

# Scotland Visitor Survey 2023

## Introduction

The Scotland Visitor Survey was conducted by Progressive Partnership on behalf of VisitScotland to enhance understanding of visitor behaviour and experience in Scotland. In total, 11,573 visitors were interviewed in Scotland between March and October 2023, with 3,011 responding to an online survey on their return home.

Overall, **156** overnight visitors to the Scottish Borders completed the online survey. The results shown below are based on these visitors to the Scottish Borders.

## Profile of overnight visitors to the Scottish Borders



**75% Domestic visitors**

- 11% Scotland (residents)
- 64% Rest of UK



**25% International visitors**

- 8% Europe
- 17% Long haul:
  - 11% North America
  - 6% Australasia

*Base: Stage 2 online survey Scottish Borders visitors 156*



**Average number in travel party: 2.3**

**Children (under 16) in party: 3%**

*Base: Stage 2 online survey Scottish Borders visitors 156*

**Life Stage**

Pre-nesters	2%
Families	3%
Older Independents	48%
Retirement Age	47%

*Base: Stage 2 Scottish Borders visitors excluding n/a 156*

## Profile of trip



Scottish Borders visitors stayed on average 10.3 nights in total in Scotland including 3.1 nights in the Scottish Borders

*Base: Stage 2 online survey Scottish Borders visitors 156*



74% of visitors to the Scottish Borders toured around Scotland, staying in two or more places



**First time visitor: 12%**  
**Repeat visitor: 88%**

Average proportion of first-time visitors to Scotland: 25% (Scotland-wide sample)

*Base: Stage 2 online survey Scottish Borders visitors*

**Examples of Type of Trip**

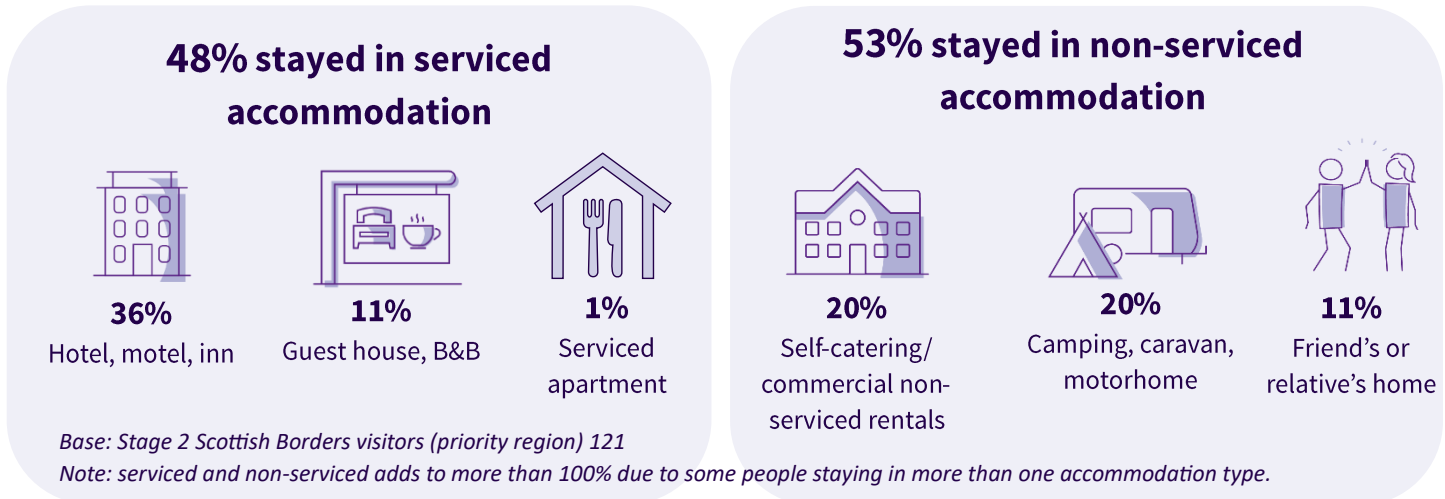
- A trip of a lifetime: 7%
- A special holiday/short break: 18%

*Base: Stage 2 Scottish Borders visitors excl. Scotland residents 144*

## Reasons for choosing Scotland

Rank	Top ten reasons for choosing Scotland	Scottish Borders sample	Rank	Top ten reasons for choosing Scotland	Scotland-wide sample
1	The scenery and landscape	74%	1	The scenery and landscape	70%
2	The history and culture	52%	2	The history and culture	48%
3	Visiting friends or family	30%	3	Outdoor activities available	27%
4	Outdoor activities available	27%	4	Visiting friends or family	22%
5	Scotland's people	23%	5	Scotland's people	21%
6	My or my family's Scottish ancestry	21%	6	A Scottish attraction	19%
7	A Scottish attraction	18%	7	My or my family's Scottish ancestry	16%
8	It's easy to get to or close to home	15%	8	Scotland's food and drink	15%
9	A specific hotel or other accommodation	13%	9	It's easy to get to or close to home	15%
10	A personal event or ceremony	12%	10	An event or festival	9%
Base: All visitors to the Scottish Borders (stage 2)		156	Base: All visitors to Scotland (stage 2)		3,011

