

SCOTTISH ATTRACTIONS FIGHT THE RECESSION



Despite the terrible weather, rising fuel prices and world economic crisis, the future looks bright for Scottish tourism. VisitScotland has named the most important and most popular tourist attractions in Scotland. Renovations and new advertising campaigns are set to bring a host of benefits.

Although Scotland is often associated with pleasantries such as golf, whisky and castles, there is no escaping the fact that the weather in northern Britain does little for the tourist industry. Couple that with the fact that the tourism industry is being tortured by the world economic crisis and Scotland seems to be in trouble. Add the rising prices of fuel and the trouble gets deeper. The statistics for 2008 suggested that this pessimism has some foundations as **4.3% less tourists visited Scotland last year.**

However, VisitScotland, the Scottish tourist board, has pointed out that there is no need for such pessimism and that the opposite attitude should be taken. 42 million people visited the most influential and important tourist attractions in Scotland last year. Amongst the obvious candidates such as **Edinburgh Castle**, which received 1.1 million visitors in 2008 and **Edinburgh Zoo**, which enjoyed an increase of 9% in visits in 2008, there were a few surprise entries.

After a GBP 3 million renovation, the **Scottish whisky attractions** should be set for a load of tourists eager to try the famous beverage on its home soil. The expected improvement in the weather during the summer breeds optimism for the golf industry as well as hiking and the **Kelvingrove art museum** is expecting its biggest ever crowds this year having reopened in 2006. It appears that, despite the less than encouraging information the statistics give off, Scottish tourism is set for a very welcome boost in the next few years.

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