

SCOTLAND



AN OVERVIEW

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SCOTLAND

History of Scotland

The history of Scotland begins around 14,000 years ago, when humans first began to inhabit what is now Scotland after the end of the last ice age. Through the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age civilization that existed in the territory, many of the artifacts remain, but few written records were left behind. The recorded history of Scotland begins with the arrival of the Roman Empire in Britain. When the Romans occupied what is now broadly England and Wales; the Scottish lowlands were administered as a Roman province called Britannia. The Romans did not govern the north. As the knowledge of the past increases, it has become apparent that some developments were earlier and more advanced than previously thought and that the seaways were very important to Scottish history. Scotland had strong reliances on trade routes by sea; the kingdom held close links to the south and east with the Baltic countries.

The Prehistoric Scotland

People lived in Scotland for at least 8,500 years before recorded history dealt with Britain. At times during the last interglacial period 130,000 to 70,000 BC Europe had a climate warmer than today's. Early humans may have made their way to Scotland after glaciers scoured their way across most of Britain. Only after the ice retreated did Scotland again become habitable around 9,600 BC.

During the period of Mesolithic history records the people as hunter/gatherers. Archaeologists have dated an encampment near Biggers around 8,500 BC. The ruins built a picture of highly mobile boat using people.

During the Neolithic period farming was evident with well-developed stone houses. About 3,000 BC, the many standing stones and circles such as "Ring of Bardgar and Orkeny, and Callanish on Lewis", formed part of the culture which produced Stonehenge in Wiltshire.

During the Iron Age brought numerous hill forts and settlements which support the image of quarrelsome tribes and petty kingdoms. This was later recorded by the Romans. There was a Roman invasion which began in AD 43, lasting 300 years.

The Early Peoples of Scotland

Scotland's population is comprised of two main groups. The Picts, the original people, and the Britains formed from the Roman influence. Different conflicts/wars went on from 432 – 563. The Picts renounced Christianity during this period. Margaret Collum II was a great influence on Scotland. She was said to have brought European cultivation to war like Scotland. They built the first monastery at Dunfermline, recognized by the Bishop of Rome. There were a long line of Scottish Kings and Queens of England. At times they had violent fighting and wars. Scotland fought for years for its independence and religious wars were fought for centuries.

The Government

The Kingdom of Scotland was an independent sovereign state before May 1, 1707 when it entered into a political union with the Kingdom of England to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain. This union resulted from the Treaty of Union agreed in 1706 and enacted by the Union Acts of 1706 passed by the parliaments of both countries despite wide spread protests across Scotland. Scotland's legal system continues to be separate from those of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and Scotland still constitutes distinct jurisdiction in public and private law.

Facts and Figures of Scotland

The population of Scotland is 5.1 million as estimated in 2009. The people are called Scots. Communities of Asians, Poles, Chinese, and other ethnic groups are scattered throughout Scotland. According to the 2001 census, approximately 2% of the population was from a (non-white) minority ethnic group. Whites consists of 97.99%; South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese or Other South Asian) was 1.09%; Black 0.16%; mixed 0.25%, Chinese 0.32% and other 0.19%.

The location is the northern part of Great Britain and the boundaries are the North Atlantic Ocean, North Sea, England, Irish Sea and the North Channel. It only has one land boundary, which is England; the rest is all sea. The area is 30,418 sq. miles.

Geographically, Scotland can be divided into three distinct areas: the Southern Uplands, the Central Lowlands and the northern Highlands and Islands. The highest point in Scotland is Ben Nevis, Britain's highest mountain, at 4,406 feet. The lowest point is sea level.

Scotland has over 100 rivers and 500 fresh and saltwater lochs. The term 'loch' is Gaelic for lake and is used throughout the country; there is in fact only one 'lake' in Scotland - the Lake of Menteith in Stirlingshire. The main rivers are Clyde, Forth, Tay, and Tweed. Major lakes are Loch Lomond, Loch Ness, Loch Shin, and Loch Tay.

