

Geronimo Stilton

Thea Stilton **AND THE SECRET OF THE OLD CASTLE**



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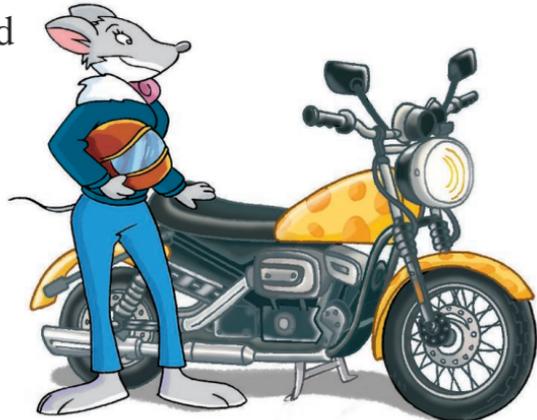


A MOTORCYCLE MOUSE!

It was a beautiful May evening in New Mouse City. I had just returned from a fabumouse trip across Mouse Island on my **motorcycle**, and I was in a great mood.

Oh, pardon me. I almost forgot to introduce myself! My name is Thea Stilton, and I am a special correspondent for *The Rodent's Gazette*, the newspaper run by my brother, Geronimo. I **travel** a lot for work, and my motorcycle is always by my side, like a true **FRIEND!**

That evening, I had just parked outside my apartment when my cell phone **beeped**.





BEE-BEE-BEEP! BEE-BEE-BEEP!

I had a text message. It was a picture of my good friends *Colette*, *Nicky*, *PAMELA*, *PAULINA*, and *Violet*, seated on three **brand-new** motorcycles!

I called them right away. “Thundering cattails, you look fantastic on those motorcycles, mouselets!”

Paulina laughed. “Thanks, Thea! I thought you’d approve. We’re in Scotland, on a **mission** in the Highlands!”

“Traveling by motorcycle is great,” Pamela added. “It’s almost like flying!”

That was the **enthusiasm** that had first drawn me to the Thea Sisters. Ever since I’d taught them in a journalism class at **MOUSEFORD ACADEMY**, these five incredible mouselets had never ceased to amaze me. They were my best students!

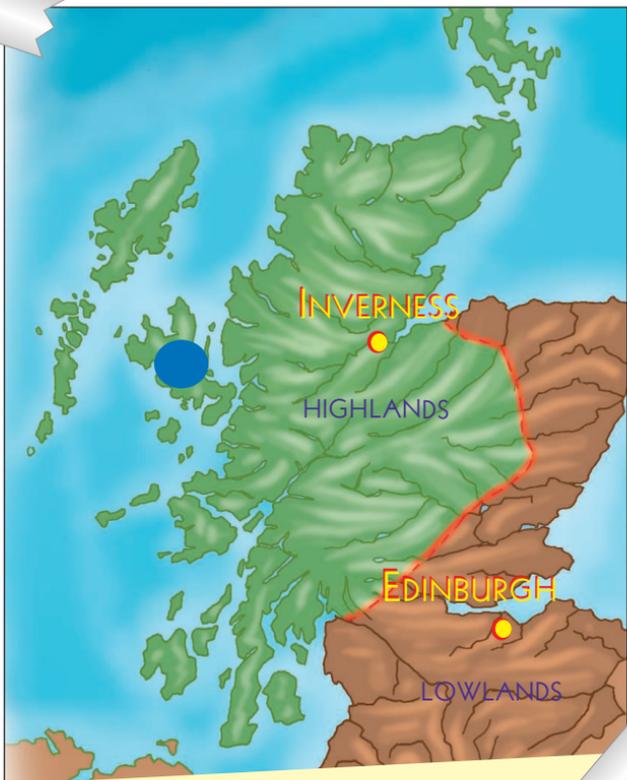


Seeing them travel by motorcycle made me feel as though I were right there with them.

Of course, I was wondering what they were up to in Scotland. And I'll bet you are, too! So get ready for a **RIP-ROARING** new adventure with the Thea Sisters!



SCOTLAND



Capital: Edinburgh

Surface area: 30,414 square miles

Population: 5,222,100 inhabitants, although the population is not evenly distributed. In the industrial city of Glasgow, there are around 8,700 people per square mile, while in some parts of the Highlands, there are only 23!



Scotland is one of the four nations that make up the **United Kingdom**, along with England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. It occupies the northern part of the island of Great Britain. Although it is part of the United Kingdom, Scotland has its own legal system and its own parliament. It was once an independent region known by the name **Caledonia**.

THE HIGHLANDS

Scotland is traditionally divided into the *Highlands* and the *Lowlands*. This division isn't just geographic: The Highlands are different from the Lowlands in language and traditions. The culture in the Highlands is similar to Irish culture. The Irish and the Highlanders share a language—Gaelic—and a traditional style of Celtic music.

The Highlands are dominated by large and impressive mountain ranges and are sparsely populated. Inverness is considered the administrative center of the Scottish Highlands.

● THE ISLE OF SKYE

The **Isle of Skye** is the largest of the Inner Hebrides islands (that is, the set of islands closest to the mainland). Its coastline is rugged, and the countryside is wild and breathtaking.