



# Yorkshire

With a population as big as Scotland's, and an area half the size of Belgium, Yorkshire is almost a country in itself. It even has its own flag (a white rose on a blue background), its own distinctive dialect (known as 'Tyke') and its own official celebration (Yorkshire Day, 1 August). Needless to say, while Yorkshire folk are proud to be English, they're even prouder to be natives of 'God's Own Country', as they (only half-jokingly) refer to their home patch.

The region's roots are in 9th-century Danelaw, a Viking-governed area that roughly coincides with the boundaries of today's Yorkshire. It was originally divided into three parts – the North, West and East Ridings. Today it's split into four separate counties: South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire.

So what is it that make Yorkshire so special? First there's the landscape – from the dark, brooding moors and lush, green dales that roll their way to the dramatic cliffs of the coast, Yorkshire has some of England's most beautiful scenery; more than a third of the county's area lies in the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors national parks.

Second, there's the sheer breadth of history – here you can explore virtually every facet of the English experience, from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, in abbeys, castles, historic houses, medieval cities, industrial monuments and urban playgrounds.

But ultimately, Yorkshire's greatest appeal lies in its people. Proud, industrious and opinionated, with a wry wit always ready to puncture the first signs of pomposity, they have a warmth and friendliness that breaks through any initial gruffness. Stay here for any length of time and you'll come away believing, like the locals, that God is indeed a Yorkshirewoman.

## HIGHLIGHTS

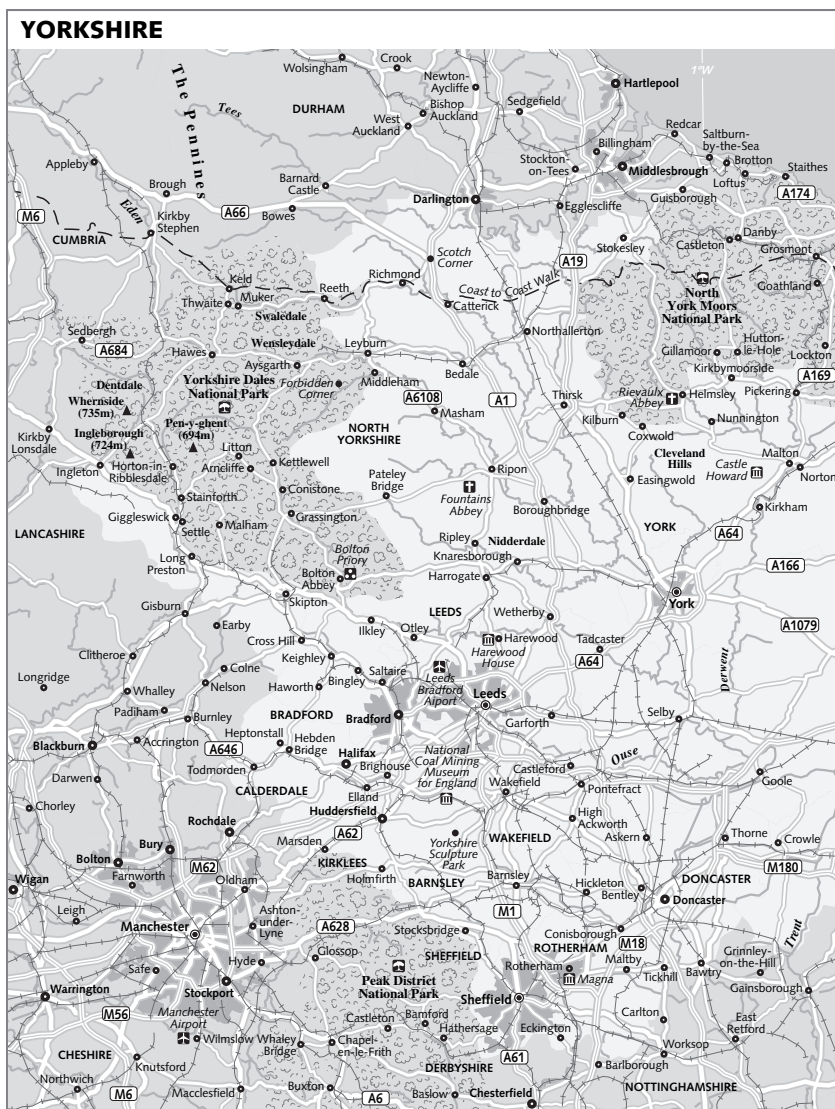
- Exploring the medieval streets of **York** (p621) and its awe-inspiring cathedral
- Pulling on your hiking boots and striding out across the moors of the **Yorkshire Dales** (p605)
- Chilling out in **Leeds** (p593): shopping, eating, drinking, dancing
- Being beside the seaside at **Scarborough** (p638) with its traditional bucket-and-spade atmosphere
- Riding on the **North Yorkshire Moors Railway** (p645), one of England's most scenic railway lines
- Discovering mining's dark side at the **National Coal Mining Museum for England** (p601)



■ POPULATION: 4.96 MILLION

■ AREA: 5958 SQ MILES

■ CALORIES IN A YORKSHIRE  
'FAT RASCAL': 350

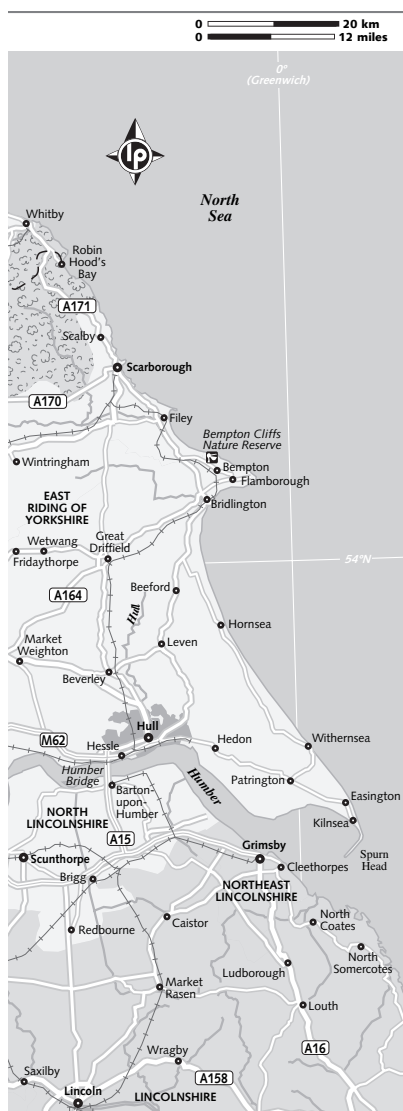


## History

As you drive through Yorkshire on the main A1 road, you're following in the footsteps of the Roman legions who conquered northern Britain in the 1st century AD. In fact, many Yorkshire towns – including York, Catterick and Malton – were founded by the Romans, and many modern roads (eg the

A1, A59, A166 and A1079) follow the lines of Roman roads.

When the Romans departed in the 5th century, native Britons battled for supremacy with invading Angles and, for a while, Yorkshire was part of the Kingdom of Northumbria. In the 9th century the Vikings arrived and conquered most of northern Britain. They



divided the territory that is now Yorkshire into *thridings* (thirds), which all met at Jorvik (York), their thriving commercial capital.

In 1066 Yorkshire was the scene of a pivotal showdown in the struggle for the English crown, when the Anglo-Saxon king Harold II rode north to defeat the forces of the Norwegian king Harold Hardrada at the

Battle of Stamford Bridge, before returning south to meet his appointment with William the Conqueror - and a fatal arrow - at the Battle of Hastings.

The inhabitants of northern England did not take the subsequent Norman invasion lying down. The Norman nobles built a chain of formidable castles throughout Yorkshire, including those at York, Richmond, Scarborough, Pickering and Helmsley. They also oversaw the establishment of the great abbeys of Rievaulx, Fountains and Whitby.

The Norman land grab formed the basis of the great estates that supported England's medieval aristocrats. By the 15th century, the duchies of York and Lancaster had become so wealthy and powerful that they ended up battling for the English throne - known as the Wars of the Roses (1455-87), it was a recurring conflict between the supporters of King Henry VI of the House of Lancaster (the red rose) and Richard, Duke of York (the white rose). They ended with the defeat of the Yorkist king Richard III by the earl of Richmond, Henry Tudor, at the Battle of Bosworth Field.

Yorkshire prospered quietly, with fertile farms in the north and the cutlery business of Sheffield in the south, until the big bang of the Industrial Revolution transformed the landscape - south Yorkshire became a centre of coal mining and steel works, while west Yorkshire was home to a massive textile industry, and the cities of Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield and Rotherham flourished. By the late 20th century another revolution was taking place. The heavy industries had died out, and the cities of Yorkshire were re-inventing themselves as shiny, high-tech centres of finance, higher education and tourism.

## Information

The **Yorkshire Tourist Board** ([www.yorkshire.com](http://www.yorkshire.com); 312 Tadcaster Rd, York, YO24 1GS) - postal and email enquiries only - has plenty of general leaflets and brochures. For more detailed information contact the local tourist offices listed throughout this chapter.

## Activities

Yorkshire's varied landscape of wild hills, tranquil valleys, high moors and spectacular coastline offers plenty of opportunities for outdoor activities. See [www.outdoor-yorkshire.com](http://www.outdoor-yorkshire.com) for more details.

## CYCLING

Yorkshire has a vast network of country lanes, although the most scenic areas also attract lots of motorists so even minor roads can be busy at weekends. Options include:

**North York Moors** Off-road bikers can avail themselves of the networks of bridle paths, former railways and disused mining tracks now converted to two-wheel use.

**Whitby to Scarborough** A 20-mile traffic-free route that follows a disused railway line, providing an effortless way to tour this rugged coast.

**White Rose Cycle Route** (NCN route 65) A 120-mile cruise from Hull to York and on to Middlesbrough, via the rolling Yorkshire Wolds and the dramatic western scarp of the North York Moors, with a traffic-free section on the old railway between Selby and York. It is part of the National Cycle Network (p792).

**Yorkshire Dales** Great cycling in the quieter areas in the north around Swaledale and Wensleydale, and the west around Dentdale. There's an excellent network of old drove roads (formerly used for driving cattle to market) which wind across lonely hillsides and tie in neatly with the country lanes in the valleys.

## WALKING

For shorter walks and rambles the best area is the **Yorkshire Dales**, with a great selection of walks through scenic valleys or over wild hilltops, with a few higher summits thrown in for good measure. The **Yorkshire Wolds** hold hidden delights, while the quiet valleys and dramatic coast of the **North York Moors** also have many good opportunities.

All tourist offices stock a mountain of leaflets on local walks (free or up to £1.50), and sell more detailed guidebooks and maps. At train stations and tourist offices, it's worth looking out for leaflets detailing walks from train stations. Some tie in with train times, so you can walk one way and ride back.

## Long-distance Walks

**Cleveland Way** A venerable moor-and-coast classic (details in the North York Moors section, p642).

**Coast to Coast Walk** England's No 1 walk, 190 miles across northern England from the Lake District across the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors. The Yorkshire section takes a week to 10 days and offers some of the finest walking of its kind in England.

**Dales Way** Charming and not-too-strenuous amble from the Yorkshire Dales to the Lake District (details in the Yorkshire Dales section, p605).

**Pennine Way** The Yorkshire section of England's most famous walk runs for over 100 miles via Hebden Bridge, Malham, Horton-in-Ribblesdale and Hawes, passing near Harworth and Skipton.

**Wolds Way** Beautiful but oft-overlooked walk that winds through the most scenic part of eastern Yorkshire (see p615).

## Getting There & Around

The major north-south transport routes – the M1 and A1 motorways and the main London to Edinburgh railway line – run through the middle of Yorkshire, serving the key cities of Sheffield, Leeds and York.

If you're arriving by sea from northern Europe, Hull (in the East Riding) is the region's main port. More specific details for each area are given under Getting There & Away sections throughout this chapter.

**Traveline Yorkshire** (☎ 0871 200 2233; www.yorkshiretravel.net) provides public transport information for the whole of Yorkshire.

## BUS

Long-distances coaches run by **National Express** (☎ 08717 818181; www.nationalexpress.com) serve most cities and large towns in Yorkshire from London, the south of England, the Midlands and Scotland. More details are given under Getting There & Away in the individual town and city sections.

Bus transport around Yorkshire is frequent and efficient, especially between major towns. Services are more sporadic in the national parks but still adequate for reaching most places, particularly in the summer months (June to September).

## TRAIN

The main line between London and Edinburgh runs through Yorkshire, with at least 10 trains per day calling at York and Doncaster, where you can change trains for other Yorkshire destinations. There are also direct services between the major towns and cities of Yorkshire and other northern cities such as Manchester and Newcastle. For timetable information contact **National Rail Enquiries** (☎ 08457 484950; www.nationalrail.co.uk).

# SOUTH YORKSHIRE

As in the valleys of South Wales, it was a confluence of natural resources – coal, iron ore and ample water – that made South Yorkshire a crucible of the British iron, steel and mining industries. From the 18th century to the 20th, the region was the industrial powerhouse of northern England.

The blast furnaces of Sheffield and Rotherham and the coal pits of Barnsley and Doncaster may have closed long ago, but the hulking reminders of that irrepressible Victorian dynamism remain, not only in the old steel works and pit-heads – some of which have been converted into enthralling museums and exhibition spaces – but also in the grand civic buildings that grace Sheffield's city centre, fitting testaments to the untrammelled ambitions of their 19th-century patrons.

## SHEFFIELD

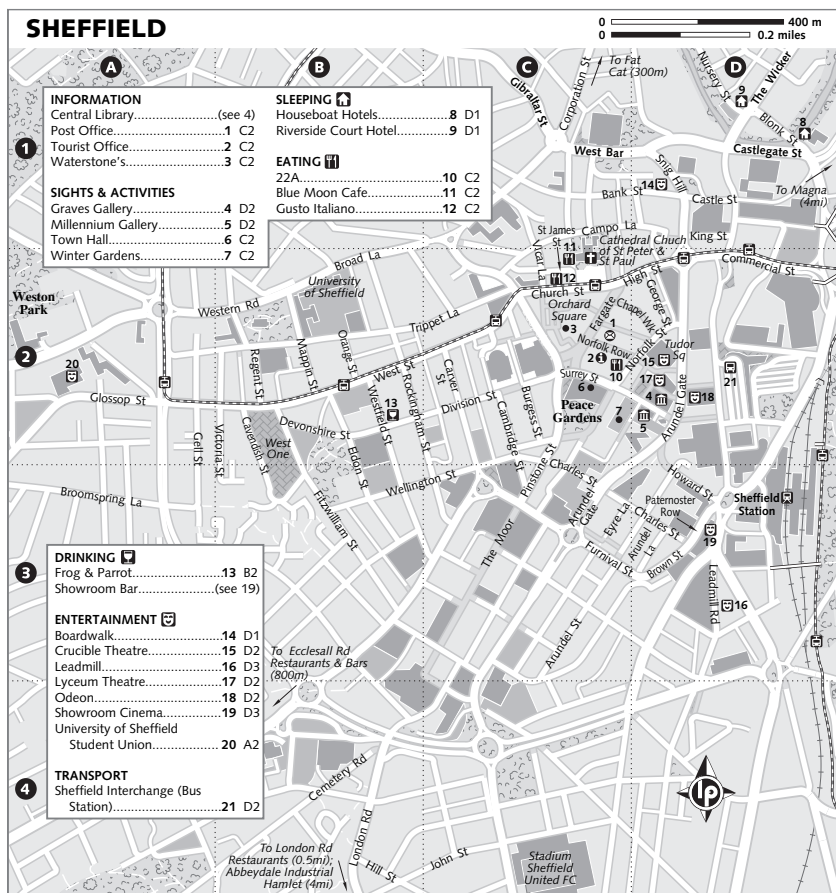
pop 525,800

Steel is everywhere in Sheffield. Today, however, it's not the steel of the foundries, mills and forges that made the city's fortune, or

the canteens of cutlery that made 'Sheffield steel' a household name, but the steel of scaffolding and cranes, of modern sculptures and supertrams, and of new steel-framed buildings rising against the skyline.

The steel industry that made the city famous is long since gone, but after many years of decline Sheffield is on the up again – like many of northern England's cities it has grabbed the opportunities presented by urban renewal with both hands and is working hard to reinvent itself. The new economy is based on services, shopping and the 'knowledge industry' that flows from the city's universities.

This renaissance got off to a shaky start in 2000 when the city's signature millennium



project, the National Centre for Popular Music, closed down due to lack of visitors only 15 months after it opened. An eye-catching and controversial piece of modern architecture shaped like four giant, stainless steel kettles, it now houses Sheffield Hallam University's student union.

But the city's redevelopment seems to be hitting its stride now, with attractive new public spaces and a clutch of interesting museums and galleries. And there's a lively nightlife fuelled by the large student population – the city's two universities support around 24,000 potential pubbers and clubbers – and Sheffield's long-standing reputation as a top spot for music (what do you mean, you've never heard of the Arctic Monkeys?).

## Orientation

The most interesting parts of Sheffield are clustered in the 'Heart of the City' district about 300m northwest of the train station (and immediately west of the bus station), a compact area outlined by Arundel Gate, Furnival St, Carver St, West St, Church St and High St. Stretching west from here, Division St and Devonshire St have hip clothes and record shops, popular restaurants and trendy bars.

## Information

**Central Library** (☎ 0114-273 4711; Surrey St; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon, 9.30am-5.30pm Tue & Thu-Sat, 9.30am-5pm Wed) Internet access.

**Post office** (Norfolk Row; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 3pm Sat)

**Tourist office** (☎ 0114-221 1900; www.sheffieldcitycentre.com; 14 Norfolk Row; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat)

**Waterstone's** (☎ 0114-272 8971; 24-26 Orchard Sq; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 10.30am-5pm Sun) Books & maps.

## Sights & Activities

Since 2000 the city centre has been in the throes of a massive redevelopment that will continue into 2020 and beyond, so expect building sites and roadworks for several years to come.

Of the parts that are already complete, pride of place goes to the **Winter Gardens** (admission free; ☎ 8am-6pm), a wonderfully ambitious public space with a soaring glass roof supported by graceful arches of laminated timber. The 21st-century architecture contrasts sharply with the Victorian **town hall** nearby, and is further enhanced by the **Peace Gardens** – complete with fountains, sculptures and lawns full of

lunching office workers whenever there's a bit of sun.

Sheffield's cultural revival is spearheaded by the **Millennium Gallery** (☎ 0114-278 2600; www.museums-sheffield.org.uk; Arundel Gate; admission free, special exhibitions £6; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 11am-5pm Sun), a collection of four galleries under one roof. The **Ruskin Gallery** houses an eclectic collection of paintings, drawings and manuscripts established and inspired by Victorian artist, writer, critic and philosopher John Ruskin, while the **Metalwork Gallery** charts the transformation of Sheffield's steel industry into craft and design – the 'Sheffield steel' stamp on locally made cutlery and tableware now has the cachet of designer chic.

The nearby **Graves Gallery** (☎ 0114-278 2600; Surrey St; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat) has a neat and accessible display of British and European modern art; the big names represented include Cézanne, Gauguin, Miró, Klee and Picasso.

In the days before steel mills, metalworking was a cottage industry just like wool or cotton. For a glimpse of that earlier, more innocent era, explore the restored 18th-century forges, workshops and machines at the **Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet** (☎ 0114-236 7731; adult/child £3/2; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Thu, 11am-4.45pm Sun Easter-early Oct, closed Fri & Sat), 4 miles southwest of the centre on the A621 (towards the Peak District).

## Events

Each year around April, Sheffield plays host to the immensely popular **World Snooker Championship** (www.worldsnooker.com), staged at the Crucible Theatre.

## Sleeping & Eating

Tourism has not quite taken off yet in Sheffield, and most of the city centre hotels cater primarily to business travellers. New restaurants are springing up – there are several in the Leopold Square development on Leopold St – but the main restaurant areas are outside the centre.

There's a mile-long strip of bars, restaurants, cafes and take-aways on Ecclesall Rd, a mile to the southwest of the city centre, while London Rd, a mile south of the city centre, has a concentration of good-value ethnic restaurants ranging from Turkish to Thai. To find student bars and eateries head along Division St and Devonshire St just west of the city centre.

**Riverside Court Hotel** (☎ 0114-273 1962; www.riversidecourt.co.uk; 4 Nursery St; s/d/tr from £37/47/65) The riverside location and relative proximity to the city centre make this hotel a pretty good choice if you don't want to get stung for a midweek business rate; the rooms were undergoing a facelift at the time of research.

**Houseboat Hotels** (☎ 0114-232 6556; www.houseboathotels.com; Victoria Quays, Wharfe St; d/q from £75/95) Here's something a bit different – kick off your shoes and relax on board your very own permanently moored houseboat, complete with self-catering kitchen and patio area. Guests are entitled to use the gym facilities at the Hilton across the road.

**ourpick** **Gusto Italiano** (☎ 0114-275 1117; 18 Church St; mains £3-6; ☎ 7am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm Sat) A real Italian cafe, from the Italian owners serving homemade Italian food to the genuine Italian coffee being enjoyed by Italian customers reading the Italian newspapers... you get the idea – Gusto Italiano is a great place for a hot lunch, or just cake and coffee.

**22A** (☎ 0114-276 7462; 22A Norfolk Row; mains £5-8; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Sat) Nice music, nice people, nice place – this homely cafe serves hearty breakfasts and offers a mean wrap at lunchtime – hummus and roasted veggie is our favourite – and serves it with a decent cup of java.

**Blue Moon Cafe** (☎ 0114-276 3443; 2 St James St; mains £5-7; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat) Tasty veggie and vegan creations, soups and other good-for-you dishes, all served with the ubiquitous salad, in a very pleasant atmosphere – perfect for a spot of Saturday afternoon lounging.

## Drinking

Lots of bars in a relatively small area plus 24,000 students equals... a wild night out – a pretty straightforward formula, really. The main concentrations of bars are around Division/Devonshire St and West St in the city centre, and Ecclesall Rd to the south-west. Virtually every bar does pub grub until about 7pm.

**Fat Cat** (☎ 0114-249 4801; 23 Alma St) One of Sheffield's finest pubs, the Fat Cat serves a wide range of real ales (some brewed on the premises) in a wonderfully unreconstructed interior. There are three bars, good pub grub, a roaring fire in winter and – in the men's toilets – a fascinating exhibit on local sanitation.

**Frog & Parrot** (☎ 0114-272 1280; 94 Division St) Home to the world's strongest beer (allegedly), the 12% ABV 'Roger & Out'. Unsuspecting ale-heads saunter in looking to down a pint of something as strong as your average wine, which is why they only serve this particular brew in half-pint glasses – so that you have at least a 50/50 chance of walking out under your own steam.

**Showroom Bar** (☎ 0114-249 5479; 7 Paternoster Row) Originally aimed at film fans, this stylish bar with its arty, hip clientele is one of the best night-time destinations in town. The ambience is good, and so is the food, and Sunday afternoons have live jazz.

## Entertainment

Sheffield has a good selection of nightclubs, a couple of top-notch theatres, and venues that attract the big names in music – both classical and popular. The weekly *Sheffield Telegraph* (out on Friday) has the lowdown on Sheffield's entertainment scene, as does the freebie *Exposed*, available almost everywhere.

## CLUBS & LIVE MUSIC

**Boardwalk** (☎ 0114-279 9090; www.theboardwalklive.co.uk; 39 Snig Hill) A Sheffield institution, the Boardwalk provides a stage for local bands, old rockers, up-and-coming stars, world music, the obscure, the novel and the downright weird – they all play here. No real music fan should miss the chance to catch a gig here.

