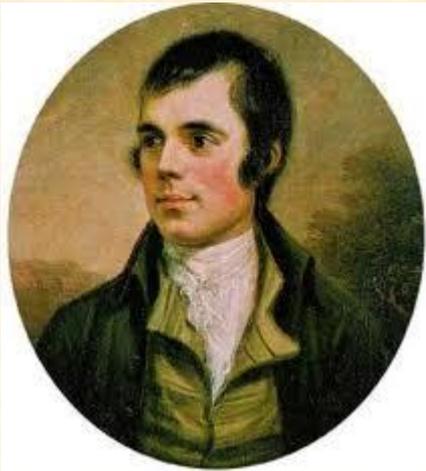


RABBIE BURNS NIGHT... January 25th

A worldwide celebration of Scotland's most famous poet



“Gie her a Haggis”

Burns Suppers have been part of Scottish culture for well over 200 years.

When Burns immortalized haggis in verse he created a central link that is maintained to this day. Before you go about trying to plan your very own Burns night, decency imposes some knowledge of the Bard...

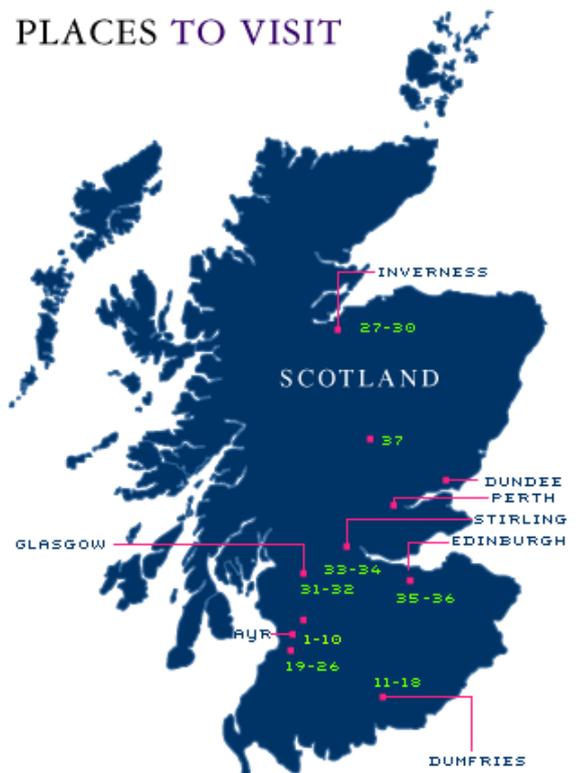
bard¹ (bärd) *n.*

1. One of an ancient Celtic order of minstrel poets who composed and recited verses celebrating the legendary exploits of chieftains and heroes.
2. A poet, especially a lyric poet

Tutor John Murdoch, of Burns: "[He] made rapid progress in reading and was just tolerable at writing"

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| 1 Burns Cottage and Museum, Alloway | 2 Burns Monument and Gardens, Alloway |
| 3 Tamo'Shanter Experience, Alloway | 4 Alloway Old Kirk, Alloway |
| 5 Burns House Museum, Mauchline | 6 Highland Mary's Monument, Mauchline |
| 7 Brig o' Doon, Alloway | 8 Poesie Nansie's Tavern, Mauchline |
| 9 National Burns Memorial Tower, Mauchline | 10 Mauchline Castle, Mauchline |
| 11 Burns House, Dumfries | 12 Burns Mausoleum, Dumfries |
| 13 Robert Burns Centre, Dumfries | 14 Broughton House and Garden, Kirkcudbright |
| 15 Craigieburn House and Garden, Moffat | 16 Ellisland, Dumfries & Galloway |
| 17 Globe Inn, Dumfries | 18 Cessnock Castle, Ayrshire |
| 19 Brow Well, Ruthwell | 20 Dean Castle, Kilmarnock |
| 21 Stair, Ayrshire | 22 Bachelors' Club, Tarbolton |
| 23 Souter Johnnie's Cottage, Kirkoswald | 24 Highland Mary's Statue, Dunoon |
| 25 Burns Club and Museum, Irvine | 26 Vennel Museum, Irvine |
| 27 House of Mergie, Kincardineshire | 28 Gordon Castle, Morayshire |
| 29 Castle Grant, Morayshire | 30 Kilravock Castle, Morayshire |
| 31 Finlaystone House, Renfrewshire | 32 Blair Castle, Kilwinning |
| 33 Clackmannan Tower, Clackmannan | 34 Harviestoun Castle, Harviestoun |
| 35 Writers' Museum, Edinburgh | 36 Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh |
| 37 Blair Castle, Blair Atholl | |

PLACES TO VISIT



SOME VITAL STATISTICS

Born: 1759

Parents : William Burness and Agnes Broun

Family : 7 siblings (he was the oldest)

