

The Trossachs



Road Access: A84, A821 or A81, A821

Activities Fishing, Photography, Walking, Mountain Biking, Loch Cruises
Sightseeing, Wildlife.

Loch Katrine

Loch Katrine is one of the most famous visitor attractions in the Trossachs region. This narrow loch is one of the largest in the area. It has an idyllic unspoiled landscape surrounded by mountains and woodlands. Inspired by the beauty of this place, Sir Walter Scott wrote his poem “Lady of the Lake” which was published in 1810.

The name Loch Katrine is probably derived from the Gaelic “Cateran” which means “Highland Robber” and is said to be in reference to Rob Roy MacGregor though this is unlikely as the loch was named prior to the birth of Rob Roy. Rob Roy was born in Glen Gyle and was one



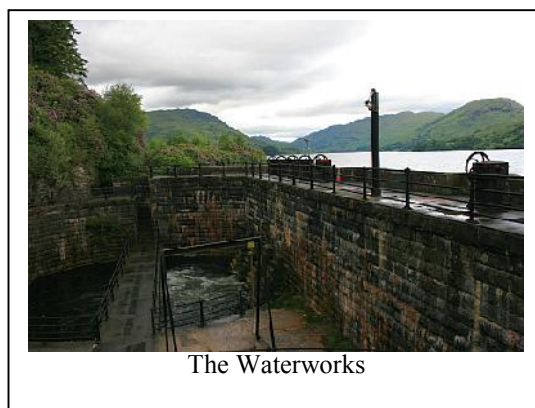
Loch Katrine, SS Sir Walter Scott and the Arrochar Alps

of the few who knew the secret droving path through ‘Bealach nam Bo’ for taking cattle along Loch Katrine’s south shore to a hiding place in Flanders Moss. On Factor’s Island, west end of Loch Katrine, Rob Roy imprisoned the Duke of Montrose’s factor. At the eastern end of Loch Katrine you can find another island named Ellen’s Isle.

Loch Katrine is home to the steamship ‘SS Sir Walter Scott’ named after Sir Walter Scott the author. It has sailed the loch since 1899 and is based at the Trossachs pier at the east end of the loch. The old steamer cruises from Trossachs Pier to Stronachlachar and allows passengers to take bicycles on board in order to cycle back on the lochside road.

For most people Loch Katrine is seen as the most beautiful loch of the Trossachs region. The best way to discover the scenery is by walking or cycling the private road on the north shore of the loch or by taking a cruise on the steamship. Bicycles can be hired from the cycle hire shop at Trossachs Pier where there is also a visitor centre, restaurant, craft shop and toilets. Parking is available at the pier for a small fee. During the high season Loch Katrine sees many visitors and the car park can be quite busy.

Loch Katrine is owned by Scottish Water and the loch is the main source of water for the city of Glasgow. A dam near Trossachs Pier raised the water level to allow a pipeline to transport the water to Glasgow by gravity alone without the use of pumps. The water level in the loch can be maintained by addition of water from Glenfinglas reservoir and Loch Arklet via tunnels. The ancient burial island of the Clan McGregor was threatened by the raising of the water level so the island was artificially heightened to protect the clan graves.



The Waterworks

Loch Katrine – Cruises on SS Sir Walter Scott

This classic steamship which sails Loch Katrine in the heart of Scotland, is named after the eminent author Sir Walter Scott who highlighted the Trossachs area in his poem of 1810, 'The Lady of the Lake'. The cruises by SS Sir Walter Scott provide the perfect opportunity for visitors from all over the world to explore this tranquil wooded loch mirroring Ben Venue, the dominant mountain at its easterly end.

Not so much a landmark as a watermark, the SS Sir Walter Scott has been cruising the placid waters of Loch Katrine, from the Trossachs Pier to Stronachlachar, for more than a century. Once part of a great fleet of pleasure craft that plied the waters of Scotland's lochs, she is now the last surviving steam screw steamer in regular service in



Scotland. Her engines — still the originals from 1900 — are powered by steam, which is generated by burning smokeless fuel, making her a remarkably 'green' vessel.