**Leadmill** (☎ 0114-221 2828; www.leadmill.co.uk; 6-7 Leadmill Rd) Every touring band has played the dark and dingy Leadmill on the way up (or on the way down), and it remains the best place in town to hear live rock and alternative music. There are club nights too, but they tend to be cheesy rubbish.

**University of Sheffield Student Union** (☎ 0114-222 8500; www.sheffieldunion.com; Western Bank) A varied and generally good program of rock gigs and club nights – including appearances by some pretty classy DJs – make this a good spot to spend an evening, plus there's the Last Laugh Comedy Club on Sunday nights. The Union is about a mile west of the city centre.

## THEATRE & CINEMAS

The **Crucible Theatre** and **Lyceum Theatre** on Tudor Sq share the same **box office** (☎ 0114-249 6000; www.sheffieldtheatres.co.uk). Both are home to excellent regional drama; the Crucible was undergoing a major renovation at the time of research and will reopen in 2009.

The **Showroom Cinema** (☎ 0114-275 7727; www.showroom.org.uk; Paternoster Row) is the largest independent cinema in England, screening a great mix of art-house, off-beat and not-quite-mainstream films. For everything else, there's the **Odeon** (☎ 0114-224 2007; www.odeon.co.uk; 45-47 Arundel Gate).

### Getting There & Away

For all travel-related info in Sheffield and South Yorkshire, call ☎ 01709-515151 or consult www.travelsouthyorkshire.com.

#### BUS

The bus station – called the Interchange – is just east of the centre, about 250m north of the train station. National Express services link Sheffield with most major centres in the north; there are frequent buses linking Sheffield with Leeds (£5.20, 50 to 75 minutes, hourly), Manchester (£7.60, 1½ hours, three daily) and London (£16.50, 4½ hours, eight daily).

#### TRAIN

Sheffield is served by trains from all directions: Leeds (£8.20, 40 to 75 minutes, twice hourly); London St Pancras (£81, two to three hours, hourly) via Derby or Nottingham; Manchester Piccadilly (£13.80, one hour, twice hourly); and York (£14.50, 1¼ hours, twice hourly).

### Getting Around

Buses run every 10 minutes during the day (Monday to Saturday, less frequently on Sundays). Sheffield also boasts a modern **Supertram** (www.supertram.com, tickets £1.20-2.70) that links the train station to the city centre and outer suburbs.

For a day of sightseeing, a **South Yorkshire Peak Explorer Pass** (adult/concession £8/5.25) is valid for one day on all bus and tram services in South Yorkshire and the northern Peak District. Buy a pass at the **transport information centre** (📞 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-5pm Sat, 9am-5pm Sun) in Sheffield bus station, or at tourist offices in the Peak District.

### AROUND SHEFFIELD

At its peak, the Templeborough steelworks was the world's most productive steel melter, with six 3000°C, electric-arc furnaces producing 1.8 million tonnes of metal a year. The mile-long works, which once had a 10,000-strong workforce, is now a 'science adventure centre' called **Magna** (☎ 01709-720002; www.visit

magna.co.uk; Sheffield Rd, Rotherham; adult/child £9.95/7.95 Apr-Oct, £9.95/7.95 Nov-Mar; 🕒 10am-5pm daily Mar–mid-Sep, 10am-5pm Tue-Sat mid-Sep–Feb).

An unashamed celebration of heavy industry, this vast, dimly lit shed smelling vaguely of machine oil, hot metal and past glory, is a hands-on paradise for kids of all ages, with a huge range of science and technology exhibits based around the themes of earth, air, water and fire. The latter section is especially impressive, with a towering tornado of flame as a centrepiece and the chance to use a real electric arc to create your own tiny puddle of molten steel, if only for a moment or two. The hourly 'Big Melt' – a massive sound, light and fireworks show – re-enacts the firing up of one of the original arc furnaces.

Magna is 4 miles northeast of Sheffield, just off the M1 motorway near Rotherham. Takes bus 69 from Sheffield bus station (30 minutes, every 20 minutes Monday to Friday, half-hourly Saturday, hourly Sunday) towards Rotherham; it'll drop you at the door.

## WEST YORKSHIRE

What steel was to South Yorkshire, so wool was to West Yorkshire. It was the tough and unforgiving textile industry that drove the county's economy from the 18th century on, and the woollen mills and factories – and the canals that were built to transport raw materials and finished products – that defined much of its landscape. But that's all in the past, and recent years have seen the transformation of a once hard-bitten area into quite the picture postcard.

Leeds and Bradford, two adjoining cities so big that they've virtually become one, are the perfect case in point. Though both were founded amid the dark, satanic mills of the Industrial Revolution, both are undergoing radical redevelopment and reinvention, prettifying their town centres and trying to tempt the more adventurous tourist with a slew of new museums, galleries, restaurants and bars.

Beyond the cities, West Yorkshire is a landscape of bleak moorland dissected by deep valleys dotted with old mill towns and villages. The relics of the wool and cloth industries are still visible in the rows



of weavers' cottages and workers' houses built along ridges overlooking the towering chimneys of the mills in the valleys – landscapes that were so vividly described by the Brontë sisters, West Yorkshire's most renowned literary export and biggest tourist draw.

## Activities

The valleys and moors of West Yorkshire make good walking country. The tourist offices all have leaflets and guidebooks on local walks. Hebden Bridge and Haworth make ideal bases for circular walks, with opportunities for several long and short hikes. The **Haworth to Hebden Bridge Path** is a popular trail that links the two towns through quiet farmland and scenic wooded valleys.

The **Pennine Way** (p588), England's longest trail, follows the watershed through the area; some good walks are possible by following it for just a day or two.

## Getting Around

The Metro is West Yorkshire's highly efficient train and bus network, centred on Leeds and Bradford – which are also the main gateways to the county. For transport information call **Metroline** (☎ 0113-245 7676; www.wymetro.com). The excellent Day Rover (£5 for train or bus, £6 train and bus) tickets are good for travel on buses and trains after 9.30am on weekdays and all day at weekends. There's a range of additional Rovers covering buses and/or trains, plus heaps of useful Metro maps and timetables, available from bus and train stations and most tourist offices in West Yorkshire.

## LEEDS

pop 750,200

One of the fastest growing cities in the UK, Leeds is the glitzy, glamorous embodiment of newly rediscovered northern self-confidence. More than a decade of redevelopment has seen the city centre transform from near-derelict mill town into a vision of 21st-century urban chic, with skyscraping office blocks, glass and steel waterfront apartment complexes and renovated Victorian shopping arcades.

Known as the 'Knightsbridge of the North', Leeds has made itself into a shopping mecca, its streets lined with bustling malls sporting the top names in fashion. And when you've shopped till you drop there's a plethora of pubs, clubs and excellent restaurants to relax

in. From cutting-edge couture to contemporary cuisine, Leeds will serve it to you on a plate... or more likely in a stylishly designed bag. Amid all this cutting-edge style, it seems fitting that the network of city bus routes includes peach, mauve and magenta lines as well as the more humdrum red, orange and blue.

## Orientation

Easily managed on foot, most of the action in Leeds' city centre is concentrated between Boar Lane to the south and The Headrow – the main drag – to the north, all within 10 to 15 minutes' walk from the train station. Briggate, which runs north-south between the two, is the focus of most of the shopping, while the best nightlife is concentrated in the warren of small streets at the eastern end of Boar Lane. In recent years there has been substantial waterfront development along the River Aire at The Calls and around Brewery Wharf.

## Information

**Central Library** (☎ 0113-247 6016; Calverley St;

☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Wed, 9am-5pm Thu & Fri, 10am-5pm Sat, 1-5pm Sun) Internet access.

**Gateway Yorkshire/Leeds Visitor Centre** (☎ 0113-242 5242; www.visitleeds.co.uk; The Arcade, Leeds City Train Station; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat, 10am-4pm Sun)

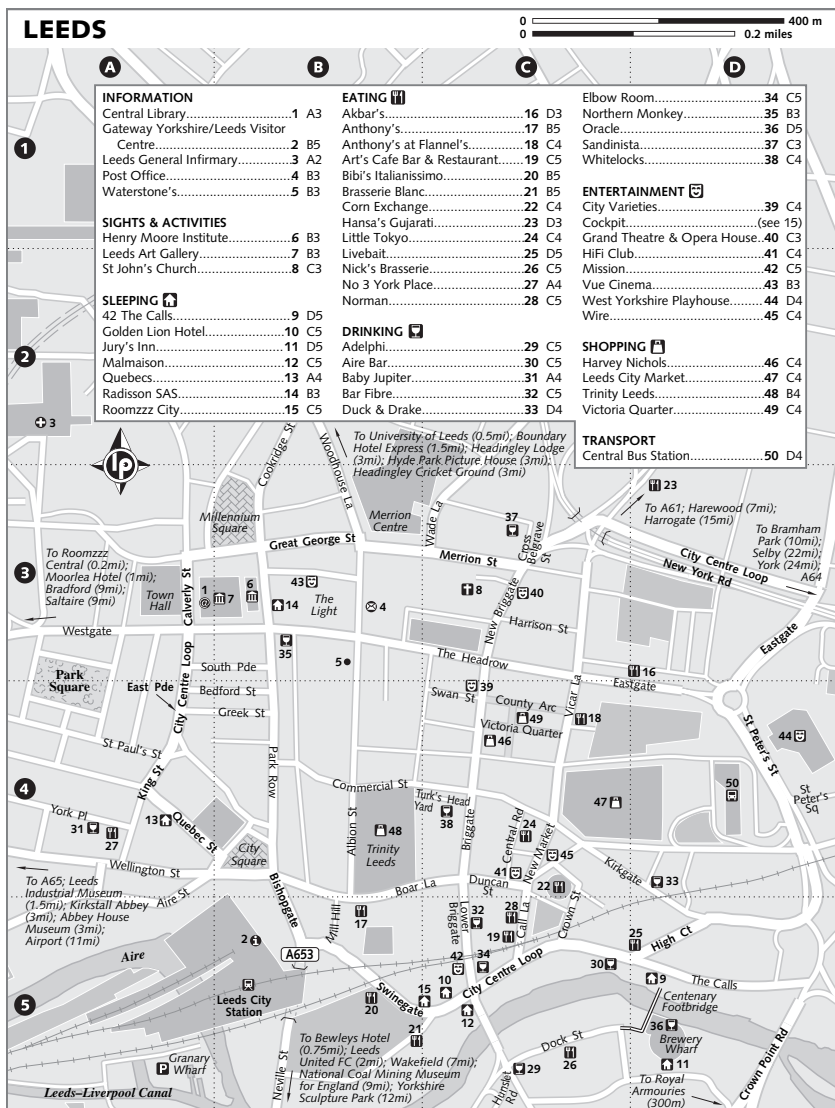
**Leeds General Infirmary** (☎ 0113-243 2799; Great George St)

**Post office** (St John's Centre, 116 Albion St; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat)

**Waterstone's** (☎ 0113-244 4588; 93-97 Albion St; 9am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, 10.30am-4.30pm Sun) Maps and books.

## Sights & Activities

Leeds' most interesting museum is undoubtedly the **Royal Armouries** (☎ 0113-220 1940; www.armouries.org.uk; Armouries Dr; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm), beside the snazzy Clarence Dock residential development. It was originally built to house the armour and weapons from the Tower of London but was subsequently expanded to cover 3000 years' worth of fighting and self-defence. It all sounds a bit macho, but the exhibits are as varied as they are fascinating: films, live-action demonstrations and hands-on technology can awaken interests you never thought you had, from jousting to Indian elephant armour – we dare you not to learn something. Catch bus 95, or take the Waterbus (adult/child £2/1, 15 minutes, two to four daily) along the river from The Embankment at the Neville St bridge.



One of the world's largest textile mills has been transformed into the **Leeds Industrial Museum** (☎ 0113-263 7861; [www.leeds.gov.uk/arm](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/arm) leymills; Canal Rd; adult/child £3/1; 🕒 10am-5pm Tue-Sat, 1-5pm Sun), telling the story of Leeds' industrial past, both glorious and ignominious. The city became rich off the sheep's back but at some cost in human terms – working conditions

were, well, Dickensian. As well as a selection of working machinery, there's a particularly informative display on how cloth is actually made. Take bus 5 from the train station.

If all this industrial stuff makes you feel starved of a bit of high culture, get yourself to the **Leeds Art Gallery** (☎ 0113-247 8256; [www.leeds.gov.uk/artgallery](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/artgallery); The Headrow; admission free; 🕒 10am-

8pm Mon & Tue, noon-8pm Wed, 10am-5pm Thu-Sat, 1-5pm Sun). It's packed with 19th- and 20th-century British heavyweights – Turner, Constable, Stanley Spencer, Wyndham Lewis et al – along with contemporary pieces by more recent arrivals such as Antony Gormley, sculptor of the *Angel of the North* (p757). Pride of place, however, goes to the outstanding genius of Henry Moore (1898–1986), who graduated from the Leeds School of Art. The adjoining **Henry Moore Institute** (☎ 0113-246 7467; www.henry-moore-fdn.co.uk; The Headrow; admission free; ☎ 10am-5.30pm Thu-Mon, 10am-9pm Wed), in a converted Victorian warehouse, showcases the work of 20th-century sculptors but not, despite the name, anything by Moore; for more of Moore, head to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (p601).

Tucked away off northern Briggate is the redundant but lovingly nurtured **St John's Church** (☎ 0113-244 1689; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Tue-Sat), a one-off masterpiece consecrated in 1634 – the first in the north of England following the Reformation. The gorgeous (and original) oak box pews are certainly eye-catching, but they're only a temporary distraction from the intricate medieval design of the magnificent Jacobean screen that is without parallel in all of England.

Leeds' most impressive medieval structure is the beautiful **Kirkstall Abbey** (☎ 0113-274 8041; Abbey Rd; admission free; ☎ 11am-4pm Tue-Sun Apr-Sep, to 3pm Oct-Mar), founded in 1152 by Cistercian monks from Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire, and one of the best-preserved medieval abbeys in Britain.

Across the road, the **Abbey House Museum** (☎ 0113-230 5492; www.leeds.gov.uk/abbeyhouse; Abbey Rd; adult/child £3.50/1.50; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Fri & Sun, noon-5pm Sat), once the Great Gate House to the abbey, contains meticulously reconstructed shops and houses that evoke Victorian Leeds, and displays that give an interesting insight into monastic life. Children will enjoy it.

The abbey and museum are off the A65, three miles northwest of the centre; take bus 33, 33A or 757.

## Festivals & Events

The August Bank Holiday (the weekend preceding the last Monday in August) sees 50,000-plus music fans converge on Bramham Park, 10 miles outside the city centre, for the **Leeds Festival** (☎ 0871 231 0821; www.leedsfestival.com), one of England's biggest rock music extravaganzas, spread across four separate stages.

## Sleeping

There are no budget options in the city centre and the midrange choices are between absolute fleapits and chain hotels. If you want somewhere cheapish you're forced to head for the 'burbs, where there are plenty of decent B&Bs and smallish hotels.

### MIDRANGE

**Golden Lion Hotel** (☎ 0113-243 6454; www.thegoldenlion-leeds.co.uk; 2 Lower Briggate; s/d from £85/99; ☎) They don't come much more central than Leeds' oldest hotel which, after a much-needed makeover, can now compete with the rest. The rooms are tidy and modern, if a little small, while the public areas retain a comfortably old-fashioned atmosphere.

**Jury's Inn** (☎ 0113-283 8800; www.jurysinns.com; Kendell St, Brewery Pl; r £60-103; ☎) The successful Irish hotel chain has another hit with its Leeds hotel; large, functional rooms, plenty of personal charm and few complaints. If you're walking, it's just across the Centenary footbridge from the city centre, in the heart of the fashionable Brewery Wharf district.

**Bewleys Hotel** (☎ 0113-234 2340; www.bewleyshotels.com; City Walk, Sweet St; r £69; ☎) Bewleys is super-convenient for motorists, just off Junction 3 on the M621 but also just 10 minutes' walk from the city centre, and with secure basement parking. Rooms are stylish and well appointed, with soundproofed walls and windows; the flat rate accommodates up to two adults plus three kids under 16.

**Roomzz Central** (☎ 0113-233 0400; www.roomzz.co.uk; 2 Burley Rd; r from £79; ☎) This outfit offers bright and modern luxury apartments complete with fitted kitchen, with the added advantage of a 24-hour hotel reception. Roomzz Central is half a mile west of the city centre; by 2009 there will also be **Roomzz City** (12 Swingate), right in the city centre.

The following places outside the city centre are also recommended:

**Moorlea Hotel** (☎ 0113-243 2653; www.moorleahotel.co.uk; 146 Woodsley Rd; s/d from £36/48) Family-friendly hotel northwest of the centre, near the University of Leeds.

**Boundary Hotel Express** (☎ 0113-275 7700; www.boundaryhotel.co.uk; 42 Cardigan Rd; s/d £40/50; ☎) Basic but welcoming; 1.5 miles northwest of centre, near Headingley cricket ground.

**Headingley Lodge** (☎ 0113-278 5323; www.headingleylodge.co.uk; Headingley Stadium, St Michael's Lane; d/f £50/60; ☎) Smart, comfortable rooms with views of Headingley cricket ground; part of the stadium complex.

**TOP END**

**Radisson SAS** (☎ 0113-236 6000; www.leeds.radissonsas.com; 1 The Light, Cookridge St; r £100-130; (P) (Q)) An extraordinary conversion of the former HQ of the Leeds Permanent Building Society, a listed building dating from 1930, with 'standard' rooms that are anything but – you have a choice of three styles: hi-tech, art deco and Italian, while the business-class rooms are truly luxurious.

**Malmaison** (☎ 0113-398 1000; www.malmaison.com; 1 Swinegate; s/d/ste from £130/160/275) Self-consciously stylish, this typical Malmaison property is set in a former bus and tram company HQ with a fabulous waterfront location and all of the trademark touches – huge comfy beds, sexy lighting and all the latest designer gear.

**42 The Calls** (☎ 0113-244 0099; www.42thecalls.co.uk; 42 The Calls; r/ste from £150/199; (Q)) This snazzy boutique hotel in what was once a 19th-century grain mill is a big hit with the trendy business crowd, who love its sharp, polished lines and designer aesthetic. The smaller studio rooms are pretty compact, and breakfast is not included; it'll cost you an extra £15 for the full English.

**ourpick Quebecs** (☎ 0113-244 8989; www.theetn collection.com; 9 Quebec St; s/d/ste from £160/170/280; (Q)) Victorian grace at its opulent best is the theme of our favourite hotel in town, a conversion of the former Leeds and County Liberal Club. The elaborate wood panelling and heraldic stained-glass windows in the public areas are matched by the contemporary design of the bedrooms. Two of the deluxe split-level suites – the cutely named Sherbert and Liquorice suites – have dramatic spiral staircases.

**Eating**

The Leeds restaurant scene is constantly evolving, with new places springing up in the wake of new shopping and residential developments. The latest scheme is the **Corn Exchange** (www.cornx.net), a beautiful Victorian building with a spectacular domed roof. At the time of research it was being converted to house a collection of food and drink retailers, with a new branch of Anthony's (see opposite) in the central piazza.

**BUDGET**

**Akbar's** (☎ 0113-245 6566; www.akbars.co.uk; 15 Eastgate; mains £5.50-7; (M) dinner only) Bit of an Egyptian theme going on at this exceptionally popular Indian restaurant – sarcophagi and cat-gods

watch over the cutting-edge decor beneath a 'night in the desert' ceiling. The traditional curry dishes come in pyramid-size portions, and they don't take bookings – expect to wait half an hour for a table on weekend nights.

**Art's Cafe-Bar & Restaurant** (☎ 0113-243 8243; www.artscafebar.co.uk; 42 Call Lane; mains lunch £5-7, dinner £10-14; (M) noon-11pm Mon-Fri, noon-2am Sat, 10.30am-11pm Sun) Local art on the walls and a Bohemian vibe throughout make this a popular place for quiet reflection, a chat and a really good cup of coffee. The dinner menu offers half a dozen old favourites, including beer-battered haddock (sustainably sourced, of course) with chips and peas.

**Hansa's Gujarati** (☎ 0113-244 4408; www.hansas restaurant.com; 72-74 North St; mains £5-7; (M) 5-10pm Mon-Thu, 5-11pm Fri, 6-11pm Sat, noon-2pm Sun) A Leeds institution, Hansa's has been dishing up wholesome Gujarati vegetarian cuisine for 20 years. The restaurant is plain and unassuming, save for a Hindu shrine, but the food is exquisite – specialities of the house include *samosa chaat*, a mix of spiced potato and chickpea samosas with a yogurt and tamarind sauce.

**Norman** (☎ 0872 080 8000; www.normanbar.co.uk; 36 Call Lane; mains £7-9; (M) noon-2am Mon-Sat, noon-midnight Sun) One of the city's hippest bars – a touch of tongue-in-cheek kitsch (think fringed lampshades and a cuckoo clock) spice up the stylish modern lines here – offers a tempting Asian noodle-bar menu with dishes ranging from squid tempura and edamame beans to seafood ramen and Vietnamese beef salad.

**MIDRANGE**

**Little Tokyo** (☎ 0113-243 9090; 24 Central Rd; mains £7-15; (M) 11.30am-10pm Mon-Thu, 11.30am-11pm Fri & Sat) Fans of genuine Japanese food should go no further than this superb restaurant, which serves a wide array of quality sushi and sashimi (including half-portions) and Bento boxes – those handy trays that serve the Japanese equivalent of a four-course meal.

**Nick's Brasserie** (☎ 0113-246 9444; www.nicks brasserie.com; 20 Dock St; mains £10-14; (M) noon-10pm Tue-Sat, noon-3pm Sun) Housed in a converted red-brick warehouse on up-and-coming Dock St, Nick's offers an intriguing menu that sees crab linguini with chilli and lime, and leek and ricotta cannelloni, alongside stalwarts such as devilled whitebait and steak-frites with pepper sauce. Weekend brunch (served noon to 4pm) ranges from a traditional fry-up or bacon sandwich to

eggs Benedict or scrambled egg with smoked salmon.

**Bibi's Italianissimo** (☎ 0113-243 0905; www.bibisrestaurant.com; Criterion Pl, Swinegate; mains £10-16; ☎ noon-10.30pm Mon & Tue, noon-11.30pm Wed-Sat, noon-10pm Sun) The mamma of Leeds' Italian eateries is a blast from the past, a glamorous, 1920s art deco-style palace – all mirrored pillars, crisp linen and waistcoated waiters – but with age comes experience and the food remains the best Italian in town. Live jazz Wednesday nights.

**Livebait** (☎ 0113-244 4144; 11-15 Wharf St, High Court; mains £10-17; ☎ noon-3pm & 5-10.30pm) Quality seafood – from Whitby crab and Canadian lobster to fresh oysters and langoustines – is the order of the day in this friendly and welcoming restaurant. Classic fish and chips is done with a light and crispy batter and served with homemade tartare sauce and deliciously minty mushy peas.

**Brasserie Blanc** (☎ 0113-220 6060; www.brasserieblanc.com; Victoria Mill, Sovereign St; mains £11-17; ☎ noon-2.45pm & 5.30-10.30pm Mon-Fri, noon-11pm Sat, noon-10pm Sun) The latest offering from Raymond Blanc manages to create a surprisingly intimate and romantic space amid the cast-iron pillars and red brick of an old Victorian warehouse. The menu is unerringly French, from escargots to Toulouse sausage, and there's a lovely outdoor terrace overlooking the river.

