



Student Life in the Silver City

Welcome to Aberdeen.

We're excited to share our University, its one-of-a-kind of hometown and its beautiful surroundings with you.

Over the last six centuries, our campuses have played host to a list of pioneering achievements. Discovering the life-saving drug insulin, developing the world's first Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine and helping shape the world's energy industry are just the beginning. From opening our doors to some of the country's earliest female graduates to empowering our students to become leaders in their fields, we've always encouraged our graduates to go on to change the world.

Our innovative work has led to five Nobel Prizes awarded for work either carried out or begun here. If you decide to study at Aberdeen you'll be following in the footsteps of some of the world's most influential engineers, scientists, composers and teachers.

Packed with potential, the city of Aberdeen boasts one of the lowest unemployment rates in the UK, and our University graduates enjoy some of the best levels of employment (and salaries!) in the country. With over 14,000 students studying here from all over the world, we know we offer a true student experience which is second to none.

Of course, you don't have to take our word for it – we're welcoming applications now. See the difference for yourself.



Your home away from home

As a leading international university, we understand the importance of helping students from every background fully integrate into Aberdeen. Whether you're coming from Scotland, the rest of the UK or further afield, our excellent facilities are available for use throughout your studies. From our Olympic-standard Sports Village and Aquatics Centre (home to some of the 2014 Commonwealth Games events) to our award-winning Sir Duncan Rice Library, our facilities are ranked among the best in the UK

If you're hoping to make friends and meet new people, it's never been easier. With over 130 different societies and 55 sports clubs to choose from, there are plenty of opportunities to develop your existing skills or acquire new ones! AUSA, our Students' Association, is always on hand to enhance student life through social events, volunteering opportunities, charity and community work across Scotland.

And for our international students and those interested in studying abroad, our International Centre is on hand to help with any aspects of settling into student life in Scotland. Whether you need advice on fees and funding, want to join our International Student Forum, are looking to start a language exchange, or are simply keen to learn more about student life, the International Centre is at your service.





Contents

☆ INTRODUCTION **p5** HIGHLIGHTS р6 X EATING **p8 O** CULTURE NIGHTLIFE p16 The same of the sa A SHOPPING p20 * ACTIVITIES p24 File of the Park o **₹** EXCURSIONS p28 GETTING AROUND p30





Introducing Aberdeen!

The glittering, granite city of Aberdeen is a cheerfully cosmopolitan place with a climate softened by the sea. The city is packed with potential and full of surprises, big enough to be sophisticated yet small enough to feel intimate. Newcomers will quickly discover a world of grandiose architecture, eclectic independent shops, diverse restaurants, world-class athletic facilities and excellent museums.

Looking just outside the city limits, visitors will also discover a wide variety of outdoor adventures. Top-notch snow sports, windsurfing and white-water kayaking are all close by, as well as a collection of unforgettable castles scattered throughout the countryside. Locals and tourists also enjoy dolphin-watching, surfing, and simple sunset strolls along the coast.

Aberdeen itself features countless old-world touches, from tangles of cobbled streets to beautiful stone spires. But a number of technological advances – free campus-wide wi-fi, a stunning new library and a number of high-profile University connections with tech companies from across the world – have made Aberdeen a truly ahead-of-the-curve destination for study and beyond.

Students from over a hundred nations have flocked to the city for its mix of cutting-edge opportunities and unique Scottish charm – a further exploration into what the 'Silver City' has on offer is a must for anyone looking at university options in the near future. Read on to discover more!



Diversity

Aberdeen is Scotland's third-largest city, and one of its most ethnically diverse, with sizeable Chinese, South Asian, Eastern European and African communities. No fewer than one in six residents were born outside the UK, attracted here by educational opportunities, low unemployment, oil industry jobs and a high quality of life.

History & Heritage

The area has been settled for nearly 8000 years, serving as a home for Celts, Vikings, and even Romans before the city of Aberdeen's eventual charter over 1000 years ago. The University itself, founded in 1495, is more than 500 years old. Its oldest surviving building (King's College Chapel) was consecrated back in 1509. Aberdeen's rich history is chronicled in several fascinating museums, and etched into the grand Victorian architecture that adorns the broad boulevard of Union St, one of the city's main thoroughfares.

