

Dario Franchitti's Great Drives: The South of Scotland



2007 Indianapolis 500 Winner



Cover: Jedburgh Abbey, Jedburgh, Scottish Borders

Your Detailed Itinerary

The South of Scotland

Day 1

From Glasgow, get on the M8 to A8 to A78 driving along the **Firth of Clyde**. This area is great for sailing so if you're an enthusiast make sure you get out on the water or attend some events such as the Brewin Dolphin Scottish Series in May. Stop off in Largs for some ice cream - it's home to Scotland's most famous café, restaurant & ice cream parlour, Nardini's. The town was and still is popular with Glaswegians going "Doon the Watter" (down the water) on a weekend getaway on one of the paddle steamers travelling down the Clyde. The **PS Waverley**, the world's last seagoing Paddle Steamer, still travels down the Clyde during the summer - a great day excursion. Continue on A78 passing through Troon and Prestwick, both famous for their golf courses. Watch out for the speed cameras on this road! At Ayr, get on the coastal road A719 - it's more fun than the busy A77! Visit **Culzean Castle**, a 400-year-old castle situated on a cliff top amongst beautiful grounds and home of the Eisenhower Apartment, the top floor of the castle

gifted to President Eisenhower as a thank you from the people of Scotland. Check out Turnberry, host of the 2009 British Open and a beautiful golf resort and spa. Stay the night in this area.

Day 2

This morning, go south on the A714 driving through the Galloway Forest Park. Great for wildlife, you could spot a red squirrel, black grouse, red deer or otter. Galloway Forest Park is also the UK's first Dark Sky Park, void of light pollution and the best place for star gazing. Further south is Newton Stewart and then onwards to **Kirkcubright** - birthplace of David Coultard! Famous not only as the birthplace of this racing legend, Kirkcubright has also been called "The Artists' Town" due to the wealth of creative artists that are inspired by and live in the area. From Kirkcubright, take the A711 south and east driving through a beautiful part of the country. Drive through Dumfries and on to Gretna, handy if you want to get married! Because of its proximity to the English border, Gretna and Gretna Green

are historically linked to weddings because of the more liberal marriage laws in Scotland. The **World Famous Old Blacksmith's Shop** is dedicated to telling the story of these run-away couples. From Gretna head up the A7 to Hawick, a great road. Stay overnight in Hawick, Melrose or Peebles, all great bases for exploring the Scottish Borders.

Day 3

Spend today discovering the Scottish Borders, an area I went on a school trip to once. You'll discover friendly towns and picturesque villages, as well as the castles, abbeys, stately homes and museums that illustrate the exciting and often bloody history of the area. Visit Melrose and explore its great Border Abbey, founded by the Cistercians in the 12th Century. The Cistercian monks had very close connections with the Knights Templar and **Melrose Abbey** is the burial place of Robert the Bruce's heart, brought back from the crusades in Moorish Spain. Further south is Jedburgh, a pretty market town dominated by the 12th century Augustinian Abbey. Also

worth a visit is Kelso, once described by Sir Walter Scott as "The most romantic if not the most beautiful place in Scotland". There's an abbey, **Floors Castle**, home to the Duke of Roxburghe, and for sports fans, Kelso is the home of National Hunt Racing. North towards Peebles is **Traquair House** in Innerleithen. Dating back to 1107, Traquair was originally a hunting lodge for the kings and queens of Scotland and is known as the oldest inhabited house in Scotland. There's also a fantastic brewery!

Day 4

This morning head back on A72 towards Melrose and at Melrose catch the A68 to A6105 to Duns for the **Jim Clark Room**. This is a museum in Jim's honor with trophies, photos, race suits and other memorabilia that tell his amazing story from a Borders sheep farmer's son to an Indy 500 winner to a two-time Formula 1 World Champion! It's amazing, especially the surrounding area, Chirnside, where there are lots of tributes and small reminders of Jim. Get on the B6355 going west past Whiteadder

Reservoir then onto the B6370 into Dunbar - there's a good chance my dad will be playing golf in the area! From Dunbar, pick up the A198 and head to **Tantallon Castle**, formidable stronghold set atop cliffs on the Firth of Forth and seat of the Douglas Earls of Angus. Travel onto North Berwick and stay in this beautiful seaside town.

Day 5

Enjoy leisurely drive from North Berwick to Edinburgh. In between there is Gullane Golf Course and Musselburgh - known for having the oldest golf course in the world, Musselburgh Links, and for its Racecourse. Enjoy the sights and sounds of Edinburgh.

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Dario Franchitti's Great Drives: The South of Scotland

Scotland is where I was born and raised. The country holds a very special place in my heart and any time there is an opening in my racing calendar, I head back home. Here are some of my suggestions for touring itineraries around Scotland and I truly hope they will help you experience the wonderful people and the breathtaking scenery of this great country. I trust you will enjoy driving around Scotland as much as I do!



1 **FIRTH OF CLYDE**, an extremely attractive and relatively well sheltered area for sailing. Its islands, protected anchorages, harbours and marinas make it ideal as a training area. Close views of porpoises, seals, and diving gannets are common, but eagles and basking sharks are sometimes seen.



2 The famous **PS WAVERLEY**, the last sea-going paddle steamer in the world, offers day, afternoon and evening cruises throughout the summer months.



3 **CULZEAN CASTLE** – Completed in 1792, this masterpiece by the Scottish architect Robert Adam stands on the edge of a dramatic cliff overlooking the Clyde estuary.



4 **KIRKCUDBRIGHT** is the only town on the Solway coast with a working harbour. The town centre was popular with Scottish artists in the late 19th century.



5 Travellers have journeyed to **THE GREYNA GREEN WORLD FAMOUS OLD BLACKSMITH'S SHOP** for over 150 years, following in the footsteps of thousands of couples who, since 1754, have come to Gretna Green to marry.



6 Founded by David I in 1136, the surviving remains of **MELROSE ABBEY** are largely from the early 15th century, and are of an elegance unsurpassed in Scotland.



7 The seat of the Duke of Roxburghe, **FLOORS CASTLE** is 1 mile west of Kelso. The castle is steeped in history and filled to the brim with fine works of art, timeless tapestries and a beautiful collection of antiques.



8 **TRAQUIR HOUSE** – Sometimes described as the oldest inhabited house in Scotland, 12th-century Traquair has been visited by 27 Scottish monarchs. There is also an on-site brewery.



9 The **JIM CLARK ROOM**, opened by Jackie Stewart and dedicated to Berwickshire man, Jim Clark (1936 - 1968), provides a comprehensive account of Clark's motor racing career.



10 **TANTALLON CASTLE** – Set on the edge of the cliffs, the castle was a stronghold of the Douglas family. It features earthwork defences and a massive 50ft-high 14th century curtain wall with towers.