**No 3 York Place** (☎ 0113-245 9922; www.no3yorkplace.co.uk; 3 York Pl; mains £12-17; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat) Any debate over which is the best restaurant in town will include this superb French eatery, with its designer dining area and regularly changing menu of Gallic delicacies – how about roast duck with endive tarte tatin, or wood pigeon with caramelised apple and thyme jus?

**Anthony's at Flannel's** (☎ 0113-242 8732; www.anthonysatflannels.co.uk; 3rd fl, Flannel's Fashion Centre, 68-78 Vicar Lane; 2-/3-course lunch £15/18; ☎ 9am-6pm Tue-Thu, 9am-11pm Fri & Sat, 11am-5pm Sun) The brasserie-style brother of the award-winning Anthony's (see right), this bright and cheerful modern restaurant set amid white walls and timber beams features much of Anthony's style stuffed into its excellent sandwiches, salads, lunches and luxurious afternoon teas (£12). If you want to see and be seen, there's also **Anthony's Patisserie** in the classy setting of the Victoria Quarter arcade across the street.

## TOP END

**Anthony's** (☎ 0113-245 5922; www.anthonysrestaurant.co.uk; 19 Boar Lane; 2-/3-course dinner £34/42; ☎ noon-2pm Tue-Sat, 7-9pm Tue-Thu, 7-10pm Fri & Sat) Probably the most talked about restaurant in town, Anthony's serves superb British cuisine to a clientele so eager that they'll think nothing of booking a month in advance. If you go at any other time except Saturday evening, you'll get away with making your reservations a day or so earlier.

## Drinking

Leeds is justifiably renowned for its selection of pubs and bars. Glammed-up hordes of party animals crawl the cluster of venues around Boar Lane and Call Lane, where bars are opening (and closing) all the time. Most bars open till 2am; many turn into clubs after 11pm or midnight, with an admission charge.

**Baby Jupiter** (☎ 0113-242 1202; 11 York Pl) A retro gem with lots of purple velvet, hanging fishbowls and images from old sci-fi films, the basement bar sports a cool soundtrack that ranges from indie, funk and soul to punk, new wave and electro.

**Bar Fibre** (☎ 08701 200888; 168 Lower Briggate) Leeds' most popular gay bar, which spills out onto the cleverly named Queen's Court, is where the beautiful congregate to congratulate themselves on being so lucky. There's another cluster of gay bars downhill at the junction of Lower Briggate and The Calls.

**Duck & Drake** (☎ 0113-246 5806; 43 Kirkgate) A down-to-earth traditional boozier with a well-worn atmosphere, a cast of regular pub characters, and no fewer than 16, hand-pulled real ales to choose from.

**Northern Monkey** (☎ 0113-242 6630; 115 The Headrow) An attractive bare-floorboards-and-leather-sofas kind of bar catering to a youngish crowd – Becks and vodkas behind the bar, and an indie soundtrack with guest DJs on Friday and Saturday nights.

**Oracle** (☎ 0113-246 9912; 3 Brewery Pl) The place to be seen on a summer afternoon, Oracle has a huge outdoor terrace overlooking the River Aire. It serves gourmet burgers and a great selection of international beers just made to be served cold, from Guinness to Grolsch to Tsingtao. Upstairs there's a very chic cocktail and champagne bar that also sells spirits by the bottle, including Regy Martin at £300 a pop.

**Sandinista** (☎ 0113-305 0372; 5/5A Cross Belgrave St) This laid-back bar has a Latin look but a unifying theme, attracting an eclectic clientele with its mixed bag of music and unpretentious atmosphere. If you're not too fussed about looking glam, this is the spot for you.

**Whitelocks** (☎ 0113-245 3950; Turk's Head Yard) There's lots of polished wood, gleaming brass and colourful stained glass in this popular traditional pub dating from 1715. Theakstons, Deuchars IPA and several other real ales are on tap, and in summer the crowds spill out into the courtyard.

Other tips for a tipple:

**Adelphi** (☎ 0113-245 6377; 3-5 Hunslet Rd) Built in 1898 and hardly changed since.

**Aire Bar** (☎ 0113-245 5500; 32 The Calls) Red-brick vaults, leather sofas, Timothy Taylor's Landlord real ale, and a terrace overhanging the river.

**Elbow Room** (☎ 0113-245 7011; 64 Call Lane) Pop art, purple pool tables and laid-back music.

## Entertainment

In order to make sense of the ever-evolving scene, get your hands on the fortnightly *Leeds Guide* (£1.90; www.leedsguide.co.uk) or *Absolute Leeds* (£1.50; www.absoluteleeds.co.uk).

## CLUBS

The tremendous Leeds club scene attracts people from miles around. In true northern tradition people brave the cold wearing next to nothing, even in winter, which is a spectacle in itself. Clubs charge a variety of admission prices, ranging from as little as £1 on a slow weeknight to £10 or more on Saturday.

**Hifi Club** (☎ 0113-242 7353; www.thehificlub.co.uk; 2 Central Rd) This intimate club is a good break from the hardcore sound of four to the floor: if it's Tamla Motown or the percussive beats of dance-floor jazz that shake your booty, this is the spot for you.

**Cockpit** (☎ 0113-244 1573; www.thecockpit.co.uk; Swinegate) Snugly ensconced in a series of railway arches, the legendary Cockpit is the antidote to dance clubs. A live music venue of note – Coldplay, White Stripes, Flaming Lips and Amy Winehouse have all cut their teeth here – it also hosts The Session on Friday nights, a superb indie/electro/guitar club night.

**Mission** (☎ 0870 122 0114; www.clubmission.com; 8-13 Heaton's Ct) A massive club that redefines the

term 'up-for-it'. Thursday night is gay go-go dancers bopping to commercial pop, while Saturdays are for the signature Glasshouse house session.

**Wire** (☎ 0113-234 0980; www.wireclub.co.uk; 2-8 Call Lane) This small, atmospheric basement club, set in a forest of Victorian cast-iron pillars, throbs to a different beat every night, from rock 'n' roll to drum 'n' bass. Popular with local students.

## THEATRE & OPERA

**City Varieties** (☎ 0113-243 0808; www.cityvarieties.co.uk; Swan St) This old-fashioned music hall features anything from clairvoyants to comedy acts to country music.

**Grand Theatre & Opera House** (☎ 0113-222 6222; www.leedsgrandtheatre.com; 46 New Briggate) Hosts musicals, plays and opera, including performances by the acclaimed **Opera North** (☎ 0113-244 5326; www.operanorth.co.uk).

**West Yorkshire Playhouse** (☎ 0113-213 7700; www.wyplayhouse.com; Quarry Hill Mount) The Playhouse has a reputation for excellent live drama, from the classics to cutting-edge new writing.

## CINEMA

**Hyde Park Picture House** (☎ 0113-275 2045; www.hydeparkpicturehouse.co.uk; Brudenell Rd) This Edwardian cinema shows a meaty range of art-house and mainstream choices. Take bus 56 from the city centre.

**Vue Cinema** (☎ 08712 240240; www.myvue.com; 22 The Light, The Headrow) For mainstream first-run films, head for the Vue on the second floor of The Light entertainment complex.

## SPORT

**Leeds United Football Club** (☎ 0113-226 1000; www.leedsunited.com; Elland Rd) Leeds supporters know all about pain: relegation from the Premiership in 2004 to the relative wilderness of the Championship was bad enough, but in 2007 they dropped another rung down the ladder to League One. All the same, loyal fans continue to pack the Elland Rd stadium in their masses. Take bus 93 or 96 from City Sq.

Headingley has been hosting cricket matches since 1890. It is still used for test matches and is the home ground of the **Yorkshire County Cricket Club** (☎ tickets 0113-278 7394; www.yorkshireccc.org.uk). Take bus 18 or 56 from the city centre.

## Shopping

Leeds' city centre has so many shopping arcades that they all seem to blend into one giant mall. The latest development – **Trinity Leeds**, between Commercial St and Boar Lane, scheduled to open in 2010 – will be the city's biggest.

The mosaic-paved, stained-glass-roofed Victorian arcades of **Victoria Quarter** (☎ 0113-245 5333; www.v-q.co.uk), between Briggate and Vicar Lane, are well worth visiting for aesthetic reasons alone; dedicated shoppers can join the footballers' wives browsing boutiques by Louis Vuitton, Vivienne Westwood and Swarovski. The flagship store here, of course, is **Harvey Nichols** (☎ 0113-204 8000; 107-111 Briggate).

Just across the street to the east you'll find the opposite end of the retail spectrum in **Leeds City Market** (☎ 0113-214 5162; www.leedsmarket.com; Kirkgate; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, to 1pm Wed, open-air market Thu-Tue). Once the home of Michael Marks, who later joined Spencer, this is Britain's largest covered market, selling fresh meat, fish, fruit and vegetables, as well as household goods.

## Getting There & Away

### AIR

Eleven miles northwest of the city via the A65, **Leeds Bradford International airport** (☎ 0113-250 9696; www.lbia.co.uk) offers flights to a range of domestic and international destinations. The Metroconnect 757 bus (£2, 40 minutes, every 30 minutes, hourly on Sunday) runs between Leeds bus station and the airport. A taxi costs about £18.

### BUS

**National Express** (☎ 08717 818181; www.nationalexpress.com) serves most major cities, including hourly services from London (£20, 4½ hours) and half-hourly services from Manchester (£8.40, 1¼ hours).

**Yorkshire Coastliner** (☎ 01653-692556; www.yorkshirecoastliner.co.uk) has useful services from Leeds to York, Castle Howard, Goathland and Whitby (840 and 842), and to York, Scarborough (843), Filey and Bridlington (845 and X45). A Freedom Ticket (£12) gives unlimited bus travel for a day.

### TRAIN

Leeds City Station has hourly services from London King's Cross (£103, 2½ hours), Sheffield (£11, 45 minutes), Manchester (£15, one hour) and York (£10, 30 minutes).

Leeds is also the starting point for services on the famous Settle–Carlisle Line. For more details see p609.

## Getting Around

Metro's **FreeCityBus** service runs every few minutes from 6.30am to 7.30pm Monday to Saturday, linking the bus and train stations to all the main shopping areas in the city centre.

The various **Day Rover** passes (see p593) covering trains and/or buses are good for reaching Bradford, Haworth and Hebden Bridge.

## AROUND LEEDS

A day trip from Leeds opens up a fascinating range of options: stately splendour at Harewood, dust and darkness at the National Coal Mining Museum for England, or technology and poppads at Bradford, to name but a few. Places are listed roughly in order of distance from Leeds, first to the west and north, then to the south.

## Bradford

pop 293,700

Their suburbs may have merged into one sprawling urban conurbation, but Bradford remains far removed from its much more glamorous neighbour, Leeds. Or so Loiners (people from Leeds) would have you believe. But even Bradford is getting a facial: much of the drab city centre is undergoing a revamp which, according to town planners, will see it recast as an urban park with its very own lake in front of city hall. It sounds promising, and a far cry from the kind of 'ugliness that could not only be tolerated but often enjoyed,' as the city's favourite son, the cantankerous JB Priestley (1894–1984), once described it.

Thanks to its role as a major player in the wool trade, Bradford attracted large numbers of Bangladeshi and Pakistani throughout the 20th century, who – despite occasional racial tensions – have helped reinvigorate the city and give it new energy. A high point of the year is the colourful Mela (see p600).

## SIGHTS

Bradford's top attraction is the **National Media Museum** (☎ 01274-202030; www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk; admission free, special events & cinemas adult/child £5.50/3.70, IMAX adult/child £6.95/4.95; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun), an impressive, glass-fronted building that chronicles the story of photography,

film, TV, radio and the web from 19th-century cameras and early animation to digital technology and the psychology of advertising. There's lots of hands-on stuff too; you can film yourself in a bedroom scene or play at being a TV newsreader. The IMAX screen shows the usual combination of in-your-face nature films and space documentaries.

The other big draw is the **Alhambra Theatre** (☎ 01274-432375; www.bradford-theatres.co.uk; Morley St), a magnificent art-deco building dating from 1914 that is a monument to the Edwardian era of music hall entertainment. It is still in use, and regularly stages shows ranging from musicals to Shakespeare to ballet.

**Bradford Industrial Museum** (☎ 01274-435900; www.bradfordmuseums.org; Moorside Rd, Eccleshill; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sat, noon-5pm Sun), 3 miles out of the centre, gives a hint of what a Yorkshire textile mill was like in the late 19th century. Other exhibits include various steam engines (sometimes working), transport from the last 100 years, and a horse-drawn tram to give a quick 'step back in history' round the car park.

Another monument to Bradford's glorious past is the **Wool Exchange** (Hustlergate), a magnificent Victorian Gothic building that was once home to crowds of wool traders; today it must rank as the most impressive branch of Waterstone's bookshops in the country.

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The **Bradford Mela** (www.visitbradford.com/events) – from the Sanskrit word 'to meet' – is a two-day celebration of Asian music, dance, arts, crafts and food. It's held in mid-June.

## EATING

Bradford is famous for its curries, so if you're still here in the evening don't miss trying one of the city's hundred or so restaurants. A great help is the **Bradford Curry Guide** (http://website.lineone.net/~bradfordcurryguide), which sorts out the rogan josh from the rotten nosh.

**Kashmir** (☎ 01274-726513; 27 Morley St; mains £4-5; ☎ evenings to 3am) Bradford's oldest curry house has top Asian tucker, served with no frills or booze (it's BYO). Whatever you do, go for a table upstairs, as the soul-destroying, windowless basement has all the character of a public toilet. It's just along the street from the Alhambra Theatre.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

Bradford is on the Metro train line from Leeds (£2.65, 20 minutes), with very frequent services every day.

## Saltaire

A Victorian-era landmark, Saltaire was a model industrial village built in 1851 by philanthropic wool-baron and teetotaler Titus Salt. The rows of neat honey-coloured cottages – now a Unesco World Heritage site – overlook what was once the largest factory in the world.

The factory is now **Salt's Mill** (☎ 01274-531163; www.saltsmill.org.uk; admission free; ☎ 10am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun), a splendidly bright and airy building where the main draw is a permanent exhibition of art by local boy David Hockney (1937–). In a fitting metaphor for the shift in the British economy from making things to selling them, this former engine of industry is now a shrine to retail therapy, housing shops selling books, crafts and outdoor equipment, and a cafe.

Saltaire's **tourist office** (☎ 01274-774993; www.visitsaltaire.com; 2 Victoria Rd; ☎ 10am-5pm) has maps of the village and runs hour-long guided walks (adult/child £3.50/2.50) through the town throughout the year.

Saltaire is 9 miles west of Leeds centre, and 3 miles north of Bradford centre. It's easily reached by Metro rail from either.

## Harewood

The great park, sumptuous gardens and mighty edifice of **Harewood House** (☎ 0113-218 1010; www.harewood.org; adult/child £13.50/8.50; ☎ grounds 10am-6pm, house 11am-4.30pm mid-Mar–Oct, house & grounds 10am-4pm Sat & Sun Nov–mid-Mar) could easily fill an entire day trip from Leeds, and also makes a good port of call on the way to Harrogate.

A classic example of a stately English pile, the house was built between 1759 and 1772 by the era's superstar designers – John Carr designed the exterior, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown laid out the grounds, Thomas Chippendale supplied the furniture (the largest commission he ever received, costing the unheard-of amount of £10,000), Robert Adams designed the interior, and Italy was raided to create an appropriate art collection. The superb terrace was added 100 years later by yet another top name, Sir Charles Barry – he of the Houses of Parliament.



Many locals come to Harewood just to relax or saunter through the grounds, without even thinking of going inside the house. Hours of entertainment can be had in the **Bird Garden**, with many exotic species including penguins (feeding time at 2pm is a highlight), and there's also a boating lake, cafe and adventure playground. For more activity, there's a network of walking trails around the lake or through the parkland.

Harewood is about 7 miles north of Leeds on the A61. Take bus 36 (20 minutes; at least half-hourly Monday to Saturday, hourly on Sunday) which continues to Harrogate. Visitors coming by bus get half-price admission, so hang on to your ticket. From the main gate, it's a 2-mile walk through the grounds to the house and gardens, or you can use the free shuttle service.

### National Coal Mining Museum for England

For close to three centuries, West and South Yorkshire was synonymous with coal production; the collieries shaped and scarred the landscape, while entire villages grew up around the pits, each male inhabitant and their descendants destined to spend their working lives underground. The industry came to a shuddering halt in the 1980s, but the imprint of coal is still very much in evidence, even if there's only a handful of collieries left. One of these, at Claphouse, is now the **National Coal Mining Museum for England** (☎ 01924-848806; www.ncm.org.uk; Overton, near Wakefield; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm, last tour 3.15pm), a superb testament to the inner workings of a coal mine.

The highlight of a visit is the underground tour – equipped with helmet and head-torch you descend almost 150m in the 'cage' then follow subterranean passages to the coal seam where massive drilling machines now stand idle. Former miners work as guides, and explain the details – sometimes with a suitably authentic and almost impenetrable mix of local dialect (known in Yorkshire as Tyke) and technical terminology.

Up on top, there are audiovisual displays, some fascinating memorabilia (including sketches by Henry Moore) and exhibits about trade unions, strikes and the wider mining communities – only a bit over-romanticised in parts. You can also stroll round the pit-pony stables (their equine inhabitants also now retired) or the slightly eerie bathhouse,

unchanged since the miners scrubbed off the coal dust for the last time and emptied their lockers. There are also nature trails in the surrounding fields and woods.

The museum is about 10 miles south of Leeds on the A642 between Wakefield and Huddersfield, which drivers can reach via Junction 40 on the M1. By public transport, take a train from Leeds to Wakefield (15 minutes, at least hourly), and then bus 232 towards Huddersfield (25 minutes, hourly).

### Yorkshire Sculpture Park

One of England's most impressive collections of sculpture is scattered across the formidable 18th-century estate of Bretton Park, 200-odd hectares of lawns, fields and trees. A bit like the art world's equivalent of a safari park, the **Yorkshire Sculpture Park** (☎ 01924-830302; www.ysp.co.uk; Bretton, near Wakefield; admission free, parking £4; ☎ 10am-6pm Apr-Sep, to 5pm Oct-Mar) showcases the work of dozens of sculptors both national and international, but the main focus of this outdoor gallery is the work of local kids Barbara Hepworth (1903-75), who was born in nearby Wakefield, and Henry Moore.

The rural setting is especially fitting for Moore's work, as the artist was hugely influenced by the outdoors and preferred his art to be sited in the landscape rather than indoors. Other highlights include pieces by Andy Goldsworthy and Eduardo Paolozzi. There's also a program of temporary exhibitions and installations by visiting artists, plus a bookshop and cafe.

The park is 12 miles south of Leeds and 18 miles north of Sheffield, just off Junction 38 on the M1 motorway. If you're on public transport, take a train from Leeds to Wakefield (15 minutes, at least hourly), or from Sheffield to Barnsley (20 minutes, at least hourly); then take bus 444 which runs between Wakefield and Barnsley via Bretton Park (30 minutes, hourly Monday to Saturday).

### HEBDEN BRIDGE

pop 4086

Tucked tightly into the fold of a steep-sided valley, Yorkshire's funkiest little town is a former mill town that refused to go gently into that good night with the dying of industry's light; it raged a bit and then morphed into an attractive little tourist trap with a distinctly bohemian atmosphere. Besides the honest-to-God Yorkshire folk who have lived here for

years, the town is home to university academics, artists, die-hard hippies and a substantial gay community – all of which explains the abundance of craft shops, organic cafes and secondhand bookstores.

The **Hebden Bridge Visitor & Canal Centre** (☎ 01422-843831; www.calderdale.gov.uk; Butlers Wharf, New Rd; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 10.30am-5pm Sat & Sun mid-Mar–mid-Oct, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10.30am-4.15pm Sat & Sun rest of year) has a good stock of maps and leaflets on local walks, including a saunter to **Hardcastle Crag**, the local beauty spot, and nearby **Gibson Mill** (NT; ☎ 01422-844518; adult/child £3.60/1.80; ☎ 11am-4pm Wed, Sat & Sun Mar-Oct, 11am-3pm Sat & Sun Nov-Feb), a renovated 19th-century cotton mill.

From the centre, a short stroll along the attractive waterfront of the Rochdale Canal leads to the **Alternative Technology Centre** (☎ 01422-842121; www.alternativetechnology.org.uk; Hebble End Mill; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, noon-5pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun), which promotes renewable energy, recycling and sustainable lifestyles through a series of intriguing exhibits and workshops.

Above the town is the much older village of **Heptonstall**, its narrow cobbled street lined with 500-year-old cottages and the ruins of a beautiful 13th-century church. But it is the churchyard of the newer St Thomas' Church that draws literary pilgrims, for here is buried the poet Sylvia Plath (1932–63), wife of another famous poet, Ted Hughes (1930–98), who was born in nearby Mytholmroyd.

## Sleeping & Eating

**Pennine Camp & Caravan Site** (☎ 01422-842287; High Greenwood House, Heptonstall; sites per person £4; closed Nov-Mar) A large, sloping field with a block of facilities in a converted barn, this campsite is about 3 miles northwest of town, on the minor road beyond Heptonstall that leads towards Widdop Reservoir.

**Mankinholes YHA** (☎ 0845 371 9751; www.yha.org.uk; Todmorden; dm £16) A converted 17th-century manor house 4 miles southwest of Hebden Bridge, this hostel has limited facilities (no TV room) but it is very popular with walkers; the Pennine Way passes only half a mile away.

**White Lion Hotel** (☎ 01422-842197; www.white.lionhotel.net; Bridge Gate; s/d from £50/70) The choicest accommodation in town is this large 400-year-old coaching inn smack in the middle of it; the rooms in the converted coach house are that little bit more comfortable than the ones in the main house.

Downstairs is an excellent real-ale pub and a restaurant (mains £7 to £10) with a standard pub grub menu.

**Crown Fisheries** (☎ 01422-842599; 8 Crown St; mains £4-5; ☎ 10am-6.30pm) A terrific chip shop that serves up a great fish supper (fish, chips, bread and butter, and tea), and also does takeaways.

There are several appealing cafes along pedestrianised Bridge Gate in a peaceful setting beside the river and the old packhorse bridge that gave the town its name.

## Getting There & Away

Hebden Bridge is on the Leeds–Manchester train line (£3.75, 50 minutes, every 20 minutes Monday to Saturday, hourly on Sunday). Get off at Todmorden for the Mankinholes YHA.

## HAWORTH pop 6100

It seems that only Shakespeare himself is held in higher esteem than the beloved Brontë sisters – Emily, Anne and Charlotte – at least, judging by the 8 million visitors a year who trudge up the hill from the train station to pay their respects at the handsome personage where the literary classics *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* were born.

Not surprisingly, the whole village is given over to Brontë-linked tourism, but even without the literary associations Haworth is still worth a visit, though you'll be hard pushed not to be overwhelmed by the cottage industry that has grown up around the Brontës and their wonderful creations.

## Information

The **tourist office** (☎ 01535-642329; www.haworth-village.org.uk; 2-4 West Lane; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Apr-Sep, to 5pm Oct-Mar) has an excellent supply of information on the village, the surrounding area and, of course, the Brontës.

