



Southern Scotland

Includes ➔

Peebles.....	139
Melrose	142
Jedburgh.....	147
Kelso	149
Eyemouth.....	151
Lanark & New Lanark....	153
Ayr	157
Alloway.....	159
Dumfries	162
Kirkcudbright.....	168
Galloway Forest Park....	170
The Machars.....	172
Stranraer.....	173

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Cobbles (p150)
- ➔ Auld Alliance (p170)
- ➔ Coltman's (p142)
- ➔ Campbell's (p175)
- ➔ MacCallum's (p157)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Corsewall Lighthouse Hotel (p175)
- ➔ Knockinaam Lodge (p175)
- ➔ Old Bank House (p143)
- ➔ Old Priory (p150)
- ➔ Edenbank House (p150)

Why Go?

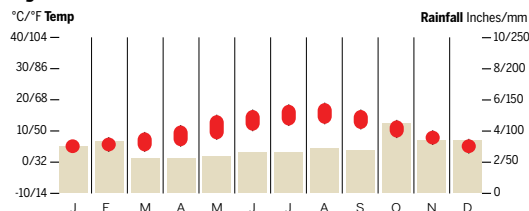
Though wise folk are well aware of its charms, for many people southern Scotland is just something to drive through on the way to northern Scotland. Big mistake. But it does mean you'll find breathing room here in summer, and peaceful corners.

Proximity to England brought raiding and strife; grim borderland fortifications saw skirmishes aplenty. There was loot to be had in the Borders, where large prosperous abbeys ruled over agricultural communities. Regularly ransacked before their destruction in the Reformation, the ruins of these churches, linked by cycling and walking paths, are among Scotland's most atmospheric historic sites.

The rolling west enjoys extensive forest cover between bustling market towns. The hills cascade down to sandy stretches of coastline blessed with Scotland's sunniest weather. It's the land of Robert Burns, whose verse reflected his earthy attitudes and active social life.

When to Go

Ayr



May Take a fortnight to cross the whole region, hiking the gorgeous Southern Upland Way.

Jun The perfect time to visit the region's numerous stately homes, with spectacular gardens in bloom.

Oct Hit Galloway's forests to see red deer battling it out in the rutting season.

BORDERS REGION

The Borders has had a rough history: centuries of war and plunder have left a battle-scarred landscape, encapsulated by the magnificent ruins of the Border abbeys. Their wealth was an irresistible magnet during cross-frontier wars, and they were destroyed and rebuilt numerous times. Today these massive stone shells are the region's finest attraction. And don't miss Hermitage Castle: nothing encapsulates the region's turbulent history like this spooky stronghold.

But the Borders is also genteel. Welcoming villages with ancient traditions pepper the countryside and grandiose mansions await exploration. It's fine walking and cycling country too, the hills lush with shades of green. Offshore is some of Europe's best cold-water diving.

Peebles

POP 8600

With a picturesque main street set on a ridge between the River Tweed and the Eddleston Water, Peebles is one of the most handsome of the Border towns. Though it lacks a major sight, the agreeable atmosphere and good walking options in the rolling, wooded hills thereabouts will entice you to linger for a couple of days.



Sights & Activities

A mile west of the town centre, Neidpath Castle is a tower house perched on a bluff above the river; it's closed but worth a look from the riverbank.

The riverside walk along the River Tweed has plenty of grassed areas ideal for a picnic, and there's a children's playground (near the main road bridge).

Nearby in Glentress forest is the busiest of the **7stanes mountain-biking hubs** (p171), as well as osprey viewing and marked walking trails. There are also swing and zip-line forest routes, not to mention camping huts (see www.glentressforestlodges.co.uk). In town, you can hire bikes to explore the region from **Bspoke Cycles** (☎ 01721-723423; www.bspokepeebles.co.uk; Old Tweeddale Garage, Innerleithen Rd; bikes per day from £25; ☀ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat).

There are further mountain-biking trails at Innerleithen, 7 miles east of Peebles.

Go Ape

ADVENTURE SPORTS

(www.goape.co.uk; Glentress Forest; adult/child £33/25; ☀ Feb-Nov) This forest-top adventure course features rope bridges, swings and a glorious long zip line over trees and a reservoir. Opening times and days vary widely through the season, so check the website and book ahead online.



Sleeping

Rosetta Holiday Park

CAMPSITE Ⓐ

(☎ 01721-720770; www.rosettaholidaypark.com; Rosetta Rd; tent site for 1/2 £12/20; ☀ Apr-Oct; ☎ ☒ ☒) This campsite, about 800m north of the town centre, has an appealing green setting with lots of trees and grass. There are plenty of amusements for the kids, such as a bowling green and a games room. It also has static caravans of various grades for week-long stays.

Tontine Hotel

HOTEL ⒶⒶ

(☎ 01721-720892; www.tontinehotel.com; High St; s £60, d £110-120; ☎ ☒ ☒) Right in the heart of things, this is a bastion of Borders hospitality. Refurbished rooms have high comfort levels, modish colours and top-notch bathrooms, while service couldn't be more helpful. There's a small supplement for rooms with four-poster beds and/or river views. There are also a good restaurant and bar here. It's in the heart of town.

Rowanbrae

B&B ⒶⒶ

(☎ 01721-721630; www.aboutscotland.co.uk/peebles/rowanbrae.html; 103 Northgate; s/d £45/68; ☎) In a quiet cul-de-sac but not far from

THE RIDING OF THE MARCHES

The Riding of the Marches, also known as the Common Riding, takes place in early summer in the major Borders towns. Like many Scottish festivals, it has ancient origins, dating back to the Middle Ages when riders would be sent to the town boundary to check on the common lands. The colourful event normally involves extravagant convoys of horse riders following the town standard as it is paraded along a well-worn route. Festivities vary between towns but usually involve lots of singing, sport, pageants and concerts, and plenty of whisky. If you want to zero in on the largest of the Ridings, head to Jedburgh for the **Jethart Callant's Festival** (p148).