

GIRLIE GLASGOW

OK! shops, spas and sips cocktails in Scotland...



Above and main: Glasgow is great for shopping. In Princes Square we loved Fifi & Ally (right). **Below:** Luxury is the name of the game at Malmaison Glasgow

Although it doesn't boast a magnificent castle or international arts festival, the city of Glasgow has plenty to shout about – it prides itself on being hip and happening, with its finger firmly on the fashion and music pulse. So style-conscious girls, if you're looking for a glam UK getaway where you can shop till you drop, celeb spot (home-grown talent includes Marti Pellow, James McAvoy and Gordon Ramsay), sip cocktails and listen to the next big thing in music, pack your bags now.

WHEN SHOULD I GO?

A good time to star spot (Colin Farrell is invited) is during the Glasgow Film Festival (February 14-24; www.glasgowfilmfestival.org.uk). Those looking for a belly laugh should book tickets for a show at the Magners Comedy Festival (March 6-23; www.glasgowcomedyfestival.com). French and Saunders and Jimmy Carr are performing.

WHERE SHOULD I STAY?

OK! visited Glasgow on a girls' weekend and stayed at the ever-so-cool Malmaison (www.malmaison.com). It's the perfect place to hang out when you're not pounding the streets or being pampered!

The hip hotel, a stylish urban bolthole with lovely rich colours and textured fabrics, also boasts wall-to-wall celebrities. Sienna Miller, Rhys Ifans, James Blunt and Keira Knightley have all checked in. If you book the Big Yin suite – named after Billy Connolly – you can submerge yourself in

the tartan-scroll bathtub. If you've overindulged the night before, OK! can heartily recommend the traditional cooked breakfast. Don't worry, you'll work off the calories while shopping!

WHERE CAN I SHOP?

If you want High Street fashion, Urban Outfitters, New Look, All Saints et al are strung along the pedestrianised Buchanan Street. It's here where you'll also find the entrance to Princes Square (www.princesquare.co.uk), home to some upmarket boutiques. Here we joined the ladies-who-lunch brigade at Fifi & Ally (www.fifidaily.com), the lifestyle store and cafe. You might see Sharleen Spiteri or Robert Carlyle ordering one of their Celtic, Italian or Moroccan sharing platters.

If you have a WAG-sized wallet, make Ingram Street your first stop. Here you'll find Mulberry, Agent Provocateur, Ralph Lauren and Scottish fashion emporium Cruise. For something more edgy try Merchant City. If you have time, head to Byres Road in the West End, where you'll find vintage and funky boutiques and tempting cafes (OK! loved Heart Buchanan) tucked away in the mews lanes. Nearby Great Western Road is home to a wealth of interior stores including Dallas & Dallas, Gallety & Tubbs and Felix And Oscar.

WHERE CAN I BE PAMPERED?

Glaswegians like to look good, so book in for a mini-makeover before a night on the tiles. Follow in OK!'s kitten heels and book into Taylor Ferguson (www.taylorferguson.com) on Bath Street. Taylor is a hairdressing legend who's attended to the tresses of everyone from Vernon Kay to Sarah Harding. Billy Connolly has even given an impromptu performance at reception!

Our next stop was the new urban lifestyle spa Brown Cow (www.browncowantraining.com), co-owned by Sandra McClumpha, who created the Fake Bake brand. Chantelle Houghton and Gemma Atkinson were at the launch party. This sleek chocolate and white salon offers everything under one roof – tanning, teeth whitening, facials. After a chat with our therapist, OK! was given the O2 facial. Oxygen was used to blast off a layer of old skin leaving us with a healthy, radiant glow. In between treatments we tucked into nibbles and champagne!

WHERE CAN I EAT, DRINK AND PARTY?

Many of the former tobacco, sugar and cotton warehouses in Glasgow's Merchant City have been turned into swanky restaurants and bars. OK! could just imagine the *Sex And The City* girls parked in one of the white leather banquettes,



sipping cocktails at the Metropolitan restaurant in Merchant Square. If you fish lower, walk across the road to Café Gandolfini, a trendy new sister resto Gandolfini Fish. Here we devoured a lobster bisque and fancy fish goujon. If you're with a gaggle of the Corinthian on Inverness Street, with its ornate decorative ceiling, is the perfect place for cocktails. While Rogano, the legendary art deco-style restaurant and bar at 11 Exchange Square, is perfect for a celebration.

At the multi-venued 29 Royal Exchange Square (www.29glasgow.com) you can dine, dance, mingle with celebs. There's the Grill Room for gourmet dining, One Up Bar And Grill if you're feeling less flush and the members' only Nebar – Take That's Gary Barlow and Mark Owen as well as Gordon Ramsay were spotted there recently.

Glasgow has always been an epicentre of music with Texas, Simple Minds, The Fratelli Snoc Patrol all calling it home. If you want to hear bands perform live, check what's on at Barrowland Ballroom, The Arches and the Club. Other good clubs include King Tut's, Anson and the Asylum.



Above: For fancy bites try the Grill Room. **Top left:** Sienna and Rhys are Glasgow fans. **Top right:** Gemma and Chantelle Brown Cow and went to the launch party.

