

# TRAVEL

with SALLY McLEAN [s.mclean@dailyrecord.co.uk](mailto:s.mclean@dailyrecord.co.uk)



**CHOCOS AWAY** Leah made delicious chocolates with staff at the Cocoa Bean Company

## Jumping into a big world of fun at Soar

SOAR at intu Braehead is the best place in the world.

Well, perhaps Disneyland is nearly as good but Soar is definitely one of my favourite places. The centre has just been given a brand new makeover. So, as a Daily Record cub reporter, I went along to test the facilities.

Wow! As we walked in, I noticed that the place has been given a brand new look. It is now ultra-modern with a new layout, new trampoline park, chocolate factory and an events area to enjoy. As it's getting near the time of year when Santa visits, the events area had been transformed into a winter wonderland - which even had snow on my visit. It looked amazing.

As an intrepid reporter, I found out from kind members of staff that there will be even more new features including a big digital screen that will be positioned on the front of the building in the coming weeks to show off all the great attractions inside.

There will also be new lighting and decor changes. I can't wait to see the new "space trees" that will be positioned in the lower mall, sitting underneath a ceiling of stars and a light box wall which show all of the constellations in space.

I was dying to get to my first stop - the Cocoa Bean Company, where I got to make chocolates in a kids workshop.

Workshops are suitable for children from two up to 18 years old - there are even workshops for the grown-ups. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is one of my fave stories and I have always wanted to visit a place like it, so Cocoa Bean was my choicest dream. With my bag of goodies, we went downstairs to my next stop - Gravity.

It's a trampoline park and it's massive. There are big ones, small ones, a soft play area, a cafe and a viewing area. I was head over heels about the place.

Everyone has to watch a safety briefing video so accidents don't happen and do a warm-up before jumping.

There are loads of marshals around to make sure you stay safe. I looked at their fancy website later and it said that there were loads of different sessions - Open Jump, Parent and Toddler and Specialised Disability Sessions, as well as

**LEAH McCOSHAN, AGED 8**  
\*Additional reporting by Stephen Stewart

fitness classes called Trampoline. By the end of our play session, it was lunchtime. We went to TGI Fridays where I had mozzarella dippers and cheesy tomato pasta.

It was great and the staff were very friendly.

Then we were off to Tenpin for more fun. Mark, the manager, showed us how to use the iPad-style screen next to our lane. You can take your picture, put your name in to the system and personalise your bowling game.

I really enjoyed it. There are loads of bowling lanes and you can get food and drinks too.

It is even open late so the oldies can have a shot at bowling and get a drink from the licensed bar.

There is so much to do at Soar at intu Braehead that I'd never get bored.

In the next few months, there are plans to improve Soar's Climzone area with a giant slide.

I can't wait!



**BOUNCING** Gravity at intu Braehead

### Competition

Daily Record readers can get up to two pairs of free Gravity Safety Socks (worth £2.50 each) using the code FREESOCKS. Valid till tomorrow.

Tenpin offers include half-price all day Tuesday, except school holidays, and Thursdays after 6pm.

# MARVEL AT ITS BEAUTY

Queen Victoria loved Kenmore - and nothing beats being treated like royalty in breath-taking Highland village

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**KENMORE** in the Highlands is one of the most beautiful places on the planet.

But don't just take my word for it. Queen Victoria loved the place and we know how difficult it was to keep that particular monarch amused.

The Victorian era saw the rapid expansion of the British Empire, but the Empress of India was just as keen to expand at home.

One of her more bizarre ventures was to have her own private island built in Loch Tay where she could go for picnics.

It's easy to see why the virtuous queen was so taken with the pure beauty of this place.

It wears every season well, green and vibrant in the spring and summer, golden and breathtaking in the autumn and winter.

For such a small village, it never ceases to amaze me how good it feels to be in Kenmore.

Its advantage is that it feels like its in the middle of nowhere without really being in the middle of nowhere.

There is an adventure around every corner and places of interest are never too far away.

It's an extremely pleasant two-hour journey from Glasgow and Edinburgh and the 16th century village sits at the point where the River Tay flows into stunning Loch Tay.

We spent a wonderful three days in luxury - for a change. And what luxury.

We "camped" ourselves in the 160-acre family-run Mains of Taymouth Country Estate in one of the finest Highland holiday homes you'll ever see.

The estate, which also has its own golf course, is made up of a series of beautifully appointed cottages, mews houses, apartments and a country farmhouse, which sleeps 12.

Our home for the weekend was in Mains Park Court, a favourite of the



**PICTURESQUE** Kenmore lies at east end of Loch Tay. Pic: John Lawson



**FRIENDLY LOCALS** Red Deer Centre. Right, Mains of Taymouth Country Estate

staff when they get a chance to treat their families to a holiday together. And we soon found out why.

The five-bedroom holiday home really is a stand-out.

The property is fitted with all the latest gadgets and comes complete with a hot tub, Finnish sauna cabin and pool table.

Tastefully decorated, Mains Park Court manages to be modern and airy while holding on to a cosy cottage comfort.

The open-plan living area, dining room and large kitchen are separated by a centre-piece wood-burning stove. A spiral

staircase at one end of the living room leads to a mezzanine level where the kids spent hours playing the Wii games console.

Every room is en-suite and the master bedroom is a magnificent space with spectacular views over the surrounding hills.

The site is a stone throw from The Courtyard restaurant, brasserie and bar, ideal for afternoon snacks and drinks.

During the trip, I dusted off my old golf clubs to have a hack around the Mains of Taymouth nine-hole course.