Youth: well-read (at his father's insistence); tutored at home; spent much time working on his father's farm;

Main interests : Scotch (whiskey) and women

First poem : My Handsome Nell (ode to the above main interests)

1784 : Father's demise; causing him to become a partner in the farm

Escape : One of his afore-mentioned interests resulted in the birth of several illegitimate children, and he decided to emigrate to the sunny, warm climes of the West Indies

First publication: "Poems- Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect - Kilmarnock Edition" based on a broken love affair received much critical acclaim ; He more or less abandoned farming
From lowly wordsmith to national celebrity: Overnight fame, and pride in his fatherhood (twins by his future wife, Jeanne Armour) brought a change in plans ; Burns decided to remain in Scotland

Impoverished author: famed but not wealthy, he took a job as an Exciseman (= tax collector) in order to provide for his family. Continued to write poems and songs

Poetic masterpieces: The Lea Rig, Tam O'Shanter, a Red, Red Rose – all written in the last years of his life

His demise: at 37, of heart disease, exacerbated by the hard manual work he undertook when he was young. His death occurred on the same day as his wife Jean gave birth to his last son, Maxwell.

How to organize a Burns Supper in 6 easy steps :

1. The guests arrive and partake of some drinks – preferably whisky.
(Scotch, it goes without saying...)

2. Chairperson's opening address : A few welcoming words start the evening and the meal commences with the **Selkirk Grace**.

Some hae meat and canna eat,
and some wad eat that want it,
but we hae meat and we can eat,
and sae the Lord be thankit

3. The guests are asked to stand to receive the haggis. The chef carries the haggis to the top table, while the guests maintain a slow handclap. The chairperson or invited guest then recites Burns' famous poem **To A Haggis**, with great enthusiasm.

Ye pow'rs, wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware,
That jaups in luggies;
But if ye wish her gratfu' prayer
Gie her a Haggis!

*You powers, who make mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill of fare,
Old Scotland want no watery ware,
That splashes in small wooden dishes;
But is you wish her grateful prayer,
Give her a Haggis!*

4. It's customary for the company to applaud the speaker, then to stand and toast the haggis (with a glass of whisky).
5. The Dinner may commence. A customary bill of fare would be :

Cock-a-leekie soup*

Haggis warm reeking, rich wi' Champit Tatties,**

Bashed Neeps

Tyspy Laird (sherry trifle)

A Tassie o' Coffee

6. There are several Very Important Parts to the evening that will take place during and after dining and toasting. They are as follows:
 - a. **The Immortal Memory.** This is one of the central features of the evening. An invited guest is asked to give a short speech on Burns, and whether it be light hearted or literary, the aim is always the same: to laud and applaud the genius of the poet.
 - b. **Toast to the Lasses.** Following the main speech, comes a lighter, witty address to the women in the company. It was originally to thank the women for having prepared the food, and a good excuse for another glass of whisky. It is never offensive and despite being a tad provocative, must always end on a conciliatory note.
 - c. **Response.** Ladies turn to go on at length about men's foibles. Must be humorous but never insulting. (another toast...)
 - d. **Poem and Songs:** Now that the speeches are over, and that blood in veins has been seriously diluted with whisky, it is time for some singing and some reciting. Some of the good old favorites are : Tam O' Shanter, Address to the Unco Guid, To A Mouse and Holy Willie's Prayer.
 - e. No Burns Night would be complete without all the guests standing (as best they can) linking hands and singing **Auld Lang Syne** – Robbie Burns wrote this one too!!

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!

Chorus.-For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne.
We'll take a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

The lyrics of Auld Lang Syne actually consist of five verses and the words 'Auld Lang Syne' literally translate from old Scottish dialect meaning 'Old Long Ago'. The song is about love and friendship in times past. The lyrics in the song Auld Lang Syne referring to 'We'll take a Cup of Kindness yet' relate to a drink shared by men and women to symbolize friendship.

Cock a leekie soup – this is really no more than a lovely, rich chicken and leek soup, although it also contains a bit of rice and (believe it or not) prunes!

Champit tatties – a marvelous name for mashed potatoes!

Bashed neeps – no ordinary turnip, this! This is actually a 'Swedish turnip', also known as a rutabaga. It was introduced to Scotland in the late 18th century and so was probably quite the sought-after vegetable in Burns' time.

Haggis –faint-hearted cooks abstain!! Aside from the very safe ingredients (oats – 2 sorts preferably and lots of pepper), other ingredients (thanks "BBC cooking") include :

- 1 sheep's stomach or ox secum*, cleaned and thoroughly, scalded, turned inside out and soaked overnight in cold salted water
- heart and lungs of one lamb
- beef or lamb trimmings, fat and lean

*I don't even want to hazard a guess at what this might be...