Arts

The city that schooled the young Lord Byron (see his poem 'Dark Lochnagar' for childhood memories of Aberdeenshire) enjoys a rich and varied cultural life, from poetry readings in packed pubs to symphony orchestras in neoclassical concert halls. Aberdeen's theatres stage a stimulating programme of plays and festivals, and the city's art gallery boasts a nationally important collection. A new



Festivals Collective brings together the city's top arts and culture festivals (featuring everything from visual arts to jazz and tech), including the University of Aberdeen's diverse May Festival, which showcases the University's researchers, authors, chefs, musicians, film makers and more.

Nightlife

Aberdeen is no shrinking violet when it comes to nightlife. The birthplace of Annie Lennox has a thriving live music scene offering something for everyone, whether your tastes run to tracking down the latest indie band from Inverness or grabbing arena seats at the AECC for the next international headlining act. The city has a long-established heritage of traditional, cosy pubs, but there are also chilled-out cocktail bars, family-friendly wine bars and cheap-and-cheerful student bars.

Outdoors

Aberdeen could hardly be better placed for taking advantage of the great outdoors. Exciting opportunities for hiking, cycling, an avalanche of winter sports and loads of water sports can be found right on the city's doorstep. The wildlife and adventure attractions of the Cairngorms National Park are under two hours' drive to the west, and you can watch dolphins and porpoises cavorting in the waves off Torry Battery, just south of the city's busy harbour (there are options for seagoing tours from Aberdeen as well).



Dig into Aberdeen's diverse dining scene

With the rich harvest of the sea on one side and some of Scotland's most fertile farmland on the other – famed worldwide for its Aberdeenshire Angus beef – you might say that Aberdeen diners are spoilt for choice. Rich Nepalese curry, classic burgers, fresh-caught seafood, pocket-friendly vegetarian lunches – there are cafes and restaurants to suit every taste and budget.



SHORED SCORE OF VINCORS, PURIOR BREMER FRACES GREEK FORTING SCORE, SHET FAMILE CESTIONE, GLAVED CHRONES & MARKY THE F25

RE OF THE WELK

Missy flox for the Z Buck finding Reser, Dollo Article Son Gastrick, Maris J. Minchell B.





Student Tip



There is a big food culture in Aberdeen, which I believe is attributed to the wide variety of foods available. My favourite type of cuisine has to be Asiar and there are several authentic Indian and Thai restaurants in town. A prize gem has to be a Japanese and Korean restaurant I discovered on Huntly Street one night.

Kenna Robertson – Year 1 – BMedSci/Medio



A Taste of Scotland

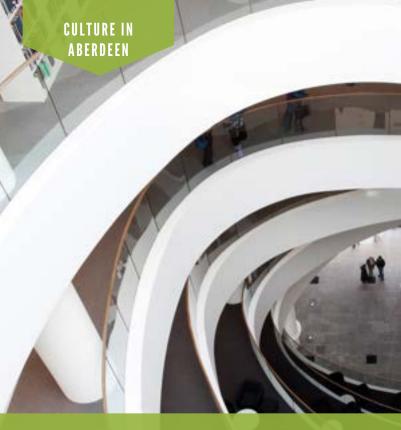
For a special occasion, you can't beat the **Silver Darling** (thesilverdarling.co.uk), an elegant spot specialising in fresh Scottish seafood and named after the old Scots nickname for herring. Long-running favourite **Cafe 52** (cafe52.co.uk), hidden away on a secret square south of Union St, has a good range of dishes featuring farm-fresh vegetables, sumptuous beef and regional specialties like Scottish black pudding. And for classic Scottish fish and chips there's the famous **Ashvale Fish Restaurant** (theashvale.co.uk).

Cafe Society

Good food needn't break the bank. Tiny **Bite Me** (biteme.co.uk) – just four seats and a takeaway counter – dishes up some of the city's tastiest grub for around £5 a plate (including superb burgers), while cafes such as **Coffee House** (coffeehouseabz.com) and **Books & Beans** (booksandbeans.co.uk) offer great coffee and good-value lunch deals (both have vegetarian and vegan options). The **Sand Dollar Cafe** (sanddollarcafe.com) has outdoor tables overlooking the beach and serves classic offerings of in-season, locally sourced regional fare.