Built by William Denny & Bros Ltd, Dumbarton in 1900, the vessel was taken in sections by barge up Loch Lomond from Balloch, then overland from Inversnaid by horse-drawn carts to Loch Katrine for re-assembly and launching. She measures 33.8 x 5.8 metres (110 x 19 feet), and weighs 110 tons. When she entered service, the Sir Walter Scott was only one of several such inland-waters steamers offering pleasure sailings. Now, she is unique as the only surviving screw-propelled steamer in regular passenger service in Scotland, her sleek hull still powered by the original triple-expansion steam engine fired now by bio-oil.

To sail on board the Sir Walter Scott with the dramatic visual backdrop slowly unfolding, coupled with the gentle rhythms of the almost-silent steam engine and soft lapping water, makes for an enchanting experience few ever forget.

The Sir Walter Scott was not the first pleasure craft on the loch. That distinction belongs to a galley named the Water Witch, which was manned — and powered! — by eight locals in full Highland costume to delight the tourists. The Water Witch had the loch to herself until 1843, when the first steamer, The Gypsy, arrived. There was intense competition between the two vessels and, despite being powered by old-fashioned elbow grease rather than new-fangled steam, the Water Witch was actually the faster of the two!

The Gypsy disappeared in mysterious circumstances one night soon after her arrival, and later turned up at the bottom of the loch. The crew of the Water Witch were prime suspects in the case of her scuttling, but there were no witnesses and no evidence against them and they were released after a hearing at Dunblane Sheriff's Court.

The Gypsy was replaced by a new, faster steamer, the Rob Roy. It in turn was succeeded by another vessel of the same name, on which Queen Victoria sailed in 1859 when she opened the Glasgow Waterworks, and again in 1869.



The SS Sir Walter Scott sails most days from April to October, with three sailings a day from May till September. The afternoon cruises do not stop at Stronachlachar. If you're feeling energetic, you can hire bikes

at Trossachs Pier, catch the morning sail to Stronachlachar and cycle back on the car-free lochside road. For information and to confirm sailing times, call 01877 376316.

There so much to see and do at Loch Katrine. It's a great day out for the whole family...www.lochkatrine.com

Loch Katrine - Fishing

Overview and Fishing Permits

Fishing Permits

The Pier Tea Room and Loch Katrine Fisheries

Email Loch Katrine Fisheries: info@lochkatrinefisheries.co.uk

Website: <http://www.lochkatrinefisheries.co.uk> , Phone: 01877 386374

A full day costs £45 per boat and a half day £25. A full day during weekdays would be from 9.30 to 17.00 and a half day from 9.30 to 13.00 or 13.00 to 16. 30. On weekends a full day is from 9.30 to 17.30 and a half day from 9.30 to 13.30 or 13.30 to 17.30. The permits are for 2 anglers using one rod each for trout and 2 rods for pike. An additional license for a third angler can be purchased for £15.

Email The Pier Tea Room: info@thepiertearoom.com

Fishing Rules

- Boat fishing is allowed only (brown trout and pike)
- Fly fishing only
- There is a bag limit of 5 for brown trout
- A record of the fish has to be left at the fishery
- Suitable unhooked gear has to be used
- No live or dead bait is permitted
- Pike lines should be at least 18lb or 30lb braided
- No trolling for trout
- Electric outboards are permitted
- Boats may not be beached on any loch shoreline or islands
- Pike fishing is allowed throughout the winter on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday.
- Life jackets or buoyancy aids have to be worn on the water

Season

March 15 to October 6

Boat Hire

6 Coulam 15 boats with electric motors can be hired by individuals and groups at the Stronachlachar Pier Tea Room (open from 10am, 7 days a week through the holiday season)

Loch Katrine - Fishing

Loch Katrine is an interesting place for the most stunning and hard fighting trout. It has been shown that the loch also holds other populations of fish including ferox, pike and char. The brown trout in this lake has many different colors for example silver, golden, dark, large spots, small spots or no spots and the good water quality of Loch Katrine is just a paradise for fish. The fish average is about three quarters of a pound. Wild brown trout up to 4lb and pike up to 30lb have already been reported.



