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Paisley made textiles, textiles made Paisley

Cotton Street, Silk Street, Gauze Street... walk around Paisley town centre and a quick look at the street names makes clear that Paisley made textiles, and textiles made Paisley.

Paisley weavers developed a reputation for their ingenuity in producing fine-linen fabrics such as lawns and gauzes. By 1781, there were 6,800 looms in Paisley and in 1783 and 1784, records show nearly two million yards of linen was produced locally.

By the time of the Industrial Revolution and the mechanisation of the textiles trade, Paisley, led by the Coats and Clarks firms, was at the forefront of the global threadmaking industry.

By the 1910s, the merged J&P Coats firm was the world's third largest company—and is still the world's largest thread manufacturer and distributor today.

Paisley: The Secret Collection

Paisley: The Secret Collection is the first publicly-accessible museum store on a UK High Street.

The large basement unit houses tens of thousands of items from Renfrewshire's museum collections—many unseen by the general public for decades.

The collection includes some of Paisley's world-famous textiles, plus a mix of ceramics, world cultures, social history, art and sculpture, natural history and local archives.

Some of the items in the collection are a product of the town's former textile wealth—with the mill-owning Clark and Coats families having been famed for their generosity.

The building is run by Renfrewshire Leisure, whose museum experts are on hand to give tours of the collection.

Free guided tours last approximately 45 mins—1 hour. Places are available to book online at www.renfrewshireleisure.com

www.paisley.is



Getting here

Whatever your mode of transport, you'll find it very easy to explore Paisley.

By road

Paisley town centre is only a five minute drive from Glasgow Airport and is less than 15 minutes from Glasgow city centre.

Paisley sits just off the M8 motorway—with lots of surrounding areas to explore. Take M8 Junction 27 westbound coming from Glasgow, or M8 Junction 29 eastbound coming from Greenock / Loch Lomond.

→ www.trafficscotland.org

By rail

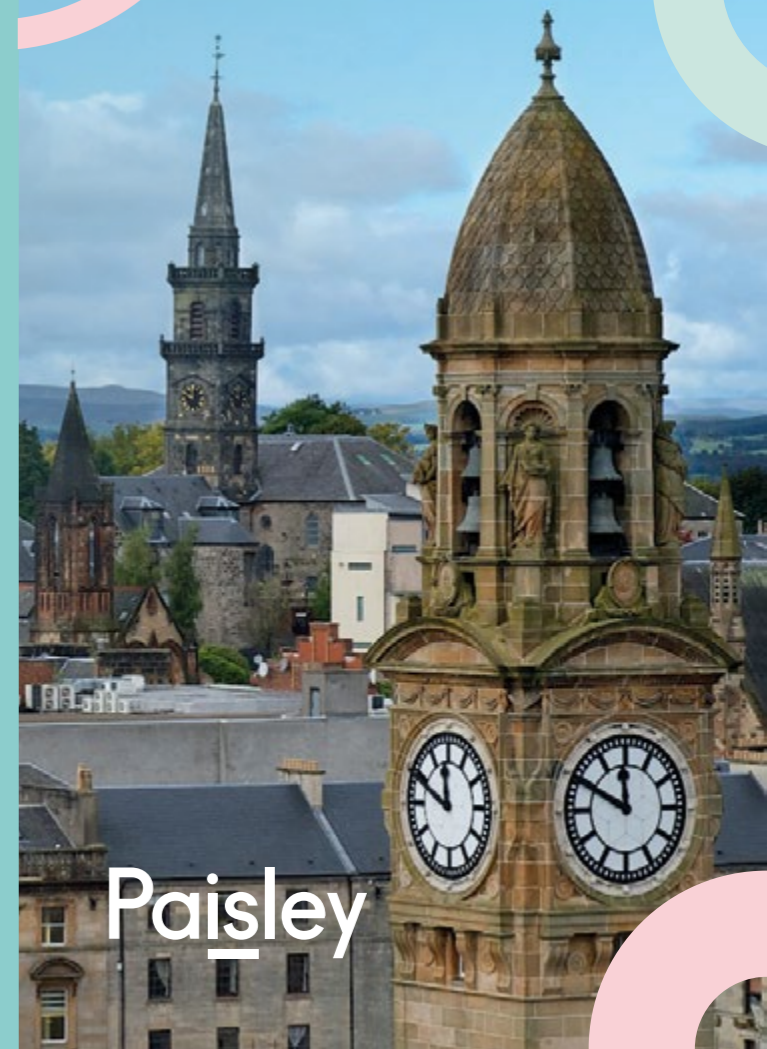
Regular trains run between Paisley and Glasgow Central and Ayrshire/Inverclyde. It is just a 12-minute train ride from Paisley Gilmour Street Station to Glasgow Central.

