

BBC © 2014

29 October 2013 Last updated at 00:05

Lonely Planet says Scotland is third best country to visit



Lonely Planet hailed Scotland's "jam-packed schedule of world class events" for 2014

Scotland has been named one of the top countries in the world to visit in 2014 by travel guide Lonely Planet.

It was voted third best country to head to, behind Brazil which took the top spot and Antarctica which came second.

Lonely Planet said Scotland's "jam-packed schedule of world-class events" made it "the place to be" in 2014.

The Commonwealth Games take place in Glasgow next summer. The Ryder Cup will be held at Gleneagles and next year is also Scotland's Year of Homecoming.

The book also cited Highland Games and the Edinburgh festivals as events that will draw travellers to Scotland next year, and it said the country's cities were well worth a visit.

The guide described Edinburgh as "the most gothic city outside Transylvania" and encouraged travellers to "take the high road to Loch Lomond, Loch Ness and Cairngorms National Park and fall in love with the landscape that inspired poet Robert Burns".

TOP 10 COUNTRIES

1. Brazil
2. Antarctica
3. Scotland
4. Sweden
5. Malawi
6. Mexico
7. Seychelles
8. Belgium
9. Macedonia
10. Malaysia

SOURCE: Lonely Planet Best of Travel 2014

Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2014 contributor Tom Hall said: "Next year Scotland will be well-deservedly taking the spotlight on the world stage.

"The country's buzzing cities and stunning scenery have plenty to offer visitors, combined with an incredible calendar of events and Scotland looks set for a year-long celebration."

Mike Cantlay, chairman of VisitScotland, said: "It's clear that 2014 is Scotland's chance to shine on the world stage, and to have this commendation from Lonely Planet is a fantastic seal of approval.

"From the bells bringing in our year-long Homecoming celebrations on Hogmanay, to the biggest ever sporting events to take place in Scotland - the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, and the Ryder Cup, this could be the greatest ever chance for our country to be seen as a globally recognised, must-visit destination for many years to come."

Lonely Planet said its Best in Travel annual is a collection of the world's hottest trends, destinations and experiences for the year ahead. It highlighted the top ten countries, cities and regions to visit in 2014.