

THE NG / SCOTLAND 2016 EVENT INFO - BEST USED TOGETHER WITH A MAP

Around Killin -

Head of the Loch *****

Just east of Killin village - superb loch views; wildlife; woodland, easy access, easy walking. Frequently seen - various ducks, Canada and Greylag geese, heron, mute and whooper swans, buzzard. Occasional sightings - otter, beaver

Firbush Bay ****

Similar in nature to the head of the loch, views are northwards, not east; fewer bird species, superb woodland, some problems with human pollution; reached via the south Loch Tay road. (It's the first place where the road is really close to the water.)

Sron a' Chlachain *****

The hill above the village (the Gaelic name means Village Hill). Easy climb, superb views. It may be worth going as far as the next summit - Meall Clachach ("stony heap") but I haven't done this myself.

Glen Lyon *****

Archetypal highland glen long, narrow, winding, dramatic mountain views, some stands of fine Caledonian pine, sparkling river. Teashop at Bridge of Balgie.

Glen Ogle *****

A few km out of Killin on the main road south, signposted parking on left, much closer unofficial parking in trees, 200m further on, on the right (but again, a problem with human pollution near the car-park). A variety of walks in and around this miniature gem - dark loch, reed-beds, "primeval" conifer forests, easy walking, silence, solitude . . .

Glen Dochart ****

The road follows this glen / valley / strath west and finally north to greater things, but there are fine images to be had here - river, loch, forest - the usual mixture but served up differently. Parking at various spots; but no extended walks here that I know of.

Glen Lochay ***

Heads roughly north from the east end of the village (by the hotel), and leads eventually by a really atrocious road, to Glen Lyon. Not the easiest place to get good images, but worth a look.

Ben Ghlas & Ben Lawers *****

Serious hillwalking with all that entails, including stupendous views over about half of the planet. Only for determined walkers; access from the Ben Lawers road - heads up left a few km beyond the Lodges to a large carpark. Various lesser walks are also possible from here, and there are information boards at the carpark.

The Tarmachan Ridge ****

As for the last item but more so. Some minor rock-climbing involved; long tiring descent, but after an extremely fine ridge-walk. Highly recommended if you are fit enough. Access from a second (unofficial) carpark 1km beyond the "official" one.

Forest walks *****

In normal times there are many forest walks around Killin but there are several "timber operations" going on at present and the situation changes from week to week. I'll have up-to-date info nearer the time. Unfortunately there will be some restrictions.

River Dochart ****

The Falls of Dochart are quite spectacular after a few days of heavy rain; otherwise there is pleasant walking in wooded territory along the river as it passes behind the village. Be careful though - one route passes along the edge of a field belonging to the owner of one "Dochart House" - trespassers, especially photographers, shot on sight.

River Lochay ****

Pleasant, open riverbanks, good easy walking, can be combined with the R. Dochart and the head of Loch Tay to give an excellent 50-min walk with many "photo opportunities".

Innis Bhuidhe (Yellow Island) *****

The road crosses the Falls of Dochart by a 3-arch stone bridge. Immediately to the east lies Yellow Island, reached by a (locked) gate. Keys are available. The island is the traditional burial-place of the chieftains of clan McNab and has a distinct and special feeling. There is a remarkable burial enclosure and other individual headstones which are all interesting, but it is the very fine woodland which covers the entire island which imparts the special and solemn atmosphere. The name derives from its colourful appearance in autumn.

The crannog (neolithic man-made island) ****

Looks like a narrow isthmus jutting out into the loch but is actually a neolithic artificial island built for defense and linked to the shore by a secret under-water causeway (now made visible by a line of trees and bushes). Good early-morning views from the loch-shore, or from high up in the woods above the loch. But it can only be reached in times of exceptionally dry weather, or when the loch is frozen hard enough. I've been out there twice in 12+ years.

Kinnell standing stones ****

Interesting and nicely-sited neolithic stone circle within easy walking distance of the village. The easiest route starts from the Falls of Dochart and the stones are less than 1km down a farm track lined with giant chestnut trees.

Finlarig Castle ***

Medieval stronghold of the Campbell clan, complete with hanging tree and beheading pit; also an equally interesting ruined 19th-century chapel. All the masonry of both buildings is fragile in the extreme and care is required if scrambling around the ruins.

Ellanryne ****

A rise in the ground - just above the flood-plain of the rivers and loch - enabled Clan McNab to build their very own medieval stronghold here at Ellanryne. The Campbells took the hump and burned it down, using the stones to build Finlarig. Today there is nothing here except three large oaks and wide views all round, over the extensive water-meadows which surround it.

The Old Mill **

Former flour-mill, tweed-mill and other kinds of mill, then a tourist info centre, now a village project and charity with thrift shop and displays of local handicrafts and art. Also the Healing Stones of St. Fillan. The water-wheel still turns, but there isn't a lot there unless you want some 2nd-hand bric-a-brac, need some healing, or are a water-wheel fanatic.

Fingal's Stone **

Not a lot to be said. A big stone at the foot of the path which leads you towards Village Hill.