→ www.scotrail.co.uk

www.paisley.is



Paisley Walking trail



Paisley

Discover Paisley

Surrounded by rolling countryside, and home to a host of architectural treasures, hidden gems and a vibrant cultural scene, Scotland's largest town is just waiting for you to discover.

An easily-walkable historic centre has Scotland's largest concentration of listed buildings outwith Edinburgh, including the iconic 850-year-old Paisley Abbey, cradle of the Stewarts and reputedly where William Wallace was educated by the monks.

Synonymous with the world-famous Paisley Pattern, the distinctive design that took the town's name around the world, Paisley's time at the centre of the global textile trade left a fascinating architectural and cultural legacy still visible today.

Paisley is proud, bold, friendly and fun. Come and see for yourself!



A story woven over time

Paisley's rich heritage stretches back over 1,000 years and takes in royalty, radicalism and national heroes.

The first Stewart king, Robert II, grandson of King Robert the Bruce, was born in Paisley Abbey in 1316. Perhaps the most famous Scotsman of all, William Wallace, was born in Renfrewshire and folklore has he was educated by the monks of the Abbey. Visitors can take a guided tour and admire a stained glass window dedicated to Scotland's Braveheart among a series of stunning artefacts and wood carvings. And, there is literally history beneath your feet with the Great Drain, a subterranean medieval passageway.

Between the late 18th and mid-19th centuries, Paisley was transformed by the Industrial Revolution into an economic powerhouse, and catapulted to the forefront of the global thread industry.

The skills of Paisley weavers meant the town was ideally-placed when the intricate teardrop motif of Kashmiri origin became popular in fashionable European circles—and the iconic Paisley Pattern was born. The pattern became favoured around the world and has been worn since by everyone from Queen Victoria to The Beatles!

Paisley Museum is home to the Paisley Shawl Collection and Loom Gallery.

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A skyline of steeples and spires

Look up, and your breath will be taken away by a beautiful skyline matched by very few towns of Paisley's size.

The 850-year-old Paisley Abbey is the town's most famous landmark, but architectural gems abound.

The neo-Gothic Thomas Coats Memorial Baptist Church is colloquially known as 'the Baptist Cathedral of Europe' while St Matthew's Church has been described as 'the most significant Art Nouveau church in Europe'.

The legacy of the Coats and Clarks threadmaking dynasties can be seen in many of the town's buildings, including the Town Hall, Coats Observatory and the Paisley Museum and Art Galleries.

Look out for former mill buildings, statues and monuments as you walk around town.



Radical roots

Paisley has a long and proud tradition of radicalism. A dispute between the weavers who made the shawls and their 19th Century 'middle managers' over the unseen cotton thread that bound the garments—the sma' shot—saw Paisley's radical roots come to the fore.

The weavers' victory is still celebrated annually on the first Saturday of July with Sma' Shot Day—one of the oldest workers' festivals in the world.







Check www.paisley.is for more information about Sma' Shot Day, and a wide variety of other events across Paisley and Renfrewshire.



Discover Paisley

Please check www.paisley.is for the latest information on opening times and contact details for each place of interest.

Don't forget to tag @paisleyis in your photos!

-  Rail station
-  Public toilets
-  Parking
-  Photo highlight
-  Taxi rank
-  National Cycle Network Route

1 Thomas Coats Memorial Baptist Church

This majestic neo-Gothic building was initially budgeted at £20,000, but by the time it was completed in 1894, costs had soared to £110,000—over £6m in today's money. But take a look at this stunning building and we think you'll agree it was worth every penny!

2 Paisley Museum and Art Galleries

The museum and art galleries were gifted to the town by Sir Peter Coats in 1871 and built to a design by Glasgow architect John Honeyman. A £42m project will transform the museum complex into an international-class destination by 2022.

3 Coats Observatory

Further evidence of the legacy of the Coats threadmaking dynasty, Scotland's oldest public observatory makes for another stunning addition to the Paisley skyline.

Visit Paisley museum and observatory before they close in autumn 2018 for a £42m project which will create an international-class visitor destination reopening in 2022.

4 Oakshaw Trinity Church

Located on the highest point of Paisley's townscape, the church was formerly Paisley's High Parish Church. Legend has it that after a stonemason fell to his death during construction, his workmates carved the outline of his handkerchief and spectacles into the cobbles where he fell as a tribute.