International Offerings

There's a whole range of international cuisines to choose from. Local institution **Nargile** (nargilerestaurant.co.uk) has been serving mouth-watering Turkish meze to hungry customers since 1983, and has a great-value two-course lunch for £8.95. Indian restaurants abound, but **Gurkha Chef** (gurkha-chef.com), near the harbour, offers a delicious Nepalese twist on the usual curry dishes.



Broad offerings of arts, history and contemporary performance

Aberdeen serves in many ways as the main cultural centre for the northeast of the country. The city's theatres, galleries and museums maintain a lively program of exhibitions and events year round, and the **Aberdeen International Youth Festival** (aiyf.org) has been a highlight of the city's cultural calendar for more than 40 years.





Art & Architecture

Aberdeen's architecture ranges from the magnificent Gothic façade of Marischal College (which dates to the 1830s and is the world's second-largest granite building after Madrid's L'Escorial) to the stunning glass monolith of the University's innovative Sir Duncan Rice Library, completed in 2011 to an award-winning Danish design. The permanent collection at the Aberdeen Art Gallery (aagm.co.uk) ranges from 18th-century pieces to modern works by Damien Hirst and Alison Watt. Numerous small commercial galleries, including Gallery Heinzel (galleryheinzel.com) in the West End, showcase work by contemporary Scottish artists.

Museums

Admission to city-run museums is free. Top of the list is the superb **Aberdeen Maritime Museum** (aagm.co.uk), which charts the city's long relationship with the sea, going back to the days of Aberdeen clippers importing tea from India. The museum is centred on a three-storey replica of an oil production



platform. Other attractions include the **Tolbooth Museum** (<u>aagm.co.uk</u>), an atmospheric 17th-century prison that houses displays on local history, and the **Gordon Highlanders Museum** (<u>gordonhighlanders.com</u>), dedicated to the military history of this locally raised regiment of the British Army.

Theatre. Music & Dance

Aberdeen Performing Arts (aberdeenperformingarts.com) is the central information point for the city's main theatres. His Majesty's Theatre provides a stage for everything from ballet and opera to pantomime and musicals. The Music Hall hosts performances by the country's leading orchestras, pop, rock and comedy acts, while the Lemon Tree is a more intimate space that's home to a whole range of experimental and alternative music, theatre, dance and performance art from up-and-coming talents. ACT Aberdeen (act-aberdeen.org.uk) is a community theatre that runs drama classes and workshops, and also stages shows by local companies, including the University's drama and dance societies



Navigate the social scenes of Belmont St and beyond

A successful local professional culture and a thriving student population have combined to give Aberdeen a lively and varied nightlife. Belmont St in the city centre serves as hub of all this activity, with outdoor terraces ideal for a wind-down drink on a summer evening.





Student Tip



I love Belmont St and the surrounding streets for nightlife. There are so many great bars and pubs that you'll always find a great spot for a night with your friends!

As a new student, I would definitely get your hands on the AUSA Fresher's Week band. It'll get you to and from town and free entry to all of the nights organised by the Students' Association in Freshers' week. You'll save an absolute packet!

Liam Tracey – Year 3 – Education



Pubs & Bars

Traditional pubs that date back to Aberdeen's days as a seafaring hub include the **Prince of Wales** (<u>princeofwales-aberdeen.co.uk</u>) and the **Globe Inn** (<u>theglobeinn-aberdeen.co.uk</u>), which offer real ales and single malt whiskies to accompany evening sessions of Scottish folk music. The modern trend for craft beers can be explored in bars like **Brewdog** (<u>brewdog.com/bars/aberdeen</u>) and **Six Degrees North** (<u>sixdnorth.co.uk</u>). Popular student hangouts include the gothic-themed **Triple Kirks** (<u>thetriplekirksaberdeen.co.uk</u>) and **Slains Castle** (<u>eerie-pubs.co.uk/slains-castle</u>).

Clubs

Drummonds (<u>cafedrummond.com</u>) on Belmont St is the heart and soul of Aberdeen's student nightlife, a comfortably grungy club that hosts regular DJ sessions, live bands and open mic nights, as well as occasional magic and comedy gigs (some nights, called 'Bright Club,' are organised by University researchers!). Nightclubs come and go like the seasons, but **Exodus**, upstairs at the Triple Kirks, is a long-standing student favourite with themed club nights seven days a week, and mostly free admission (£4 after midnight Friday and Saturday).

