There are around **50 million people worldwide** who claim Scottish ancestry.

The past is very accessible in Scotland, and a special experience awaits those who come here to ‘walk in the footsteps of their ancestors’, both by exploring sites associated with their own families, and by visiting the regions associated with their clan/family names. Others wish to take things a step further by undertaking genealogical research while in Scotland.

Ancestral visitors to Scotland **tend to:**

- **Stay longer** than average
- Be more likely than average to visit **out with the peak summer months** of July and August
- **Visit areas across Scotland** related to their own family history or ancient clan lands

There are an estimated **50 million people** with Scottish ancestry worldwide. The countries with the largest concentrations of people with Scottish ancestry are:

- **CANADA**
  - 4.7 million people
- **USA**
  - 9.4 million people
- **AUSTRALIA**
  - 1.5 million people

**VisitScotland’s 2015/16 Visitor Survey** of visitors from these countries revealed that

- **Over a quarter** of respondents cited Scottish ancestry as a major motivation for visiting Scotland
- **More than a third** of respondents said their ancestors had lived in Scotland
Every tourism business in Scotland stands to benefit from ancestral tourism, and by making use of the tips and links below, you can take proactive steps to capitalise on this important visitor segment.

Ensure you and your staff have at least a basic knowledge of the history of your local area, including key historic events and sites in the region, so you can speak knowledgably to guests exploring their Scottish connections.

If your area has a strong connection with particular surnames, find out about any clans/families associated with those names, and any relevant clan/family sites in the areas.

Ensure that you highlight these connections in your communications with potential guests, such as highlighting the connections on your website and in newsletters.

If you are an accommodation provider, think about ways in which you could bring the history of your building or area to life for guests.

Keep abreast of developments in the film and TV world which feature famous Scots and events in Scotland’s history. From Braveheart to Outlander, stories seen on screen encourage visitors to come to Scotland, especially those with Scottish roots!

One of the things visitors with Scottish roots love to do is meet their fellow Scots. Keep abreast of events in the local area where they can meet the locals such as Highland Games, trad music festivals, pub sessions, etc.

If you run a visitor attraction with historic or ancestral connections, consider how you can tell its story in an engaging and interactive way, which will really bring the story to life for ancestral visitors.

Be ready to assist those ancestral visitors who want to do genealogical research as part of their visit. Ensure you and your staff know where local records offices, libraries and family history societies are. Pay them a visit to find out what records they hold and how your guests can access them.

Top Tips to Help You Benefit from Ancestral Tourism

VisitScotland resources to help you:

VisitScotland.org - our industry website contains a wealth of insights and research into ancestral tourism

Digital Media Library - register as a library user to download and use stunning imagery of Scotland in your marketing materials

Ancestral content - the ancestral section of our website highlights a range of topics of interest to visitors with Scottish connections

Clan/Family Itineraries - visit our website to discover the stories, events and places related to some of Scotland’s best known surnames

Ancestral Welcome Scheme – join the scheme to demonstrate your commitment to welcome ancestral visitors

Ancestral Support Services - regional listings of research and genealogy sources available across Scotland

Useful links:

Historic Scotland

National Trust for Scotland

Museums Galleries Scotland

Scotland’s People Centre

National Records of Scotland

Scottish Association of Family History Societies

The Association of Scottish Genealogists and Researchers in Archives

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