Scotland has 790 islands, of which 130 or so are inhabited. The major groups include the Inner and Outer Hebrides off the west coast, the Orkneys and the Shetland isles, both of which lie to the northeast of the mainland.

The capital of Scotland is Edinburgh, population of approximately 460,000 (estimated in 2010). Edinburgh is one of the most beautiful capitals in Europe. It is known as "Athens of the North" for its distinctive and unique skyline that is similar to that of Venice in Italy.

The main language is English, comprised of Scottish English/British English; however, Gaelic, Scots, Urdu, Mandarin, Polish and French are also spoken in Scotland.

Religion in Scotland, according to a 2001 census, shows 65% of the population being Christian. 42% of the population is Presbyterian and attends the "Church of Scotland" called "The Kirk" which is recognized as the National Church of Scotland, although it is not an established church and does not have state control. 16% of the population is Roman Catholic, Baptist, and Episcopalian. Conservative Presbyterian churches have members of 15,000 each. Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism,

Baha'i, Rasta and Neopagan are minority religions with 28% of the population having no religious beliefs.

The major cities are Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Iverness (also referred to as Capital of the Highlands), Renfrew and Aberdeen.

The National Symbols of Scotland are the National Flag known as the Saltire or St. Andrews Cross. It dates in legend from 9th Century and is the oldest national flag still in use.

The Thistle is the National Floral Emblem. The "Flower of Scotland" is the National Anthem of Scotland and is played at events such as football or rugby matches involving the Scottish team at the Commonwealth Games.

The Economy

At one time, the economy of Scotland was heavily based on shipbuilding, coal mining and the steel industry. In the late 1980's when the coal and steel industries were in decline, Scotland shifted its economy towards one of technology and service based. Many large technology companies relocated to Scotland. Once the economy was based on textiles, coal and steel, whiskey and shortbread, and now the economy is one that provides computer software, microprocessors, ships, aeroengines, avionics, and is strong in banking, insurance and other related financial services.

Only a quarter of the country is agricultural. Barley, wheat and potatoes are grown in the eastern part of Scotland in Fife and the Scottish Borders with strawberries, raspberries and loganberries grown along the eastern seacoast. South-west areas of Scotland have dairy farming, while the hill farming of the Southern Uplands has production of lamb, wool and mutton. Large amount of beef are raised in east and south of Scotland.

Fishing remains as an economic strength in the North East and along the west coast of Scotland. There has been a decrease in the fishing industry due to low amount of commercial fish in the North Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean. Attempts to regulate the amount of fish that can be harvested, days at sea commercial fishing vessels can be out and the type of fishing gear that can be used have not helped in rebuilding the fish population. Commercial salmon and trout farms have increased in production in the rivers and lochs of the north and west areas.

Service sector or service industry jobs are on the rise in Scotland. In 2002, Tourism accounted for 7.5% of employment and 5% of the Gross Domestic Product.

Oil was discovered in the North Sea in 1966. Over two and a half billion tons of crude oil has been produced. Most of the oil fields in the North Sea are expected to be in production until 2020.

Scotch Whiskey production supports 41,000 jobs and adds £800 million to the Scottish economy, and adds £2 billion to the trade industry and generates £1.6 billion to the Scottish government in duties each year. Major whiskey producing areas are in Speyside and on the Island of Islay.

Cuisine

Scottish Cuisine is a specific set of cooking traditions and practices associated with Scotland. It shares much with wider British cuisine, but has distinctive recipes of its own; as a result of foreign and local influences both ancient and modern. Traditional Scottish dishes exist along side international foodstuffs brought about by migration.

Scotland national larder game, dairy, fish, fruit and vegetables are an integral part of traditional Scots cooking. Many common dishes are rich in fat and many contribute to high rates of heart disease and obesity in the country. In recent times, greater importance has been placed on the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, but many Scots particularly of low incomes continue to have extremely poor diets which contribute to Scotland's relatively high mortality rate from coronary heart disease.

