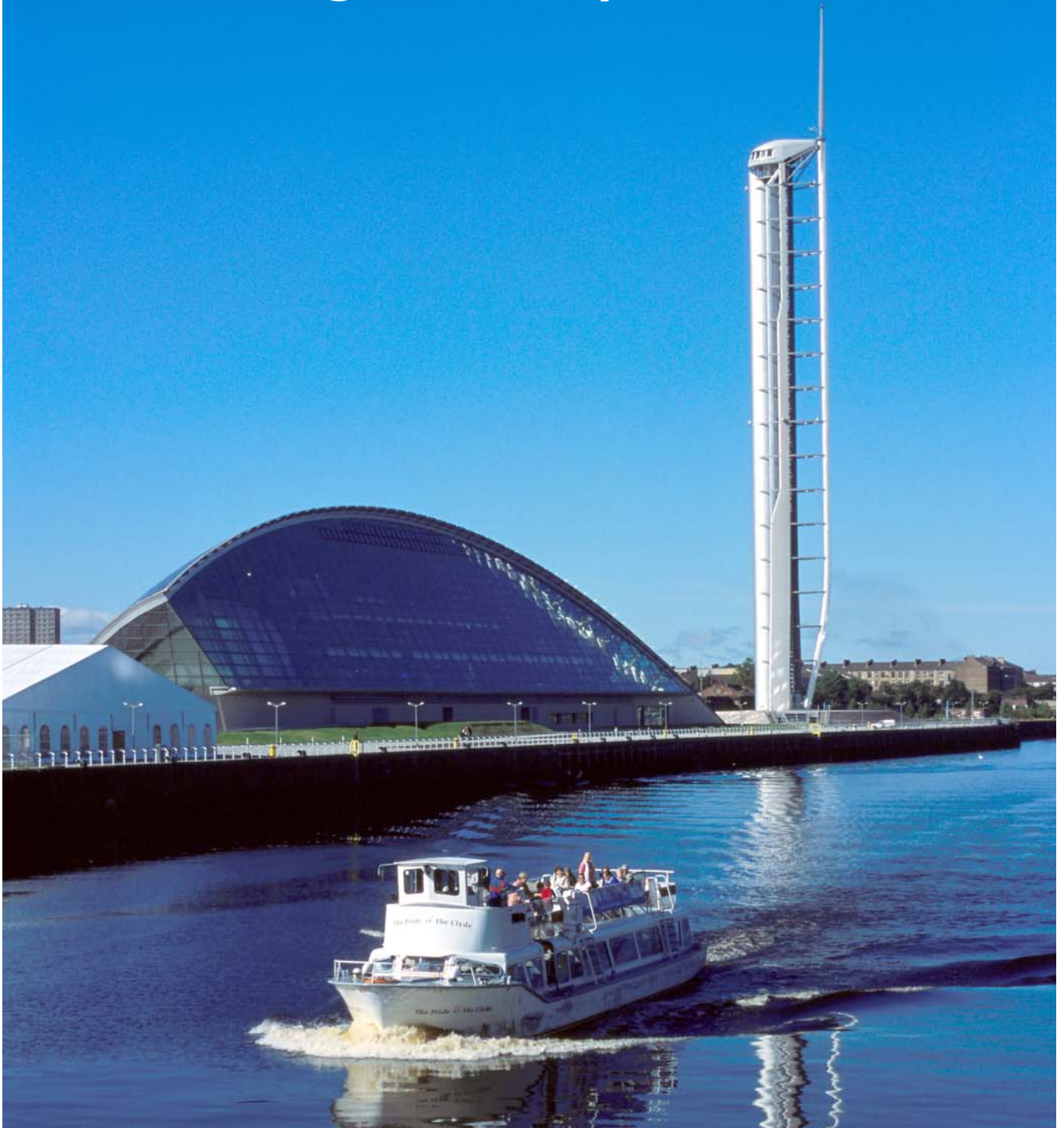


Walking Tour Glasgow City Centre



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Short Walk in Glasgow City Centre

All of us at Scottish Tours hope that you will enjoy your stay in Glasgow. In order to maximise the pleasure of your visit we have prepared this short walking tour that you can experience at your own pace. The walk should take from 45 minutes to 1 hour, but of course you can take as long or as short a time as you wish. The walk contains concise directions that will return you to your starting point in George Square, outside Queen Street Railway Station. Places of interest are highlighted together with a brief history. It can be undertaken by anyone who is reasonably fit, but remember, if you find any part tiring or too much to finish, taxis are readily available to return you to your hotel and you can finish your walk another day.

We hope you will enjoy your short walk in the company of our silent guide and that you will have a pleasant stay in Glasgow.

This walk takes us through the City Centre of Glasgow, showing some of the Victorian buildings erected when Glasgow was Second City of the Empire. We start in the NorthWest corner of George Square, nearest Queen Street Station. George Square is the Civic Centre of Glasgow, laid out in 1781 and called after George III. We will walk right round the outside of the square, clockwise looking at the statues.

Statue 1.

