

Ballater

Built as a spa town by Col. Francis Farquharson, Ballater has an enduring charm that doubtlessly contributed to the Royal decision to buy an estate close by. Indeed it was its reputation as a health resort that first brought the area to Royal attention. The town was the birthplace of Patrick Geddes, whose studies gave him a holistic view of the world and an instinct for man's relationship with nature and society. It is easy to understand that this area will have influenced his international work in town planning that aspired to balance amenity with space, light and living green. Leave the car behind today if you can and immerse yourself in Ballater and surrounds at walking pace.

Route

Explore Ballater and surrounds on foot. In addition to highlighted attractions there are a number of gift, clothing and food shops as well as two art galleries, **The Larks Gallery** and **Number 46**. Choose from three walks, two providing great viewpoints and the other exploring the ruins of the medieval **Tullich Church**.

Glenmuick Parish Church is located physically central to the town welcomes visitors and is open daily. An impressive interior matches its imposing exterior with lofty spire making it well worth a visit.

Deeside Books is an institution across Aberdeenshire and beyond. It's informed, friendly staff can assist if a book is the souvenir of your choice or if you would like to read and learn more about the area they can usually suggest something.

The Old Royal Station has a replica of a Royal carriage used by Queen Victoria and has preserved the Royal Waiting Room complete with facilities. Prince Charles suggested that a replica train be commissioned and when the project was realised he visited the popular exhibition! The railway line never achieved plans to extend beyond Ballater. [4 Jan - 25 Jun & 4 Sep - 30 Dec: Mon-Sun 10am-5pm; 26 Jun - 3 Sep: Mon-Sun 9am-6pm] **Tourist Information** within the station sell the £1 entry tickets and access is through their centre and gift shop where they also provide orientation of Royal Deeside.

Dee Valley Confectioners is situated in Station Square and is like a trip down memory lane. Closely guarded traditional recipes produce favourites like fudge, macaroon and coconut ice. All the sweets are hand made and it is possible to see the sweetie makers at work through the viewing window. Hard boilings are a specialty and so you can take away old friends like soor plums, humbugs, bullseyes and market candy. [Monday is the best day to view; possible Mon-Thurs in summer]

Craigendarroch A steep but rewarding climb on the *oak hill*. This is a must do to fully appreciate Ballater's location. At 2.5 miles it is not long so take the ascent steadily and you should complete in 1.5 to 2 hours. Walk from Station Square towards Braemar and turn right into Craigendarroch Walk. You will see way markers to the left into the oak woods. See description at www.walkhighlands.co.uk/cairngorms/craigendarroch.shtml

Pannanich Woods and Craig Coilich This 3-mile walk has great wildlife spotting opportunities. Craig Coilich is used for the **Ballater Highland Games** [www.ballaterhighlandgames.com] hill race but take your time and you may be lucky enough to spot a Capercaillie known to live here. Like Craigendarroch it is a steady ascent but the views are worth it. See description at www.walkhighlands.co.uk/cairngorms/craig-coilich.shtml

Old Deeside Railway to Tullich This old rail track stretches for miles and makes for easy walking though watch for cyclists. At about 3.5 miles, return should be easily completed within 2 hours even with a break for a picnic. Stop at Tullich Church, just after carefully crossing the road. It's collection of carved stones suggests this place was significant before St. Nathalan brought Christianity in the 7th century. It is said the fiddle music Reel o Tullich was created by the congregation as they stood waiting outside on a stormy day that the minister had decided was too wild to go out for services! Retrace your steps to Ballater.

Contact Information [we recommend checking opening for your planned visit]

Visits

Glenmuick Parish Church, Church Square, Ballater; open all year;
Deeside Books, 18-20 Bridge Street, Ballater, AB35 5QP; 013397 54080
The Old Railway Station, Station Square, Ballater
Dee Valley Confectioners, Station Square Ballater, AB35 5RB; 013397 55499

www.deesidebooks.com

www.dee-valley.co.uk

Refreshment Options

Station Restaurant, Station Square, Ballater, AB35 5QB; 01339 755050
Brown Sugar Café, 8 Bridge Street, Ballater; 013397 55388
Bean For Coffee, 35 Bridge Street, Ballater, AB35 5QP; 013397 55514
The Rowantree Restaurant, 43 Bridge Street, Ballater, AB35 5QD; 01339 755191
Chalmers Bakery, Golf Road, Ballater; 013397 55474
Gow's Delicatessen, 37 Bridge Street, Ballater, AB35 5QD; 013397 56183
The Prince of Wales, 2 Church Square, Ballater, AB35 5NE; 01339 755877

www.brownsugarcafe.co.uk

www.beanforcoffee.com

Take away service – very ethnic

www.gowsdeli.co.uk