I love the fact that the train line into the city used to be a loch. It's one of the most exciting things to arrive in Edinburgh by train, skirting the bottom of the Castle rock.

Vantage point or outlook

Blackford Hill

Observatory Road, Blackford, EH9 3HJ

An alternative to Arthur's Seat, a wonderfully peaceful place to sit with views of the city, the Pentland Hills and Arthur's Seat.

David Hume Tower (13th floor)

University of Edinburgh, George Square, EH9 9JX
0131 650 1000/ed.ac.uk/maps

This building was designed by Robert Matthew of RMJM and was built in 1963. It's not very well loved today, but if you wander in and go up to the 13th floor, the views out of the window across Edinburgh to the west are simply breathtaking.

Inverleith Park

Arboretum Place, EH3 5NY

0131 332 2368/edinburgh.gov.uk

The bank above the pond gives you a great view of the roofs of the New Town with the Castle behind it.

Waverley Bridge

Off Princes Street

A fascinating view across the city, taking in the Old and New Towns.

Good street for a walk/up-&-coming area

Easter Road

It's like Leith Walk's poor cousin but Easter Road has its own character, and the bakehouse, Manna House, at the top end is a sign that there are innovative things happening here. I also like the Vietnamese supermarket. It's got a good social and ethnic mix and there's a delicate atmosphere of old and new, with good galleries, shops and interesting bars.

Glenogle Road

Glenogle Road takes you past the colonies, that early form of two-storey social housing, where the entrance to the top flat is on one road and the entrance to the ground floor flat is on another road entirely. Also at the end of the road are Glenogle Baths if you fancy a swim. You can circle back on the other side of the Water of Leith if you fancy.

Leith Docks

Ocean Drive, Leith

There's an atmosphere about Leith Docks that makes you feel as though you are walking around in the 18th century. There are still warehouses with iron pulleys and features on them; big wooden doors; expanses of stone; old signage beneath layers of peeling paint. I like the sense of history that pervades from these buildings and their sturdiness – that gives them grandeur.

Around the Shore there are good galleries (The Leith Gallery), shops and interesting bars (The Roseleaf, Coburg Street).