Live Music

Big-name artists play at the 8500-seat **AECC** (aecc.co.uk), but it's well worth seeking out small venues too. The atmospheric **Tunnels** (thetunnels.co.uk), buried deep beneath Union St, is a great place to catch up-and-coming local bands. A favourite haunt of students for decades, the cosy **Blue Lamp** (jazzatthebluelamp.com) has recently been reinvented as a jazz club (it also stages standup comedy), while the **Moorings Bar** (themooringsbar.co.uk) is the city's top spot for heavy metal gigs.



Browse a city stocked with shops

Aberdeen is full to the brim with retail opportunities, from massive malls to designer boutiques, supermarkets and corner delis. And don't forget the monthly Aberdeen Farmers Market in Belmont St, which showcases a wide range of delicious local produce.





Student Tip



Shopping is fantastic no matter what you need. You have big brand names such as Apple and Zara in Union Square and department stores like Debenhams and John Lewis, but there are also smaller stores. There is also a large variety of international supermarkets on George St plus another large international market that runs over a weekend every three or four months, which is always amazing.

Matthew Edwards – Year 2 – Law



Shopping Centres

The mile-long boulevard of **Union St** is one of Aberdeen's most captivating shopping districts, lined with mainstream fashion stores such as River Island, H&M, Primark and New Look. For designer boutiques, check out the **Academy** (academyaberdeen.co.uk) shopping centre on Belmont St. To the south, next to the train and bus stations, is the cavernous **Union Square** (unionsquareaberdeen.com), where you'll find an Apple Store, Topshop/Topman, Marks & Spencer, TK Maxx and high street fashion brands, as well as a food hall that includes Costa Coffee, Nando's and Pizza Express.

Independent Shops

Half the fun of shopping is seeking out a city's secret stash of independent shops. Explore the lanes around Belmont St, the back streets near George St and Thistle St, and the junction of Rosemount Viaduct and Skene St, and you'll come across hidden gems such as **The Closet**, an Aladdin's Cave of vintage fashion, and **Plan 9**, an Aberdeen institution that has been selling comics, graphic novels and RPGs to local fans for more than 25 years.

Books & Records

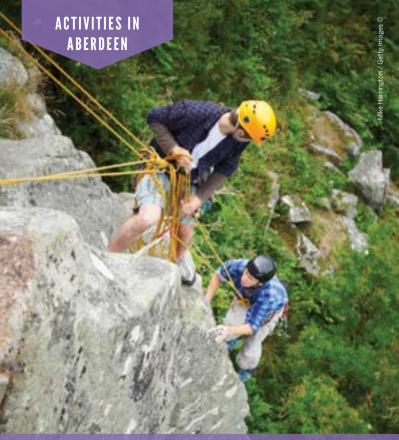
As well as an on-campus branch of **Blackwell's** (blackwell. co.uk), there's a huge **Waterstones** (waterstones.com) on Union St complete with coffee shop. But it's the secondhand bookshops that make a city, and the **Old Aberdeen Bookshop** (oldaberdeenbookshop.co.uk) doesn't disappoint, a cosy maze of creaking shelves lined with classic volumes. Record shops are an endangered species these days, but Aberdeen's **Cavern** still offers a varied choice of collectible vinyl to its many aficionados.



Embracing the great outdoors

From surfing off Aberdeen Beach to shredding the slopes at Glenshee Ski Centre, Aberdeen offers year-round attractions for active exploration of the region's great outdoors.





Student Tip



When I'm not studying I spend practically all of my time at the Sports Village – it's like a second home to me! The indoor athletics facility is a great asset. During any bursts of inclement winter weather I am able to continue indoors without any disturbance to my training.

Zoey Clark – Year 3 – Chemical Engineering – Competed in Scotland's athletics team for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games



Hiking & Biking

Aberdeen is a great city for walking and cycling, with many green spaces – notably **Seaton Park**, **Hazlehead Park** and **Duthie Park** – and appealing trails leading along the banks of the rivers Dee and Don. The **Aberdeen Coastal Path** leads south to the sea cliffs of Portlethen, and north to the sand dunes of Balmedie. Cyclists can follow the **Deeside Way** (deesideway.org) for 41 miles west all the way to Ballater, while purpose-built XC and downhill mountain-biking trails can be found at **Pitfichie Forest** (cyclegrampian.co.uk/mtb), just 20 miles west of the city.