The mobile nature of Scots society in the past required food that would not spoil quickly. It was common to carry a small bag of oatmeal that could be transformed into a basic porridge or oatcakes using a griddle. It is thought that Scotland's national dish, haggis, originated in a similar way. A small amount of offal, or low-quality meat carried in the most inexpensive bag available, a sheep or pig's stomach. It has been suggested that this dish was introduced by Norse invaders who were attempting to preserve their food during the long journey from Scandinavia.

During the 19th and 20th centuries there was large-scale immigration to Scotland from Italy, and later from the Middle East, Pakistan and India. These cultures have influenced Scots cooking dramatically. The Italians reintroduced the standard of fresh produce, and the later comers introduced spice. With the enlargement of the European Union in the early years of the 21st century, there has been an increase in the population of Eastern European descent, from Poland in particular. It is too early to assess the impact that this will have on the culture of Scots cookery, but a number of specialty restaurants and delicatessens catering for the various new immigrants have opened in the larger towns and cities. (See Scottish recipes attached)

Health Care

Scotland's Health Care is provided. It is a public health care system that is patterned after England's Health Care System. All health care is provided by the government just like Canada.

Culture

The culture of Scottish people is music, theatre, literature, art, and cuisine. A famous traditional Scottish instrument is the Great Highland Bagpipe and various types of drums playing Scottish music style. Each clan has their own plaid. These plaid costumes are worn when performing on their instruments and on special occasions such as a parade or special events.

Scottish literature had many writers, poets and songwriters such as Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and J.M. Barrie, Irvine Welsh, and more recently J.K. Rowling who wrote the Harry Potter Series.

Sports

Sports are an important element in a Scottish culture, with the country hosting many of its own national sporting competitions. This includes the FIFA World Cup, the Rugby Union World Cup, the Rugby World League Cup, Cricket World Cup and the commonwealth games. In the Olympic Games, Scottish athletes are part of the Great Britain team.

Golf was introduced in Scotland around 1421. Although originally thought to be from Holland and Belgium, Scotland added the one thing the game did not have, which was the hole. Scotland gave birth to the game of golf that is played today. James VI, King of Scots, took golf to London in 1603. Mary Queen of the Scots introduced the game to France when she studied there. The word "caddie" comes from what she called her helpers who were cadets in the French Military. Once, golf was a game played by the rich. In 1848, metal golf clubs and gutta percha balls were being produced and golf was available to be played by the "average" person. Golf was added to the Olympics in 1900. Golf is vital to the tourism economy of Scotland. St. Andrew's Links is located in the town of St. Andrews, Fife, Scotland, and is known as the "home of golf". It is the oldest course in the world, established in the 15th century. The first written record of golf being played at St. Andrew's is in 1574.

Other national sporting culture includes the Highland Games that include the Caber toss, Stone put (similar to shot put), Scottish hammer throw, the Weight throw, Weight over bar and the Sheaf toss. Bag pipe music, Celtic arts and Scottish country dancing also are a part of Highland Games. Highland Games are very popular and are celebrated in many places in the United States. Other sports in Scotland include rugby, curling, water polo and shinty.

Scotland will host to the Commonwealth Games in 2014 with Glasgow as the host city.

Education

Scotland's education system consists of public education. Schooling was made compulsory for ages 3 – 18. All 3 – 4 yr. old children of Scotland are provided a free nursery care school. The formal education system begins at 5 year old and last for seven years. The school system gives intermediate exams at between 14 and 16 years old. The school leaving age is age 16, but they can chose to remain at school and get an intermediate higher-grade exam or an advanced higher exam. There are 14 Scottish Universities. Some are amongst the oldest in the world including University of St. Andrews.

