



# Mercat Tours

## AWARD WINNING STORYTELLERS LAUNCH FIVE EXCLUSIVE NEW EDINBURGH TOURS



Edinburgh's original five-star history and ghost tour company is launching five exclusive new tours of the city this April. Mercat Tours, a family business led by an award-winning team of professional storytellers, specialises in walking tours that show visitors a side of Edinburgh others don't see.

The new tours launching this April are:

### **Spark 100 (Easter weekend only)**

- Part of a year-long celebration of the works and influence of world-renowned author Muriel Spark marking the centenary of her birthday. Walking in the footsteps of Spark's Edinburgh, a Mercat Tours guide will tell the story of the some time retiring Edinburgh local, whose style and work influenced a huge array of authors. She was educated at James Gillespie's School for Girls in the city, an experience that many believe went on to influence one of her most famous novels, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*.
- Time: Saturday 31 March & Sunday 01 April, 5pm
- Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes
- For more information or to book visit: [www.mercattours.com](http://www.mercattours.com)

### **Scottish Storytelling Supper**

- Experience the warm Scottish welcome, famous the world over, in one of the Scotland's finest restaurants and bars neighbouring Edinburgh Castle. Those joining the supper will enjoy a captivating evening that indulges the best of Scottish traditions including: Scottish prose; the finest food from Scotland's larder; Scottish mysteries, myths and legends; and learning how to toast like a true Scot with a wee dram of whisky, Scotland's national drink. The host, dressed for the occasion, will tell diners all about that curious Scottish skirt - better known as the kilt – the famous dress of the Scottish Highlands.
- Time and length: April – August 2018. 7pm to 10.30pm
- Cost: £60pp inclusive of all entertainment, 3 course Scottish meal and a dram of Scottish malt whisky
- For more information or to book visit: [www.mercattours.com](http://www.mercattours.com)

### **Whisky Tour**

- A walk through the Old Town of Edinburgh to discover the city that founded the world's largest Scottish whisky company and hear of the people that helped whisky production. The



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tour will conclude in Megget's cellar with a complimentary candlelit single malt whisky tasting from Scotland's four whisky producing regions, under the guidance of Mercat's whisky specialist (in a kilt, of course).

- Time and length:
  - Year round (from April 2018) - Departs at 4pm
  - Duration: 2 hours
- For more information or to book visit: [www.mercattours.com](http://www.mercattours.com)

## Mile to the Museum

- Mercat guides will tell the story of Scotland through the capital city and the National Museum of Scotland. Those joining the tour will:
  - explore key locations and stories hidden around Royal Mile in Edinburgh's Old Town.
  - Discover the nation's treasures stored in the National Museum of Scotland and hear how they all have shaped our past, present and future. Then enjoy tea and a freshly baked scone in the Museum Brasserie.
- Time and Length:
  - April - October: 10am & 2pm, Thursday to Saturday
  - November - March: 10am Saturday only, 2pm Saturday & Sunday
  - Duration: 1hr 30min
- For more information or to book visit: [www.mercattours.com](http://www.mercattours.com)

## Sotterannei Spettrali

- Discover Edinburgh's ghostly past told in the beautiful Italian language on this exclusive tour of the City's underground Blair Street Vaults. The vaults witnessed the deeds of mischief-makers and murderers, vagrants, and torturers. It's one of Edinburgh's most haunted sites, where restless spirits still tread. The Italian language version of the tour is new for 2018 – there are also tours told in French, German and Spanish.
- Time and length:
  - April to October 6.30pm Thursday to Saturday
  - November to March 6.30pm Saturday
  - Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes.
- For more information or to book visit: [www.mercattours.com](http://www.mercattours.com)

## Ends

For more media information, contact Kirsty Innes, tel 07790 910 646, email [Kirsty@kirstyinnespr.com](mailto:Kirsty@kirstyinnespr.com)

## Note to editors:

- Mercat Tours is Edinburgh's original five-star history and ghost tour company. Established over 30 years ago, the company's accredited guides bring Edinburgh's stories to life every day.
- The company was first established in 1985 by history teacher, Des Brogan, and three other history teachers, when they identified there were no other existing walking tours of Edinburgh. They researched and created four walking tours, with two of them (Secrets of the Royal Mile and Ghosts & Ghouls) still running today.
- Today, Mercat Tours is run by Des' daughter, Kat Brogan, and now offers a wide range of tours to suit any budget, group size and interest.



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- Mercat Tours is the only Edinburgh tours company with access to **The Blair Street Underground Vaults**, which were filled with rubble in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and were only rediscovered in the 1980s. Since then they've become known as one of Edinburgh's most famous haunted sites and offer a fascinating insight into Edinburgh's underground life.
- Groups are limited to an absolute maximum of 30 people, with tours running every day and in all weather. With each tour leaving from the Mercat Cross on the Royal Mile in the heart of the city, visitors will find the city's shops and restaurants within easy reach. Tours vary in length from 45 minutes to two hours, with specially tailored tours available for groups. All tours leave from the [Mercat Cross](#) on the Royal Mile – next to St Giles Cathedral.
- There are tours for every generation (from age 5 and up).
- More information on the accessibility on Mercat Tours can be found in its [Access Statement](#).
- French, German, Italian and Spanish tours are also available for a limited number of tours. Written translations are also available in Russian and Mandarin.

## AWARDS

- VisitScotland Five Star rating – first achieved in 2007 and maintained ever since
- The Green Tourism Business Scheme – awarded gold every year since 2012 for the company's commitment to the environment and economic sustainability.
- Scottish Business in the Community – named SME of the Year in 2014 for the company's commitment to improving Scots' lives.
- Scottish Thistle Award 2016 – recognised for Skills and Training Development, as a third of Mercat Tours team members have been with the company for over 10 years.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

A range of images of Mercat Tours can be found in this [Dropbox](#).

## SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Mercat Tours can be found on the following platforms:

[www.facebook.com/MercatTours/](http://www.facebook.com/MercatTours/)

[www.twitter.com/mercattoursltd](http://www.twitter.com/mercattoursltd)

[www.instagram.com/mercattours/](http://www.instagram.com/mercattours/)

[www.youtube.com/user/MercatToursLtd](http://www.youtube.com/user/MercatToursLtd)