

Eighty five YORK – FAR TOO MUCH TO SEE AND DO!

One of England's loveliest cities, York is packed with shops, museums, churches, pubs, restaurants, gardens and fine buildings. It is almost ridiculous to pick out any for special mention! This route gives a true feel of the place, so take your time and pick out what you fancy - then you will want to visit again.

Catch a train from Eccles to Stalybridge. Change onto an express train to York. Alight at York. *This station, by Thomas Prosser, took four years to build and when it opened on 25th June 1877 it replaced the 1841 station that was inside the walls of York. As you cross the footbridge note the York coat of arms on the clock, and the white roses of York on the station roof.*

Leave the station through the main exit.

Go straight ahead across the road towards the walls then turn left. *The pale cream limestone of the walls is typical of York architecture.*

Where the road goes through the walls, cross it and go right into the city. *Ahead of you are the palatial offices of the North Eastern Railway Company, and to the right the cenotaph.*

Climb the steps up onto the wall and then turn left (anticlockwise) along the wall. *George Hudson, 'the railway king', speculator and purveyor of dodgy financial instruments, had said 'Make all t'railways come to York!' On the right is the full extent of the modern railway and The National Railway Museum. The original station, later a railway works, is replaced with the undistinguished modern buildings on the left. Ahead you can see the entrance arches into the city for the railway.*

Continue along the walls round the corner. *Now you see the quotidian but attractive York.*

Pass across Micklegate Bar (*a museum and fortified gateway*).

Down on the left is Dewsbury Terrace *with pale red brick, and old corner shops. Behind it is St Mary's Church, Bishophill.*

Just before the wall turns, look into the right distance. *The square clock tower is on one of York's famous chocolate factories – remember Terry's and Rowntree's?*

Baile Hill is next on the left. *A mound built for a castle in 1069, by the Normans. This followed their ruthless subjugation of the anglo-scandinavian north of the country.*

Descend from the walls; go left, cross the road and cross Skeldersgate Bridge. *This is one of many Viking names in York. The bridge crosses the River Ouse. At the end is a crenellated toll booth.*

Go left down the steps just after the toll booth. *Right is The Esplanade and King's Staith – the river trips start from there if you fancy one.*

Turn sharply to your right in order to go diagonally over the green to Clifford's Tower. *The mound dates from 1068 under William the Conqueror and the stone castle from the reign of Henry III. Good views of the city. Open daily from 10.00. Admission is category one. [Tel: 0870 333 1181](tel:08703331181). Website: www.english-heritage.org.uk.*

Go right across the square to York Castle. *It was rebuilt in the 18th century in a grand administrative style; one wing is the Crown Court.*

The Castle Museum occupies two wings of the Castle. *Open daily from 09.30. Admission is category two and valid for a year. [Tel: 01904 687687](tel:01904687687). Website: www.yorkcastlemuseum.org.uk It has a great collection of period rooms, life from cradle to grave, kitchens, farming, (marvel at the ram scarers), Kirkgate (a whole street), a mill, military, civil war, second world war, textiles, costume, toys and a prison!*

Leave the Castle Square and cross the car park on the right behind Clifford's Tower, then walk along Castlegate. Fairfax House is on the right. *Described as the finest Georgian town house in England, it reminds us that York became very fashionable in the 18th century. . Open daily except Jan-early Feb. Admission category two. [Tel: 01904 655543](tel:01904655543) Website: www.fairfaxhouse.co.uk*

Next on the right is St Mary's Church. Behind it are the Coppergate Centre and the JORVIK Viking Centre.

[OPTIONS: Go down the side of the church to visit

a) The modern shops in the centre.

b) The Jorvik Viking Centre - *a ride around a splendid illustrated history of Viking York complete with sounds and smells! Open daily from 10.00.*

Admission is category three. [Tel: 01904 543400](tel:01904543400). Website: www.jorvik-viking-centre.co.uk.

Then return to Castlegate.]

