

Insulae Draconis answers – What is your perfect SCA event?

By Ruth of Derlington, AS. 58

In Autumn 2022, the populace were asked two simple questions – What is your perfect Weekend SCA Event, and what is your perfect week-long event?

Common wishes for sites & facilities:

NB: anything mentioned by just one person was left off

General Comment:	Mentions
Indoor accommodation	10
Camping available	10
Showers/ private washing facilities	7
Outdoor facilities for a wide array of activities/ and camping	7
Enough indoor facilities for a wide array of activities (beyond just court and feast), including socialising	7
Good transport links and/or co-ordinated lifts	6
Plenty of space	6
Period sites preferred	6
Easy access to shops/ pubs/ cafes/ restaurants etc	6
Specifically comfortable/ good beds	5
Food provided by event	5
Heating	4
Real fire	4
Central space/ social area	4
Court and feast in separate locations (for easier take up and put down)	3
Ability to decorate site for period aesthetic	3
On the island of Ireland	3
Indoor toilets	3
Ability to acquire food/ snacks onsite	3
Professional/ “good” kitchen(s)	2
Self-catered	2

Covered outdoor area	2
Affordability	2
Better waste management (e.g. less food waste, ability to recycle)	2
Accessibility	2

Common wishes for activities and event schedule:

General Comment:	Mentions
A&S activities (including classes, bardic circles, dancing, etc.)	7
An event with both martial and A&S activities	7
Live music	7
Martial activities (including mentions of archery and equestrian)	6
Keeping court short	5
Publicised schedule, i.e. posted on a board and/or announced by herald	4
Breaks in the schedule to allow for travel between sessions/ socialising	4
Games (including board games and field games)	4
Not too many competing things in the schedule, e.g. one track martial one track A&S	4
Entertainment during feast	4
A&S display	3
Activities specifically for children	2
Feast menu readily available in the feast room (e.g. on table/ wall)	2

Here are the full answers, and we hope you find them inspiring and food for thought for your event.

What is your perfect weekend SCA Event?

Site & Facilities

- Comfortable beds (they can totally be bunk beds but they can't break your back). Large shared bathrooms with decent showers. One large meeting hall for court and feast. Outdoor facilities that allow archery as well as the other martial activities.
- A decent professional kitchen. Accessible by public transport. Ideally 2 or three other meeting rooms for various activities. An outdoor area for camping for those who would prefer to go that route. Enough room for 100-200 people for the larger events.

- If you pretend we're not still in a pandemic: indoor accommodation with good heating, good disability accessibility through the venue for those who require it, not huge bedrooms, easily reachable from the NW. Plenty of seating space for during frat so people aren't super cramped up.
- Period site is an extra bonus but the other things come first.
- Indoor bed style accommodation, 2 halls, food provided, showers, toilets etc. Forest, field and just archery, on the island of Ireland
- A site with beds (bedding not required), good heating and good kitchens
- A variety of spaces for groups and quiet chats and quiet breaks from people. Private washing facilities. Small dorms, the ability to specify "corner" or "near loo" or "quiet". Camping if seasonal. Self service food with less waste. Either a historical site or the ability to decorate. Accessible by public transport or co-ordinated lifts
- Historic site building, with beds.
- As good heating has been mentioned, please also a way to get away from heating, especially in the "confined" bits like feast and Court.
- Site:
 - Comfortable temperatures
 - Accessible bedrooms (small dorms)
 - Plenty of space for archery, fencing, and heavy outdoors but covered area for Inevitable Weather
 - Indoor space - general area, some smaller spaces for specialized classes and general meetings
 - Decent and not too obtrusive space for Court if modern site
 - Nice spot for photo ops
 - Accessible by public transport
 - Walkable distance to shops
- Places to socialise, good heating, B&B style bedrooms (I.e. only 2 beds/room).
- good food, good friends and a feckin good bed.
- A level field with piped water for equestrian activities
- Somewhere within driving range.
- Real showers.
- Affordable - I'm perfectly willing to camp for that.
- Rooms that aren't stuffy or loud - windows that open and surfaces that absorb noise.
- Room to retreat a bit as needed.
- Healthy food, with more variety of the wholemeal kind. Better portion sizing. There seems to be a lot of food waste at events.
- Separate eating and court room.
- Additional room for a tavern style setting for people to socialise - this could be a community tent if we are looking at camping events.
- All locations are nicely decorated and set dressed to create better immersion.
- Less rearranging of furniture at events. Set up once and leave it as is.
- Proper waste collection, such as separating bottles, paper etc. for recycling.