Sir Robert Peel, 1788 - 1850.

Prime Minister of Great Britain. Repealed the Corn Laws, which restricted the import of foodstuffs, and created the Metropolitan Police Force, which is why British Police became known as Bobbies. Also elected Lord Rector of Glasgow University.

Statue 2.

William Ewart Gladstone, 1809 - 1898.

Also a Prime Minister of Great Britain and Lord Rector of Glasgow University. Glasgow merchants appreciated him for his part in the Free Trade Movement, and he received the freedom of the City.

Statue 3.

James Oswald, 1779 - 1853.

Son of a Glasgow merchant: became a Liberal politician and was much involved in the 1832 Reform Bill. This ended the anomaly by which Glasgow, then with 150,000 people, shared a single Member of Parliament with several other much smaller Clydeside burghs.

The Cenotaph.

A memorial to Glasgow's dead in two World Wars. In the 1914-1918 War, 200,000 Glaswegians took part - 20,000 of them were killed.

Statue 4.

Thomas Graham, 1805 - 1869.

Born in Glasgow. The father of colloid chemistry. Became Master of the Mint and introduced the bronze penny to our coinage. Statue paid for and erected by one of his former students, James 'Paraffin' Young, father of the shale-oil industry.

Statue 5.

Thomas Campbell, 1777 - 1844.

Born in Glasgow. Poet and writer. Lord Rector of Glasgow University for three terms of office. Buried in Poets Corner in Westminster Abbey. Best known for "ye Mariners of England" and "Lord Ullin's Daughter".

Statue 6.

Lord Clyde (Sir Colin Campbell), 1792 - 1863.

Born Glasgow. Soldier. One of the funeral party of Sir John Moore (see statue 7). He commanded the 93rd Highlanders at the Battle of Balaclava (the Thin Red Line) and was in charge of the relief of Lucknow. Buried in Westminster Abbey.

Statue 7.

Sir John Moore, 1761 - 1809.

Born in Glasgow. Politician and Soldier. Hero of Corunna during the Peninsular War. "Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note" His was the first statue to be placed in the Square, in 1819. It was cast from brass cannons.

Statue 8.

(On the Central Pillar) Sir Walter Scott, 1771 -1832.

Famous lawyer, author and poet. Wrote Marmion, Lady of the Lake and the Waverley Novels, among many other literary works. Though Scott is chiefly associated with Edinburgh and the Borders, this was the first memorial to be erected in his honour.

Statue 9.

Robert Burns, 1759 - 1796.

Scotland's National poet or Bard. Born Alloway, died Dumfries. This statue was paid for by public subscription. Over 40,000 people contributed 1/- (5p). More than 30,000 were present at the unveiling and wreaths are laid to his memory on the anniversary of his birth.

Statue 10.

James Watt, 1736 - 1819.

Father of the Industrial Revolution. While working in Glasgow he improved the steam engine by fitting a separate condenser. Other improvements followed, his engine becoming the power unit of the Industrial Revolution.

Statue 11.

Prince Albert, 1819 - 1861.

Husband and consort to Queen Victoria

Statue 12.

Queen Victoria, 1819 - 1901.

Queen from 1837 till her death. This statue commemorates her visit to Glasgow in 1849.

Before we leave George Square let us look at some of the buildings:

Much of Glasgow is built from red or yellow (blond) sandstone. Sandstone is a soft stone - so many of the buildings have beautiful carvings on them for decoration. The symmetry of the building closing this end of the square is broken by the extra storey added to [Merchants House](#) (1877), now the home of Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1783 - the oldest in Britain. Look at the top of the building and see the gilt globe and ship in full sail, a reminder of Glasgow's trading glory.

On our right, beside Queen Street Station, (trains from here for the east and north of Scotland), is the [Millenium Hotel](#). Here in 1941 President Roosevelt's personal envoy, Harold Hopkins, came for a secret meeting with Winston Churchill, before America's entry into the war.

We will now walk back through the Square, this time through the centre. Notice behind the benches on our left, (between them and the flower beds), the old Imperial Standard measures for feet, links, chain and inches (1882) and the City's Coat of Arms in an oval on each lamppost. Ahead of us are the [City Chambers](#), opened by Queen Victoria in 1888. To our right is the building that was for many years our Main Post Office, the first in Britain to be lit by electric light. It has now been converted to luxury apartments.

Go to the right of the Cenotaph and cross at the lights.

CITY CHAMBERS

We can see more Standard Measures on the corner of the building, which is the headquarters of local government, housing the offices of the Lord Provost. It is both a working and a ceremonial building. As we cross in front of the building, look inside the entrance hall There are free conducted tours round the inside of the building 10.30 am and 2.30 pm most days Monday to Friday. Ask at the desk. Only by going inside do you see the true Victorian opulence

We are now ready to leave George Square. Walk past the entrance to the City Chambers to traffic lights at junction of George Street and George Square. Turn right along George Square and continue to John Street. Remember to look at beautiful carvings on buildings.