Main St is lined with cafes, tearooms, pubs and shops selling everything imaginable bearing the Brontë name. Handy stops might include: the **post office** (98 Main St; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat); **Venables & Bainbridge** (☎ 01535-640300; 111 Main St; ☎ 11am-5pm daily), selling used books including many vintage Brontë volumes; and **Rose & Co Apothecary** (☎ 01535-646830; 84 Main St; ☎ 10.30am-5.30pm daily), the beautifully restored chemist shop so favoured by Branwell Brontë.

## BAD LUCK BRONTËS

The Rev Patrick Brontë, his wife Maria and six children moved to Haworth Parsonage in 1820. Within four years Maria and the two eldest daughters had died from cancer and tuberculosis. The treble tragedy led the good reverend to keep his remaining family close to him, and for the next few years the children were home-schooled in a highly creative environment.

The children conjured up mythical heroes and fantasy lands, and produced miniature home-made books. It was an auspicious start, at least for the three girls, Charlotte, Emily and Anne; the lone boy, Branwell, was more of a painter but lacked his sisters' drive and discipline. After a short stint as a professional artist, he ended up spending most of his days in the Black Bull pub, drunk and stoned on laudanum obtained across the street at Rose & Co Apothecary.

While the three sisters were setting the London literary world alight with the publication of three superb novels – *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights* and *Agnes Grey* – in one extraordinary year (1847), Branwell was fading quickly and died of tuberculosis in 1848. The family was devastated, but things quickly got worse. Emily fell ill with tuberculosis soon after her brother's funeral; she never left the house again and died on 19 December. Anne, who had also been sick, was next; Charlotte took her to Scarborough to seek a sea cure but she died on 28 May 1849.

The remaining family never recovered. Despite her growing fame, Charlotte struggled with depression and never quite adapted to her high position in literary society. Despite her misgivings she eventually married, but she too died, in the early stages of pregnancy, on 31 March 1855. All things considered, it's hardly surprising that poor old Patrick Brontë spent the remaining years of his life going increasingly insane.

## Sights

Your first stop should be **Haworth Parish Church** (admission free), a lovely old place of worship built in the late 19th century on the site of the 'old' church that the Brontë sisters knew, which was demolished in 1879. In the surrounding churchyard, gravestones are covered in moss or thrust to one side by gnarled tree roots, giving the place a tremendous feeling of age.

Set in a pretty garden overlooking the church and graveyard, the **Brontë Parsonage Museum** (☎ 01535-642323; [www.bronte.info](http://www.bronte.info); admission £6; ☞ 10am-5.30pm Apr-Sep, 11am-5pm Oct-Mar) is where the Brontë family lived from 1820 till 1861. The rooms are meticulously furnished and decorated exactly as they were in the Brontë era, with many personal possessions on display. There's also a neat and informative exhibition, which includes the fascinating miniature books the Brontës wrote as children.

## Activities

Above Haworth stretch the bleak moors of the South Pennines – immediately familiar to Brontë fans – and the tourist office has leaflets on local **walks** to endless Brontë-related places. A 6.5-mile favourite leads to Top Withins, a ruined farm thought to have inspired *Wuthering Heights*, even though a plaque clearly states that the farm-

house bore no resemblance to the one Emily wrote about.

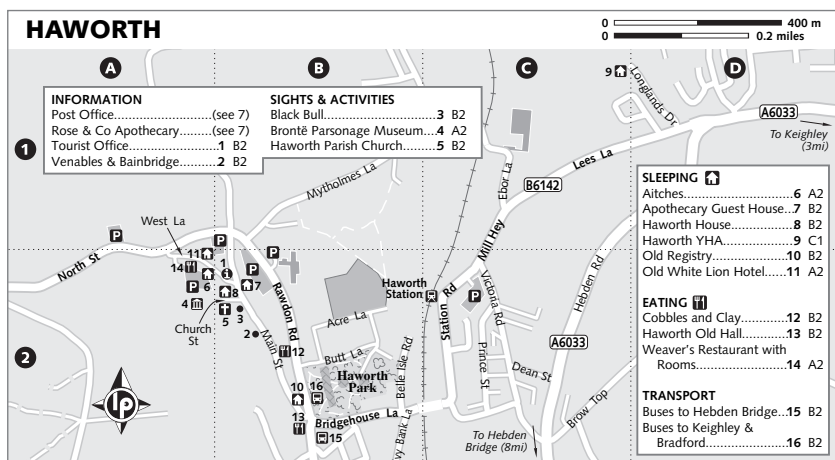
Other walks can be worked around the **Brontë Way**, a longer route linking Bradford and Colne via Haworth. Alternatively, you can walk or cycle the 8 miles south to Hebden Bridge via the scenic valley of Hardcastle Crag.

## Sleeping & Eating

Virtually every second house on Main St offers B&B; they're mostly indistinguishable from each other but some are just that little bit cuter. There are a couple of good restaurants in town and many of the B&Bs also have small cafes that are good for a spot of lunch – mediocre servings of local dishes and nice safe bets such as sandwiches.

**Haworth House** (☎ 01535-643374; 6 Church St; s/d from £25/50) Tucked along the alley beside the church, this place has mostly spacious rooms with a New Age vibe, though the smaller, cheaper rooms are pretty cramped. Breakfast (£3 to £4 extra) is served in your bedroom.

**Aitches** (☎ 01535-642501; [www.aitches.co.uk](http://www.aitches.co.uk); 11 West Lane; s/d from £37/52) A very classy, stone-built Victorian house with four en suite rooms, each differently decorated with a pleasantly old-world atmosphere. There's a residents' dining room where a three-course meal will cost £16 (prebooked, minimum four persons).



**Weaver's Restaurant with Rooms** (☎ 01535-643822; www.weaversmallhotel.co.uk; 15 West Lane; s/d £60/100, mains £12-18; ☺ lunch Wed-Fri & Sun, dinner Tue-Sat) A stylish and atmospheric restaurant, Weaver's offers a menu featuring local specialities such as black pudding with corned beef hash, and sausage and mash with caramelised onion. Upstairs are three comfy bedrooms, two of which have views towards the moors.

**Old Registry** (☎ 01535-646503; www.theoldregistryhaworth.co.uk; 2-4 Main St; r £75-100) This place is a bit special. It's an elegantly rustic hotel where each of the carefully themed rooms has a four-poster bed, whirlpool bath or valley view. The Blue Heaven room is just that – at least for fans of Laura Ashley's delphinium blue.

Other options:

**Haworth YHA** (☎ 0845 371 9520; www.yha.org.uk; Longlands Dr; dm £14; ☎ P) A big old house with a games room, lounge, cycle store and laundry. It's on the northeastern edge of town, off Lees Lane.

**Apothecary Guest House** (☎ 01535-643642; www.theapothecaryguesthouse.co.uk; 86 Main St; s/d £35/55)

Oak beams and narrow, slanted passageways lead to smallish rooms with cheerful decor.

**Old White Lion Hotel** (☎ 01535-642313; www.oldwhitelionhotel.com; West Lane; s/d from £57/80) Pub-style accommodation – comfortable if not spectacular – above an oak-panelled bar and highly rated restaurant (mains £10 to £16).

**Cobbles and Clay** (☎ 01535-644218; 60 Main St; mains £3-7; ☺ 9am-5pm) Attractive, child-friendly cafe offering Fairtrade coffee and healthy salads and snacks.

**Haworth Old Hall** (☎ 01535-642709; www.hawortholdhall.co.uk; Sun St; mains £8-12) Sixteenth-century pub serving real ale and decent food. If you want to linger longer, two comfortable doubles cost £65.

## Getting There & Away

From Leeds, the easiest approach to Haworth is via Keighley, which is on the Metro rail network. Bus 500 runs from Keighley bus station to Haworth (15 minutes, hourly) and continues to Todmorden and Hebden Bridge. However, the most interesting way to get from Keighley to Haworth is via the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (see boxed text, below).

## STEAM ENGINES & RAILWAY CHILDREN

Haworth is on the **Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (KWVR)**; (☎ 01535-645214; www.kwvr.co.uk; adult/child return £9/4.50, adult/child Day Rover £14/7), which runs steam and classic diesel engines between Keighley and Oxenholme. It was here, in 1969, that the classic movie *The Railway Children* was shot; Mr Perks was stationmaster at Oakworth, where the Edwardian look has been meticulously maintained. Trains operate about hourly at weekends all year; in holiday periods they run hourly every day.

# YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK

The Yorkshire Dales – named from the old Norse word *dalr*, meaning ‘valleys’ – is the central jewel in the necklace of three national parks strung across the neck of northern England, with the dramatic fells of the Lake District to the west and the brooding heaths of the North York Moors to the east.

From well-known names such as Wensleydale and Ribblesdale, to obscure and evocative Langstrothdale and Arkengarthdale, these glacial valleys are characterised by a distinctive landscape of high heather moorland, stepped skylines and flat-topped hills rising above green valley floors patchworked with drystone dykes and dotted with picture-postcard towns and hamlets, where sheep and cattle still graze on village greens. And in the limestone country in the southern dales you’ll find England’s best examples of karst scenery.

The Dales have been protected as a national park since the 1950s, assuring their status as a walker’s and cyclist’s paradise. But there’s plenty for non-walkers as well, from exploring the legacy of literary vet James Herriot of *All Creatures Great And Small* fame, to sampling Wallace and Gromit’s favourite teatime snack at the Wensleydale Creamery.

## Orientation & Information

The Yorkshire Dales National Park divides into two parts: in the north, two main valleys run west to east – broad expansive Wensleydale (home of the famous cheese) and narrow secretive Swaledale. In the busier, southern part, the main valleys – Ribblesdale, Malhamdale, Littondale and Wharfedale – run north to south.

The main Dales gateways are Skipton in the south and Richmond in the northeast. Good bases in the park itself include Settle, Grassington and Hawes. All have excellent tourist offices, stocking a mountain of local guidebooks and maps, and providing accommodation details.

To the northwest and west, the towns of Kirkby Stephen and Kirkby Lonsdale also make handy jumping-off points, although

both are actually in the county of Cumbria (despite definite Dales affiliations).

The *Visitor* newspaper, available from tourist offices, lists local events and walks guided by park rangers, as well as many places to stay and eat. The official park website at [www.yorkshiredales.org.uk](http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk) is also useful.

## Activities

### CYCLING

Other than on busy summer weekends, this is excellent cycling country. Most roads follow the rivers along the bottom of the Dales so, although there are some steep climbs, there’s also plenty on the flat. Tourist offices stock maps and leaflets with suggested routes (on-road and off-road) for a day or longer.

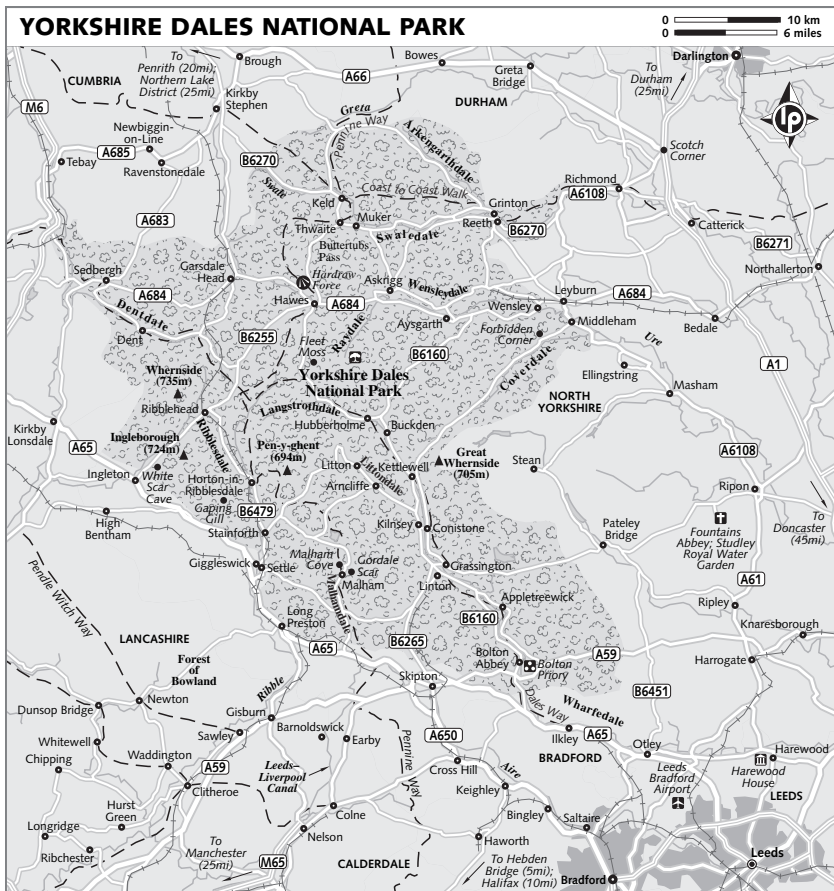
One example is the **Yorkshire Dales Cycle Way**, an exhilarating 130-mile loop, taking in the best of the park. Skipton is a convenient starting point, from where you ride up Wharfedale, then steeply over Fleet Moss to Hawes. From here turn east along Wensleydale to Aysgarth, then north over the wild hills to Reeth. The roads are steep but the scenery is breathtaking. Follow Swaledale westwards, through remote Keld and down to the market town of Kirkby Stephen. Then it’s south to Sedbergh, and up beautiful Dentdale to pop out at Ribblesdale. It’s plain sailing now, through Horton-in-Ribblesdale to Stainforth, one more climb over to Malham, and finally back to Skipton for tea and medals.

There’s also lots of scope for off-road riding, with around 500 miles of bridleways and trails – check out [www.mtbthedales.org.uk](http://www.mtbthedales.org.uk) for inspiration.

### WALKING

The Yorkshire Dales has a vast footpath network, offering everything from easy strolls to challenging hikes; we suggest a few options throughout this section. Look out at tourist offices for leaflets describing walks from train stations, notably on the Settle–Carlisle Line. Serious walkers should equip themselves with 1:25,000 OS Explorer Maps Nos 2 and 30.

Two of England’s most famous long-distance routes cross the Dales. The **Pennine Way** goes through the rugged western half of the park. If you haven’t got three weeks to cover all 259 miles, a few days hiking between Malham and Hawes, for example, is well worth the effort. The **Coast to Coast Walk** (p588) passes through Swaledale in the



northern Dales. Following the route for a day or two is highly recommended; see p612.

Another long-distance possibility is the **Dales Way** ([www.dalesway.org.uk](http://www.dalesway.org.uk)), which begins in Ilkley, follows the River Wharfe through the heart of the Dales, and finishes at Bowness-on-Windermere in the Lake District. If you start at Grassington, it's an easy five-day journey (60 miles). A handy companion is *Dales Way Route Guide* by Arthur Gemmell and Colin Speakman (£5.99), available at most bookshops.

### Getting There & Around

The main gateway towns of Skipton and Richmond are well served by public transport, and local bus services radiate from there. Pick

up the useful *Dales Explorer Travel Guide*, a free map available from tourist offices that covers bus and train services in the region, or consult the comprehensive **Traveldales website** ([www.traveldales.org.uk](http://www.traveldales.org.uk)).

Going by train, the best and most interesting access to the Dales is via the famous **Settle–Carlisle Line** (p609). From the south, trains start in Leeds and pass through Skipton, Settle, and numerous small villages, offering unrivalled access to the hills straight from the station platform. Of course, if you're coming from the north, Carlisle is the place to get on board.

Around 90% of visitors to the park arrive by car, and the narrow roads can be extremely crowded in summer; parking can also be a

serious problem. If you can, try to use public transport as much as possible.

## SKIPTON

pop 14,300

This busy market town on the southern edge of the Dales takes its name from the Anglo-Saxon *sceape ton* (sheep town) – no prizes for guessing how it made its money. Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday are market days on High St, bringing crowds from all over and giving the town something of a festive atmosphere. The **tourist office** (☎ 01756-792809; www.skiptononline.co.uk; 35 Coach St; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat) is on the northern edge of the town centre.

## Sights & Activities

A pleasant stroll from the tourist office along the canal path leads to **Skipton Castle** (☎ 01756-792442; www.skiptoncastle.co.uk; High St; admission £5.80; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Sat, noon-6pm Sun Mar-Sep, to 4pm Oct-Feb), one of the best-preserved medieval castles in England – a fascinating contrast to the ruins you'll see elsewhere.

From the castle, wander along Skipton's pride and joy – the broad and bustling **High St**, one of the most attractive shopping streets in Yorkshire. On the first Sunday of the month it hosts the Northern Dales farmers market.

No trip to Skipton is complete without a cruise along the Leeds–Liverpool Canal that runs through the middle of town. **Pennine Boat Trips** (☎ 01756-790829; www.canaltrips.co.uk; The Wharf, Coach St; adult/child £6/3) runs hour-long trips daily from April to October; call for departure times.

## Sleeping & Eating

There's a strip of B&Bs just outside the centre on Keighley Rd. All those between Nos 46 and 57 are worth trying.

**Carlton House** (☎ 01756-700921; www.carltonhouse.rapidial.co.uk; 46 Keighley Rd; s/d from £28/55) A handsome house with five pretty, comfortable rooms – no frills but lots of floral prints. The house is deservedly popular on account of the friendly welcome.

**Bizzie Lizzies** (☎ 01756-793189; 36 Swadford St; mains £5-8; ☎ 11.30am-9pm, takeaway till 11.30pm) This sit-down fish-and-chip restaurant overlooking the canal has won several awards for quality, a rare thing for what is essentially deep-fried fast food. There's also a takeaway counter.

**Canalside** (☎ 01756-795678; www.canalsideskipton.co.uk; Waterside Ct, Coach St; mains lunch £7-9, dinner £13-17; ☎ noon-9.30pm Wed-Mon) Set in a converted warehouse overlooking the canal basin, this brisk modern restaurant enjoys the best location in town. The menu runs from game pie and confit duck to Dales beef and pan-fried sea bass.

Also recommended:

**Bojangles** (☎ 01756-709333; 20 Newmarket St; mains £3-4) Best coffee in town, American-style breakfasts and burgers.

**Narrow Boat** (☎ 01756-797922; 38 Victoria St) Traditionally styled pub with a great selection of local ales and foreign beers, friendly service and bar food.

## Getting There & Away

Skipton is the last stop on the Metro rail network from Leeds and Bradford (£7.10, 40 minutes, half-hourly, hourly on Sunday). For heading into the Dales, see the boxed text on p609.

For Grassington, take bus 72 (30 minutes, hourly Monday to Saturday, no Sunday service) from Skipton train station, or 66A (hourly, Sunday) from the Market Pl.

## BOLTON ABBEY

The tiny village and country estate of **Bolton Abbey** (www.boltonabbey.com), owned by the duke of Devonshire, is about 5 miles east of Skipton. The big draw here is the ruined church of **Bolton Priory** (admission free, parking £5.50; ☎ 8.30am-5pm Apr-Oct, to 4pm Nov-Mar), an evocative and beautiful 12th-century ruin. Its soaring arches and huge windows silhouetted against the sky have inspired artists such as Wordsworth and Turner; part of the building is still used as a church today.

Apart from the priory ruins, the main attraction is the scenic **River Wharfe** which flows through the grounds – there's a network of walking trails beside the river and through the surrounding area. It's very popular with families (part of the riverbank looks like a beach at weekends); you can buy teas and ice creams in the **Cavendish Pavilion**, a short walk from the priory. Other highlights include the stepping stones – a large gap between stones in the middle of the river frequently forces faint-hearted walkers to turn around and use the bridge – and **The Strid**, a picturesque wooded gorge just upstream from the pavilion.

The **Devonshire Arms Country House Hotel** (☎ 01756-718111; www.thedevonshirearms.co.uk; s/d

from £180/225; (P) (Q) – also owned by the duke of Devonshire – is actually more like a stately home hotel. The decoration of each bedroom was designed by the duchess herself, and while her tastes might not be everyone's cup of tea, there's no arguing with the quality and beauty of the furnishings; almost all of them were permanently borrowed from another of their properties, Chatsworth in Derbyshire.

There are half-hourly buses from Skipton and Grassington Monday to Saturday; on Sunday there's only an hourly service from Skipton.

## GRASSINGTON

pop 1120

The perfect base for jaunts around the south Dales, Grassington's handsome Georgian centre teems with walkers and visitors throughout the summer months, soaking up an atmosphere that – despite the odd touch of faux rusticity – is as attractive and traditional as you'll find in these parts.

The **tourist office** (☎ 01756-751690; Hebden Rd; ☹ 9.30am-5pm daily Apr-Oct; Fri, Sat & Sun Nov-Mar) is beside the big car park on the edge of town. There's a good stock of maps and guides, and a nice little display that puts the surrounding scenery in context.

## Sleeping & Eating

There are several B&Bs along and just off Main St.

**Devonshire Fell** (☎ 01756-718111; www.devonshirefell.co.uk; Burnsall; s/d from £85/135; (P) (Q)) A sister property to Bolton Abbey's Devonshire Arms Country House Hotel (p607), this former gentleman's club for mill owners has a much more contemporary feel, with beautiful modern furnishings crafted by local experts. The breakfast room/restaurant (dinner mains £16) has a stunning view over the valley. It's 3 miles southeast of Grassington on the B6160.

**Ashfield House** (☎ 01756-752584; www.ashfieldhouse.co.uk; Summers Fold; r from £91; (P) (Q)) A secluded 17th-century country house behind a walled garden with exposed stone walls, open fireplaces and an all-round cosy feel. It's just off the main square.

**Dales Kitchen** (☎ 01756-753208; 51 Main St; mains £5-7; ☹ 9am-6pm) Classic Yorkshire munchies – rarebits, local sausage and, of course, Wensleydale – in a lovely tearoom in the middle of town.

## Getting There & Away

Grassington is 6 miles north of Skipton; see p607) for buses from there. For onward travel, bus 72 continues up the valley to the villages of Kettlewell and Buckden.

## AROUND GRASSINGTON

From Grassington narrow roads lead north up the beautiful valley of Wharfedale. If you're cycling, take the quieter road on the east side of the river; on foot, you can follow a charming stretch of the Dales Way to Kettlewell.

About 7 and 11 miles respectively from Grassington, the villages of **Kettlewell** and **Buckden** are good places to aim for, offering a good choice of camp sites, B&Bs, tearooms and pubs offering food and accommodation. Favourite hostels include the **Racehorses Hotel** (☎ 01756-760233; www.racehorseshotel.co.uk; s/d from £40/70) in Kettlewell, which has a nice riverside garden, and the **Buck Inn** (☎ 01756-760228; www.thebuckinnbuckden.co.uk; r from £75) in Buckden.

Check at Grassington tourist office about the local buses that trundle up and down Wharfedale daily in the summer months (weekends in winter) – ideal for bringing home weary walkers.

## MALHAM

pop 120

Stretching west from Grassington to Ingleton is the largest area of limestone country in England, which has created a distinctive landscape dotted with dry valleys, potholes, limestone pavements and gorges. Two of the most spectacular features – Malham Cove and Gordale Scar – lie near the pretty village of Malham.

The **national park centre** (☎ 01969-652380; malham@yorkshiredales.org.uk; ☹ 10am-5pm daily Apr-Oct, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun Nov-Mar) at the southern edge of the village has the usual wealth of information. Note that Malham can only be reached via narrow roads that can be very congested in summer; leave your car at the national park centre and walk into the village.

## Sights & Activities

A half-mile walk north from Malham village leads to **Malham Cove**, a huge rock amphitheatre lined with 80m-high vertical cliffs. You can hike steeply up the left-hand end of the cove (on the Pennine Way footpath) to see the extensive limestone pavement above the cliffs.



Another 1.5 miles further north is **Malham Tarn**, a glacial lake and nature reserve.