Cross Coppergate, go ahead onto Nessgate and then right onto High Ousegate. *The main shopping area is now left of you. On the right is a lovely old church-on the sign 'All Saints Pavement with St Crux and Saint Michael Spurriergate, York' (gasp).*

Cross Parliament Street/Piccadilly to go straight ahead up Pavement.

Turn left onto Shambles. *At the corner is the lovely old church hall of St Crux – the volunteers serve delicious light refreshments in aid of charity and it's worth a look.*

Shambles is a mediaeval shopping street. *York Minster towers above it all in front. In a half timbered building on the left is the Shrine of St Margaret Clitherow, martyred in York, 1586.*

[OPTION: Go through any opening on the left to visit the open market.]

Shambles becomes King's Court (keep towards right).

Turn left at King's Square and walk along Low Petergate.

Then turn right at Stonegate and come out facing the main entrance to York Minster. *Northern Europe's greatest gothic cathedral with a strong tradition of sacred music; in the crypt is a good historical exhibition. Open daily. Admission category two – but worship is free. Website: www.yorkminster.org*

Turn right past the statue of Constantine the Great, *declared Emperor of Rome in York, 306AD. York has been important since Roman times!*

Then go left here between the Minster and its school. *Ahead of you is St William's College (1461) with a delightful courtyard, and a cafe.*

Turn left on College Street, and through the gates of Minster yard. The Chapter House is on your left. On the right is The Treasurer's House. *Take a look in (and a rest?) in the quiet formal garden. The splendid house is open from 11.00 (not Friday), March to November. Admission is category two. [Tel: 01904 624247](tel:01904624247). Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk.*

Next go left across Dean's Park and outside the west front of the Minster turn right onto High Petergate. *Two pubs sell Yorkshire beers on hand pump – The York Arms, old fashioned inside with Samuel Smith's OB Bitter and across the road the more modern Three Legged Mare – York Brewery.*

Continue through Bootham gate. Cross the road here to the City Art Gallery. *Open daily from 10.00. Admission is free. [Tel: 01904 687687](tel:01904687687) Website: www.yorkartgallery.org.uk. It houses a very good art collection.*

Look back across to Bootham Gate (*old*) and then the elegant De Grey Rooms (*18th century fashionable*).

Turn right to pass King's Manor (*now York University – archaeology*). Go right down the side of it (*the walls on your left*) and enter Museum Gardens – *a tranquil green space above the river.*

On the right of the gardens is The Yorkshire Museum, *in a Greek classical style building. First rate collections cover archaeology, astronomy, biology, and geology.*

Open daily from 10.00.

Admission: category two-concessions. [Tel: 01904 687687](tel:01904687687) or www.yorkshireremuseum.org.uk.

Beyond the museum are the ruins of St Mary's Abbey. Go down through these – *the abbey was nationalised (sorry dissolved) by Henry VIII – the timber constructed hospitium survived and is lower down towards the river.*

Turn right and leave the gardens through the abbey gateway. *On your right is the lovely church of St Olave (Olaf – patron saint of Norway).*

Turn left down Marygate. *The Minster Inn sells a selection of Cask Marque real ales and good food.*

Go between the gateposts at the bottom (*notice that this is a flood gate – needed very often here!*)

Turn left along the river bank.

At Lendal Bridge climb the steps on the left (or slope) and turn right to cross the bridge.

Follow the road to the right through the walls (Station Avenue) and cross Leeman Road (*which leads to the National Railway Museum*).

Go straight ahead past the hotel to the railway station.

At the station you can catch an express train to Stalybridge to change for Victoria and Eccles (*there are other trains to Manchester Piccadilly that miss out Stalybridge – go for one of these if you wish*).

CLASSIFICATION: MEDIUM MODERATE (a lot of steps)

WALLS, VIEWS, RIVER, BOAT TRIPS, CASTLE,
MUSEUMS, ARCHITECTURE, SHOPS CAFES,
PUBS, MINSTER, GARDENS,

RAIL FARE: category six

Maps: OS 1:50,000 sheet 105

Philip's Street Atlas North Yorkshire.