For fly fishing the best sizes are mainly 12 and 14. You should not forget your binoculars because the whole area offers lots of wildlife such as red and roe deer, eagle and flycatcher. Simple traditional flies will always catch something near features, rock faces, inlets, and overhanging trees.

The whole shore situated east of Ferry Bay can be productive for angling. Especially the spots with overhanging oaks are good locations. At the rock face of Hangman's Tree there is deep water which can be worthwhile. Glengyle is good for angling but can be difficult after June because of the weed growth. The drifts of Glengyle boathouse can be productive. Some regular anglers enjoy the bank at Portnellen past the McGregor burial island.

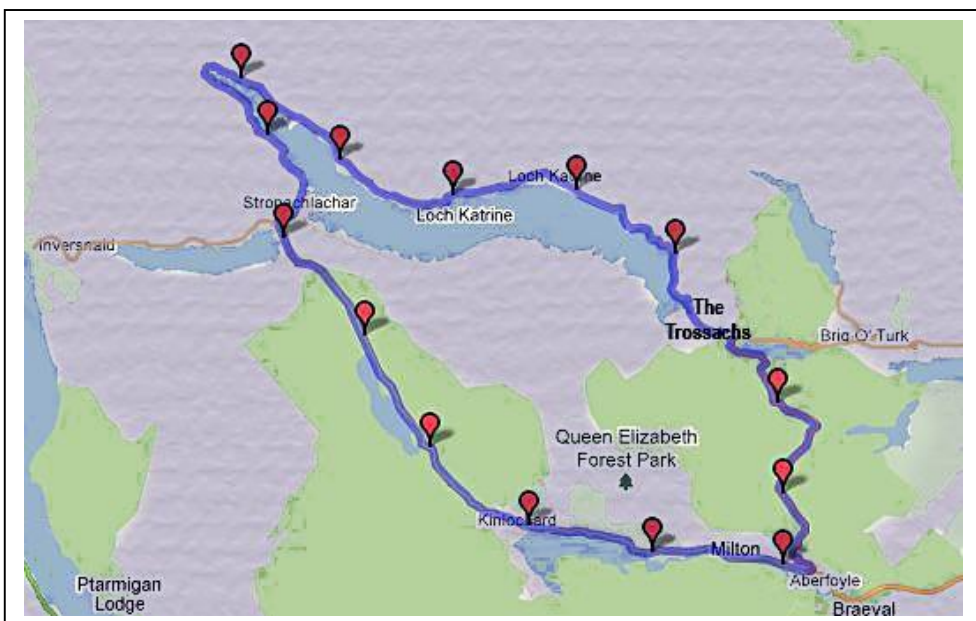
Glasahoile provides several top drifts and some of the larger browns are being caught here quite often. The whole shore from Heather Bay to the west of Glasahoile is worthwhile fishing as is Fiddler's Bay. Other places that could be interesting are Peat Bay or, even better, Osslan Bay which has a grassy bottom.

Loch Katrine - Mountain Biking

The North shore of Loch Katrine between Stronachlachar at the west end of the loch and the pier at the east end is suitable for biking as there is a private road. The Southern side of Loch Katrine does not have any roads or bicycle paths and is therefore not suitable. Not only Loch Katrine is a great place for mountain biking; Loch Achray and Queen Elizabeth park can be discovered by bike and have stunning scenery. Below you can find a cycling route which allows you to enjoy all of the areas. There are also places to hire bikes for a few hours up to a few weeks.

Loch Katrine Route via Dukes Pass

This popular route starts from the Trossachs Pier on Loch Katrine. The road heads north west following the loch all the way. You follow the road around Loch Katrine to Stronachlachar. At Stronachlachar you take the Lochard Road through Loch Ard forest, Kinlochard, Milton and finally into Aberfoyle. The whole trip has a distance of about 28 miles (45 km)



and takes about three hours. In Aberfoyle, turn left, and follow the Duke's pass (A821) back to Trossachs Pier where you started.