References:

World Book Encyclopedia
Wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotland/economy
Wikipedia.org/Scottish Cuisine

Burrebrede (Scottish Shortbread)

This is a medieval Scottish shortbread recipe. It has been a holiday favorite. The shortbread keeps very well in an airtight tin or tightly wrapped in tinfoil.

Prep Time: 20 Min.

Cook Time: 30 Min.

Ready In: 50 Min.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup superfine sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 3/4 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 cup butter, softened

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. In a medium bowl, stir together the sugar, cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, allspice and salt. Divide into two equal parts, and set one aside. Add the flour and butter to the other half, and stir until blended. It should be slightly grainy.
3. Press the dough evenly into an 8 inch square pan. Cut into 1x2 inch pieces using a knife, and prick with the tines of a fork. This will keep the shortbread from warping while baking. Sprinkle the reserved sugar and spice liberally over the top, brushing into all of the cuts and holes.
4. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes in the preheated oven, or until firm and golden at the edges. Do not brown. Cool completely in the pan, and break into pieces along the lines to serve.

Source: allrecipes.com

Forfar Bridies

Traditional Scottish pastries filled with seasoned lamb

Prep Time: 30 Min. Cook Time: 35 Min. Ready In: 1 Hr 5 Min

Ingredients

- 12 ounces ground lamb
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons beef broth
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, or to taste
- 1 recipe pastry for double-crust pie
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. In a large heavy skillet over medium heat, cook lamb until evenly brown; drain excess fat. Remove from heat, and stir in onion, beef broth and Worcestershire sauce. Season with salt and pepper.
3. On a lightly floured surface, roll pastry out to 1/8 inch thickness. Cut into 6 inch rounds. Place approximately 1/2 cup filling on one half of each. Fold the pastry over the filling, and crimp edges to seal. Brush lightly with beaten egg white, and cut three slits in the top to allow steam to escape. Place on baking sheet.
4. Bake in preheated oven for 30 to 35 minutes, or until golden brown.

Source: allrecipes.com

Scottish Shepherd's Pie

Ingredients

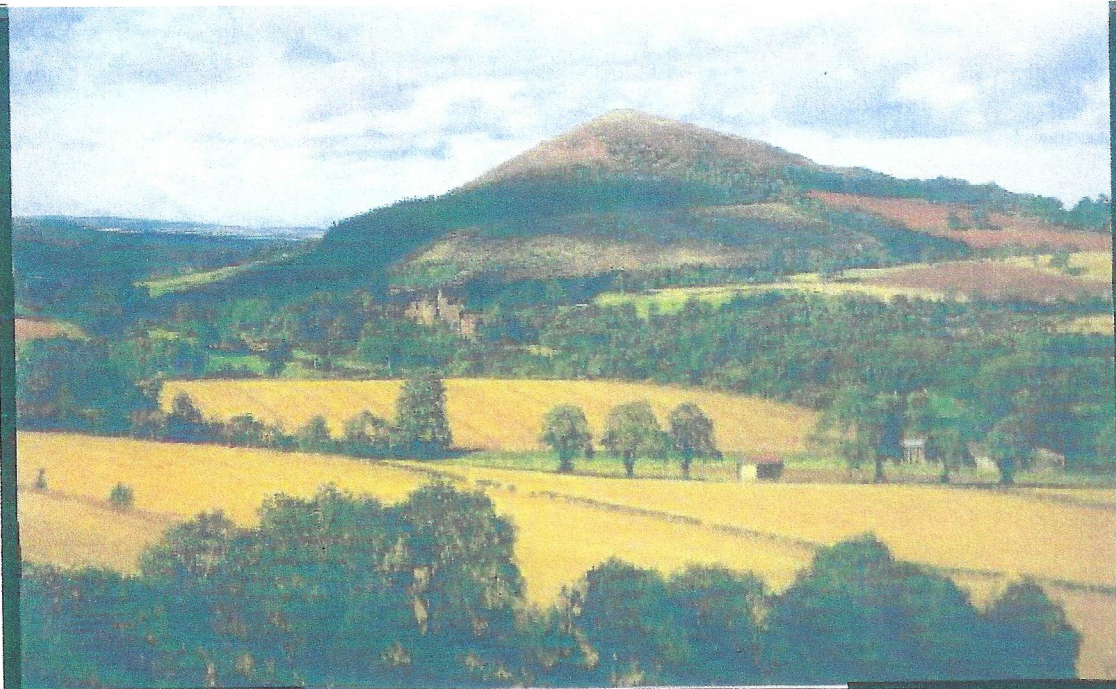
- 1 pound cooked ham, cut into one inch cubes
- 2 (14.75 ounce) cans creamed corn
- 7 potatoes - peeled, boiled and mashed
- 1/4 cup butter