Mountain Sports

Less than two hours away by bus, the **Cairngorms** form Scotland's second-highest mountain range and are home to some of Britain's best big-mountain crags. Here you'll find resorts like **Glenshee** (ski-glenshee.co.uk), Scotland's most extensive ski area, and the smaller **Lecht** (lecht.co.uk). The area also offers everything from hiking and fly fishing to birdwatching. When the sun shines, rock climbers head to the coastal sea cliffs or, if it's raining, to the indoor wall at **Transition Extreme** (transition-extreme.com). Adventurous types could attempt the area's famously difficult winter climbs.

Watersports

Scotland has a thriving surf scene, and in the right conditions Aberdeen Beach can offer some great **surfing** and **windsurfing**. The water may be cold, but any local will tell you that this just builds character. All kinds of rowing activities are on offer too, from **sea-kayaking** offshore to **white-water kayaking** and **open canoeing** on local rivers and lochs.



Essential nearby stops in Scotland

With its excellent transport connections, Aberdeen makes the best starting point for exploring the wide variety of attractions throughout North East Scotland. The 165-mile North East Coastal Trail traces the edge of the diverse Donmouth Nature Reserve, home to sea trout, porpoises and soaring peregrine falcons. A wander through the region could lead you to unforgettable castles, cliff-fringed harbours, and even the Braemar Gathering of kilt-clad competitors at the Scottish Games. Here are just a few highlights.



See Stonehaven's stunning castles and scenic sands

Easily reached by bus or train, the fishing harbour of **Stonehaven** nestles beneath the sea cliffs just 15 miles south of Aberdeen. There are lively waterfront pubs, seafood restaurants and an open-air swimming pool, among other attractions. A coastal path leads from the harbour to the spectacular ruins of **Dunottar Castle** (dunnottarcastle.co.uk), which featured in Franco Zeffirelli's movie version of *Hamlet* (starring Mel Gibson). The town is famous for its timeless New Year **fireball ceremony** (stonehavenfireballs.co.uk), when pipes and drums lead bands of locals on a midnight march down the street swinging blazing fireballs around their heads before throwing them into the sea.

Visit the historic homes of Royal Deeside

The A93 leads west from Aberdeen along the scenic valley of the River Dee, a serene rolling countryside known as Royal Deeside for its long association with the British monarchy. The main attraction is **Balmoral Castle** (balmoralcastle.com), Queen Victoria's 19th-century highland holiday home, and still used by the royal family today. The incredible 16th-century **Crathes Castle** (nts.org.uk) is closer to the city, and is famous for its Jacobean painted ceilings, romantic atmosphere, and the 'Horn of Leys', presented to the Burnett family by Robert the Bruce in the 14th century. **Ballater** and **Braemar** are attractive villages; both provide starting points for lovely walks in the surrounding forests and hills.

Explore the Speyside whisky region

The nearby villages of **Aberlour** and **Dufftown** lie at the heart of the whisky-producing region known as **Speyside**. Here, the valley of the River Spey is lined with whisky distilleries – there are seven within easy striking distance of Dufftown – and a visit to one is an absolute must (the local word for whisky translates to 'water of life'). **Glenfiddich Distillery** (glenfiddich.com) is the most famous, and offers guided tours year round, with an opportunity to sample the produce at the end.





First Aberdeen (<u>firstaberdeen.com</u>) operates most of the city bus network. Students are eligible for discounted tickets and passes, and you'll soon get familiar with bus routes 1, 2 and 20, which link the Kings College campus to the city centre. Four-week (£50) and 12-week (£135) passes give unlimited travel on First buses within the city.

Stagecoach Bluebird (stagecoachbus.com/aberdeen) runs bus services to the surrounding towns and villages. Route number 201/202/203 from Aberdeen's Union Square bus station to Banchory and Crathes Castle (every half hour), Ballater (hourly) and Braemar (every two hours) is very useful for weekend escapes. Students get a 40% discount on Dayrider tickets, which allow unlimited bus travel for one day, and can buy special 4-week (£45) and 13-week (£120) bus passes allowing unlimited travel on Stagecoach services within Aberdeen.



ScotRail (scotrail.co.uk) is the national rail operator, with frequent trains connecting Aberdeen to Dundee and Edinburgh in the south, and to Elgin and Inverness in the north. Anyone aged 16 to 25 (or over 25 and in full time study) is eligible for a **16-25 Railcard** (16-25railcard.co.uk) which gives the user one-third off the price of most rail tickets.







