



STRATHSPEY & BADENOCH HERALD

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[Centre of the adventure world... for a wee while](#)

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AVIEMORE has become the centre of the outdoor adventure world - at least for the next few days.

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Almost 600 international delegates from 50 different countries were given a hearty Highland welcome when they arrived in Aviemore for the start of the Adventure Travel World Summit (ATWS) on Sunday.

Drams of Tomatin whisky were served to those arriving by train from Edinburgh and Glasgow for the week-long event and 21-year-old Gemma Smith welcomed the delegates in true Highland fashion with a host of Scottish pipe tunes.

The warm weekend welcome was the start of a conference which will show off all that Badenoch and Strathspey has to offer in outdoor pursuits.

The ATWS focuses on three themes - Fur, Fowl & Furkins, the Spirit of the Cairngorms and The High Road to the Summit. Delegates had the opportunity to try a range of activities including mountain biking, walking, nature and wildlife-based trips, while taking in the world class scenery of Cairngorms National Park.

At least 250 delegates were taken on a "Day of Adventure" by the Cairngorms Business Partnership on Monday.

Hosted by a range of local outdoor activity providers, delegates experienced a range of adventures including a Cairngorm skyline walk, Highland climbing, red deer stalking, orienteering, open canoe descent of the River Spey, gorge walking and sea kayaking.

Kevin Roach of the Aviemore Business Association, who were involved in the warm Highland welcome, said: "We are delighted that the entire Aviemore business community has come together to ensure that our international visitors have the best experience possible of the area.

"The arrival welcome ensured that delegates began their stay in Aviemore in the best way possible, and we know that businesses up and down the Strath, as well as the rest of the Park, will make sure that the rest of the week will continue to be enjoyable for all involved."

Scotland's Tourism Minister, Jim Mather, addressed the ATWS opening night, which introduced delegates - including some from South America and Asia - to haggis, whisky and even a ceilidh.

He said: "Scotland, with its breathtaking land and waterscapes, ranks among the top adventure travel destinations in the world, so it makes tremendous sense for the Adventure Travel Trade Association to host its 2010 World Summit here.

"Our country, and in particular the Cairngorms, has had an incredible winter sports season and continues to prove it is not only a first-class year round tourist destination, but a stunning location that offers a variety of outdoor adventures, activities and pursuits that continues to attract visitors from across the world to Scotland time and time again.

"We are delighted to welcome global tourism leaders and commentators to this incredible part of Scotland for this important event."

Mr Mather also addressed delegates.



Delegates are given a warm welcome to Aviemore by officials. Alan Rankin (front left), Kevin Roach (front

"Our industry is truly sustainable. It has been around for 200 years and has the potential to preserve and protect Scotland's environment and communities for the next 200.

"The timing of the Adventure Travel World Summit in Aviemore, and our new guide to the Adventure Capital of Europe, is particularly apt. "January 2011 will signal the start of Active Scotland, a year of events that will encourage more people than ever before to get out and enjoy this nation's great outdoors."

The conference is a coup for Aviemore and 2010 is the first year ATWS has been held in Europe.

In recent years the summit has been held in Seattle in the USA, Quebec and Whistler in Canada, and Sao Paulo in Brazil. The delegates represent some of the world's biggest travel operators world and media agencies associated with the outdoor leisure market.

The conference is a joint bid by Macdonald Aviemore Highland Resort, Visitscotland, Highland Council, the Cairngorms National Park Authority and the Cairngorms Business Partnership.

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