- More space to sit and walk around tables. Although I am not a wide person I feel often cramped in. I am also thinking here along the lines of risks of blocked exit routes.
- I am not fussed about the location or accommodation. I can adapt to many things.
- Minimum requirements for me are running water and a toilet, showers are a welcome bonus but I can do without them.
- Accessible venue - I want to be able to access a toilet without having to negotiate stairs, from both my sleeping room and my daytime room.
- Co-ordinated lifts from designated transport points.
- Small dorm bedrooms with bedding.
- On the island of Ireland.
- Good bathrooms.
- Real fire.
- No modern lighting.
- Period buildings or no buildings at all.
- Car park out of sight.
- I'm the only one whose idea of an ideal event is hardcore camping with no mod cons then.
- Sauna would be nice.
- I've had too many bush wee incidents with a small child and as such am very fond of indoor plumbing.....
- Real beds, not bunks. Decent toilets. Good enough public transport links that I don't feel guilty about not spending my entire event giving lifts from the train station. Indoor court area (so I don't spend my entire event worrying about damage to scrolls). And, of course, all the above on a minimal budget and without running event staff ragged. Which is where it starts to get tricky.
- And rooms with good enough lighting for me to be able to see well enough to teach an embroidery class! Last time I gave a class, I couldn't see well enough to determine what my students had done wrong.....

Activities & Schedule

- “No plans. Just turn up, chat and do stuff.”
- When people are encouraged to socialise with people outside their normal group, and dancing
- For activities, it's good seeing a range of activities, both A&S activities that are good as introductions to something, and more martial based one's, including fencing.
- Arrive on Friday to Travellers Fayre and have a good conversation. Saturday with fighting and archery outdoors, possibly with games as well. Indoor classes are both practical and discursive. A short court before the feast, which will include entertainment. Afterwards dance and bardic for those who wish them, but space away from the music for those who want to chat. Sunday with classes and fighting until lunchtime, then clean-up and departure by mid-afternoon.
- A variety of discussion and active A&S. some history and philosophy talks if possible. Lots of music both to make and listen to, not just later in the evening. Martial activities but including some history / background lectures..
- A widely publicised theme.

- Arrive at a nice traveller's fayre, get up early and do some bread and breakfast. fence and fight, have a tasty dinner that won't kill me, Beer o'clock! Late night chatting/flirting/private duels/teaching classes, get up early Sunday to do some breakfast, bugger off home.
- Activity:
 - Archery
 - Fencing (and C&T for those who want)
 - Heavy
 - Variety of A&S for all ages and abilities
 - Newbie and kid-specific classes included
 - Bardic time and general jam session
 - Court with meaningful stuff - not too long or stuffy
 - Displays of A&S - not necessarily competitions but if people want feedback that's cool too.
 - Time for tea and/or ice cream depending on the season.
 - Silliness for all - nothing better than everyone coming together and letting our inner children play
- Lots of classes on the Saturday, short court, early feast (starting at 6pm), with singing/entertainment at points during feast....
- A schedule that allows enough time to transition between activities.
- A big board in a central location that shows the timeline of the event, with locations.
- Event plan with enough time between activities.
- All of this but make it a 4 day weekend to fit everything in.
- Use bank holiday weekends to have a four day weekend event. Not scheduling too many things against each other; one martial and one A&S track is plenty. Heralds regularly crying reminders of the schedule when an activity is due to begin. A general social area, not too far from either the martial or A&S activities, so that everything feels connected and not like three separate events that are begrudgingly sharing a venue. A little bit of court, but not too long. Feast menu printed out and pinned to the wall somewhere so you don't have to keep asking the frazzled servers what allergens are in everything. Short entertainment pieces during the feast. Bardic circles. DANCING.
- Live music and dancing
- A&S classes and hangout.
- Music throughout the day.
- Dancing to live music.
- Food at the times we're told there will be food, for health reasons waiting 2hr for feast is disastrous.
- Short court, 30 min max.
- More mixing with people you don't know.
- An A&S display which does not feel like an afterthought, but is given adequate space, lighting and timetabling.
- A range of activities, that are not scheduled so everything I want to do is at the same time. Court not too long. Food on time, with posted menu and ingredients so everyone can tell

what they can eat. And, of course, all the above on a minimal budget and without running event staff ragged. Which is where it starts to get tricky.

