

PRINT

**THE
Sun**

TRAVEL

Old York, Old York



The majestic York Minster Cathedral
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ONE small city for a long weekend and we're flying there?

Better hire a car and do a bit of exploring in the area after we've seen it then, I suggested.

You know, visit some of the towns nearby, maybe take a run to the coast.

Honestly, we won't need it, my better half insisted.

But surely there can't be enough to see or do in the one place?

Just wait and see, she assured me.

Four days later I left York feeling that I'd barely scratched the surface, already planning a return trip armed with a list of all the stuff I either haven't seen yet or want a second, more leisurely look at.

There's so much to take in, from the majestic York Minster Cathedral with its booming bells onwards, that it seems almost unfair that one place gets to have so much history and grandeur.

As if some mythical gods of tourism had got together and decided York had won the attractions lottery.

Right, so we'll give the city plenty of obvious royal connections down through the ages... kings and

queens, castles and battles and all that.

Let's chuck in the Romans and have the original wall they built right round the city restored for folk to wander around.



The Jorvik visitor centre

Oh yeah, what about the Vikings? Better give York a settlement that archaeologists can discover so they can have the awesome Jorvik visitor centre.

Hmm, need some industrial heritage too. Right, so make the place really big on trains.

Then they can have a fancy Victorian station, the longest platforms in England plus the fascinating and impressive National Railway Museum, which is worth at least half a day itself.

Maybe lighten the mood a bit by making the city the chocolate capital of the country and that's another must-see for visitors.

Not sure if even that's enough, so let's throw in the birthplace of Guy Fawkes and tell his story.

And when you need a breather from culture overload, there are gentle, manicured parks bordering the mighty river that rolls right through the city centre.

Cue boat trips to the city boundaries and beyond, chic riverside restaurants and cafes and even a bit of canoeing or fishing if you fancy it.

Back on dry land, there's a warren of cobbled streets to explore — The Shambles is the most famous — and all boasting a range of souvenir shops that manage to stay just the right side of tourist tat.

One thing I really appreciated about York is the lack of pressure to part with your dosh. Sure, the city is totally geared up for the tourist trade — a constant stream of coach parties testifies to that.

But you never feel like anyone is trying to rip you off.



The Shambles street is the most famous
Alamy

The cafes, the restaurants and the shops all keep their prices at a level where you won't need a second mortgage to wile away a pleasant few days.

Getting there couldn't be easier — we did the short hop with Loganair from Glasgow to the dinky Leeds Bradford Airport which is just half an hour or so from York.

It's one of those flights where it feels like you're hardly settling in after take-off before you are preparing to land.

There are plenty of hotels to choose from and we stayed at the classy Churchill — a restored Georgian mansion where a couple of royals and Winston himself are reputed to have once stayed.

The hotel is just a few minutes' stroll from the city centre and its comfort, style and helpful staff were matched by exquisite dining that tempted us to stay there rather than checking out the city's huge range of eating places.

My verdict?

To mangle the words of the old song, View York View York, it's a wonderful town.

Go York: LOGANAIR fly twice daily to Leeds Bradford from Glasgow, Monday to Thursday and once on Fridays — from £75.99.

See flybe.com or call 0371 700 2000. Churchill Hotel prices start from £100pn for a double room with B&B. City info: visityork.org

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