Number of nationalities represented in the University's student community.



Number of Nobel Laureates associated with the University of Aherdeen



There are 1.2 jobs for every person of working age in Aberdeen.



ഷ 40%

Amount Aberdeen is committed to cutting carbon emissions by 2020.



75% of the University's research was deemed 'World-leading' or 'Internationally Excellent' in the most recent REF14 rankings.



£2 million

Aberdeen's current investment in superfast broadband, aimed at becoming one of the world's most digitally connected cities.



A Top-20 'Most Spellbinding University libraries in the World' ranking from The Independent.



Ranking among Scotland's medical schools.





Percentage of students from outside the UK.



Local links taking you further

What better way to learn than gaining hands-on, in-the-field experience? As the Oil and Gas Capital of Europe, it's no secret that the energy sector has played an important role in Aberdeen's prosperity. For those who are interested in the energy sector, engineering and physical sciences, we have a range of strong industrial links that students can benefit from while studying here. Of course, we don't stop at energy: for those interested in medicine or life sciences, our Medical School has been consistently voted the best in Scotland; our student satisfaction rates are some of the highest in the UK. When it comes to arts and social sciences, our world-famous Business School is in the process of developing strong international links, and many of our arts students have had the opportunity to study and work in exciting placements all over the world

Find out more:

Keen to add your name to our list of impressive alumni? Simply want to find out more about student life in Aberdeen? Here's how: the University website (www.abdn.ac.uk/sras) has step-by-step instructions on how to apply, as well as links to everything you might need as a student, from accommodation and fees advice to tips on where to find the best lunch deals on campus.

Useful websites:

University of Aberdeen www.abdn.ac.uk

Prospective Students www.abdn.ac.uk/study

Aberdeen University Students' Association **www.ausa.org.uk**

Visit Scotland www.visitscotland.com

Visit Aberdeen
www.visitaberdeen.com



Study Aberdeen Published April 2015

Produced by Lonely Planet for University of Aberdeen. All editorial views are those of Lonely Planet alone and reflect our policy of editorial independence and impartiality.

www.lonelyplanet.biz

Published by: Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd ABN 36 005 607 983

Lonely Planet offices:

Australia

Locked Bag 1, Footscray, Vic 3011 tel 613 8379 8000, fax 613 8379 8111 lonelyplanet.com/contact

HSZ

230 Franklin Rd. Building 2B. Franklin TN 37604

150 Linden St, Oakland, CA 94607 tel 510 250 6400, toll free 800 275 8555, fax 510 893 8572

HK

240 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 8NW tel 020 8433 1333, fax 020 8702 0112

India

302 DLF City Court, Sikanderpur | Gurgaon 122002 tel 91 124 423 1645

University of Aberdeen

www.abdn.ac.uk

This book was commissioned in Lonely Planet's Franklin office and produced by the following:

Author Neil Wilson Sales Manager Melissa Skogman Project Manager Madeleine DiBiasi Commissioning Editor Matt Parish Designers Michelle Hebert, Mike Johansen Proofer Bella Li

With special thanks to Larissa Frost, Sarah McCahon and Becky Leonhardt.

For sales enquiries contact csuk@lonelvplanet.com

Text © Lonely Planet Publications 2015; text on inside front cover, pages 1, 31 and 32 supplied by University of Aberdeen.

Cover image: Provided by the University of Aberdeen

Printed in the UK by Ancient House.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical recording or otherwise, except brief extracts for the purpose of review, and no part of this publication may be sold or hired, without the written permission of the publisher. Lonely Planet and the Lonely Planet logo are trademarks of Lonely Planet and are registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office and in other countries. Other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Lonely Planet does not allow its name or logo to be appropriated by commercial establishments, such as retailers, restaurants or hotels. Please let us know of any misuses: lonelyplanet.com/ip. Although the authors and Lonely Planet have taken all reasonable care in preparing this book, we make no warranty about the accuracy or completeness of its content and, to the maximum extent, disclaim all llability arising from its use.

Study **ABERDEEN**

The 'Silver City' is packed with potential and full of surprises, boasting international sophistication and old world intimacy. Use this guide as an introduction to Aberdeen's diverse world of grandiose architecture, eclectic independent shops, unique restaurants, world-class sports facilities and unforgettable opportunities.