## Type of accommodation used in the Scottish Borders



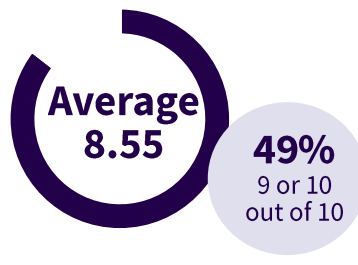
## Satisfaction with accommodation in the Scottish Borders

**Satisfaction with...** (Scored out of 10)



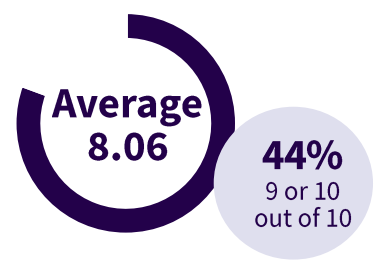
**Overall welcome provided to you**

Scotland-wide sample 62%  
(9 or 10 out of 10)



**The knowledge of staff/host (at accommodation) about things to do in the area**

Scotland-wide sample 53%  
(9 or 10 out of 10)

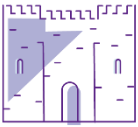


**The value for money of accommodation**

Scotland-wide sample 42%  
(9 or 10 out of 10)

Base: Stage 2 Scottish Borders visitors in paid for accommodation excluding n/a 109-133

**Attractions and activities undertaken in the Scottish Borders**



**Top 5 attractions or activities undertaken/visited in the Scottish Borders**

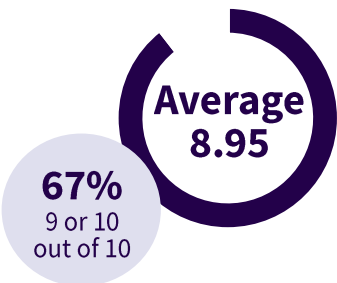
Rank	Attractions and activities undertaken in the Scottish Borders	Scottish Borders sample
1	A cathedral, church, abbey or other place of worship	43%
2	A historic house, palace, stately home	39%
3	A castle or fort	34%
4	Shopping	33%
5	Viewed architecture and buildings	31%
Base: Took part in activities/attractions in the Scottish Borders		115

Rank	Attractions and activities undertaken in Scotland	Scotland wide sample
1	A castle or fort	59%
2	Viewed architecture and buildings	52%
3	A museum or art gallery	50%
4	A historic house, palace, stately home	49%
5	Shopping	47%
Base: Took part in activities/attractions in Scotland		3,011

**Satisfaction with attractions in the Scottish Borders**

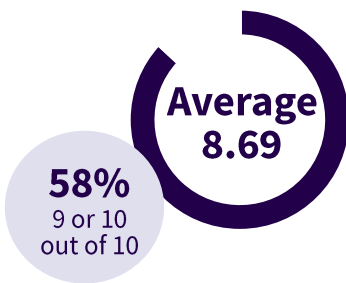
*Satisfaction with...* (Scored out of 10)

**Knowledge and passion of the staff at attractions**



**Scotland-wide sample 64%**  
(9 or 10 out of 10)

**Quality of experience at attractions**



**Scotland-wide sample 57%**  
(9 or 10 out of 10)

**Value for money of paid for attractions**



**Scotland-wide sample 47%**  
(9 or 10 out of 10)

Base: Stage 2 Took part in activities/attractions in the Scottish Borders excl. n/a 103-108