- Summer: Camping, finger-food/street-food (anything not involving washing up), competitive outdoor antics (archery, fencing, team games), cooperative outdoor antics (building a new shelter, a bridge, a maypole), evening campfire entertainment (music, talks, tastings) Winter: group learning, group A&S projects, the opportunity to do outdoors stuff if the weather is nice, a strong sense of medievalness, dancing, live music, moments of "oooh" at well done ceremony or food service or scene-setting. Encouragement for people to show things they have made, or perform a skill. Both - convenient means to stay hydrated and caffeinated.
- Fighting, feasting, frolicking

What is your perfect SCA week long event?

Site & Facilities

- Castle/period site, indoor accommodation and halls, rooms. Camping, water feature, island of Ireland, near shops and pubs
- Ok. Just move everything to Finland, lol!
- Some general shelter in case of hot / cold / rainy weather. Arena space for martial activities. Access to food / shops / co-ordinated lifts thereto. A method to combine / share fires and cooking/meals without feeling you have to invade a clique or existing setup. Arrangements for lifts and accessibility by public transport.
- pubs, cafes and shops nearby.
- Honestly pretty similar to the weekend event, just with tents. Good toilets. Showers!!!! A central sheltered area for socialising eg a pavilion or hall ideally right beside the tourney field and also close to the loos. An area with ground level enough to dance on, large enough for a reasonable group of dancers plus live musicians, and preferably sheltered so that instruments don't get wet and/or electronic minstrels may be used if the live ones are unavailable. A central campfire area for social time at night, where bardic circles can happen. A grocery shop within walking distance would be handy. Some kind of option to acquire food onsite is also good, like the Pig in a Bun man.
- Based in a nice B&B, with a tent on-site for storage and if I feel like staying.
- A giant festival/popup village...Bonfires and drum circles in the village centre, Shops setup all around, A section for younger kids to go play safely while the parents take a break, Food areas (not necessarily food trucks, but like, popup "pubs")
- Decent beds, good showers, WiFi access.
- Camping with an historic backdrop and a nice flat field for the equestrian list. Water, shower block and an indoor space for the evenings or heat of the day. And areas for all the other activities.
- A train station a stone's throw away and accommodation in the village...

Activities & Schedule

- Seriously, a clear but intense range of courses / classes maybe spread over several days. A "day off" for relaxing and chilling. Camping and beds if possible. Clearly labelled areas WITH A MAP. Quiet, early rising and late night.

- A clear set timetable and announcements that include WHERE things are happening. Music. Games.
- Camp.fight.food.breaks in the schedule for naps.
- A focus! It can be somewhere different each day, but each day/night there should be a clear “happening” zone - like a tavern or a fire pit.
- Not keen on week-long events, but would like it to include everything for a good weekend event on at least one of the two weekends.
- Not too many competing things on the schedule. If there's fewer than, say, 60 people on site, a single martial track and a single A&S track is enough. And even more important than it is at weekend events, where it is still quite important: HERALDS REGULARLY ANNOUNCING UPCOMING ACTIVITIES, AND WHEN THEY ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN.
- As mentioned previously, plus GAMES. Not just board games but also filled games like tug-of-war, boules, and the Viking box game.
- Arrive at a traveller's fare of some kind, or supply it. Alternating fencing and fighting, teaching classes. Beer o'clock followed by the chatting/flirting/private duels etc as per weekends. A feast that won't kill me. Away missions to nearby historical sites/locations. All that weekend feast bit on at least the second weekend before bugging off home
- Activities for every inclination, not just one.