

Sixty two YORK – NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

A wonderful railway treat is this one involving a good train ride out and a visit to the largest railway museum in Europe. Its collections of engines, rolling stock and documents illustrate the rise of railways and how this helped to shape the life of the British Isles.

Catch a train from Eccles to Stalybridge. Change there onto an express train to York.

Alight at York. *This station is a breathtaking piece of architecture, by Thomas Prosser, with its large train shed on a long curve. It took four years to build and when it opened on 25th June 1877 it replaced the small 1841 station that was inside the walls of York.*

Leave the platforms towards the west following the signs to the railway museum.

Proceed along a narrow path until it reaches Leeman Road. Cross the side road left, and go down the left-hand side of the curved front of the building.

This brings you to the entrance of the railway museum. *Entry is free. Open 10.00-18.00 daily except 24/25/26 of Dec. [Tel: 08448 153139](tel:08448153139). Website: www.nrm.org.uk*

Free maps of the site are on offer. It's easy to spend three or four hours here.

If you go straight ahead through the shop you enter the old goods shed. *This building was once used to shuffle small goods between different trains. It is now set up like a main line railway station with old-fashioned carriages, Royal & Pullman carriages, wagons and locomotives. The museum café/restaurant is in here too.*

If you go out of the opposite end of the building you enter a railway yard. *This contains numerous other items and there is often a steam train on offer as well.*

Return through the shop area and go to the left along an underpass under Leeman Road. This brings you into the Great Hall of the museum.

Ahead: Here is a collection of locomotives from very ancient to quite modern - *what remains of the original 'Rocket' through to modern high speed trains. There are also the grand gates of the wonderful Euston Station (not the current one!). This was once York North Engine Shed – a 'roundhouse' where the locomotives stood, rather like numbers on a clock face, around a central turntable.*

Up to the left is a display gallery that ends in a small library called the ‘search engine’. *It’s good - while there I found and read the original report of the Eccles 1941 fatal railway accident! It includes children’s books too.*

Up to the right is the entrance to the viewing gallery of the railway workshop. *This workshop is used to repair locomotives and carriages and service Flying Scotsman. There is also a display of typical mechanical failures and railway accidents.*

At ground level to your right is ‘The Warehouse’. *Don’t miss this real junk shop of a place – it’s crammed full of the most bizarre and wonderful railway artefacts including the old model railway once used at the signal training school at Manchester Victoria.*

Leave the museum by the main exit and retrace your steps along the path to York station.

[OPTION: Visit to the Leeman Bridge Pub (old pub with real ales). Go right along Leeman road, through the little tunnel. Cross the road under the walls and bear left. The pub is down below the right hand side of the bridge. Less than 10 minutes walk.

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: **SHORT, EASY**

**A VAST MUSEUM, PLENTY OF REFRESHMENT
OPPORTUNITIES ARCHITECTURE.**

RAIL FARE: category six