**Food and drink experiences in the Scottish Borders**



**22% took part in food and/or drink experiences in the Scottish Borders**

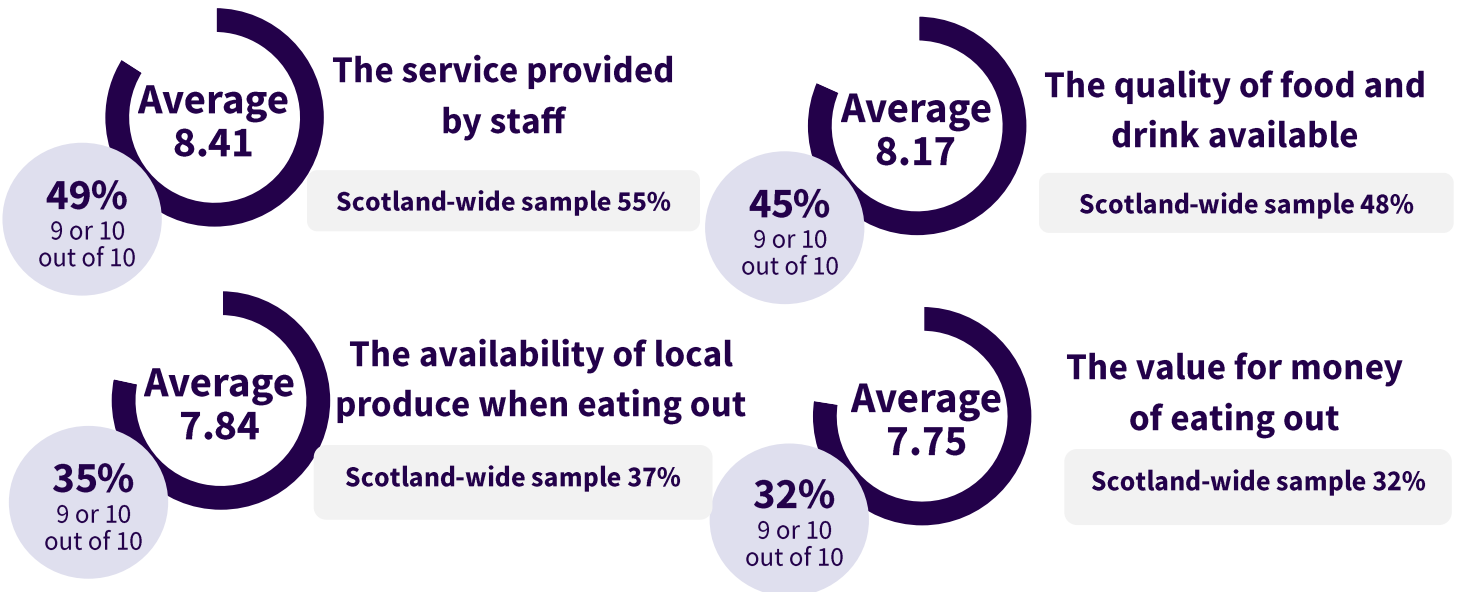
Key food and drink experiences included:

- 12% visited a farm shop/farmers market
- 5% visited a fine dining restaurant
- 1% undertook a food or drink activity e.g. cookery class
- 1% went to a food or drink event or festival

Base: Stage 2 Took part in activities/attractions in the Scottish Borders 115

**Satisfaction with food and drink experiences in the Scottish Borders**

*Satisfaction with..... (Scored out of 10)*



Base: Stage 2 Scottish Borders visitors excl. n/a 137-151

**Overall experience and likelihood to recommend the Scottish Borders**



Base: Stage 2 Scottish Borders visitors (priority region) 121

## Appendix: Interpreting the results

- The Scotland Visitor Survey should not be viewed in isolation.
- The survey collates views on a wide range of topics to understand visitor attitudes and behaviours.
- This data supplements data on tourism in Scotland which is gathered by the annual statistical surveys undertaken at a national level by;
  - The Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) which estimates the volume and value of domestic tourism - from within Scotland and the rest of Great Britain
  - The International Passenger Survey (IPS) which provides details of tourism from abroad
- The Scotland Visitor Survey is undertaken during spring, summer and autumn seasons only, based on a need to gather visitor views in an efficient manner. This means the results reflect the views of those visiting Scotland between March and October 2023 only.
- The sample comprises leisure overnight visitors only, and as such the following are excluded: visitors on a day trip from home, those on a business trip, cruise ship visitors.
- The base size varies across questions. Visitors could have stayed in multiple locations, therefore the questionnaire was designed to ask specific questions about accommodation and satisfaction with their experience overall in up to two priority regions. Where the base size of 156 is used this includes all visitors who stayed in the Scottish Borders during their trip. Where the base size is 121 this shows results for the visitors who were allocated the Scottish Borders as their priority region and were asked more detailed questions. The base size refers to the unweighted base.
- Figures may not always add to 100% as this may be due to rounding within the data analysis or where respondents have answered more than one category.
- The following questionnaire wording was used to describe the area: Scottish Borders (e.g. Peebles, Jedburgh, Melrose)
- Both face-to-face and online data were weighted to reflect the profile of visitors measured by the GBTS and the IPS.
- The Scotland Visitor Survey does not provide data on how many visits are made to Scotland or a specific region.
- Browse our [Scotland Visitor Survey page](https://visitscotland.org/scotland-visitor-survey) on visitscotland.org for more information on this survey.

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