

There are many famous castles in Aberdeenshire on the tourists' castle trail but can you also spot some of the less well-known castles, which have since become ruins. Here, we have highlighted 6 ruined towers in Gordon and Buchan districts and given their Ordnance survey grid references. Can you plot a route to visit them all?

Balquhain



4km west of Inverurie, OS ref: NJ 731 236
Built by the Leslie family in 14th century, Mary Queen of Scots stayed here in 1562. It was burned down by Duke of Cumberland following Culloden in 1746 to suppress the Jacobite cause.

Esslemont



2km west of Ellon on A920, OS ref: NJ 933 298
Rebuilt by the Cheynes in 1500s but ceased to be used regularly from 1625. The Gordon's took ownership in 1728 but it became disused after the family built a new manor house nearby.

Fedderate



3km north of New Deer on A981, ref NJ 897 498
The tower was about 10m high with walls 2m thick and it had a causeway and drawbridge. It was occupied by Jacobites who held it against Government forces for 3 weeks in 1690.

Knockhall



1km NW of Newburgh off A975, ref: NJ 992 264
It was built in 1565 and later purchased by the Udney Clan. It was used by the Earl Marischal for Covenanters in 1629 but was later returned to the Udnys. It was destroyed by fire in 1734.

New Slains



1 km west of Cruden Bay off A975, NK 103 362
Although massively extended, the lower parts of a tower remain of the original castle built by the Earl of Errol in 1698 after his previous castle (Old Slains) had been destroyed by James VI.

Inverugie



3km NW of Peterhead off A952, ref: NK 102 483
Built by 5th Earl Marischal, founder of Marischal College in 1590s. The Keith lands were forfeited after Culloden and the castle purchased by Fergusons in 1764. It was demolished in 1899.