A mile east of Malham along a narrow road (very limited parking) is spectacular **Gordale Scar**, a deep limestone canyon with scenic cascades and the remains of an Iron Age settlement. The national park centre has a leaflet describing the **Malham Landscape Trail**, a 5-mile circular walk that takes in Malham Cove, Gordale Scar and the Janet's Foss waterfall.

The **Pennine Way** passes through Malham; Horton-in-Ribblesdale (p610) lies a day's hike away to the northwest.

### Sleeping & Eating

**Malham YHA** (☎ 0845 371 9529; www.yha.org.uk; dm £14; ♿) In the village centre you will find this purpose-built hostel; the facilities are top-notch and young children are well catered for.

**Beck Hall** (☎ 01729-830332; www.beckhallmalham.com; s/d from £25/50; ♿) This rambling 17th-century country house on the edge of the village has 15 individually decorated rooms – we recommend the Green Room, with its old-style furnishings and four-poster bed. There's a rustling stream flowing through the garden and a nice tearoom (snacks about £4).

## RIBBLESDALE & THE THREE PEAKS

Scenic Ribblesdale cuts through the south-western corner of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, where the skyline is dominated by a trio

of distinctive hills known as the **Three Peaks** – Wharfedale (735m), Ingleborough (724m) and Pen-y-ghent (694m). Easily accessible via the Settle–Carlisle railway line, this is one of England's most popular areas for outdoor activities, attracting thousands of hikers, cyclists and cavers each weekend.

### Settle

pop 3621

The busy market town of Settle, dominated by its grand neo-Gothic town hall, is the gateway to Ribblesdale. Narrow cobbled streets lined with shops and pubs lead out from the central market square (Tuesday is market day), and the town offers plenty of accommodation options.

The **tourist office** (☎ 01729-825192; settle@ytbtic.co.uk; Town Hall, Cheapside; ☎ 9.30am-4.30pm Apr-Oct, to 4pm Nov-Mar) has maps and guidebooks, and an excellent range of local walks leaflets.

### SLEEPING & EATING

**Golden Lion Hotel** (☎ 01729-822203; info@goldenlion.yorks.net; Duke St; s/d £43/75; lunch mains £8, dinner £9-14) This handsome 17th-century coaching inn has 12 warm and comfortable rooms, a traditional pub and a pleasant restaurant that is one of the most popular in town.

**Ye Olde Naked Man** (☎ 01729-823230; Market Pl; mains £3-7) Formerly an undertakers – look for the 'naked man' on the outside wall, dated

### THE SETTLE–CARLISLE LINE

The Settle–Carlisle Line (SCL), built between 1869 and 1875, offers one of England's most scenic railway journeys. The 72-mile line's construction was one of the great engineering achievements of the Victorian era – 5000 navvies armed with picks and shovels built 325 bridges, 21 viaducts and blasted 14 tunnels in horrific conditions – nearly 200 of them died in the process.

Trains run between Leeds and Carlisle via Settle about eight times per day. The first section of the journey from Leeds is along the Aire Valley, stopping at **Keighley**, where the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway branches off to **Haworth** (p602); **Skipton** – gateway to the southern Dales; and **Settle**. The train then labours up the valley beside the River Ribble, through **Horton-in-Ribblesdale**, across the spectacular **Ribblehead Viaduct** and then through Blea Moor Tunnel to reach remote **Dent** station, at 350m the highest main-line station in the country.

The line reaches its highest point (356m) at Ais Gill where it leaves the Dales behind before easing down to **Kirkby Stephen**. The last halts are **Appleby** and **Langwathby**, just northwest of Penrith (a jumping-off point for the Lake District), before the train finally pulls into **Carlisle**.

The entire journey from Leeds to Carlisle takes two hours and 40 minutes and costs £22/27 for a single/day return; from Settle to Carlisle is 1¼ hours and £16/18. Various hop-on-hop-off passes for one or three days are also available. You can pick up a free SCL timetable – which includes a colour map of the line and brief details about places of interest – from most Yorkshire stations; for more information contact **National Rail Enquiries** (☎ 08457 484950) or click on to www.settle-carlisle.co.uk.

### THREE PEAKS CHALLENGES

Since 1968 more than 200,000 hikers have taken up the challenge of climbing Yorkshire's Three Peaks in less than 12 hours. The circular 25-mile route begins and ends at the Pen-y-ghent Cafe in Horton-in-Ribblesdale – where you clock in and clock out to verify your time – and takes in the summits of Pen-y-ghent, Wharfedale and Ingleborough. Succeed, and you're a member of the cafe's Three Peaks of Yorkshire Club. You can find details of the route at [www.merseyventure.com/yorks](http://www.merseyventure.com/yorks) and download a guide (£3) at [www.walkingworld.com](http://www.walkingworld.com) (walk ID 4228 and 4229).

Fancy a more gruelling test of your endurance? Then join the fell-runners in the annual **Three Peaks Race** ([www.threepikessrace.org.uk](http://www.threepikessrace.org.uk)) on the last Saturday in April, and run the route instead of walking it. First held in 1954 when six people competed, it now attracts around 900 entries; the course record is two hours, 43 minutes and three seconds

Cyclists get their chance too in the **Three Peaks Cyclo-Cross** ([www.3peaks-cyclocross.org.uk](http://www.3peaks-cyclocross.org.uk); last week of Sep) which covers 38 miles of rough country and 1524m of ascent.

1663 – and now a bakery and cafe selling coffee, tea and scones with clotted cream.

Around Market Pl there are several other cafes, including the excellent **Shambles** (☎ 01729-822652; Market Pl; fish & chips £5-7).

### GETTING THERE & AWAY

The easiest access is by train. Trains from Leeds or Skipton heading to Carlisle stop at the station near the town centre; those heading for Morecambe (on the west coast) stop at Giggleswick, about 1.5 miles outside town.

### Horton-in-Ribblesdale

☎ 01729 / pop 560

A favourite with outdoor enthusiasts, the little village of Horton and its railway station is 5 miles north of Settle. Everything centres on the Pen-y-ghent Cafe which acts as the village **tourist office** (☎ 01729-860333; [horton@ybtic.co.uk](mailto:horton@ybtic.co.uk)), wet-weather retreat and hikers' information centre.

Horton is the starting point for climbing Pen-y-ghent and for doing the **Three Peaks Walk** (see boxed text above); it's also a stop on the Pennine Way. At the head of the valley, 5 miles north of Horton, is the spectacular **Ribblehead Viaduct**, built in 1874 and the longest on the Settle–Carlisle line – more than 30m high and 400m long. You can hike there along the Pennine Way and travel back by train from Ribblesdale station.

### SLEEPING & EATING

Horton is popular, so it's wise to book accommodation in advance.

**Dub-Cote Farm Camping Barn** (☎ 01729-860238; [www.threepikessbarn.co.uk](http://www.threepikessbarn.co.uk); per person £10) This 17th-

century stone barn enjoys a lovely hillside setting a mile southeast of the village, and is equipped with self-catering facilities (BYO sleeping bag and pillow case).

**Golden Lion** (☎ 01729-860206; [www.goldenlionhotel.co.uk](http://www.goldenlionhotel.co.uk); s/d from £40/60, bunkhouse per person £10)

The Golden Lion is a lively pub that offers comfortable B&B rooms and a basic, 15-bed bunkroom upstairs, and three public bars downstairs where you can tuck into a bit of grub washed down with a pint of hand-pulled ale.

**Crown Hotel** (☎ 01729-860209; [www.crown-hotel.co.uk](http://www.crown-hotel.co.uk); s/d from £30/60; Ⓟ) Another popular rest stop with walkers, the Crown has a variety of basic rooms (with slightly over-the-top floral decoration) and a cosy bar that serves a range of meals.

**Pen-y-ghent Cafe** (☎ 01729-860333; mains £3-7; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon & Wed-Fri, 8am-6pm Sat & Sun) A traditional caff run by the same family since 1965, the Pen-y-ghent fills walkers' fuel tanks with fried egg and chips, homemade scones and pint-sized mugs of tea. It also sells maps, guidebooks and walking gear.

### Ingleton

pop 2000

The village of Ingleton, perched precariously above a river gorge, is the caving capital of England. It sits at the foot of one of the country's most extensive areas of limestone upland, crowned by the dominating peak of Ingleborough and riddled with countless pot-holes and cave systems.

The **tourist office** (☎ 01524-241049; [www.visitingleton.co.uk](http://www.visitingleton.co.uk); ☎ 10am-4pm Apr-Sep) is beside the main car park, while **Bernie's Cafe** (☎ 01524-241802; 4 Main St) is the centre of the local caving scene.

Ingelton is the starting point for two famous Dales hikes. The shorter and easier of the two is the circular, 4.5-mile **Waterfalls Walk** ([www.ingeltonwaterfallswalk.co.uk](http://www.ingeltonwaterfallswalk.co.uk)), which passes through native oak woodland on its way past a series of spectacular waterfalls on the Rivers Twiss and Doe. Around 120,000 people climb **Ingleborough** (724m) every year, but that doesn't make the 6-mile round trip any less of an effort; this is a proper hill walk, so pack waterproofs, food, water, and a map and compass.

Although most of the local caves are accessible only to experienced potholers, some are open to the general public. **White Scar Cave** ([☎](tel) 01524-241244; [www.whitescscarve.co.uk](http://www.whitescscarve.co.uk); adult/child £7.50/4.50; [🕒](#) 10am-4.30pm daily Feb-Oct, Sat & Sun only Nov-Jan) is the longest show cave in England, with a series of underground waterfalls and impressive dripstone formations leading to the 100m-long Battlefield Cavern, one of the largest cave chambers in the country. The cave is 1.5 miles northeast of the village on the B6255 road.

**Gaping Gill**, on the southeastern flank of Ingleborough, is one of the most famous caves in England. A huge vertical pothole 105m deep, it was the largest known cave shaft in the UK until the discovery of Titan in Derbyshire in 1999. Gaping Gill is normally off-limits to non-cavers but, twice a year on the May and August bank holiday weekends, local caving clubs set up a winch so that members of the public can descend into the depths in a special chair (£10 per person). For details see [www.bpc-cave.org.uk](http://www.bpc-cave.org.uk) and [www.cravenpotholeclub.org](http://www.cravenpotholeclub.org), and click on the Gaping Gill link.

Ingelton is 10 miles northwest of Settle; take bus 581 from Settle train station (25 minutes, two daily).

## HAWES

pop 700

Hawes is the beating heart of Wensleydale, a thriving and picturesque market town (market day is Tuesday) with the added attraction of its own waterfall in the village centre. On busy summer weekends, however, Hawes' narrow arteries can get seriously clogged with traffic – leave the car in the parking area beside the **national park centre** ([☎](tel) 01969-666210; [hawes@yorkshiredales.org.uk](mailto:hawes@yorkshiredales.org.uk); Station Yard; [🕒](#) 10am-5pm year round) at the eastern entrance to the village.

## Sights & Activities

Sharing a building with the park centre is the **Dales Countryside Museum** (adult/child £3/free), a beautifully presented social history of the area that explains the forces that shaped the landscape, from geology to lead mining to land enclosure.

At the other end of the village lies the **Wensleydale Creamery Visitor Centre** ([☎](tel) 01969-667664; [www.wensleydale.co.uk](http://www.wensleydale.co.uk); admission £2; [🕒](#) 9.30am-5pm Mon-Sat, 10am-4.30pm Sun), devoted to the production of Wallace and Gromit's favourite crumbly, white cheese. You can visit the cheese museum and then try before you buy in the shop, which is free to enter. There are one-hour tours of the creamery between 10am and 3pm.

About 1.5 miles north of Hawes is 30m-high **Hardraw Force**, the highest unbroken waterfall in England. By international standards it's not that impressive (except after heavy rain); access is through the Green Dragon pub, which levies a £2 admission fee.

## Sleeping & Eating

**Bainbridge Ings Caravan & Camp Site** ([☎](tel) 01969-667354; [www.bainbridge-ings.co.uk](http://www.bainbridge-ings.co.uk); tent, car & 2 adults £10.50, hikers & cyclists per person £4) An attractive site set in stone-walled fields around a spacious farmhouse about half a mile east of town. Gas, milk and eggs are sold on site.

**Hawes YHA** ([☎](tel) 0845 371 9120; [www.yha.org.uk](http://www.yha.org.uk); Lancaster Tce; dm £16; [P](#)) A modern place on the western edge of town, at the junction of the main A684 (Aysgarth Rd) and B6255, this is a family-friendly hostel with great views of Wensleydale.

**Green Dragon Inn** ([☎](tel) 01969-667392; [www.green-dragonhardraw.co.uk](http://www.green-dragonhardraw.co.uk); Hardraw; s/d from £24/45) A fine old pub with flagstone floors, low timber beams, ancient oak furniture and Theakstons on draught, the Dragon serves up a tasty steak and ale pie and offers B&B accommodation in plain but adequate rooms.

**Herriot's Guest House** ([☎](tel) 01969-667536; [www.herriotsinhawes.co.uk](http://www.herriotsinhawes.co.uk); Main St; r per person from £36) A delightful guest house set in an old stone building close to the bridge by the waterfall, Herriot's has seven comfy, en suite bedrooms set above an art gallery and coffee shop.

**Cart House** ([☎](tel) 01969-667691; [www.hardrawforce.co.uk](http://www.hardrawforce.co.uk); Hardraw; mains £6; [🕒](#) 10am-5.30pm Mar-Nov) Across the bridge from the Green Dragon, this craft shop and tearoom offers a healthier diet of homemade soup, organic bread, and

a 'Fellman's Lunch' of Wensleydale cheese, pickle and salad. There's a basic campsite at the back (£10 for two adults, tent and car).

**Chaste** (☎ 01969-667145; Market Pl; mains £13) An unusual name for a bistro, but this place is far from coy when it comes to promoting Yorkshire produce – almost everything on the menu, from the all-day breakfast to the vegetable hotpot to the black pudding and mashed potato is either homemade or locally sourced.

## Getting There & Away

Dales & District buses 156 and 157 run from Bedale to Hawes (1¼ hours, eight daily Monday to Saturday, four on Sunday) via Leyburn, where you can connect with transport to/from Richmond. To get to Bedale from Northallerton train station on the main York–Newcastle line, take bus 73 (25 minutes, half-hourly Monday to Saturday, every two hours Sunday).

From Garsdale station on the Settle–Carlisle line, bus 113 runs to Hawes (20 minutes, three daily Monday to Saturday); on Sundays and bank holidays bus 808 goes to Hawes from Ribbleshead station (50 minutes, two daily). Check the bus times at [www.yorkshiretravel.net](http://www.yorkshiretravel.net) or a tourist office before using these routes.

## RICHMOND

pop 8200

The handsome market town of Richmond is one of England's best-kept secrets, perched on a rocky outcrop overlooking the River Swale and guarded by the ruins of a massive castle. A maze of cobbled streets radiates from the broad, sloping market square, lined with elegant Georgian buildings and photogenic stone cottages, with glimpses of the surrounding hills and dales peeking through the gaps.

## Orientation & Information

Richmond lies east of the Yorkshire Dales National Park but makes a good gateway for the northern part. The centre of everything is Market Pl (market day is Saturday). The **tourist office** (☎ 01748-828742; [www.richmond.org](http://www.richmond.org); Friary Gardens, Victoria Rd; ☎ 9.30am–5.30pm Apr–Oct, to 4.30pm Nov–Mar) has the usual maps and guides, plus several leaflets showing walks in town and the surrounding countryside.

## Sights

Top of the pile is the impressive heap that is **Richmond Castle** (EH; ☎ 01748-822493; admission £4; ☎ 10am–6pm Apr–Sep, to 4pm Oct–Mar), founded in 1070 and one of the first castles in England since Roman times to be built of stone. It's had many uses through the years, including a stint as a prison for conscientious objectors during WWI (there's a small and sobering exhibition about their part in the castle's history). The best part is the view from the top of the remarkably well-preserved 30m-high keep which towers over the River Swale.

Military buffs will enjoy the **Green Howards Museum** (☎ 01748-822133; [www.greenhowards.org.uk](http://www.greenhowards.org.uk); Trinity Church Sq; adult/child £3.50/free; ☎ 10am–4.30pm Mon–Sat, closed 24 Dec–31 Jan), which pays tribute to the famous Yorkshire regiment. In a different vein, the **Richmondshire Museum** (☎ 01748-825611; Ryder's Wynd; adult/child £2.50/1.50; ☎ 10.30am–4.30pm Apr–Oct) is a delight, with local history exhibits including an early Yorkshire cave-dweller and displays on lead mining, which forever altered the Swaledale landscape a century ago; you can also see the original set that served as James Herriot's surgery in the TV series *All Creatures Great and Small*.

Built in 1788, the **Georgian Theatre Royal** (☎ 01748-823710; [www.georgiantheatreroyal.co.uk](http://www.georgiantheatreroyal.co.uk); Victoria Rd; tours per person £3.50; ☎ tours hourly 10am–4pm Mon–Sat mid-Feb–mid-Dec) is the most complete Georgian playhouse in Britain. Tours include a look at the country's oldest surviving stage scenery, painted between 1818 and 1836.

## Activities

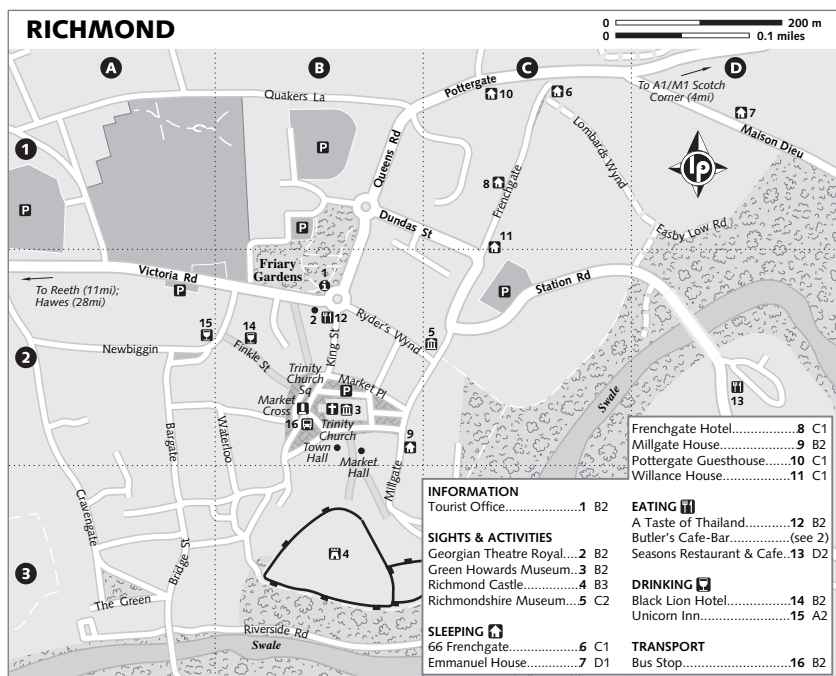
Walkers can follow paths along the River Swale, both upstream and downstream from the town. A longer option is to follow part of the famous long-distance **Coast to Coast Walk** (p588) all the way to Reeth (11 miles) and take the bus back (see [www.dalesbus.info/richmond](http://www.dalesbus.info/richmond)).

In September/October the town hosts the **Richmond Walking & Book Festival** ([www.richmondwalking.com](http://www.richmondwalking.com)), 10 days of guided walks, talks, films and other events.

Cyclists can also follow Swaledale – as far as Reeth may be enough, while a trip to Keld and then over the high wild moors to Kirkby Stephen is a more serious but very rewarding 33-mile undertaking.

## Sleeping

**Willance House** (☎ 01748-824467; [www.willancehouse.com](http://www.willancehouse.com); 24 Frenchgate; s/d £40/65) This is an oak-



beamed house, built in 1600, with three immaculate rooms (one with a four-poster bed) that combine old-fashioned charm and all mod cons.

**Frenchgate Hotel** (☎ 01748-822087; [www.thefrenchgate.co.uk](http://www.thefrenchgate.co.uk); 59-61 Frenchgate; s/d from £58/98; **P**) Eight elegant bedrooms occupy the upper floors of this converted Georgian town house, now a boutique guest house decorated with local art. The rooms have cool designer fittings that set off a period fireplace here, a Victorian roll-top bath there; downstairs there's an excellent restaurant (three-course dinner £29) and a hospitable lounge with oak beams and an open fire.

**ourpick Millgate House** (☎ 01748-823571; [www.millgatehouse.com](http://www.millgatehouse.com); Market Pl; r £95-125; **P** **Q**) Behind an unassuming green door lies the unexpected pleasure of one of the most attractive guest houses in England. While the house itself is a Georgian gem crammed with period details, it is overshadowed by the multi-award-winning garden at the back, which has superb views over the River Swale and the Cleveland Hills – if possible, book the Garden Suite.

There's a batch of pleasant places along Frenchgate, and several more on Maison Dieu

and Pottergate (the road into town from the east). These include **66 Frenchgate** (☎ 01748-823421; [www.66frenchgate.co.uk](http://www.66frenchgate.co.uk); 66 Frenchgate; s/d from £40/60; **Q**), where one of the three rooms has a superb river view, **Pottergate Guesthouse** (☎ 01748-823826; 4 Pottergate; d from £44) and **Emmanuel House** (☎ 01748-823584; 41 Maison Dieu; d from £40).

## Eating & Drinking

**Butler's Cafe-Bar** (☎ 01748-825252; Victoria Rd; mains £2-5; ☎ 10am-2pm Mon & Tue, 10am-3pm Wed-Sat) Tucked away at the top of the Georgian Theatre Royal building, this little place serves fair-trade coffee, speciality teas and delicious hot, buttered muffins – try to get the one table with a view over Friary Gardens.

**A Taste of Thailand** (☎ 01748-829696; 15 King St; mains £6-8; ☎ 5-11pm) Does exactly what it says on the tin – an extensive menu of Thai favourites and a convenient BYO policy (corkage £2).

**Seasons Restaurant & Cafe** (☎ 01748-825340; Richmond Station, Station Rd; mains restaurant £14-17, cafe £6-10; ☎ restaurant 5.30-10pm, cafe 9am-11pm) Housed in the newly restored Victorian station building, this attractive, open-plan eatery shares

space with a boutique brewery, artisan bakery, ice cream factory and cheesemonger – and yes, all this local produce is on the menu.

Surprisingly, despite a vast choice, few of the pubs in Richmond are up to much. After extensive research, the best we found were the **Black Lion Hotel** (☎ 01748-823121; Finkle St), with cosy bars, low beams and good beer and food, and the determinedly old-fashioned **Unicorn Inn** (☎ 01748-823719; 2 Newbiggin), a free house serving Theakstons and Old Speckled Hen.

### Getting There & Away

From Darlington (on the railway between London and Edinburgh) it's easy to reach Richmond on bus X26 or X27 (35 minutes, every 15 minutes, every 30 minutes on Sunday). All buses stop in Market Pl.

On Sundays and bank holiday Mondays only, from late May to late September, the Fountains Flyer bus 802 runs from Leeds to Richmond (3½ hours, one daily) via Fountains Abbey, Ripon, Masham and Middleham.

### SWALEDALE

The quietest and least-visited of the Dales stretches west from Richmond, its wild and rugged beauty in sharp contrast to the softer, greener dales to the south. It's hard to imagine that only a century ago this was a major lead mining area. When the price of ore fell in the 19th century, many people left to find work in England's burgeoning industrial cities, while others emigrated – especially to Wisconsin in the USA – leaving the valley almost empty, with just a few lonely villages scattered along its length.

