

OBAN - Gateway to the Highlands

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Times, the town's weekly newspaper, has a 'what's on' list of events each week. For children and adults Oban offers a cinema showing all the latest films, a leisure centre with a splash pool and a full-size swimming pool with flume, a climbing wall, a gym. Add to this an outdoor play park, soft play area, tennis courts and a five-a-side astro-turf park as well as badminton courts and squash courts and you've have more than enough to work off your surplus energy. And after all that exercise you can enjoy a relaxing sauna as well.

The town's War and Peace Museum is also a popular attraction. It has a huge display of nostalgic heirlooms and a dedicated and highly knowledgeable army of volunteers.

Outdoor activities are there for the taking - climbing, walking, cycling, boating, diving, canoeing, horse riding, fishing, sailing, skiing and much more.

Then there's the wildlife and plenty of it - deer, sea eagles, otters, seals, dolphins, whales and more.

Cuan Mor owner Paul Sloan is delighted with the way business has boomed since he bought the former Mondo in March 2007.

Paul has transformed the premises into a tasteful gastro pub, and the reclaimed Scottish materials and handcrafted work used in the refurbishment programme add a touch of class and tradition to the restaurant and bar.

There is currently one menu on offer for

the whole day, with 12 dishes to choose from. The menu will change with the seasons four times a year, and with each of the six main lunch dishes costing between £5.95 and £6.95, the freshly prepared food is affordable for diners of varying budgets. Families of all ages are welcome at Cuan Mor and a kid's menu is on offer, but the bar is strictly for over 21s only.

Opened from 10am when locals and tourists can take the opportunity to relax with coffee and accompaniments, Cuan Mor differs from most other restaurants in Oban as food is served right up until 10pm.

With beautiful French doors looking onto George Street and the stunning scene of the bay beyond, Cuan Mor is the perfect place to enjoy delicious food and first-class service.

Situated in a former bank building, this award-winning restaurant on Oban's main street is renowned for creative cooking and exceptional service.

In 2007, Coast Restaurant picked up two awards from Eat Scotland and was also awarded the Holiday West Highland Restaurant of the Year.

The relaxed and friendly environment offers a haven from Oban's hustle and bustle or infamous west coast weather. Enjoy watching the world go by with a light lunch or choose from the seasonal a la carte menu. A special 3 course menu for £12 is also available at lunchtime and early evening.

Husband and wife team Richard and Nicola Fowler opened Coast restaurant in 2004 and quickly became the locals' favourite. Richard's imaginative cooking uses the best of Oban landed fish, and shellfish along with locally sourced meat and game with vegetarian options also available.

The carefully selected and sensibly priced wine list draws on both old and new worlds and there's a good range of Scotland's most famous whiskies to choose from.

Coast Restaurant is open 7 days a week - Mon to Sat 12-2pm and 5.30-9pm and Sun 5.30-9.00pm.

If you're looking for just coffee or a light snack Coast-caffe a new venture for Richard and Nicola has opened round the corner on John Street. Eat in or take away there's a variety of freshly made sandwiches and snacks available.

And with a warm welcome and friendly service from Nicola and her team, you'll enjoy a delicious relaxed meal or snack in modern and comfortable surroundings. Coast-caffe is open 7 days a week 9-4pm

Oban has one of the oldest distilleries in Scotland and you can have a guided tour with a wee dram at the end which will really put a spring in your step. Near to Oban are lots of attractions where visitors can enjoy a day out or just a morning or afternoon. Children will love the national seal rescue sanctuary.

In addition, there are historic castles with dark dungeons, a power station inside a mountain and lots of intriguing mysteries and legends whose trails you can follow.

A pleasant excursion is a visit to Ardrathatn Priory Gardens. The priory itself is Scotland's second oldest inhabited house and the seat of the last Gaelic-speaking Scottish parliament in 1308. Older still is Dunollie Castle, at the entrance to Oban Bay, with records showing it was captured as early as AD498 by the marauding Irish Loarn brothers from whom comes the name Lorn, still used today for the area surrounding Oban.

The castle guards the northern approach to Oban Bay. From their principle seats of Dunstaffnage and Dunollie castles, the Macdougalls, lords of Lorn and chiefs of the clan, exerted a major influence in Argyll as well as in the islands to the west. Their power ended early in the 14th cen-



Oban's North Pier with McCaig's Tower in the background

ture when the clan chose the losing side in the struggle for the Scottish throne.

Today, the name is known mainly for the MacDougall Collection, a vast array of artefacts of social history amassed by Miss Hope MacDougall, daughter, sister and aunt to three successive chiefs of the clan.

The vast collection include peat spades, a herring girl's kist, early vacuum cleaners, butter moulds and churns, the contents of a cobbler's shop, hand-loom weaving and textiles, an early post office and an unrivalled range of tools for working the land. This unique collection is accompanied by clear documentation as to the origin and owner of each item and the collector's own research and brings the history of the area alive.

There are plenty of hostelries round Oban set in tranquil glens or by the sides of lochs selling the area's finest of ales and whiskies as well as high quality meals using local produce.

All in all, Oban and its surrounding area have everything the visitor could want and more. There is so much to see and do that their attractions will call you back time after time as if by magic.

When in Oban visit
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FAMILY AMUSEMENT CENTRE
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Dates for you Diary - Sept/Oct

SATURDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER One Night of Queen 8pm Tickets £16.50 Reserved Seating	FRIDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER The Drifters Door 7.30pm Tickets £17.50 Reserved Seating
FRIDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER Phil & Aly Scottish Tour 2008 8pm Tickets £15 Reserved Seating	Friday 17th OCTOBER The Complete Stone Roses Doors 7.30pm Tickets £18
CORRAN HALLS BOX OFFICE FOR DETAILS - 01631 567333	SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER Scottish Opera Presents The Merry Widow Tickets Adult £13 / Under 26's £5

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