

EDINBURGH

(56.9°N 3.2°W)

Cultural charm (right) city view; (below) Scotch Whisky Experience's Castlehill Room; (far below) Printing Press Bar and Kitchen



QUIRKY VENUES

Dovecot Studios is a tapestry studios established by the 4th Marquess of Bute in 1912, as an offshoot of William Morris' workshops at Merton Abbey in London. It caters for between 20 and 250 guests for events including conferences, drinks receptions, meetings and launches. **The Scotch Whisky Experience** completed a renovation of its top floor event space last year, with the Castlehill Room, which holds up to 80, featuring a series of copper and brass installations illustrating whisky production. The Whisky Blenders room, meanwhile, has handcrafted oak cabinets displaying notable blended whiskies and accommodates up to 20. **National Museums Scotland** opened ten new galleries in July, including the Explore gallery, a space featuring interactive exhibits, feats of Scottish engineering and famous 'faces' like Dolly the sheep, and is available for private views and drinks receptions. **Heads & Tales bar** is the place for gin. It shares the location with the Edinburgh Gin Distillery, which can be booked exclusively for events and guests can watch the gin being made as they drink it. **Carlowrie Castle**, built in 1852 and nine miles from the centre of Edinburgh, opened last year for events following a renovation, seating 120 for dinner or up to 450 in a marquee and offering a contemporary luxury setting with traditional touches.

Style Mile

*Kim Benjamin
uncovers
Edinburgh's
best-kept
secrets, from
hotel hideaways
to the home of
Lothian gin*



FOODIE FURORE

The Printing Press Bar and Kitchen, part of the George hotel, opened in October last year, with food focused on Scottish produce and a 'literary' décor featuring vintage typewriters and classic Scottish novels. The building was the former home of novelist Susan Ferrier and a regular haunt of poet Robert Burns. Housed within an old Victorian pump house in the Old Town, bar and restaurant **The Devil's Advocate** has a mezzanine dining area and a comprehensive whisky menu, with dishes featuring seasonal and Scottish ingredients. Basement venue **Copper Blossom**, which opened last October on George Street, features a décor dominated by flowers and serves both cocktails and dinner.

BOUTIQUE BOLTHOLES

Set to open next year, **MV Windsor Castle**, a former lighthouse boat, will offer a luxury 25-bedroom hotel moored alongside the Royal Yacht *Britannia* in Leith. The 136-room **G&V Hotel**, the only five-star



Go wild Forage for seasonal foods at Wedgwood the Restaurant

property on the Royal Mile, underwent a refurbishment in 2015, unveiling individually designed suites created by Scottish artists, including ones by fashion designer Judy R Clark, design duo Timorous Beasties and textile designer Hatti Pattison. The 16-room **24 Royal Terrace Hotel**, which reopened in June 2015 following renovation, features a bold contemporary design and its own private art collection, occupying a building designed by architect William Playfair in the 1820s.

INSPIRING INCENTIVES

Wedgwood the Restaurant, on Edinburgh's historic Royal Mile, offers a 'wild foraging experience' for groups of ten and above, where Scottish chef, Paul Wedgwood, leads tours scouring for seasonal produce in the countryside. Groups identify edible leaves, fruit and fungi before returning to the restaurant for a *Masterchef*-style competition, with each team given a hamper of mystery ingredients to prepare lunch. Get an alternative take on the city's history, learning about celebrated writers, majestic castles, historic buildings and famous locals with Rabbie's City Tours, which offers a private tour in a glass-roofed mini coach convertible seating up to 16. Mercat Tours has devised new group tours of the National Museums Scotland, which reveal the stories found in the galleries, including 'A history of Scotland in 20 objects' and 'What makes a Scot'.

DIRECTORY

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CASE STUDY

Quartermile's Edinburgh high



THE BRIEF

Property developer Quartermile Developments, which is developing Quartermile – a mixed-use complex of high-end residential and commercial properties in Edinburgh designed by Foster + Partners – hosted an event on 21 April, 'Quartermile Four Launch'. The aim was to mark and promote the launch of a commercial office block to prospective clients as well as celebrating ten years of Quartermile.

The event was held on the top floor of a new office building within the Quartermile development. Sixty guests were invited, with Edinburgh-based agency Maximillion organising all elements, including a talk from explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes.

THE EVENT

The evening started with an informal alfresco drinks reception with canapés on a

terrace, with a welcome from Quartermile's managing director Paul Curran, followed by dinner. Guests were entertained with Fiennes detailing his adventures, followed by a hosted Q&A session.

"We were challenged by limited access and a narrow time window for set-up as the surrounding area was effectively still a building site," says John Strachan, managing director at Maximillion. "Additionally, with a new tenant occupying shortly after the event, the tiled floor had to be protected by fitting a carpet throughout. Further challenges included preparing a three-course dinner with no kitchen."

THE VERDICT

"This is the second key event that Quartermile has asked Maximillion to manage and for the second time, we were not disappointed," said Jan Welsh, sales and marketing

FACT FILE

Who
 Quartermile Developments

What
 Launch party

When
 21 April 2016

Where
 Quartermile development

How many
 60

Agency
 Maximillion

director at Quartermile. "Our aim was to show the building in the best possible light and impress our 60 guests. Maximillion successfully took a blank canvas open-plan office and transformed it into a unique dining experience, and arranging Ranulph Fiennes as our guest speaker went down a storm. We look forward to working with Maximillion in the future."