In the heart of Swaledale is the pretty village of **Reeth**, home to some art and craft

shops, cafes and a few good pubs dotted around a large sloping green (Friday is market day). There's a **tourist office** (☎ 01748-884059; reeth@ybtbic.co.uk) and the dusty little **Swaledale Museum** (☎ 01748-884118; admission £1.50; ☎ 10.30am-5pm Wed-Fri & Sun Easter-Oct, Sun only Nov-Easter), which tells the story of the dale's fascinating history.

There are many B&B options, including the **Arkleside Hotel** (☎ 01748-884418; www.arklesidehotel.co.uk; s/d from £60/100), made up of a converted row of old cottages just by the green.

## EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

In command of the East Riding of Yorkshire is the tough old sea dog known as Hull, a no-nonsense port that looks to the North Sea and the broad horizons of the Humber estuary for its livelihood. Just to its north, and in complete contrast to Hull's salt and grit, is East Riding's most attractive town, Beverley, with lots of Georgian character and one of England's finest churches.

Stretching north from Hull and Beverley are the Yorkshire Wolds, an area of gently rolling chalky hills that reaches the coast in a splash of white sea cliffs at Flamborough Head. Close by there are some classic seaside towns – bucket-and-spade Bridlington and the rather more upmarket Filey – while further south the coastline tapers away into the strange and otherworldly landscape of sand dunes and tussock grass that is Spurn Head.

### DETOUR: FORBIDDEN CORNER

Hidden away in the eastern foothills of the Yorkshire Dales, 2 miles west of the village of Middleham, is one of Yorkshire's most bizarre tourist attractions. Built around 20 years ago as a private 'folly' for a local landowner, the **Forbidden Corner** (☎ 01969-640638; www.theforbiddencorner.co.uk; Tuppill Park, Middleham; adult/child/family £8.50/6.50/29; ☎ noon-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun late Mar-Oct) is a labyrinth of miniature castles, caves, temples and gardens decorated with all manner of weird and wonderful sculptures. You enter through a gateway in the shape of a fanged mouth and follow a series of 'clues' in the form of rhyming couplets to reach a 'temple of the underworld'. It's great fun for kids, and some of the jokes will bring a smile to adult lips. And watch out for the sign 'cave aquae' – beware of the water.

Admission is through bookings only – by phone at the number above, or in person at the **tourist office** (☎ 01748-828747) in Leyburn, or at the **Central Stores** (☎ 01969-623224) in Middleham.

## Activities

The area's main long-distance walk is the 79-mile **Wolds Way** ([www.nationaltrail.co.uk/YorkshireWoldsWay](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/YorkshireWoldsWay)), which starts at Hessle near the Humber Bridge and leads northwards through farmland, hills and quiet villages to end at the tip of Filey Brigg, a peninsula on the east coast just north of the town of Filey. Billed as 'Yorkshire's best-kept secret', it takes five days, and is an excellent beginners' walk.

The **Cleveland Way** (p588) also ends (or begins) at Filey; you can make an easy one-day walk by following the Cleveland Way along the scenic stretch of coast from Filey to Scarborough.

## Getting There & Around

Hull is easily reached by rail from Leeds, York, Beverley, Filey and Scarborough, and is also the hub for regional bus services. The website at [www.gettingaround.eastriding.gov.uk](http://www.gettingaround.eastriding.gov.uk) lists local transport operators.

## HULL

pop 256,200

Tough and uncompromising, Hull is a curmudgeonly English seaport with a proud seafaring tradition. It has long been the principal cargo port of England's east coast, with an economy that grew up around carrying wool out and bringing wine in. It was also a major whaling and fishing port until the trawling industry died out, but it remains a busy cargo terminal and departure point for ferries to the Continent.

Hull too has climbed aboard the regeneration bandwagon, and the next few years from 2009 will see major redevelopment around the train station, at the marina and along the east bank of the River Hull. Meanwhile, the city's attractions include a fine collection of Victorian and Edwardian architecture, several good museums and a world-class aquarium. It's also home to the famous Hull Truck Theatre company, and counts among its famous former residents William Wilberforce (1759–1833), the Yorkshire politician who led the movement to abolish the slave trade; and the quintessentially English poet Philip Larkin (1922–85), who presided over Hull's university library for many years.

A distinctive feature of the city and surrounding area is its old-fashioned telephone

boxes, which are cream-coloured rather than red. Hull was the only place in the UK to retain its own municipal phone system after all others were taken over by the Post Office in 1913; the company, now known as Kingston Communications, still provides the local phone service independently of British Telecom.

## Orientation

The train and bus stations – collectively known as Hull Paragon Interchange – sit on the western edge of the city centre; all the main sights are within 20 minutes' walk from here. Arriving by car, head for the multi-storey car park at Princes Quay Shopping Centre, or the car park at The Deep.

## Information

**Central Library** (☎ 01482-223344; Albion St;

☎ 9.30am–8pm Mon–Thu, to 5.30pm Fri, 9am–4.30pm Sun) Internet access.

**Post office** (63 Market Pl; ☎ 9am–5.30pm Mon–Sat)

**Tourist office** (☎ 01482-223559; [www.hullcc.gov.uk](http://www.hullcc.gov.uk);

1 Paragon St; ☎ 10am–5pm Mon–Sat, 11am–3pm Sun)

**Waterstone's** (☎ 01482-580234; 19–21 Jameson St;

☎ 9am–6pm Mon–Sat, 10.30am–4.30pm Sun)) Books and maps.

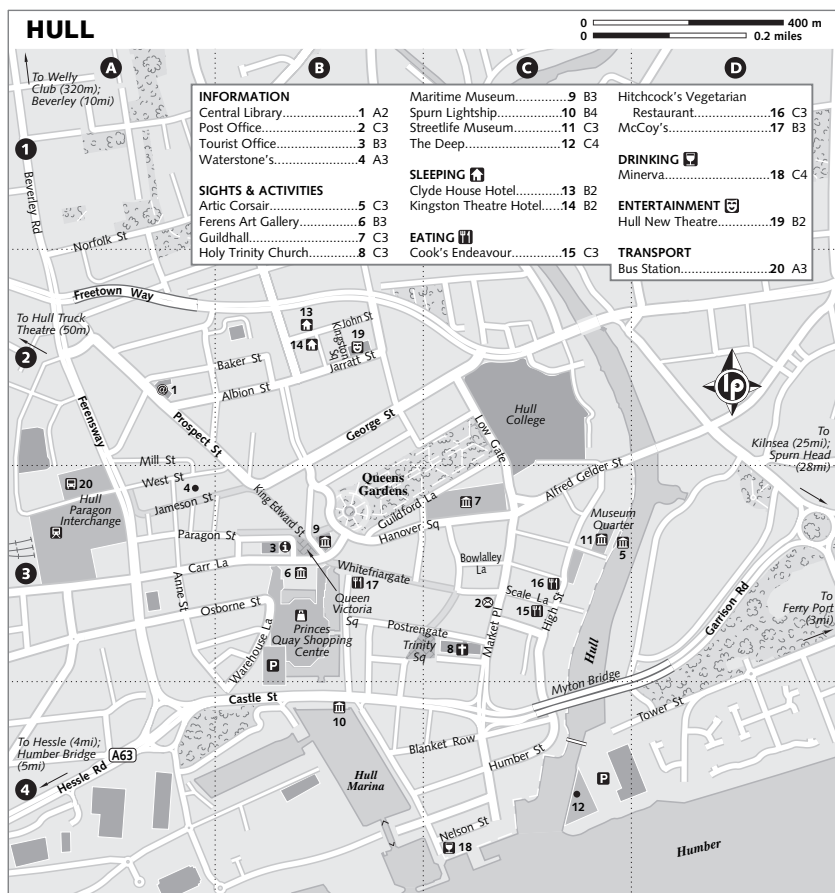
## Sights

### THE DEEP

Hull's biggest tourist attraction is **The Deep** (☎ 01482-381000; [www.thedeep.co.uk](http://www.thedeep.co.uk); Tower St; adult/child £8.75/6.75; ☎ 10am–6pm, last entry 5pm), a vast aquarium housed in a colossal, angular building that appears to lunge above the muddy waters of the Humber like a giant shark's head. Inside it's just as dramatic, with echoing commentaries and computer-generated interactive displays that guide you through the formation of the oceans and the evolution of sea life. The largest aquarium is 10m deep, filled with sharks, stingrays and colourful coral fishes, with moray eels draped over rocks like scarves of iridescent slime. A glass elevator plies up and down inside the tank, though you'll get a better view by taking the stairs. Don't miss the café on the very top floor, which has a great view of the Humber estuary.

### MUSEUM QUARTER

Hull has several city-run **museums** (☎ 01482-300300; 36 High St; [www.hullcc.gov.uk/museums](http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/museums); admission free; ☎ 10am–5pm Mon–Sat, 1.30–4.30pm Sun) concentrated in an area promoted as the Museum



Quarter. All share the same contact details, admission and opening hours.

The fascinating **Streetlife Museum** contains re-created street scenes from Georgian and Victorian times and from the 1930s, with all sorts of historic vehicles to explore, from stagecoaches to bicycles to buses and trams. Behind the museum, marooned in the mud of the River Hull, is the **Arctic Corsair** (tours 10am-4.30pm Wed & Sat, 1.30-4.30pm Sun). Tours of this Atlantic trawler, a veteran of the 1970s 'Cod Wars', demonstrate the hardships of fishing north of the Arctic Circle.

## OLD TOWN

Hull's Old Town, whose grand public buildings retain a sense of the prosperity the town

once knew, occupies the thumb of land between the River Hull to the east and Princes Quay to the west. The most impressive legacy is the **Guildhall** (☎ 01482-300300; Low Gate; admission free; 🕒 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Thu, to 3.30pm Fri), a huge neoclassical building that dates from 1916 and houses acres of polished marble, and oak and walnut panelling, plus a small collection of sculpture and art; phone to arrange a free guided tour.

The **Ferens Art Gallery** (☎ 01482-300300; Queen Victoria Sq; admission free; 🕒 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 1.30-4.30pm Sun), built in 1927, has a decent collection that includes works by Stanley Spencer and Peter Blake; across the square is the interesting **Maritime Museum** (same details as Ferens Art Gallery), housed in the former dock offices



(1871) and celebrating Hull's long association with the sea.

At the heart of the Old Town is **Holy Trinity Church** (☎ 01482-324835; Market Pl; ☎ 11am-2pm Tue-Fri Oct-Mar, 11am-3pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-noon Sat Apr-Sep, services Sun year round), a magnificent 15th-century building with a striking central tower and a long, tall, unified interior worthy of a cathedral. It features huge areas of windows, built to keep the weight of the walls down as the soil here is unstable.

Built in 1927, the **Spurn Lightship** (☎ 01482-300300; Castle St; admission free; ☎ Apr-Sep, call for opening hrs) once served as a navigation mark for ships entering the notorious Humber estuary; she is now safely retired in the marina.

## Festivals

**Hull Literature Festival** ([www.humbermouth.org.uk](http://www.humbermouth.org.uk)) Last two weeks of June. A celebration of Hull's rich literary heritage: besides the Larkin connection, poets Andrew Marvell, Stevie Smith and playwrights Alan Plater and John Godber all hail from here.

**Hull Jazz Festival** ([www.hulljazzfestival.co.uk](http://www.hulljazzfestival.co.uk)) July. Week-long festival brings an impressive line-up of great jazz musicians to the city.

**Hull Fair** (☎ 01482-300300; [www.hullcc.gov.uk](http://www.hullcc.gov.uk)) Second week in October. Europe's largest travelling funfair, with 250 different attractions including all kinds of stalls selling everything from palm reading to candy floss and all manner of rides, from the gentle, traditional kind to more modern white-knucklers.

## Sleeping & Eating

Good accommodation in the city centre is pretty thin on the ground – mostly business-oriented chain hotels and a few mediocre guest houses. The tourist office will help book accommodation for free.

**Clyde House Hotel** (☎ 01482-214981; [www.dydehousehotel.co.uk](http://www.dydehousehotel.co.uk); 13 John St; s/d £30/50) Overlooking leafy Kingston Sq, and close to the New Theatre, this is one of the best B&B options in the city centre; the rooms are nothing fancy, but are tidy and comfortable, and the owners are friendly and helpful.

**Kingston Theatre Hotel** (☎ 01482-225828; [www.kingstontheatrehotel.com](http://www.kingstontheatrehotel.com); 1-2 Kingston Sq; s/d/ste from £45/65/80) A slightly more formal hotel sharing the same central location, this place offers charming if not quite memorable rooms; upgrade to a suite if you're looking for a little leg room.

**McCoy's** (☎ 01482-327757; Colonial Chambers, Princes Dock St; mains £3-5; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Sat) This home-grown alternative to Starbucks serves excellent coffee, and a breakfast menu that ranges from porridge to a vegetarian fry-up to scrambled egg with smoked salmon. There are freshly baked cakes and pastries through the day, with salads and sarnies at lunch.

**Hitchcock's Vegetarian Restaurant** (☎ 01482-320233; 1 Bishop Lane, High St; per person £15; ☎ 8-9pm Tue-Sat) The word 'quirky' could have been invented to describe this place – an atmospheric maze of small rooms, an all-you-can-eat vegetarian buffet whose theme – Thai, Indian, Spanish, whatever – is chosen by the first person to book that evening. BYO alcohol, and no credit cards. But hey – the food is excellent and the welcome is warm. Bookings necessary.

**Cook's Endeavour** (☎ 01482-213844; 5 Scale Lane; 2-/3-course dinner £25/30; ☎ dinner Mon-Sat) Set in a quaint 15th-century building – the oldest surviving house in Hull – this wittily named place specialises in local produce, including Yorkshire beef and Whitby crab, prepared in traditional English style.

## Drinking & Entertainment

Come nightfall – especially at weekends – Hull can be raucous and often rowdy, especially in the streets around Trinity Sq in the Old Town, and on the strip of pubs along Beverley Rd to the north of the city centre.

**Hull Truck Theatre** (☎ 01482-323638; [www.hulltruck.co.uk](http://www.hulltruck.co.uk); Spring St) Home to acclaimed playwright John Godber, who made his name with gritty comedies *Bouncers* and *Up'n'Under* – he is one of the most-performed playwrights in the English-speaking world – Hull Truck presents a lively program of drama, comedy and Sunday jazz. It's just northwest of the Old Town.

**Hull New Theatre** (☎ 01482-226655; [www.hullcc.gov.uk](http://www.hullcc.gov.uk); Kingston Sq) A traditional regional theatre hosting popular drama, concerts and musicals.

**Welly Club** (☎ 01482-326131, 221676; [www.giveit.somewelly.com](http://www.giveit.somewelly.com); 105-107 Beverley Rd; admission free-£5; ☎ to 2am, closed Wed & Sun) The Welly is best known these days for the regular Saturday house night *Déjà Vu* ([www.clubdejavu.co.uk](http://www.clubdejavu.co.uk)), which was voted the best club night in Yorkshire in 2007. Choose Thursday if indie rock appeals more than house and trance.

**Minerva** (☎ 01482-326909; Nelson St) If you're more into pubbing than clubbing, try a pint of Timothy Taylors at this lovely, 200-year-old pub down by the waterfront; on a sunny day you can sit outdoors and watch the ships go by.

### Getting There & Away

National Express operates coaches direct from London (£24, 6½ hours, two daily) and Manchester (£15, 3¼ hours, one daily). Both National Express and bus X46 run to/from York (£7.60, 1¼ hours, one daily).

Hull has good rail links north and south to Newcastle (£43, 1½ hours, hourly, change at York) and London King's Cross (£61, 2½ hours, every two hours), and west to York (£17, 1¼ hours, every two hours) and Leeds (£16, one hour, hourly).

The ferry port is 3 miles east of the centre at King George Dock; a bus connects the train station with the ferries. For details of ferry services to Zeebrugge and Rotterdam see p805.

### AROUND HULL Humber Bridge

Opened in 1981, the **Humber Bridge** ([www.humberbridge.co.uk](http://www.humberbridge.co.uk)) swoops gracefully across the broad estuary of the River Humber, its 1410m span made it the world's longest single-span suspension bridge – until 1998. It links Yorkshire to Lincolnshire (p490), opening up what was once an often-overlooked corner of the country.

The best way to appreciate the scale of the bridge, and the vastness of the estuary, is to walk or cycle out along the footway from the **Humber Bridge tourist office** (☎ 01482-640852; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat & Sun May-Sep, 10am-3pm Nov-Feb, 9am-4pm Mar, Apr & Oct) at the north end of the bridge (follow road signs for Humber Bridge Country Park). The car park here hosts a popular farmers market on the first Sunday in the month.

The bridge is a mile west of the small riverside town of **Hessle**, about 4 miles west of Hull. Bus 350 runs from Hull Paragon Interchange to Ferryby Rd in Hessle (15 minutes, every two hours), from where it's a 300m walk to the tourist office.

### Spurn Head

Three and half miles long and less than 100m wide, Spurn Head (also called Spurn Point)

is the front line in a constant battle between the River Humber and the North Sea. A series of sand and shingle banks tenuously held together by tussocks of marram grass, this fragile and unusual environment is a paradise for bird watchers and fossil hunters. It is also under threat – as the fastest-eroding stretch of coastline in Britain, it is only ever a storm away from destruction.

Most of the land is now part of the **Spurn National Nature Reserve** (☎ 01964-650533; [www.ywt.org.uk](http://www.ywt.org.uk); admission per car £3) which is managed by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust; the tidal mud flats on the west side of the headland are a haven for wading birds and migrating water fowl. You can park for free at the **Blue Bell Tea Room & Visitor Centre** (☎ 01964-650139; ☎ 11am-4.30pm Sat, 11am-5pm Sun Easter-Oct) and walk out along the Spurn Footpath to the tip of the headland (7 miles round trip), or pay the admission fee and drive along the very narrow road to a parking area at the old lighthouse. There are sandy beaches on either side, where the shingle is littered with fossil ammonites, and the very end of the headland is home to a remote community of lifeboat personnel and harbour pilots.

In 1804 gun batteries were built here to repel a possible French invasion, and during WWII guns of all sizes mounted in heavy concrete emplacements were added – the shattered concrete blocks and sandy scarps near the Blue Bell are a graphic illustration of how fast this coast is being lost to the sea.

There are a couple of pubs and tearooms in **Kilnsea**, the last village before the Blue Bell, and at **Easington**, two miles to the north.

Spurn Head is about 28 miles southeast of Hull city centre, on mostly minor roads – it's about an hour's drive. There is no public transport.

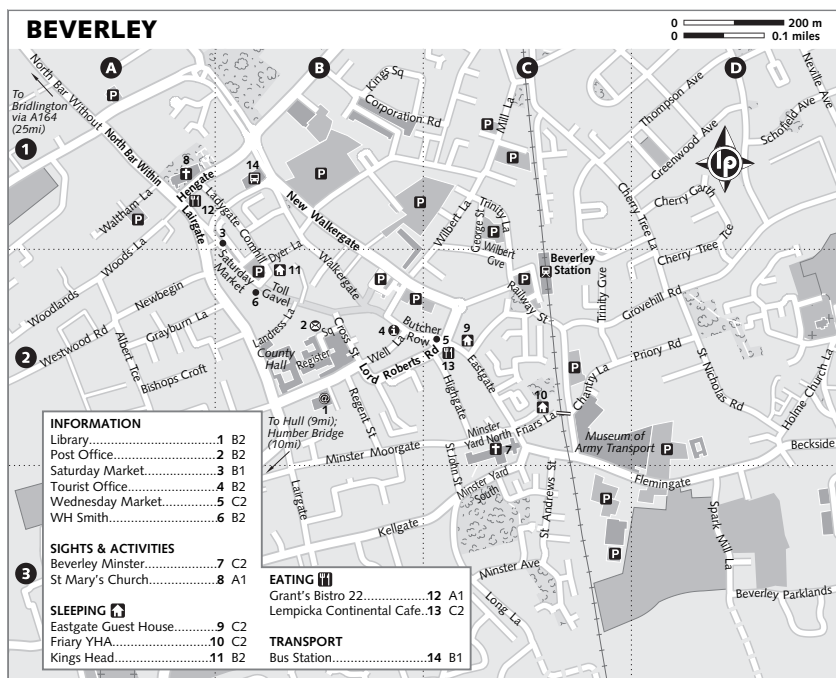
### BEVERLEY

pop 29,110

Handsome, unspoilt Beverley is one of the most attractive of Yorkshire towns largely on account of its magnificent minster – a rival to any cathedral in England – and the tangle of streets that lie beneath it, each brimming with exquisite Georgian and Victorian buildings.

### Orientation & Information

All the sights are a short walk from either train or bus station. There's a large mar-



ket in the main square on Saturday, and a smaller one on Wednesday on the square called – Wednesday Market.

**Library** (☎ 01482-885355; Champney Rd; ☏ 9.30am–5pm Mon & Wed, 9.30am–7pm Tue, Thu & Fri, 9am–1pm Sat) Internet access and a small art gallery with changing exhibitions.

**Post office** (Register Sq; ☏ 9am–5.30pm Mon–Fri, to 12.30pm Sat)

**Tourist office** (☎ 01482-391672; www.beverley.gov.uk; 34 Butcher Row; ☏ 9.30am–5.15pm Mon–Fri, 10am–4.45pm Sat year round, 11am–3pm Sun Jul & Aug)

**WH Smith** (☎ 01482-870494; 39–41 Toll Gavel; ☏ 8.45am–5.30pm Mon–Sat, 10am–4pm Sun) Books and maps.

## Sights

One of the great glories of English religious architecture, **Beverley Minster** (☎ 01482-868540; www.beverleyminster.org; admission by donation; ☏ 9am–5.30pm Mon–Sat May–Aug, 9am–5pm Sep–Oct & Mar–Apr, 9am–4pm Nov–Feb, also noon–4pm Sun year round) is the most impressive church in the country that is not a cathedral. Construction began in 1220 – it was the third church to be built on this site, the first dating from the 7th century – and

continued for two centuries, spanning the Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular periods of the Gothic style.

The soaring lines of the exterior are imposing, but it is inside that the charm and beauty lie. The 14th-century **north aisle** is lined with original stone carvings, mostly of musicians – indeed, much of our knowledge of early musical instruments comes from these images – but also of goblins, devils and grotesque figures. Look out for the bagpipe player.

Close to the altar, the elaborate and intricate **Percy Canopy** (1340), a decorative frill above the tomb of local aristocrat Lady Eleanor Percy, is a testament to the skill of the sculptor, and the finest example of Gothic stone carving in England. In complete contrast, in the nearby chancel, is the 10th-century Saxon **frith stool**, a plain and polished stone chair that once gave sanctuary to anyone escaping the law.

In the roof of the tower is a restored **tread-wheel crane** (guided tours £4; ☏ 11.15am & 2.15pm Mon–Sat), where workers ground around like hapless hamsters to lift the huge loads necessary to build a medieval church; access is by guided tour only.

Doomed to play second fiddle, **St Mary's Church** (☎ 01482-865709; admission free; ⌚ 9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & 2-4pm Sun Apr-Sep, 9.30am-noon & 1-4pm Mon Fri Oct-Mar) at the other end of town was built between 1120 and 1530; the west front (early 15th century) is considered one of the finest of any parish church in England. In the north choir aisle there is a **carving** (c 1330) of a rabbit dressed as a pilgrim that is said to have inspired Lewis Carroll's White Rabbit.

