

A TASTE OF Scotland

TAYMOUTH



REVIEWED BY Mum, Dad
& Luke Wilson (age 4)

OVER the Easter holidays we decided to take a little jaunt up to Perthshire for a much needed family break and to experience some traditional Scottish activities. Our son, Luke (4) has spent more holidays in Spain and Ireland than in Scotland, so this was a good chance to teach him about his heritage.

We booked into the fantastic Mains of Taymouth, right at the edge of Loch Tay at Kenmore. This gorgeous 120 acre estate offers a wide range of 4 & 5 star self-catering accommodation for families of all sizes and budgets. We stayed in a Maxwell property, a two-bedroom, two-storey, stylish villa complete with a great sized kitchen with all mod cons; two en-suites upstairs and a downstairs WC and utility room. Full length tweed curtains, luxurious fur throws, mood lighting and ducks on our door step made for a very happy family living space.

The estate boasts a well-stocked deli for any

forgotten essential food items, a gift-shop, and the adjoining bar and restaurant means you can conveniently either dine on-site, or order food to take back to your accommodation. The whole estate is extremely dog friendly so even furry friends can enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of the restaurant, which has a pool table and a stash of board games to keep the kids entertained too.

We settled in, stocked the fridge, said hello to the ducks and got to grips with our surroundings knowing we had lots of fun planned for the next day! And it started early because dad was keen to make the most of the golf course right outside our door. He was up and out before Luke and I had even woken. That's a first! The 6052 yards, par 70 golf course with the spectacular scenery was the perfect start to his day.

After a leisurely breakfast, we got ready for a trip to Highland Safaris; a park which offers all sorts of activities – land rover safaris, walking



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and biking tours and lots more. Our first pursuit of the day was a visit to their Red Deer Park and a chance to feed the deer. The friendly guide had about 30 of us to educate, so took us into a purpose built, seated viewing hut where we learned about various types of deer, their cycles and habits, and had the chance to feel various antlers. He gave us each a mug of 'deer food' and we went outside to feed the beautiful creatures. Deer don't have teeth so there's little chance of being hurt, so the kids in the group had a ball getting up close. After the deer had their snacks we went back into the hut to meet gorgeous barn owl, Ossian! Ossian showed off her flying for us, while we learned more about her night-time antics. We even got to stroke her soft downy back, which was fantastic.

After a thorough hand-wash it was time for lunch. Highland Safaris has a lovely gift shop and café so we ordered soup and sandwiches for everyone, and Luke started talking about the next highly anticipated item on the agenda... Gem-panning! Thanks to Disney's Sheriff Callie, he was very excited about getting the chance to do this and when he got his chance he dove right in, swirling his tray as instructed and immediately finding lots of gems. He found garnet, amethyst, rose & clear quartz and gold! Well, it was actually pyrite or Fool's Gold but it was thrilling to find. Each panner gets to keep the gems they find so Luke was delighted with the idea of showing his friends at home. The all-weather panning flume is ideal for kids of all ages and heights, and there's no time restriction limiting the fun.

Our base at Mains of Taymouth was an ideal location for lots of sightseeing and family friendly activities. We were close to Aberfeldy and the Watermill; an art gallery, homeware shop, café and bookshop, with children's reading room. The Scottish Crannog Centre, based in Kenmore is Visit Scotland's 'Living the Iron Age' experience with an authentic Celtic Roundhouse. Back at Mains of Taymouth Estate Luke could have tried horse-riding where a professional team supervise pony rides, trekking and hacking on well trained ponies and native horses through beautiful forest or riverside walks.

But the next day we decided to visit Dewars World of Whisky. The tour starts in a cinema

