

Latest Insights 2025



FOCUS ON

VisitAberdeenshire's Consumer Research:
Motivations, Behaviours & Perceptions

HEADLINES

Top holiday types: City breaks, beach holidays, and scenic/landscape trips.

Favourite activities: Enjoying local food and drink, sightseeing, exploring cities, short walks, and relaxing/people-watching.

Decision sources: Friends and family, alongside digital and online tools, remain most influential.

Social media inspiration: Instagram leads for travel ideas.

Smartphone use on holiday: Almost all respondents use a smartphone; checking weather and sharing photos are the most common activities.

Regional perception: Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire are seen as traditional, culturally rich, and heritage-focused.



1,600 UK respondents. 2025 results represent fourth wave of this ongoing research focusing on Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

THE SURVEY

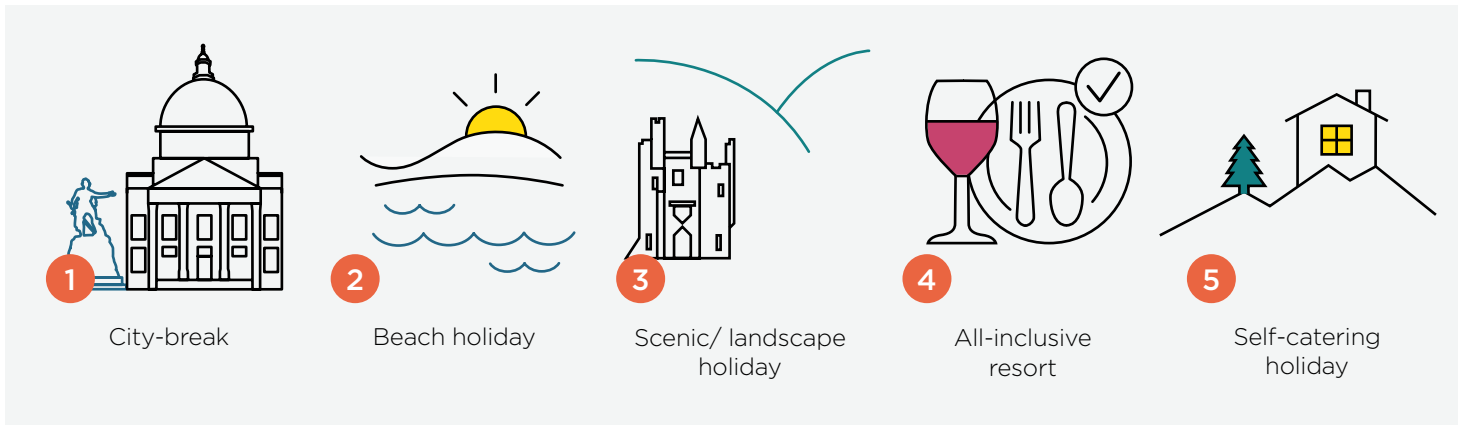
In addition to collecting standard demographics (age, gender, employment), respondents were asked about:

- Favourite types of holidays and activities.
- Key sources of travel inspiration and information.
- Knowledge, experience and appeal of Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire.

WHAT WE FOUND OUT

FAVOURITE TYPES OF HOLIDAYS/ SHORT BREAKS

Respondents considered 21 potential holiday types. When asked to select their ideal holiday/ short break, the **top 5** were:

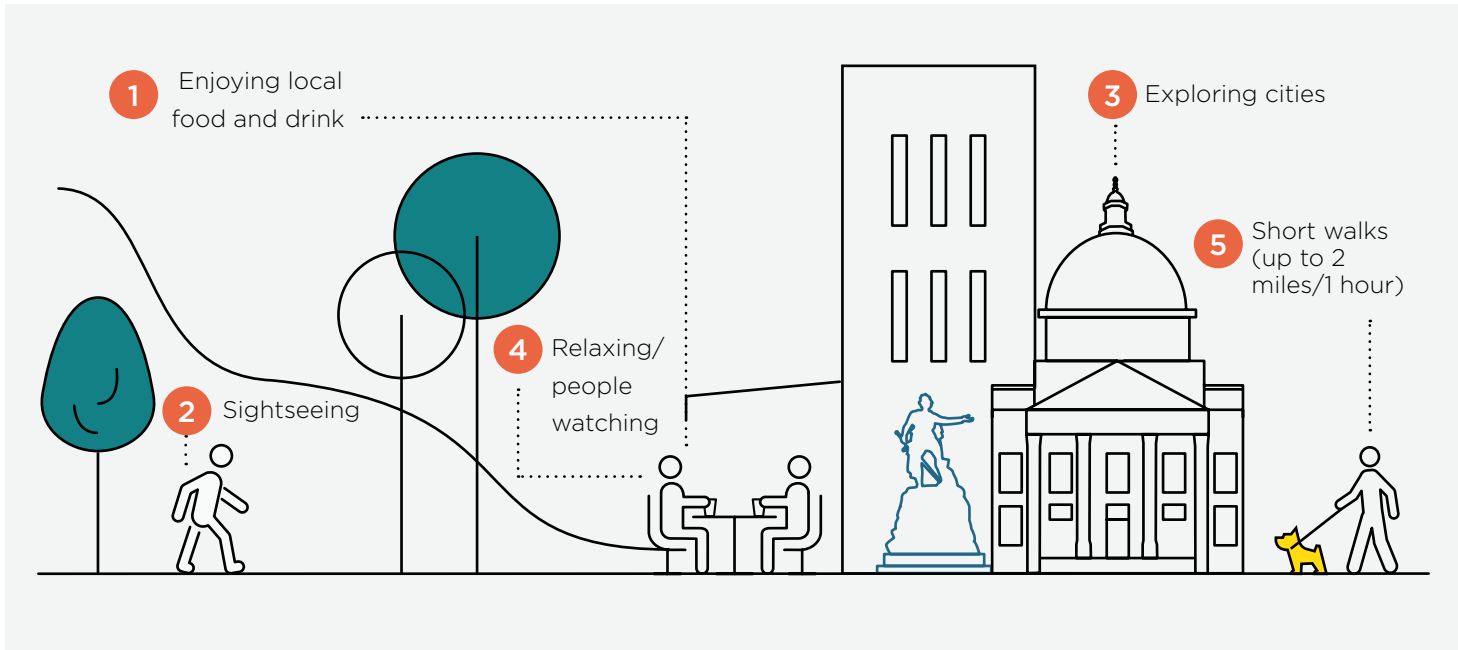


Other types of holidays, including golf, country sports (shooting, deer stalking), mountain biking, and wild/cold water swimming – were less frequently selected by this audience. These tend to appeal to smaller, specialist segments of the market rather than the wider visitor base.

Full rankings for all 21 holiday types are available in the slide deck.

ACTIVITIES WHILST ON HOLIDAY/ SHORT BREAK

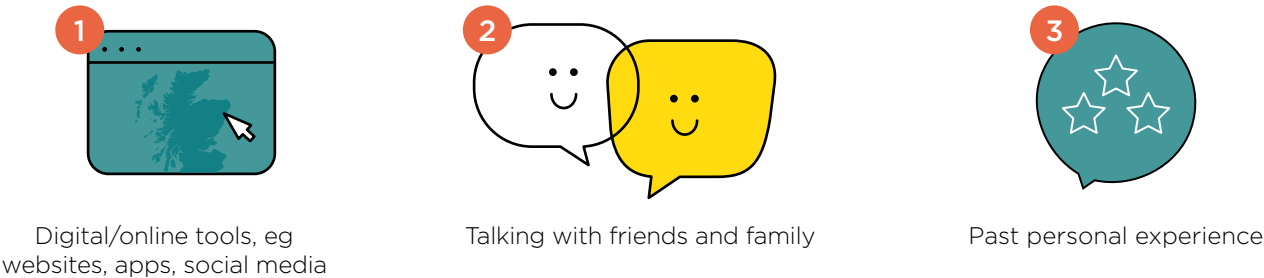
Our respondents said their top 5 things to do whilst on holiday are:



When asked specifically about Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, there was broad agreement that the region offers these activities, reinforcing its appeal for a range of visitor interests.

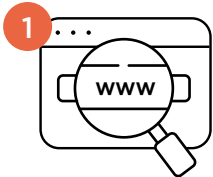
HOW VISITORS DECIDE WHERE TO TRAVEL TO

Respondents could select multiple sources of information, The **three most influential** were:



ONLINE TOOLS USED TO PLAN A TRIP

For respondents who selected digital or online tools as a source of travel information, we asked which platforms they used for their most recent trip. The **top 3** were:



Online search engines



Booking platforms
(eg. Booking.com)



Traveller review websites or apps
(eg. Tripadvisor)

These results highlight the digital channels that matter most to potential visitors. Businesses should ensure they are visible, up-to-date, and well-represented on these platforms to influence travel decisions effectively.

When looking more closely at social media, the **platforms most commonly used** to inform travel decisions were:



Instagram



YouTube



Facebook



Tik Tok

SMARTPHONE USE IN DESTINATION

This year we explored smartphone use while on holiday in more detail. Respondents' **top five** in-destination uses were:

1. To check the weather forecast
2. To share photos of the places they were visiting with friends and family
3. To open maps to help find their way or spot places to visit
4. To display a ticket/boarding pass
5. To find general tourist information about the destination

These behaviours highlight opportunities for businesses to ensure key visitor information is mobile-friendly and easy to access while on-site.



VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

To better understand visitor personalities and preferences, respondents rated a set of statements.