## Sleeping & Eating

**Friary YHA** (☎ 0845 371 9004; www.yha.org.uk; Friar's Lane; dm from £14; (P)) In Beverley, it's the cheapest accommodation that has the best setting and location – this hostel is housed in a beautifully restored 14th-century Dominican friary mentioned in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, and is only 100m from the minster and a short walk from the train station.

**Eastgate Guest House** (☎ 01482-868464; 7 Eastgate; s/d £45/60) This red-brick Victorian town house offers 15 very comfortable rooms in a central location, and the sort of hearty breakfast that will see you passing up lunch in favour of a snack.

**Kings Head** (☎ 01482-868103; 38 Saturday Market; s/d £50/65; (P)) A Georgian coaching inn that has been given a modern makeover, the Kings Head is a lively, family-friendly pub with 12 bright and cheerful rooms above the bar – the pub opens late on weekend nights, but ear-plugs are supplied for those who don't want to join the revelry!

**Lempicka Continental Cafe** (☎ 01482-866960; 13 Wednesday Market; mains £5-7) Named and themed after Polish artist Tamara de Lempicka, this stylish and sepia-toned little cafe has a 1930s art-deco atmosphere and serves good fair-trade coffee and tea, wicked hot chocolate, homemade cakes and daily lunch specials.

**Grant's Bistro 22** (☎ 01482-887624; 22 North Bar Within; 2-course lunch/dinner £13/25; ⌚ lunch Tue-Sat, dinner Mon-Sat) The top place in town is a great place for a romantic dinner *à deux*, with dark wood tables, fresh flowers and candlelight. The menu makes the most of fresh local beef, game and especially seafood.

## Getting There & Away

There are frequent bus services from Hull including numbers 121, 122, 246 and X46/X47 (30 minutes, every 20 minutes). Bus

X46/X47 links Beverley with York (1¼ hours, hourly).

There are regular trains to Scarborough via Filey (£11, 1½ hours, every two hours); trains to/from Hull (£4.90, 15 minutes) run twice an hour.

## BRIDLINGTON

pop 33,600

Bridlington is one of those sleepy seaside resorts that seems to have been bypassed by the 21st century, pulling in a crowd of contented regulars who return year after year to enjoy the neatly groomed beaches of golden sand, the mini-golf and paddling pool, the deck-chairs and donkey rides.

So the reopening of **Bridlington Spa** (☎ 01262-401400; South Marine Drive) in 2007 with a rock gig by Yorkshire indie band the Pigeon Detectives was a bit of a shot in the arm. The renovated building, which retains its Edwardian theatre and 1930s art-deco ballroom, promises a lively program of music and entertainment events that will liven things up down by the South Beach.

The **tourist office** (☎ 01262-673474; 25 Prince St; ⌚ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Sat, 11am-3pm Sun) is near the North Beach and has short-term parking at the front.

Food wise, Bridlington is famous for **Audrey's Fish and Chips** (☎ 01262-671920; 2 Queen St; mains £5-6; ⌚ 11.30am-6pm daily), an old-school fish and chip restaurant that serves superbly crisp battered haddock fried in beef dripping – the real deal.

For something more contemporary try **Rags Hotel** (☎ 01262-400355; www.ragshotel.co.uk; South Pier; mains £8-17; s/d from £60/85; (P)), a boutique-style place where you can enjoy a dish of *moules marinière* with a view over the harbour.

Bridlington is on the railway line between Hull (£9.60, 45 minutes, every 30 minutes) and Scarborough (£6, 40 minutes, every two hours).

## AROUND BRIDLINGTON

Northeast of Bridlington, the 120m-high chalk cliffs of **Flamborough Head** thrust out into the North Sea, providing nesting sites for England's largest seabird colony. The headland is also home to the country's oldest surviving **lighthouse tower**, dating from around 1670 – it stands in the golf course about 300m before the car park beside the modern lighthouse.

On the northern side of the headland, about 4 miles north of Bridlington, is the RSPB's **Bempton Cliffs Nature Reserve** (☎ 01262-851179; pedestrian/car free/£3.50; 📄 visitor centre 10am-5pm Mar-Oct, 9.30am-4pm Nov-Feb). From April to August these cliffs are home to more than 200,000 nesting sea birds, including guillemots, razorbills, fulmars, a rare colony of gannets, and those supermodels of the seagull world, the delicate and elegant kittiwakes, with their fat and fluffy chicks. The big crowd-pullers, though, are the comical and colourful puffins. There is a good visitor centre at the car park and the reserve has 3 miles of well-maintained paths along the cliffs. Binoculars can be rented for £3 and there are helpful volunteers on hand to offer guidance.

You can take a train from Bridlington to Bempton village (7 minutes, every 1½ hours), from where it's a 1½-mile walk to the reserve.

## NORTH YORKSHIRE

The largest of Yorkshire's four counties – and the largest county in England – is also the most beautiful; unlike the rest of northern England, it has survived almost unscathed by the Industrial Revolution. On the contrary, North Yorkshire has always, since the Middle Ages, been about sheep and the woolly wealth that they produce.

Instead of closed-down factories, mills and mines, the man-made monuments that dot the landscape round these parts are of the magnificent variety – the great houses and wealthy abbeys that sit ruined or restored, a reminder that there was plenty of money to be made off the sheep's back.

All the same, North Yorkshire's biggest attraction is an urban one. Sure, the genteel spa town of Harrogate and the bright and breezy seaside resorts of Scarborough and Whitby have many fans, but nothing compares to the unparalleled splendour of York, England's most-visited city outside London.

### Getting There & Around

The main gateway town is York, which has excellent road and rail links to the rest of the country (see p631). For countywide public transport information, call **Traveline Yorkshire** (☎ 0871 200 2233; www.yorkshiretravel.net). There are

various Explorer passes, and individual bus and train companies also offer their own saver schemes, so it's worth asking for advice on the best deal when you buy your ticket.

### YORK

pop 181,100

Nowhere in northern England says 'medieval' quite like York, a city of extraordinary cultural and historical wealth that has lost little of its preindustrial lustre. Its medieval spider's web of narrow streets is enclosed by a magnificent circuit of 13th-century walls. At the heart of the city lies the immense, awe-inspiring minster, one of the most beautiful Gothic cathedrals in the world. The city's long history and rich heritage is woven into virtually every brick and beam, and modern, tourist-oriented York – with its myriad museums, restaurants, cafes and traditional pubs – is a carefully maintained heir to that heritage.

### Orientation

Compact and eminently walkable, York has five major landmarks to take note of: the wall enclosing the old city centre; the minster at the northern corner; Clifford's Tower at the southern end; the River Ouse, which divides the centre in two; and the train station to the west. Just to avoid the inevitable confusion, remember that round these parts *gate* means street and *bar* means gate.

### Information

**American Express** (Amex; ☎ 01904-676501; 6 Stonegate; 🕒 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat) With foreign exchange service.

**Borders** (☎ 01904-653300; 1-5 Davygate; 🕒 9am-9pm Mon-Sat, 11am-5pm Sun) Well-stocked bookshop.

**City Library** (☎ 01904-552815; Museum St; 🕒 9am-8pm Mon-Wed & Fri, to 5.30pm Thu, to 4pm Sat; per 30min £1) Internet access.

**Post office** (22 Lendal; 🕒 8.30am-5.30pm Mon & Tue, 9am-5.30pm Wed-Sat)

**Thomas Cook** (☎ 01904-653626; 4 Nessgate) Full service travel agent and currency exchange.

**York District Hospital** (☎ 01904-631313; Wiggington Rd) A mile north of the centre.

**York Visitor Centre** (☎ 01904-550099; www.visitork.org; De Grey Rooms, Exhibition Sq; 🕒 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm Sun Apr-Sep, 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, 10am-4pm Sun Oct-Mar) There's another branch at the train station (same hours).

## YORK: FROM THE BEGINNING

York – or the marshy area that preceded the first settlement – has been coveted by pretty much everyone that has ever set foot on this island. In the beginning there were the Brigantes, a local tribe that minded their own business. In AD 71 the Romans – who were spectacularly successful at minding everyone else's business – built their first garrison here for the troops fighting the poor old Brigantes. They called it Eboracum, and in time a civilian settlement prospered around what became a large fort. Hadrian used it as the base for his northern campaign, while Constantine the Great was proclaimed emperor here in AD 306 after the death of his father. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, the town was taken by the Anglo-Saxons who renamed it Eoforwic and made it the capital of the independent kingdom of Northumbria.

Enter the Christians. In 625 a Roman priest, Paulinus, arrived and managed to convert King Edwin and all his nobles. Two years later, they built the first wooden church; for most of the next century the city was a major centre of learning, attracting students from all over Europe.

The student party lasted until 866, when the next wave of invaders arrived. This time it was those marauding Vikings, who chucked everybody out and gave the town a more tongue-friendly name, Jorvik. It was to be their capital for the next 100 years, and during that time they put a rest to their pillaging ways and turned the city into an important trading port.

The next arrival was King Eadred of Wessex, who drove out the last Viking ruler in 954 and reunited Danelaw with the south, but trouble quickly followed. In 1066 King Harold II managed to fend off a Norwegian invasion-rebellion at Stamford Bridge, east of York, but his turn came at the hands of William the Conqueror a few months later at the Battle of Hastings.

## Sights

### YORK MINSTER

Not content with being Yorkshire's most important historic building, the awe-inspiring **York Minster** (☎ 01904-557200; www.yorkminster.org; adult/child minster only £5.50/free, all areas £9.50/3; ☎ minster 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, noon-3.45pm Sun Apr-Oct, 9.30am-5pm Mon-Sat, noon-3.45pm Sun Nov-Mar) is also the largest medieval cathedral in all of Northern Europe. Seat of the archbishop of York, primate of England, it is second in importance only to Canterbury, home of the primate of *all* England – the separate titles were created to settle a debate over whether York or Canterbury was the true centre of the English church. But that's where Canterbury's superiority ends, for this is without doubt one of the world's most beautiful Gothic buildings. If this is the only cathedral you visit in England, you'll still walk away satisfied – so long as you have the patience to deal with the constant flow of school groups and organised tours that will invariably clog up your camera's viewfinder.

The first church on this spot was a wooden chapel built for the baptism of King Edwin of Northumbria on Easter Day 627; its location is marked in the crypt. It was replaced with a stone church that was built on the site of a Roman basilica, parts of which can be seen in the foundations. The first Norman minster

was built in the 11th century; again, you can see surviving fragments in the foundations and crypt.

The present minster, built mainly between 1220 and 1480, manages to encompass all the major stages of Gothic architectural development. The transepts (1220–1255) were built in Early English style; the octagonal chapter house (1260–1290) and the nave (1291–1340) in the Decorated style; and the west towers, west front and central, or lantern, tower (1470–1472) in Perpendicular style.

You enter via the south transept, which was badly damaged by fire in 1984 but has now been fully restored. To your right is the 15th-century **choir screen** depicting the 15 kings from William I to Henry VI. Facing you is the magnificent **Five Sisters Window**, with five lancets over 15m high. This is the minster's oldest complete window; most of its tangle of coloured glass dates from around 1250. Just beyond it to the right is the 13th-century **chapter house**, a fine example of the Decorated style. Sinuous and intricately carved stonework – there are more than 200 expressive carved heads and figures – surrounds an airy, uninterrupted space.

Back in the main church, take note of the unusually tall and wide **nave**, the aisles of which (to the sides) are roofed in stone in contrast to the central roof, which is wood painted to

Willie exercised his own brand of tough love in York. After his two wooden castles were captured by an Anglo-Scandinavian army, he torched the whole city (and Durham) and the surrounding countryside so that the rebels knew who was boss – the ‘harrying of the north’. The Normans then set about rebuilding the city, including a new minster. From that moment, everything in York was rosy – except for a blip in 1137 when the whole city caught fire – and over the next 300 years it prospered through royal patronage, textiles, trade and the church.

No sooner did the church finally get built, though, than the city went into full recession. In the 15th century Hull took over as the region’s main port and the textile industry moved elsewhere. Henry VIII’s inability to keep a wife and the ensuing brouhaha with the church that resulted in the Reformation also hit York pretty hard. Henry did establish a branch of the King’s Council here to help govern the north, and this contributed to the city’s recovery under Elizabeth I and James I.

The council was abolished during Charles I’s reign, but the king established his court here during the Civil War, which drew the devastating attentions of the Parliamentarians. They besieged the rabidly promonarchist York for three months in 1644, but by a fortunate accident of history their leader was a local chap called Sir Thomas Fairfax, who prevented his troops from setting York alight, thereby preserving the city and the minster.

Not much happened after that. Throughout the 18th century the city was a fashionable social centre dominated by the aristocracy, who were drawn by its culture and new racecourse. When the railway was built in 1839 thousands of people were employed in the new industries that sprung up around it, such as confectionery. These industries went into decline in the latter half of the 20th century, but by then a new invader was asking for directions at the city gates, armed only with a guidebook.

look like stone. On both sides of the nave are painted stone shields of the nobles who met with Edward II at a parliament in York. Also note the **dragon’s head** projecting from the gallery – it’s a crane believed to have been used to lift a font cover. There are several fine windows dating from the early 14th century, but the most impressive is the **Great West Window** (1338), with its beautiful stone tracery.

Beyond the screen and the choir is the **lady chapel** and, behind it, the **high altar**, which is dominated by the huge **Great East Window** (1405). At 23.7m by 9.4m – roughly the size of a tennis court – it is the world’s largest medieval stained-glass window and the cathedral’s single most important treasure. Needless to say, its epic size matches the epic theme depicted within: the beginning and end of the world as described in Genesis and the Book of Revelations.

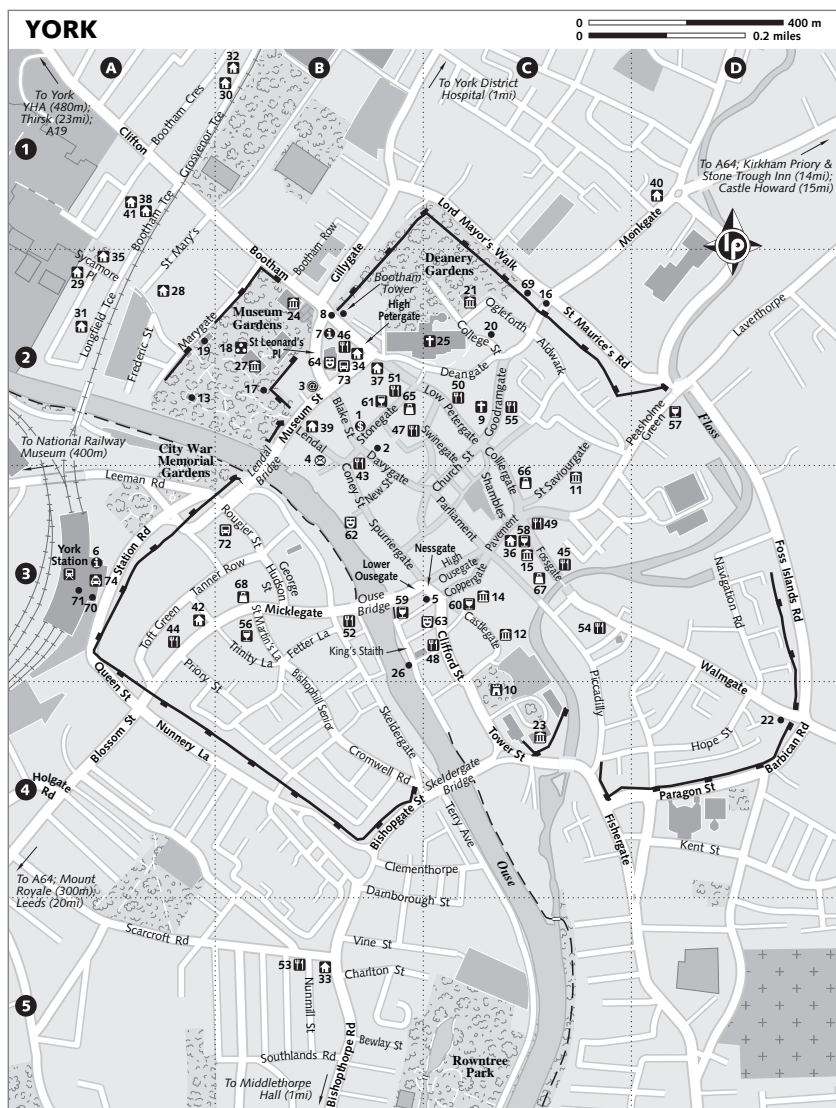
At the heart of the minster is the massive **tower** (adult/child £4/2; ☎ 9.30am–5pm Mon–Sat, 12.30–5pm Sun Apr–Oct, from 10am Nov–Mar), which is well worth climbing for the unparalleled views of York. You’ll have to tackle a fairly claustrophobic climb of 275 steps and, most probably, a queue of people with cameras in hand. Access to the tower is near the entrance in the south transept, dominated by the exquisite **Rose Window** commemorating the union of the royal houses of Lancaster

and York, through the marriage of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, which ended the Wars of the Roses and began the Tudor dynasty (see p40).

Another set of stairs in the south transept leads down to the **undercroft** (adult/child £4/2; ☎ 9.30am–5pm Mon–Sat, 12.30–5pm Sun), where you’ll also find the **treasury** and **crypt** – these should on no account be missed. In 1967 the foundations were shored up when the central tower threatened to collapse; while engineers worked frantically to save the building, archaeologists uncovered Roman and Norman remains that attest to the site’s ancient history – one of the most extraordinary finds is a Roman culvert, still carrying water to the Ouse. The treasury houses 11th-century artefacts including relics from the graves of medieval archbishops. The crypt contains fragments from the Norman cathedral, including the font showing King Edwin’s baptism that also marks the site of the original wooden chapel.

#### AROUND THE MINSTER

Owned by the minster since the 15th century, **St William’s College** (☎ 01904-637134; College St) is an attractive half-timbered Tudor building with elegant oriel windows built for the minster’s chantry priests.



The **Treasurer's House** (NT; ☎ 01904-624247; Minster Yard; admission £5.80, house & basement £8; 🕒 11am-4.30pm Sat-Thu Apr-Oct, 11am-3pm Sat-Thu Nov) was home to the minster's medieval treasurers. Substantially rebuilt in the 17th and 18th centuries, the 13 rooms house a fine collection of furniture and provide a good insight into 18th-century life. The house is also the setting

for one of the city's most enduring ghost stories: during the 1950s a plumber working in the basement swore he saw a band of Roman soldiers walking *through* the walls; his story remains popular if unproven – but you can explore the cellar to find out.

Tucked away behind an inconspicuous gate and seemingly cut off from the rest of the



<b>INFORMATION</b>				
Amex.....	1 B2	York City Art Gallery.....	24 B2	
Borders.....	2 B2	York Minster.....	25 C2	
City Library.....	3 B2	YorkBoat River Trips.....	26 B3	
Post Office.....	4 B2	Yorkshire Museum.....	27 B2	
Thomas Cook.....	5 C3	<b>SLEEPING</b> ☞		
York Visitor Centre (Branch).....	6 A3	23 St Mary's.....	28 A2	
York Visitor Centre (Main Office).....	7 B2	Alcuin Lodge.....	29 A2	
<b>SIGHTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>			Arnot House.....	30 B1
Bootham Bar.....	8 B2	Briar Lea Guest House.....	31 A2	
Church of the Holy Trinity.....	9 C2	Brontë House.....	32 B1	
Clifford's Tower.....	10 C4	Dairy Guesthouse.....	33 B5	
Dig.....	11 C3	Dean Court Hotel.....	34 B2	
Fairfax House.....	12 C3	Elliott's B&B.....	35 A2	
Gatehall.....	13 A2	Golden Fleece.....	36 C3	
Hospitium.....	(see 13)	Guy Fawkes.....	37 B2	
Jorvik.....	14 C3	Hedley House Hotel.....	38 A1	
Merchant Adventurers' Hall.....	15 C3	Judges Lodging Hotel.....	39 B2	
Monk Bar.....	16 C2	Monkgate Guesthouse.....	40 D1	
Multangular Tower.....	17 B2	St Raphael.....	41 A1	
Richard III Museum.....	(see 16)	York Backpackers.....	42 A3	
St Mary's Abbey.....	18 B2	<b>EATING</b> ☞		
St Mary's Lodge.....	19 A2	Betty's.....	43 B3	
St William's College.....	20 C2	Blake Head Vegetarian Cafe.....	44 A3	
Steps to City Walls.....	(see 16)	Blue Bicycle.....	45 C3	
Steps to City Walls.....	(see 8)	Cafe Concerto.....	46 B2	
Treasurer's House.....	21 C2	El Piano.....	47 B2	
Walmgate Bar.....	22 D4	Fiesta Mexicana.....	48 C3	
York Castle Museum.....	23 C4	J Baker's.....	49 C3	
		La Vecchia Scuola.....	50 C2	
		Little Betty's.....	51 B2	
		Living Room.....	52 B3	
		Melton's.....	53 B5	
		Melton's Too.....	54 C3	
		Siam House.....	55 C2	
		<b>DRINKING</b> ☞		
		Ackhorne.....	56 B3	
		Black Swan.....	57 D2	
		Blue Bell.....	58 C3	
		King's Arms.....	59 B3	
		Little John.....	60 C3	
		Ye Olde Starre.....	61 B2	
		<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b> ☞		
		City Screen.....	62 B3	
		Grand Opera House.....	63 C3	
		York Theatre Royal.....	64 B2	
		<b>SHOPPING</b> ☞		
		Antiques Centre.....	65 B2	
		Azendi.....	66 C3	
		Barbican Books.....	67 C3	
		Ken Spellman Booksellers.....	68 B3	
		<b>TRANSPORT</b>		
		Bob Trotter Bike Hire.....	69 C2	
		Europcar.....	70 A3	
		Hertz.....	71 A3	
		Local Bus Stops.....	72 B3	
		Road Train Stop.....	73 B2	
		Station Taxis.....	74 A3	

town, the **Church of the Holy Trinity** (☎ 01904-613451; Goodramgate; ☞ 10am-5pm Tue-Sat May-Sep, 10am-4pm Oct-Apr) is a fantastically atmospheric old building, having survived almost unchanged for the last 200 years, with rare 17th- to 18th-century box pews, 15th-century stained glass, and wonky walls that seem to have been built without plumb line or spirit level.

## CITY WALLS

If the weather's good, don't miss the chance to walk the **City Walls** (admission free; ☞ 8am-dusk), which follow the line of the original Roman walls – it gives a whole new perspective on the city. The full circuit is 4.5 miles (allow 1½ to two hours); if you're pushed for time, the short stretch from Bootham Bar to Monk Bar is worth doing for the views of the minster.

Start and finish in the Museum Gardens or at **Bootham Bar** (on the site of a Roman gate), where a multimedia exhibit provides some historical context, and go clockwise. Highlights include **Monk Bar**, the best-preserved medieval gate, which still has a working portcullis, and **Walmgate Bar**, England's only city gate with an intact barbican (an extended gateway to ward off uninvited guests).

At Monk Bar you'll find the **Richard III Museum** (☎ 01904-634191; www.richardiiimuseum.co.uk; admission £2.50; ☞ 9am-5pm Mar-Oct, 9.30am-4pm Nov-Feb). The museum sets out the case of the murdered 'Princes in the Tower' and invites visitors to judge whether their uncle, Richard III, killed them (see *Dark Deeds in the Tower*, p39).

You can download a free guide to the wall walk at [www.visitryork.org/explore](http://www.visitryork.org/explore).