The route described above is works well when you rent a bike from Katrinewheelz at the east end of Loch Katrine. Bikes can be rented for 1 or 2 hours, a half day (4h) or a whole day (8h). Prices vary from about £8 to £20 per day depending on the type of the bike. Bikes can also be rented for a longer period of one or two weeks. For more information visit the website of Katrine Wheelz: <http://www.katrinewheelz.co.uk/>

Clyde and Loch Lomond Cycleway

At the east end of Loch Katrine runs the Route 7 Cycleway which connects Balloch, Drymen, Gartmore, Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Balquhidder and in the North, Killin. Most paths of the cycleway are traffic free and those paths that are not are fairly small and quiet roads.

Following the cycling route allows you to see many interesting places with stunning views. From route 7 you can also get to other loops from where you can get to other interesting places such as the Queen Elizabeth Park.

Loch Katrine - Hiking

The Trossachs and particularly Loch Katrine are a great area for a walk. Below you can find an easy route that allows you to enjoy some great views of the lake. Other possibilities are private road that goes around the north of Loch Katrine or another road that goes from Stronachlachar along the south of the lake (but no through road). Apart from the roads there are not many easy walking paths in that area but if you are interested taking more difficult routes you can go hill walking around Loch Katrine on Ben A'an or Ben Venue

The GlenFinglas Dam Walk (easy and short)

This walk is appropriate for visitors who are looking for an easy and short path to walk. The GlenFinglas Dam Walk is only a distance of 1.5 miles. It starts at the Glenfinglas Car Park at Brig o' Turk village where you take the narrow road by the Tea Room and past the little graveyard. Keep on walking past the school to a fork where you can decide if you prefer the more energetic and lengthy walk to the right or the easier left path. If you take the left hand, private road, then after a while you reach a cattle grid where you keep on the path on the left which goes to the top of the dam. There you can enjoy the views on the reservoir.

After enjoying the views you can go back to the cattle grid and try the higher road. This climbs steeply for some way before leveling out and eventually a viewpoint is found on the left by a decorative low wall. From there you get to a splendid view to the north along Finglas water to the mountains beyond. You return the same route to the Glenfinglas Car Park

The Bealach Nam Bo Walk.

At the west end of Loch Achray find a car park about 100 yards south of the turn off for Loch Katrine pier. A steep path leads off behind the car park and takes you to a small car park beside the private road leading to the Loch Katrine dam. Follow this private road and after about ½ a mile look for a narrow track on the left leading to an arched timber bridge over some waterfalls. Cross the bridge and continue to a forest road where you turn right. Continue on this forest road then onto a footpath



The Bealach Nam Bo (Pass of the Cattle)

beside a fence. Follow this until you see Loch Katrine on your right. The Bealach Nam Bo lies in front of you. This is the secret pass used by Rob Roy MacGregor to drive his cattle to his hiding place in Flanders Moss. You can continue beyond the pass if you wish but must return by the same route.

Loch Katrine - Places to visit

Stronachlachar

Stronachlachar is a small hamlet that can be found at the far end of Loch Katrine. Historically this was 'Rob Roy land', still standing is Glengyle house where Rob Roy McGregor was born. Stronachlachar has a real sense of 'splendid isolation', but in reality is within an hour of Aberfoyle and Callander and is a 5 minute drive from the West Highland way at Inversnaid and the Inversnaid Hotel.

Access to Stronachlachar can be via the main road from Aberfoyle which passes through Kinlochard or on SS Sir Walter Scott which docks daily at the Pier. Alternatively, there is a 'limited access' road which runs beside Loch Katrine and is suitable for cycling.

As you cycle along this secluded and peaceful road it is hard to imagine that Loch Katrine has supplied most of Glasgow's water or that these roads use to be used by four-in-hands the original form of coach travel.

The Stronachlachar Pier tearoom has been operating for 30 years and serves Italian coffee and homemade soups, paninis and baking. Accomodation in this area is mostly on a self-catering basis, the Inversnaid Hotel or the Inversnaid Bothy or nearer to Kinlochard.