Most popular statements:



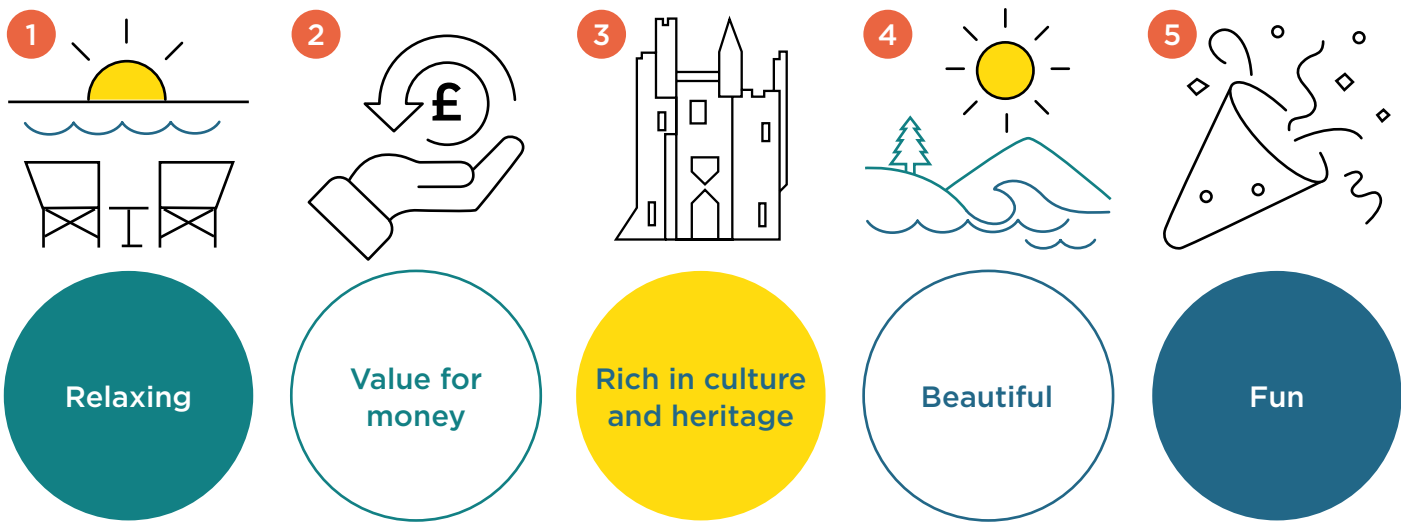
Lower agreement ratings:



These results help paint a fuller picture of visitors' interests and motivations, informing businesses on the types of experiences and services that resonate most. Lower agreement ratings can indicate an opportunity for the region from visitors with more specialist interests.

WORDS AND PHRASES THAT DESCRIBE HOLIDAYS AND THE REGION

Before considering Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, respondents shared the words and phrases that describe their ideal holiday destination. The top five were:



An ideal destination should deliver emotional benefits, tick the right functional boxes, and offer sufficient product features to make a visit worthwhile.

	Perceptions of Aberdeen	Perceptions of Aberdeenshire
	Traditional Rich in culture and heritage Accommodation choices suitable for all budgets	Beautiful Traditional Rich in culture and heritage
	Romantic Out of the ordinary Breath-taking	Easy to get to Upmarket For all seasons

These results highlight how the region aligns with visitor expectations and areas where perceptions may differ from the “ideal” destination. Businesses can use these findings to help shape product development, marketing and messaging. This can be to emphasise the “best describes” words/phrases, for example “Beautiful”, “Rich in culture and heritage” and “Traditional”, and also to help address those “least describes” words/phrases including “Easy to get to” and “For all seasons”. The full deck provides the detailed list for businesses to consider.

USING THESE FINDINGS

Feature the most popular holidays and activities

Check your website, social media, and marketing materials to make sure city breaks, beach trips, scenic/landscape holidays, food & drink experiences are clearly featured.

If you offer any of the top activities, make sure visitors can find your listings online and through local partner networks.

Make your business more visible at decision-making stage

Ensure your presence on the top digital and online sources, including online search engines, booking platforms and traveller review websites.

Encourage visitors to share experiences with friends and family online – simple actions like prompts on receipts, signs, or social posts can help.

Use words and phrases visitors associate with an ideal holiday

Incorporate those top 5 “best describes” words”, where appropriate, into your content and communications.

Review the full list in the slide deck, which are the most important and how can you show your business provides or addresses them.

Think mobile first

Visitors use smartphones for weather, maps, photos, tickets and general info. Ensure these are easy to access and clearly signposted.

Even small changes, for example mobile-friendly pdfs or clear on-site signage with QR codes, can make a difference.

Plan for niche segments

Not every activity or holiday type suits all visitors. Use the research to see if there are smaller, specialist markets your business could serve profitably.

ABOUT THE STUDY

1,600 UK adults
Fieldwork: **October 2025**
Data collection:
Taylor MacKenzie
Analysis:
Scattered Clouds

Purpose: This annual survey explores visitor intentions, behaviours, and attitudes to inform VisitAberdeenshire and tourism and hospitality businesses about what motivates visitors and how they perceive the region.

Insights & Evaluation at VisitAberdeenshire: Our ongoing research helps us understand current and future visitors, informing both regional activity and supporting businesses in the area.

To discuss the findings in more detail and how they can support your business, email insights@visitabdn.com