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Place ham in a 2 quart casserole dish and top with corn. Heat in preheated oven 10 minutes. Remove and top with mashed potatoes. Heat in oven for 20 more minutes, then remove.
3. Turn oven to "broil" setting. Dot potatoes with butter or margarine, then place pie under broiler just until golden brown on top, about 3 minutes. Serve immediately.

Map of Scotland





Border Countryside

MELROSE, ROXBURGHSHIRE

"I can stand on the Eildon Hills and point out forty-two places famous in war and verse", Sir Walter Scott liked to say. Most modern visitors will be content just to enjoy the scenery. But there is no doubt that the sense of struggles past gives the Border country a unique atmosphere; the spirit of the reivers seems to resonate still. Here we look out from the foot of the Eildons across a now peaceful scene to where the Black Hill rises in the distance.



St. Clement's Church

RODEL, SOUTH HARRIS

There is believed to have been a church at Rodel for several centuries. Visiting Harris in 1549, Dean Monro noted "a monastery with a steeple". The structure he saw is thought to have been newly built – though completed just in time, as it turned out – to have its function abolished by the Scottish Reformation. Far removed from ecclesiastical oversight, Catholicism clung on in a number of the Western Isles, but those that converted (including Harris) adopted an especially ferocious form of Protestantism.



Gylen Castle

ISLE OF KERRERA

The MacDougalls built this impressive castle in 1582, but it was burnt down by Sir James Leslie's Covenanters in 1642. So called because, in 1638, they had signed a 'National Covenant' refusing to compromise their Presbyterian beliefs and practices as England's King Charles I had demanded, the Covenanters fought bravely for religious freedom. The English king's interference had been resented both on nationalistic and religious grounds: soon, of course, his own country's puritans would tire of his high church sympathies and dictatorial ways.

TRUE OR FALSE QUIZ ON SCOTLAND

- T / F The capital of Scotland is Glasgow.
- T / F The history of Scotland begins about 14,000 years ago.
- T / F Boundaries of Scotland are North Atlantic Ocean, North Sea, England, Irish Seas and North Channel.
- T / F A famous golf course and the oldest recorded one is St. Andrews founded in 1956.
- T / F The thistle is a terrible weed grown mainly in Scotland, and spread worldwide.
- T / F One of best known sports of Scotland is rugby.
- T / F The National symbol of Scotland is the Saltire or St. Andrews Cross.
- T / F All 3 – 4 years old begin school and it is paid for by the Scottish government.
- T / F The kingdom of Scotland was an independent sovereign state before May 1, 1707 when it entered into a political union with the kingdom of England.
- T / F The highest mountain in Scotland is Ben Nevis at 4,406 feet.
- T / F Whiskey, petroleum, natural gas and dairy products are all exported.
- T / F Tourism is becoming an important part of Scotland's service sector income.
- T / F The estimated population of Scotland today is 7.1 million.
- T / F Archaeologists have dated encampments near Biggers around 8,500 BC.
- T / F Stonehenge in Wiltshire came about during the Neolithic period when farming was evident.