Aberdeenshire Restaurant Week

Emma Stanford

Strategic Town Centres Executive



What is Restaurant Week?

A proven economic development initiative

- Restaurant Week originated in New York in 1992 and is now delivered across cities and regions worldwide.
- Events typically take place during quieter trading periods to stimulate demand and increase footfall.
- Businesses offer value-led menus, fixed-price dining experiences and exclusive promotions. The approach encourages customers to try new venues while supporting local hospitality businesses.

Why it matters

Drives footfall

- Supports local business
- Encourages repeat visits
- Generates positive promotion for towns and destinations

Why Aberdeenshire introduced Restaurant Week

Objectives of the pilot programme (2024)

The project was developed by the Economic Development service to:

- Increase footfall in town centres.
- Support hospitality businesses during a traditionally quieter period.
- Encourage residents to try new businesses
- Attract visitors to different parts of Aberdeenshire.
- Create a collaborative network of hospitality businesses.
- Support wider initiatives such as Scotland Loves Local and the Aberdeenshire Gift Card.

2024 vs 2025 Comparison

New restaurant visits: 34% → 44%

Additional business spend: 32% → 36%

Would participate again: 83% → 87%

Support for 2-week event: 52% → 72%

Support for twice-yearly event: 70% → 79%

Visitor movement across Aberdeenshire: 50% → 41%

Headline Results 2025



- 77 PARTICIPATING VENUES



- 86% REPORTED ADDITIONAL SALES



- 1,731+ ADDITIONAL COVERS



- £26,490+ ADDITIONAL SALES IDENTIFIED



- 80% WOULD DEFINITELY PARTICIPATE AGAIN

Business Impact



Strong footfall growth in quieter period



New and returning customers attracted



New menu items tested



98% found sign-up easy



96% valued flexibility on offers

Public Engagement

78% dined out

44% tried a new restaurant

41% visited a different area of Aberdeenshire

36% spent elsewhere locally

79% want two events per year

Marketing Performance



37.6k website visitors



191.2k page views



1,449 newsletter subscribers



56% email open rate



493.7k Facebook views



116.2k Instagram views

Influencer Campaign



15 influencers engaged



37 hospitality businesses featured



1.05 million views



17,448 likes/comments engagement



Town guides promoted wider economic spend

Partnerships & Wider Benefits

- Loves Local Gift Card promotion
- Small Business Saturday tour visit
- Business Gateway webinar
- Cross-service marketing support
- 5 businesses improved food hygiene rating

2026 Opportunities

- Maintain strong digital marketing
- Review timing and duration
- Improve menu visibility
- Expand geographic coverage
- Increase dietary choice
- Consider biannual delivery

Any questions?

Emma.Stanford@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

@Aberdeenshirerestaurantweek