5 Paisley: The Secret Collection

The first publicly-accessible museum store on a UK High Street contains thousands of objects reflecting Renfrewshire's culture and heritage. Free guided tours are available to book at www.renfrewshireleisure.com

6 Paisley Town Hall

In 1873, George A. Clark of the famous thread family left £20,000 in his will to build a town hall in his native Paisley; in the New Town, east of the River Cart, where Clark was born and his family's mills were based. This magnificent building has been at the heart of Paisley's civic life since.

7 Paisley Abbey

The jewel in Paisley's crown and the cradle of one of the most enduring royal dynasties, the Stewarts. Take a free tour of this imposing 12th Century building. Admire the stone work of the rare 10th Century Barochan Cross. See if you can spot the gargoyle modelled by a modern stonemason on a monster from the film Alien.

8 St Mirin's Cathedral

Designed by Thomas Baird, this spectacular neo-Romanesque building became a cathedral in 1948. Named after the patron saint of Paisley, it is the mother church of the Catholic diocese of the town.

9 Paisley Thread Mill Museum

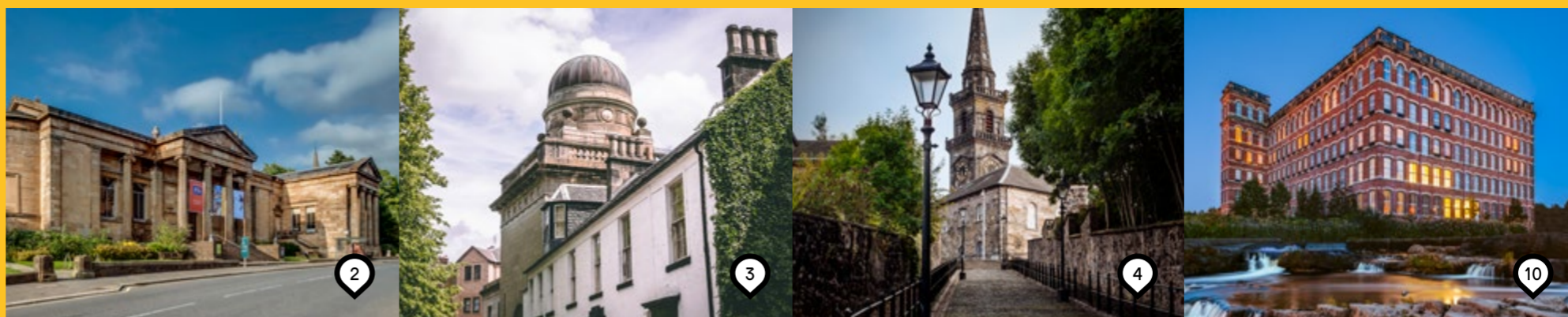
Explore the social and industrial heritage of the Paisley and Renfrewshire thread mills with mill machinery, photographs, product samples and sewing artefacts.

10 Anchor Mill

This magnificent A-listed building was a spinning mill, and played a key role in the global cotton industry. A 21st Century restoration project secured its future as a stunning place to live. It's also a great photo opportunity.

11 St Matthew's Church

Designed by William Daniel McLennan and built in 1906, this stunning A-listed building of national importance was once described as 'the most significant Art Nouveau church in Europe'.



12 Brown's Lane

This narrow cobbled lane linking Causeyside Street and Shuttle Street contains a few surprises—a series of fantastic murals dedicated to everything from Paisley historian and former mill girl Ellen Farmer and music legends Gerry Rafferty and Paolo Nutini, to St Mirren's Scottish Cup-winning team of 1987.

13 Sma' Shot Cottages

Come and see how people lived in two distinct periods in Paisley's weaving history. The weaver's cottage shows how life was for the artisans 250 years ago, with original weaving looms in place. The complex also houses the residence of a foreman of a nearby mill from the mid-19th Century.

14 Paisley Arts Centre

Formerly the Laigh Kirk building, with a fascinating history of its own. John Witherspoon was minister of Laigh Kirk from 1758-1768 before travelling to America and becoming president of Princeton University and one of the Founding Fathers of the United States of America. The building is now a popular arts and cultural hub.

15 Russell Institute

This A-listed Art Deco building was donated by Miss Agnes Russell to the women and children of Paisley in 1927. The former health centre was restored in 2017 as a skills and employability hub. Visitors always admire the ornate statues on the building's exterior depicting some of the ailments treated inside.