Welcome to Glen Affric
Faith do’n gleann aitfa

Even a fleeting visit to Glen Affric will leave an indelible memory of inviting pinewoods, shimmering lochs, enchanting islands and tumbling burns. Stay longer, let the glen feed your soul, and your cares will fly away with the eagles.

You will tread in the steps of folk who have harvested the woodlands, herded cattle and sheep, fished the waters and made their own whisky. You will see where wild red deer roam and watch over today’s visitors. You will tread in the steps of folk who have harvested the woodlands, herded cattle and sheep, fished the waters and made their own whisky. You will see where wild red deer roam and watch over today’s visitors.

River Affric
Am Meallan Viewpoint Trail 0.5 km / 0.3 miles. Allow 20 mins. A short climb for a classic view up the glen to the mountains beyond.

River Affric Trail 1.6 km / 1 mile. Allow 50 mins. Take care on the rocky sections alongside the river, which can be slippery when wet. Stand on the rock, which resembles a whale’s back, as the peaty waters surge into the loch. Watch for otters searching for larvae below the foaming waters. Make sure you’re wearing proper footwear as the river in spate can rage past before settling into deep dark eddies. When the water changes direction, you may see a heron, with his unmistakable lazy wingbeat, heading for quieter fishing grounds. In winter, whooper swans wait by the lochs to feed on seeds andGreens and Fruit, which are available in nearby shops.

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Everywhere is special in its own way, but Glen Affric is more special than most!

Eagles soaring over Glen Affric for eight thousand years have seen the pine woods suffer a wet period when swamped trees formed peat and then return to healthy growth, only to be cut down for timber and fuel. The land was overgrazed by the big sheep that replaced tenants and used by Victorian sportsmen. The Forestry Commission bought much of the estate in 1951 and the early foresters fenced off important remnants of native pine forest, the first steps in a major regeneration project. They were led by Findlay MacRae, then head forester whose dedication and custodianship set the pattern for today’s foresters. He ensured that deer were culled to reduce damage to young trees and the seeds of a Caledonian Forest Reserve were literally sown. Today, because the woods are actively conserved, wildlife is abundant and the forest is now a National Nature Reserve.

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The glen of alluring aromas
Gleann nan boltrachan tàladhan

You’ll never forget the fresh fragrance of the juniper and the bog myrtle. Many woodland plants were used for herbal remedies by people who lived close to the land. The glen adds to our larder from the lean meat of venison and the seasonal pleasure of chanterelles to the many different berries and fruits. Blackbirds fly from Norway for the rowan berries!

In the clean air, you can smell the glen – the resin of pine, the perfume of bog myrtle, the hints of deer and musky traces of fox in early morning.

Scotland’s National Nature Reserves
Scotland has more than 50 National Nature Reserves. In 2002, Scottish Natural Heritage declared Glen Affric as an NNR because its precious native woodlands are home to an astonishing variety of plants and animals. Discover more about Scotland’s national treasures by visiting www.nnr-scotland.org.uk.

The glen of countless colours
Gleann nan dathan dò-aireamhan

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The glen of a thousand whispers
Gleann nan mile cogaran

You’ll hear the rustle of leaves on birch and aspen, and the murmur of wind through pine needles. You might catch the bark of a roe deer or the chatter of crossbills as they split open pine cones for their seeds. You can’t miss the mewing of a buzzard, the call of a sandpiper searching for a missing chick, the songs of warblers or the curious clicking of a stonechat. There is always a whirr of summer insects and the tinkling of burns. Thundering waterfalls will bring shivers of excitement and the honking of greylag geese will remind you of long journeys to come.

At dusk, you might hear the yelp of a fox or the haunting cry of an owl.

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Ghost-like woodcock in search of worms, fly darkly against the long grey shadows cast by autumn moons.

One colour dominates – the reddish-pink of the Scots pine trunks, the fox, the deer, the squirrel, the pine marten and the chests of bullfinches.

You can see why this place is called the speckled glen – the sun constantly lights up different scenes.