Aberfoyle

Just a short walk from the Village is the old graveyard and Kirk at Kirkton, once the hub of the village and now a ruin. The fascinating history surrounding the Old Kirk is well worth a visit to learn more on the story of the Reverend Robert Kirk who, as legend would have it, was spirited away by the fairies in 1692. This and the nearby Doon Hill make a fascinating walk to the lone Scots Pine on the top of the hill which is said to contain the spirit of Robert Kirk.

Aberfoyle is an attractive village situated in the heart of the new National Park at the southern part of the Trossachs. It has a thriving Main Street offering many facilities to tourists and visitors such as Pubs, Restaurants, Post Office, Bank, Supermarket and Garden Centre. Situated in the midst of the magnificent scenery of the Highland Boundary Fault offering many outdoor attractions for the visitor. Aberfoyle is a good base for walking and pony trekking and the starting point for many miles of waymarked walks and cycle routes. The Forestry Commission has produced a great map showing all of the walking and cycling routes in the Loch Ard and Loch Achray Forests and the location of the many visitor attractions.

Just a short walk from the Village is the old graveyard and Kirk at Kirkton, once the hub of the village and now a ruin. The facinating history surrounding the Old Kirk is well worth a visit to learn more on the story of the Reverend Robert Kirk who, as legend would have it, was spirited away by the fairyies in 1692. This and the nearby Doon Hill make a facinating walk as the lone Scots Pine on the top of the hill is said to contain the spirit of Robert Kirk. The Trossachs Discovery Centre is situated in the Main Street with maps and publications to get the most of a visit to this wonderful little Village. Go Ape and the longest zip wire in the UK are now at the David Marshall Lodge Visitor Centre in Aberfoyle. The Centre has a Cafe and Shop and much to see and do

regarding the forest and wildlife to found nearby. There is a childrens' adventure park and short walks to the Waterfall of the Little Fawn or take a shortcut back to Aberfoyle.

The Annual Trossachs Mushroom Festival is centred on Aberfoyle and is an extravaganza of Food, Drinking and Dancing with a mix of culture and is well worth a visit as there is something for everyone. Normally held near the end of October when the mushrooms are in full bloom.

National Cycle Route 7 (NCR7), a long distance route from Carlisle to Inverness passes through Aberfoyle.

The Scottish Wool Centre in Aberfoyle

Situated in Aberfoyle, the centre of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park you can find the Scottish Wool Centre. This Visit Scotland 4 star tourist attraction provides entertainment and shopping. Here you can learn something about sheep gathering, sheep shearing and you can see dogs and ducks. The Scottish Wool Centre is open every day except on Christmas Day. All outdoor live shows are free of charge You can also get close to birds of prey. The Scottish Wool Centre has Golden Eagles, owls and falcons and gives a you a flying demonstration on selected days.

Kinlochard

Kinlochard is a thriving village community at the head of Loch Ard. This probably has a lot to do with its incredibly beautiful Trossachs location over looking Loch Ard; Kinlochard has the feeling of a remote highland village whilst still being only 10 minutes from the village of Aberfoyle. Loch Ard has a Tea Room, and the Loch Ard Sailing Club.

The village contains only 59 households with a further 17 scattered across the surrounding area which extends from Glassert corner in the east to Frenich in the west. In total there are around 300 residents ranging in age from babies to octogenarians.

Kinlochard is used by many providers of outdoor activities such as watersports, field sports and even Historic Re-enactments. Local activity providers include Great Times Scotland, the Go Country Watersports Centre and Action Adventure Activities. Between them they provide all of the following activities:

- Clay Pigeon Shooting
- All types of Watersport
- Archery
- Cycle hire
- Paint Balling
- Fishing
- Hill Walking
- Gorge Walking
- Wild Life Spotting
- Sailing
- Tree Top Adventures
- Climbing
- Pony Trekking
- Mountain Biking
- 4 x 4 off road driving
- Abseiling