In cracking condition, the course



is enough of a test to stay interesting without being so demanding you wish you had hit the 10th, or 19th, a lot sooner.

The riding stables, run by Kerry Orr, offers lessons for children as young as four and there are horses suitable for trekking, hacking and stabling. Visitors can also stable their own horses during their stay.

If you're looking to get out and about, Highland Safaris, based in the inappropriately named Dull between Aberfeldy and Kenmore, is a must visit, too, particularly if you are in a family group.

With plenty for kids to do,

including gold panning, the Red Deer experience is great fun and lets everyone get up close and personal with the park's resident herd.

Once we'd fed the dominant stag and his harem, it was time to feed ourselves, the cafe serving up top quality grub and refreshments.

Elsewhere, the town of Aberfeldy is just six miles away and Pitlochry a 35-minute drive, about 20 miles.

Aberfeldy has surprisingly good shopping and plenty of places to eat and drink, as well as its own cinema. Just don't expect a choice of movies.

The Birks of Aberfeldy, where Robert Burns wrote his song of the



same name, is a spectacular country walk on the edge of town.

A bit of a huff and puff up the various gushing falls as you ascend the gorge of Moness, it's well worth the effort when you reach and walk across Upper Moness Falls.

I would also recommend a visit to Killiecrankie visitor centre just 10 minutes up the road.

There, you will witness the impossible-to-believe Soldier's Leap, where a Redcoat soldier allegedly leapt 18ft over the River Garry fleeing the Jacobites during the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689.

But you don't have to travel too far

if walking is your thing as there are plenty of beautiful walks right on your doorstep.

The Drummond Hill and Black Rock is a personal favourite, with some spectacular views on the way.

Loch Tay also offers something for everyone, whether it's pleasure cruising or just watching the wildlife from the small but perfectly formed Kenmore shingle beach.

When we arrived at Mains of Taymouth, my 10-year-old Daisy said she never wanted to leave.

She hadn't changed her mind three days later.

We can't wait to go back.

### Late deals

- Flying from Glasgow on December 16, 7 nights HB at the 4-star VIK San Antonio, Puerto del Carmen, Lanzarote, from £369pp.
- Flying from Glasgow on February 10, 17, 24, 7 nights HB at the 4-star King Evelthon Beach Hotel & Resort, Paphos, Cyprus, from £459pp.
- Flying from Glasgow on March 2, 7 nights AI at the 4-star Globales Palmanova, Majorca, from £369pp.
- For these and other great deals go to [www.stewarttravel.co.uk](http://www.stewarttravel.co.uk) or visit your nearest Stewart Travel store or call 0800 091 2757.

### Late deals

- Flying from Glasgow on December 10 & 17, seven nights all inclusive at the 4\* Occidental Lanzarote Mar, Costa Tequise, Lanzarote, from £499pp.
- Flying from Glasgow on December 15, seven nights B&B at the GF Gran Costa Adeje, Tenerife, from £549pp.
- Flying from Glasgow on January 30, seven nights B&B at the Paladim Apartments, Albufeira, from £229pp.
- For these and other deals, visit [www.stewarttravel.co.uk](http://www.stewarttravel.co.uk) or call 0800 091 2757.

### Facts

- Chris and his family stayed in Mains Park Court, Kenmore, courtesy of Mains of Taymouth Estate.
- Prices from £747 for weekly lets in the Maxwell's holiday apartments.
- To find out about special offers, visit [www.taymouth.co.uk](http://www.taymouth.co.uk) or call 01887 830226 to book.

## News

### Carnival on high seas

LONG gone are the days when cruising was exclusively for holidaymakers craving a slower pace of life.

These days, cruise lines are coming up with invigorating and exhilarating ways to keep passengers entertained - and the new ship from Carnival Cruise Line is no exception.

Due to set sail in March 2018, Carnival Horizon will feature many first-at-seas and will have exciting activities for all the family - a waterpark for children, a spa for adults or entertainment options suitable for all.

The most exciting new feature is the Dr. Seuss Waterworks. The centrepiece is two twisting waterslides themed after two Dr. Seuss characters (the Cat's Hat slide and Fun Things slide), while

other attractions include side-by-side racing slides, splashy water-spray toys and a giant tipping top-hat.

The ship will also include the SportsSquare, complete with the much-loved SkyRide - a bike machine suspended high above deck offering fantastic views of the ship.

When it's time to relax, there is plenty of quiet space too. The Serenity Adults-Only Retreat is included in the price and is the perfect place to unwind. Then there's also the Cloud 9 Spa, with traditional spa services such as massages, facials and body wraps



**LAUNCH** Carnival Horizon sails in March as well as modern thermal suites.

Carnival Horizon caters to all tastes, with 11 restaurants on board including the brand new Bonsai Teppanyaki and Guy's Pig & Anchor Bar-B-Que Smokehouse. The latter even includes its own at-sea brewery.

When it's time to sleep, passengers can choose between a generous selection of suites and staterooms.

Pool lovers can opt for the Havana Staterooms & Suites, which are close to the Havana Bar & Pool.

Spa fans can select a Cloud 9 Spa stateroom or suite, which comes with priority spa reservations, unlimited access to thermal suites and free fitness classes.

Families will love the Family Harbor staterooms, which are near the Family Harbor Lounge and include free meals for children in most speciality restaurants and a free evening of Night Owls babysitting service.

European, Bermuda, Transatlantic and Caribbean itineraries have already been announced. Call Barrhead Travel's cruise team on 0141 242 1337 to find out more.

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