Falls of Dochart ***** (dropping to * in dry weather)

Unavoidable since the main road out of the village actually crosses the falls. Spectacular when in flood but rather tame otherwise. Popular with tourists.

Moirlanich Longhouse ***

A preserved southern highland "longhouse", commonplace throughout the Scottish countryside until the period between the wars. Interesting; good for a rainy day. As I never tire of telling people, my own grandmother lived in one just like it, which she "modernised" in 1938. This meant having tiles instead of thatch, a gas cooker instead of an open fire, and plumbing - a WC for the first time!

Village Resources -

The Co-op	Public Library
McGregors Shop and Cafe	Post Office
Shutters Coffee Shop	Outdoor Sports Shop (bike and canoe hire)
Eureka Hardware	Escape Luxury gift shop
News First: papers, magazines etc	Laundry & launderette
Pubs, hotels & restaurants	Golf course
Nurses' station	Medical Practice

Further afield -

Glen Coe *****

Famous for its massacre and for its mountains. Wonderful scenery, easy access but no easy walks - the mountain-slopes begin at the side of the road. Discretely-placed visitor centre, small village with museum, shops, cafe, etc. some hidden gems - ask me. An hour's drive from Killin.

Glen Etive *****

The Glen Etive road branches off, left, from the Glencoe road about 2k beyond the sign-posted ski area. Glen Etive is a treasure. Fine mountains all around, a clear sparkling river with several short waterfalls, and a long narrow road which eventually reaches the sea at the inner end of a fjord (Loch Etive). Herds of red deer can frequently be seen here - often right by the road - if you stay in your car you can get very, very close to them.

Oban ****

Bustling seaport - the main ferry port for many of the islands. Interesting town, esp. along the seafront, spectacular "folly" on the hill above the town; excellent seafood from open-air stalls by the harbour, and a really excellent and expensive fish restaurant in the main street if your ego needs pampering. 80km from Killin.

Fort William ***

Not a pretty town, but an important regional centre with all services - hospital, college, marine research centre, shops, supermarkets, trades, building supplies. etc etc. About 1.5 hours from Killin, via Glencoe, and most useful as the gateway to . . .

Ben Nevis & Glen Nevis *****

Scotland's highest mountain and one of its most beautiful glens. Ben Nevis is a hard days' climb and descent (and access is not from the glen) and Glen Nevis has plenty to see and do anyway. Recommended - drive to the end of the glen road (car-park) then follow the track through steeply sloping woodlands to the upper valley and the magnificent Steall Falls (120m high), and cross the steel-rope bridge if you dare. (3km altogether).

Loch Lubnaig ****

You will all pass this loch as you drive up to Killin - after the little town of Callander and before the village of Stratheyre. Dark, narrow loch backed by steep, conifer-clad hills; can be quite spectacular in the right conditions.

Balquidder ****

An area of steep hills and conifer forest surrounding the long, narrow Loch Voil. Not many places to park and no extended walks that I know, but very worthwhile, just the same. There is something quite unScottish about Balquidder - it often reminds me of Canada. And this is bandit country - the famous outlaw, Rob Roy MacGegor, lived here and is buried in Balquidder churchyard.

The Trossachs ****

A very pleasant area of rolling forested hills and quiet lochs, and like Balquidder, not typically Scottish. Quiet, remote-feeling and not heavily touristed. The biggest loch, Loch Katrine, surrounded by pine forests, offers paddle-steamer trips.

Slightly more urban -

The Pineapple House *****

Late 18th century aristocratic “folly” in the shape of a very large pineapple. Available to rent! Well worth adding to a day which might include some of the others below.

The Kelpies *****

The now-famous stainless steel sculptures in the shape of two horses’ heads 35m high. I think this is a “must” and early in the day, or late, would be best.

The Falkirk Wheel *****

Science-fiction, futuristic design, clever engineering and eccentricity all come together here, in a contraption which will lift at large boat, its occupants and the water it floats in, 24m into the air, to connect two canals which run at different heights.

Stirling Castle ***

“**Stirling Castle** is one of the largest and most important [castles](#), both historically and architecturally, in [Scotland](#).” (Wikipedia). Worth a look if you’re in the Stirling/Falkirk area.

A day out, away from Killin -

- 1) Oban and Castle Stalker. See: <http://nikongear.net/revival/index.php/topic,2954.15.html>
- 2) Glen Coe and Glen Etive
- 3) Fort William and Glen Nevis
- 4) Falkirk and Stirling
- 5) Balquidder and the Trossachs
- 6) Cruachan Power Station

1, 2 and 3 have great scenery all the way there and back.

2 and 3 could be combined to give one very long day.

4 passes thro good mixed scenery en route to Stirling, and visits the Kelpies, etc.

5 is a remote-feeling area of woods, forests, rolling hills, and lochs

6 is a huge power-station built right inside a mountain; 60s/70s technology but still feels futuristic, science-fiction - excellent for a wet day

(Glasgow and Edinburgh are both within about 1.5 hours drive from Killin.)

If you need any further detail, don’t hesitate to ask me.