

Castles & Cake

A glimpse of fine country living in this visit to **Crathes Castle**, the ancestral home of the Burnetts of Leys. There is no mistaking the importance of the family, since this imposing tower house says it all. Even before the current castellated dwelling, the family were to become Foresters to King Robert the Bruce. The ivory hunting horn that sealed Robert the Bruce's gift of land is still on display above the fire place in the great hall. History favoured them and they were able to build this house and through the years embellishing not only the house but also the grounds around it. The gardens are elegant and peaceful. Choose to spend your time inside or out. **Milton of Crathes** offers some stylish shopping and could be just the place for that special souvenir from Royal Deeside. Such a day can have only one conclusion – afternoon tea! **The Falls of Feugh** tearoom is just the place – a good choice of home baking or perhaps a Scottish cream tea. Yum.

Summary

Drive Distance :Ballater/Crathes 27 miles; Crathes/Bridge of Feugh 4 miles; Bridge of Feugh/Ballater 24 miles
:Total 55 miles
Drive time :1 hr 45 mins
Accessibility :Be prepared for walking over short distances and being outside.
Year round :Yes - see descriptions below for a guide to opening.
Child friendly :Yes

Route

Depart Ballater on the A93 heading west. After passing through the town of Banchory you will see brown tourist signpost for **Crathes Castle** to the left. The driveway leads to the car park. Leave by the same route and as you emerge onto the A93 you will see **Milton of Crathes** on the opposite side of the road. Turn right from Milton of Crathes and then immediately right on to A957. Cross the River Dee and then turn right again onto the south Deeside road, after around 3 miles you will see the car park for the **Falls of Feugh** on the left. Cross the Bridge of Feugh and turn right (B974) going into Banchory. Turn left at the traffic lights, which is the A93. This will take you west to Ballater.

Crathes Castle, Gardens & Estate The National Trust for Scotland takes care of this pristine example of a 16th century tower house, home to the Burnett family for 350 years continuously before being handed over to the nation. The award-winning gardens are a delight and have something to offer year round and in summer it is always possible to find a quiet spot to sit and reflect. The estate extends to some 595 acres and with a number of way-marked walks, offers many wildlife opportunities for those who walk lightly. Red squirrels can be seen at feeders – there are some behind the excellent book and gift shop. A children's adventure playground close to car park has climbing frames, slides, swings, monkey bars, tyre swings and an aerial slide, among other things and has the magical ability to keep children amused for hours. *[Open all year – refer website for hours]*

The National Trust for Scotland is Scotland's largest conservation body and a membership charity fully dependent on private donations. Their property portfolio is truly diverse and annually they face increasing financial pressure. Every penny you spend at Crathes supports their endeavours.

Milton of Crathes This is a delightful retail experience comprising Atholl Countrywear, Milton Art Gallery and The Milton Restaurant. The textile outlet offers workshops in embroidery, felting and patchwork.

Alongside, **The Royal Deeside Railway** Preservation Society has begun the process of restoring, in part, the Royal railway line lost in 1966 due to government cuts. When operating, they operate a café from a railway carriage to the side of the line. They run short train rides and steam hauled trains are said to be *an imminent prospect*. *[Starts 11am; Variable dates; Days of operation Wed, Sat, Sun & BH; Not Feb/Mar/Oct/Nov – 2010 timetable online]*

The Falls of Feugh These waterfalls have a soothing effect unless of course it is the time of the salmon's migration when you can see their tireless determination to scale the seemingly unassailable falls. There is a car park close by and it is best to remain on this side of the road and walk up to the bridge and falls viewing platform. Alternatively cross at the car park and go straight into the adorable Falls of Feugh tearoom. *[Falls Daily; Tearoom: Daily Apr-Oct; Wed-Sun Oct-Apr]*

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

Visits

Crathes Castle, near Banchory, AB31 5QJ; 0844 493 2166
The Royal Deeside Railway, Milton of Crathes, AB31 5QH

www.nts.org.uk/Property/20/
www.deeside-railway.co.uk

Refreshment Options

Crathes Castle courtyard catering
The Milton restaurant, Crathes, Banchory, AB31 5QH; 01330 844566
Falls of Feugh, Bridge of Feugh, Banchory, AB31 6NL; 01330 822123

www.nts.org.uk/Property/20/
www.themilton.co.uk
www.thefallofffeugh.com