STRATHCLYDE UNIVERSITY

The large red sandstone building across the road is the principal building of Strathclyde University – Glasgow's second university that got its Royal Charter in 1964, but as an educational institute dates back to 1796. Previously known as the Royal College of Science and Technology. Most of the modern buildings we can see ahead of us are part of the campus. John Logie Baird, the pioneer of television, was a former student.

Turn right into John Street - walk under the arches between the two parts of the City Chambers to Cochrane Street. Cross over to the pedestrianised section of John Street (watch out for traffic from the left - Cochrane Street is one-way). Note the attractively renovated building on the left of the square. Originally it was a church.

THE ITALIAN CENTRE

This is a newly rejuvenated part of the city that now forms an exclusive shopping and living area. On each end of the facade to the right you will see a statue of Mercury, Roman god of Merchandise, as well as Messenger of the Gods. There is a smaller statue of him in the centre of the square. Note that the spelling of Mercury is different on each statue. Enter the central courtyard through the archway on the right. Look up and see the main awards won by the Italian Centre. Inside the courtyard you can see more modern sculptures and a fountain.

If the exit through the shopping arcade is open, walk through it. If not, return to John Street and walk round the outside of the Centre to the traffic lights in Ingram Street. Cross over, and stop under the clock on the lawyers office on the corner of Ingram Street and Glassford Street.

HUTCHESON'S HALL

From here look back beyond the Italian Centre to get a better view of the light coloured building with the blue clock face on its steeple. This is Hutcheson's Hall. Originally Hutcheson's Hospital was a charitable institution founded by two brothers for poor old men and orphans. The statues of the brothers, George and Thomas, are in niches on the front of the building. The National Trust for Scotland now owns the building and it has an enquiry desk and a shop.

Now look across at the buildings in Glassford Street. The building directly opposite is now a fashion shop but was once the TSB, one of Scotland's four Banks (also worth a peep inside as we pass). Adjoining it to the left is Trades House.

TRADES HOUSE

This was designed by the famous Scottish architect Robert Adam (1794) and is the meeting place of the four incorporated Trades of Glasgow. The façade is virtually intact.

Cross Glassford Street at the lights and continue along Ingram Street. On the left, after the TSB building, see Virginia Place, leading to Virginia Street – a reminder of our trade in tobacco with America. Continue to Queen Street. Take care crossing here – we want to reach the broad pavement in the centre of Royal Exchange Square.

ROYAL EXCHANGE SQUARE

The statue is the Duke of Wellington, victor at Waterloo, on his famous horse, Copenhagen. The impressive building with the portico has had several uses. It was built in 1775 as a suburban residence for William Cunningham, one of the "Tobacco Lords", as the merchants in tobacco were known. In 1827 it became the Royal Exchange, and the portico at the front was added, and also the great hall at the back. In 1954 it became the public lending library and it is now the Gallery of Modern Art.

Walk along the north side of the square, passing a “Doctor Who” police box; cross over to the shop side. Turn right into the lane, North Court, between the Jenny tearoom and the Rainbow Room. Follow the lane into St Vincent Place.

ST VINCENT PLACE

Straight across the road the light coloured building was the headquarters of the Anchor Line, one of Glasgow’s shipping companies. There are lots of anchors in the ironwork, as well as those on the façade. Turn left. The next building across the road is a former newspaper office. Look for the name in very fancy writing across the candy-style pillars. The next building is the Clydesdale Bank, another of Scotland’s banks with a magnificent banking hall (worth making a slight detour to visit once we are on that side of the road).

Continue left until you reach Buchanan Street. Straight ahead in the middle of the road is a bronze relief model of the city centre. Enjoy working out where you have been and where you can go. (For shopping turn left along Buchanan Street to the Princes Square shopping gallery, or a little further to St Enoch Centre on the other side of Argyle Street. Alternatively turn right to the Buchanan Galleries.) To continue our walk, turn right and cross the road. (This is your opportunity to take a detour to visit the Clydesdale Bank mentioned earlier.) Look up the hill ahead. The light coloured building directly ahead is the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall.

GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL

This was opened in 1990 when Glasgow was the European city of Culture. Nearer to us is a large “U” – this is the sign of our underground system, known as the subway. Opened in 1897 (older than New York), it is like a toy train layout of two concentric circles with no junctions. An original coach is preserved in the booking hall at this station. Do have a look, and why not buy a ticket and go round the 15 station circuit. It is the same price for any journey, and a cheap one-day ticket is available.

Walk straight ahead to the next corner and stop. On your left is Stock Exchange House.

STOCK EXCHANGE HOUSE

A fine example of Glasgow’s Venetian Gothic, built in 1877 (interior rebuilt 1971.) Now houses the Scottish office of the London Stock Exchange. On the side of the Stock Exchange building note the name. Glasgow University students elected Nelson Mandela as their rector while he was still in prison. More recently he came to Glasgow to be awarded the freedom of the City. Across the road is St George’s Tron Church. When it was built in 1807 many people felt that this would be as far as the City would ever stretch to the west!

Turn right. Walk along West George Street until you reach George Square.

We hope you have enjoyed your walk.

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