## SHAMBLES

The narrow, cobbled lane known as the **Shambles** ([www.yorkshambles.com](http://www.yorkshambles.com)), lined with 15th-century Tudor buildings that overhang so

## THE YORK PASS

If you plan on visiting a lot of sights, you can save yourself some money by using a **York Pass** ([www.yorkpass.com](http://www.yorkpass.com); 1/2/3 days adult £24/32/36, child £14/18/22); it grants you free access to most pay-to-visit sights in town, as well as free passage on a handful of tours and discounts at a range of eateries. It's available at the tourist offices, or you can buy online.

much they seem to meet above your head, is the most visited street in Europe. Quaint and picturesque it most certainly is, and it hints at what a medieval street may have looked like – if it was overrun with people told they have to buy a tacky souvenir and be back on the tour bus in 15 minutes. It takes its name from the Saxon word *shamel*, meaning ‘slaughterhouse’ – in 1862 there were 26 butcher shops on this one street.

### JORVIK

Interactive multimedia exhibits aimed at ‘bringing history to life’ often achieve just the opposite, but the much-hyped **Jorvik** (☎ 01904-543403; [www.vikingjorvik.com](http://www.vikingjorvik.com); Coppergate; adult/child £8.50/6, Jorvik & Dig combined £11.25/8.50; ☎ 10am-5pm Apr-Oct, to 4pm Nov-Mar) – the most visited attraction in town after the minster – manages to pull it off with admirable aplomb. It’s a smells-and-all reconstruction of the Viking settlement that was unearthed here during excavations in the late 1970s, brought to you courtesy of a ‘time-car’ monorail that transports you through 9th-century Jorvik (the Viking name for York). While some of the ‘you will now travel back in time’ malarkey is a bit naff, it’s all done with a sense of humour tied to a historical authenticity that will leave you with a pretty good idea of what life must have been like in Viking-era York. In the exhibition at the end of the monorail, look out for the **Lloyds Bank Turd** – a fossilised human stool that measures an eye-watering nine inches long and half a pound in weight, and must be the only jobbie in the world to have its own Wikipedia entry.

You can cut time spent waiting in the queue by booking your tickets online and choosing the time you want to visit – it only costs £1 extra.

### DIG

Under the same management as Jorvik, **Dig** (☎ 01904-543403; [www.digyork.co.uk](http://www.digyork.co.uk); St Saviour’s Church, St Saviourgate; adult/child £5.50/5, Dig & Jorvik £11.25/8.50; ☎ 10am-5pm) cashes in on the popularity of archaeology programs on TV by giving you the chance to be an ‘archaeological detective’, unearthing the ‘secrets’ of York’s distant past as well as learning something of the archaeologist’s world – what they do, how they do it and so on. Aimed mainly at kids, it’s much more hands-on than Jorvik, and a lot depends on how good – and entertaining – your guide is.

### CLIFFORD’S TOWER

There’s precious little left of York Castle except for this evocative stone **tower** (EH; ☎ 01904-646940; admission £3; ☎ 10am-6pm Apr-Sep, to 5pm Oct, to 4pm Nov-Mar), a highly unusual figure-of-eight design built into the castle’s keep after the original one was destroyed in 1190 during anti-Jewish riots. An angry mob forced 150 Jews to be locked inside the tower and the hapless victims took their own lives rather than be killed. There’s not much to see inside but the views over the city are excellent.

### YORK CASTLE MUSEUM

Opposite Clifford’s Tower, this excellent **museum** (☎ 01904-653611; [www.yorkcastlemuseum.org.uk](http://www.yorkcastlemuseum.org.uk); adult/child £7.50/4, with Yorkshire Museum £9.50/6; ☎ 9.30am-5pm) contains displays of everyday life through the centuries, with reconstructed domestic interiors and a less-than-homely prison cell where you can try out the condemned man’s bed – in this case the highwayman Dick Turpin’s (he was imprisoned here before being hanged in 1739). There’s a bewildering array of evocative objects from the past 400 years, gathered together by a certain Dr Kirk from the 1920s onwards for fear that the items would become obsolete and disappear completely. He wasn’t far wrong, which makes this place all the more interesting.

### NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

Many railway museums are the sole preserve of lone men in anoraks comparing dog-eared notebooks and getting high on the smell of machine oil, coal smoke and nostalgia. But this place is different. York’s **National Railway Museum** (☎ 0844 815 3139; [www.nrm.org.uk](http://www.nrm.org.uk); Leeman Rd; admission free; ☎ 10am-6pm daily, closed 24-26 Dec) – the biggest in the world, with more than 100 locomotives – is so well presented and full of fascinating stuff that it’s interesting even to folk whose eyes don’t mist over at the thought of a 4-6-2 A1 Pacific class chuffing into a tunnel.

Highlights for the trainspotters among us include a replica of George Stephenson’s *Rocket* of 1829, the world’s first ‘modern’ steam locomotive; the sleek and streamlined *Mallard*, which set the world speed record for a steam locomotive in 1938 (126mph); a 1960s Japanese *Shinkansen* bullet train; and the world-famous *Flying Scotsman*, the first steam engine to break the 100mph barrier (still in bits in the workshop at time of research – should be on display by early 2009). There’s also a

massive 4-6-2 loco from 1949 that's been cut in half so you can see how it works.

But even if you're not a rail nerd you'll enjoy looking around the gleaming, silk-lined carriages of the royal trains used by Queen Victoria and Edward VII, or having a *Brief Encounter* moment over tea and scones at the museum's station platform cafe called, erm, Brief Encounter. Allow at least two hours to do the museum justice.

The museum is about 400m west of the train station; if you don't fancy walking you can ride the road train (adult/child £2/1) that runs every 30 minutes from 11am to 4pm between the minster and the museum.

### OTHER SIGHTS

Most of York's Roman archaeology is hidden beneath the medieval city, so the displays in the **Yorkshire Museum** (☎ 01904-629745; www.yorkshiremuseum.org.uk; adult/child £5/3.50, with York Castle Museum £9.50/6; ☎ 10am-5pm) are invaluable if you want to get an idea of what Eboracum was like. There are excellent exhibits on Viking and medieval York too, including priceless artefacts such as the 8th-century Coppergate helmet, a 9th-century Anglian sword decorated with silver, and the 15th-century Middleham Jewel, an engraved gold pendant adorned with a giant sapphire.

In the peaceful **Museum Gardens** (☎ dawn-dusk) you can see the **Multangular Tower**, a part of the city walls that was once the western tower of the Roman garrison's defensive ramparts; the Roman stonework at the base has been built over with 13th-century additions.

On the other side of the Museum Gardens are the ruins of **St Mary's Abbey** (founded 1089), dating from 1270-1294. The ruined **Gatehall** was its main entrance, providing access from the abbey to the river. The adjacent **Hospitium** dates from the 14th century, although the timber-framed upper storey is a much-restored survivor from the 15th century; it was used as the abbey guest house. **St Mary's Lodge** was built around 1470 to provide VIP accommodation.

Adjacent to Museum Gardens on Exhibition Sq is the 19th-century **York City Art Gallery** (☎ 01904-551861; www.yorkartgallery.org.uk; Exhibition Sq; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm), which includes works by Reynolds, Nash, Boudin. LS Lowry and controversial York artist William Ety, the first major British artist to specialise in nude painting back in the 1820s.

Built between 1357 and 1361, the **Merchant Adventurers' Hall** (☎ 01904-654818; www.theyorkcompany.co.uk; Fossgate; admission £2.50; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Thu, 9am-3.30pm Fri & Sat, noon-4pm Sun Apr-Sep, 9.30am-3.30pm Mon-Sat Oct-Mar) is one of the most handsome timber-framed buildings in Europe, and testifies to the power of the medieval guilds that controlled all foreign trade into and out of York until 1830 – a handy little monopoly. There are displays of oil paintings and antique silver, but the building itself is the star.

If you're a fan of the Georgian style, then a visit to **Fairfax House** (☎ 01904-655543; www.fairfaxhouse.co.uk; Castlegate; adult/child £5/free; ☎ 11am-4.30pm Mon-Thu & Sat, 1.30-5pm Sun, guided tours 11am & 2pm Fri) should be on your itinerary. Built in 1762 by John Carr (of Harewood House fame; see p600), this exquisitely restored town house features the best example of rococo stucco work to be found in the north of England, and houses a superb collection of Georgian furniture.

### Tours

There's a bewildering range of tours on offer, from historic walking tours to a host of ever more competitive night-time ghost tours – York is reputed to be England's most haunted city. For starters, check the tourist office's own suggestions for walking itineraries at www.visit-york.org/explore.

### BOAT

**YorkBoat** (☎ 01904-628324; www.yorkboat.co.uk; 1hr daytime cruises adult/child £7/3.30, evening cruises adult/child £9/5.50) Runs one-hour cruises on the River Ouse departing from King's Staith at 10.30am, noon, 1.30pm & 3pm (and Lendal Bridge 10 minutes later) February to November. The evening 'ghost cruise' departs from King's Staith at 6.30pm April to October.

### BUS

**York Citysightseeing** (☎ 01904-655585; www.city-sightseeing.com; day tickets adult/child £9/4; ☎ 9am-5pm) Two hop-on hop-off routes calling at all the main sights; buses leave every 15 minutes from Exhibition Sq outside the main tourist office.

### WALKING

**Association of Voluntary Guides** (☎ 01904-640780; www.york.touristguides.btinternet.co.uk; ☎ tours 10.15am, also 2.15pm Apr-Sep & 6.45pm Jun-Aug) Free two-hour walking tours of the city starting from Exhibition Sq in front of York City Art Gallery.

**Breadcrumbs Trail** (☎ 01904-610676; www.endpapers.co.uk; Collage Corner, 2 Norman Ct; book £9.95) Explore York by following the Hansel-and-Gretel-type trails laid out in the book – a novel and excellent way to keep the kids entertained. The book is available from bookshops and El Piano restaurant (see p630).

**Ghost Hunt of York** (☎ 01904-608700; www.ghosthunt.co.uk; adult/child £5/3; ☎ tours 7.30pm) Award-winning and highly entertaining 75-minute tour laced with authentic ghost stories; the kids just love this one. Begins at the Shambles, no need to book.

**Original Ghost Walk of York** (☎ 01904-764222; www.theoriginalghostwalkofyork.co.uk; adult/child £4/2.50; ☎ tours 8pm) An evening of ghouls, ghosts, mystery and history courtesy of a well-established group departing from the King's Arms pub by Ouse Bridge.

**Roam'in Tours of York** (☎ 07931 668935; www.roamintours.co.uk) Two-hour history and specialist tours (adult/child £4/2) with a guide, or you can take a DIY audio tour (£4.50).

**Yorkwalk** (☎ 01904-622303; www.yorkwalk.co.uk; adult/child £5.50/2.50) Offers a series of two-hour themed walks on an ever-growing list of themes, from the classics – Roman York, the snickelways (alleys) and City Walks – to specialised walks on chocolates and sweets, women in York, secret York and the inevitable graveyard, coffin and plague tour. Walks depart from Museum Gardens Gate on Museum St.

## Festivals & Events

For a week in mid-February, York is invaded by Vikings once again as part of the **Jorvik Viking Festival** (☎ 01904-643211; www.vikingjorvik.com; Coppergate), which features battle re-enactments, themed walks, markets and other bits of Viking-themed fun.

## Sleeping

Beds are tough to find midsummer, even with the inflated prices of the high season. The tourist office's accommodation booking service charges £4, which might be the best four quid you spend if you arrive without a booking.

Needless to say, prices get higher the closer to the city centre you are. However, there are plenty of decent B&Bs on the streets north and south of Bootham. Southwest of the town centre, there are B&Bs clustered around Scarcroft Rd, Southlands Rd and Bishopthorpe Rd.

It's also worth looking at serviced apartments if you're planning to stay two or three nights. **City Lets** (☎ 01904-652729; www.cityletsyork.co.uk) offers a good selection of places from around £90 a night for a two-person apart-

ment – we particularly like the stylish, modern flats in the peaceful courtyard at Talbot Court on Low Petergate.

## BUDGET

**York Backpackers** (☎ 01904-627720; www.yorkbackpackers.co.uk; 88-90 Micklegate; dm/d from £14/35; ☎) Housed in a Grade I Georgian building that was once home to the High Sheriff of Yorkshire, this large and well-equipped hostel was closed for refurbishment at the time of research, but should be open for 2009.

**York YHA** (☎ 0845 371 9051; www.yha.org.uk; 42 Water End, Clifton; dm £18.50; ☎) Originally the Rowntree (Quaker confectioners) mansion, this handsome Victorian house makes a spacious and child-friendly youth hostel, with most of the rooms being four-bed dorms. It's about a mile northwest of the city centre; there's a riverside footpath from Lendal Bridge (poorly lit so avoid after dark). Alternatively, take bus 2 from Station Ave or Museum St.

**Golden Fleece** (☎ 01904-625171; www.goldenfleece.yorkwebsites.co.uk; 16 Pavement; per person from £45) Four distinctive, Gothic-themed rooms (including the Shambles Room, with views over York's most famous street) above the bar in what claims to be York's most haunted pub – we've yet to see a ghost, but we liked what we did see: nice furnishings, comfortable beds and great hospitality.

## MIDRANGE

**Elliotts B&B** (☎ 01904-623333; www.elliottshotel.co.uk; 2 Sycamore Pl; s/d from £38/75; ☎) A beautifully converted 'gentleman's residence', Elliotts leans towards the boutique end of the guest house market with stylish and elegant rooms, and hi-tech touches such as flat-screen TVs and free wi-fi. Excellent location, both quiet and central.

**23 St Mary's** (☎ 01904-622738; www.23stmarys.co.uk; 23 St Mary's; s £45-55, d £70-90; ☎) A smart and stately town house with nine chintzy, country house-style rooms, some with hand-painted furniture for that rustic look, while others are decorated with antiques, lace and polished mahogany.

**Brontë House** (☎ 01904-621066; http://bronteguesthouse.yorkwebsites.co.uk; 22 Grosvenor Tce; s/d from £40/76; ☎) The Brontë offers five homely en suite rooms, each decorated differently; our favourite is the double with a carved, 19th-century sleigh bed, William Morris wallpaper and assorted bits and bobs from another era.

**Dairy Guesthouse** (☎ 01904-639367; www.dairyguesthouse.co.uk; 3 Scarcroft Rd; s/d from £55/75; (P)) A lovely Victorian home that has retained many of its original features, including pine doors, stained glass and cast-iron fireplaces, but the real treat is the flower- and plant-filled courtyard that leads to the cottage-style rooms. Minimum two-night stay at weekends.

**Hedley House Hotel** (☎ 01904-637404; www.hedleyhouse.com; 3 Bootham Tce; s/d/f from £50/80/90; (P) (M)) Run by a couple with young children, this smart red-brick terrace-house hotel could hardly be more family-friendly – plus it has private parking at the back, and is barely five minutes' walk from the city centre through the Museum Gardens.

**Guy Fawkes** (☎ 0845 460 2020; www.theguyfawkeshotel.com; 25 High Petergate; s/d/ste from £65/90/200; (M)) Directly opposite the minster is this comfortable hotel whose premises include a cottage that is reputed to be the birthplace of Guy Fawkes himself. We're not convinced, but the cottage is still the handsomest room in the building, complete with a four-poster and lots of red velvet.

**Arnot House** (☎ 01904-641966; www.arnthouse.york.co.uk; 17 Grosvenor Tce; r £75-80; (P)) With three beautifully decorated rooms (provided you're a fan of Victorian floral patterns), including one with an impressive four-poster bed and curtain-draped bath, Arnot House sports an authentically old-fashioned look that appeals to a more mature clientele – and there are no children allowed.

**Judges Lodging Hotel** (☎ 01904-638733; www.judgeslodgings.com; 9 Lendal; s/d from £85/100) Despite being housed in an elegant Georgian mansion that was built for a wealthy physician, this is really a place for the party crowd to crash – it's within easy reach of city centre pubs, and the hotel's own lively courtyard bar rocks late into the night.

Also recommended:

**Alcuin Lodge** (☎ 01904-632222; www.alcuinlodge.com; 15 Sycamore Pl; s/d from £35/60; (M)) Elegant rooms in a beautiful Edwardian house, with fair-trade coffee and healthy breakfasts.

**Briar Lea Guest House** (☎ 01904-635061; www.briarlea.co.uk; 8 Longfield Tce; s/d from £35/60) Clean, simple rooms and a friendly welcome in a central location.

**St Raphael** (☎ 01904-645028; www.straphaelguesthouse.co.uk; 44 Queen Annes Rd; s/d from £59/68; (M)) Historic house with that half-timbered look, great central location and home-baked bread at breakfast.

**Monkgate Guesthouse** (☎ 01904-655947; www.monkgateguesthouse.com; 65 Monkgate; s/d from £40/76; (P)) Attractive and very child-friendly guest house with special family 'suite' with separate bedroom for two kids.

## TOP END

**Mount Royale** (☎ 01904-628856; www.mountroyale.co.uk; The Mount; r £100-210; (P)) A grand, early 19th-century listed building that has been converted into a superb luxury hotel, complete with a solarium, beauty spa and outdoor heated tub and swimming pool. The rooms in the main house are gorgeous, but the best of the lot are the open-plan garden suites, reached via a corridor of tropical fruit trees and bougainvillea.

**Dean Court Hotel** (☎ 01904-625082; www.deancourt-york.co.uk; Duncombe Pl; s/d from £104/135; (P) (M)) Don't be put off by the Best Western sign this is no charmless chain hotel, but a gracious Victorian building that once housed the York Minster clergy. You won't find a better location – right across the street from the minster (though you only get a church view from the superior rooms).

**Middlethorpe Hall** (☎ 01904-641241; www.middlethorpe.com; Bishopsthorpe Rd; s/d from £130/190; (P) (M)) York's top spot is this breathtaking 17th-century country house set in 20 acres of parkland that was once the home of diarist Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. The rooms are spread between the main house, the restored courtyard buildings and three cottage suites. Although we preferred the grandeur of the rooms in the main house, every room is beautifully decorated with original antiques and oil paintings carefully collected so as to best reflect the period.

## Eating

Eating well in York is not a problem – there are plenty of fine options throughout the city centre; most pubs also serve food.

## BUDGET

**Blake Head Vegetarian Cafe** (☎ 01904-623767; 104 Micklegate; mains £4-6; ☎ 9.30am-5pm Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm Sun) A bright and airy space at the back of a bookshop, filled with modern oak furniture and funky art, the Blake Head offers a tempting menu of daily lunch specials such as crispy bean burger with corn relish or hummus and roast red pepper open sandwich; great ginger and lemon cake too.

**El Piano** (☎ 01904-610676; www.elpiano.co.uk; 15 Grape Lane; mains £7; ☎ 11am-11pm Mon-Sat) With a menu that is 100% vegan, nut-free and gluten-free, this colourful, Hispanic-style spot is a vegetarian haven with a lovely cafe downstairs and three themed rooms upstairs: check out the Moroccan room, complete with floor cushions. They sell takeaways too.

**Cafe Concerto** (☎ 01904-610478; 21 High Petergate; snacks £2-6, mains £9-14; ☎ 10am-10pm) Walls papered with sheet music, chilled jazz on the stereo and battered, mismatched tables and chairs set the bohemian tone in this comforting coffee shop that serves breakfasts, bagels and cappuccinos big enough to float a boat in during the day, and a sophisticated bistro menu in the evening.

### MIDRANGE

**Betty's** (☎ 01904-659142; www.bettys.co.uk; St Helen's Sq; mains £6-11, afternoon tea £15; ☎ 9am-9pm) Afternoon tea, old-school style, with white-aproned waitresses, linen tablecloths and a teapot collection ranged along the walls. House speciality is the Yorkshire Fat Rascal – a huge fruit scone smothered in melted butter.

**Little Betty's** (☎ 01904-622865; 46 Stonegate; mains £8-10; ☎ 10am-5.30pm) Betty's younger sister is more demure and less frequented, but just as good; you head upstairs and back in time to what feels like the interwar years – on any given day you are bound to spot a couple of Agatha Christie lookalikes nibbling crumpets in a corner.

**Siam House** (☎ 01904-624677; 63a Goodramgate; mains £8-14; ☎ dinner Mon-Sat) Delicious, authentic Thai food in about as authentic an atmosphere as you could muster up 6000km from Bangkok. The early bird, three-course special (£12, order before 6.30pm) is an absolute steal.

**La Vecchia Scuola** (☎ 01904-644600; 62 Low Petergate; mains £8-15; ☎ lunch & dinner) Housed in the former York College for Girls, the faux elegant dining room – complete with self-playing grand piano – is straight out of *Growing Up Gotti*, but there's nothing fake about the food: authentic Italian cuisine served in suitably snooty style by proper Italian waiters.

**Fiesta Mexicana** (☎ 01904-610243; 14 Clifford St; mains £9-12; ☎ dinner) Chimichangas, tostadas and burritos served in a relentlessly cheerful atmosphere, while students and party groups on the rip add to the fiesta; it's neither subtle nor subdued, but when is Mexican food ever so?

**Melton's Too** (☎ 01904-629222; 25 Walmgate; mains £9-13; ☎ 10.30am-10.30pm Mon-Sat, to 9.30pm Sun) A comfortable, chilled out, booth-lined cafe-bar and bistro, Melton's younger brother serves everything from cake and cappuccino to tapas-style snacks to a three-course dinner of Whitby crab, braised beef with Yorkshire pudding, and local strawberries with clotted cream.

**Living Room** (☎ 01904-461000; www.thelivingroom.co.uk; 1 Bridge St; mains £9-15; ☎ 10am-midnight Sun-Wed, till 1am Thu-Sat) The Living Room snapped up a hot location when it opened back in 2004, and has been making the most of its balcony tables overlooking the river ever since. The menu focuses on quality versions of classic dishes from around the world, from fish and chips and steak and ale pie to Thai fish cakes and Peking duck. Sunday brunch served noon to 6pm.

### TOP END

**Melton's** (☎ 01904-634341; www.meltonrestaurant.co.uk; 7 Scarcroft Rd; mains £15-18; ☎ lunch Tue-Sat, dinner Mon-Sat) Foodies come from far and wide to dine in one of Yorkshire's best restaurants. It tends to specialise in fish dishes but doesn't go far wrong with practically everything else, from sea trout with sorrel to marinated wild boar. There's a good value lunch and early dinner set menu (£18.50 for two courses).

**Blue Bicycle** (☎ 01904-673990; www.thebluebicycle.com; 34 Fossgate; mains £15-22; ☎ lunch & dinner) Once upon a time, this building was a well-frequented brothel; these days it serves up a different kind of fare to an equally enthusiastic crowd. French food at its finest – the occasional anti-*foie gras* protester outside the door gives a clue as to the menu – served in a romantic, candlelit room, makes for a top-notch dining experience.

**our pick J Baker's** (☎ 01904-622688; www.jbakercs.co.uk; 7 Fossgate; 2-/3-course dinner £23/27.50; ☎ lunch & dinner) Superstar chef Jeff Baker left Leeds' Pool Court and his Michelin star to pursue his own vision of Modern British cuisine here. The ironic 70s-style colour scheme (think chocolate/oatmeal/tango) with moo-cow paintings is echoed in the unusual menu, which offers witty, gourmet interpretations of retro classics, from macaroni cheese to Bakewell tart – the 'sausage roll and beans' is actually more like French *cassoulet*, and the Crunchie bar dessert is superb.

## Drinking

With only a couple of exceptions, the best drinking holes in town are the older, traditional pubs. In recent years, the area around Ousegate and Micklegate has gone from moribund to mental, especially at weekends.

**Ackhorne** (☎ 01904-671421; 9 St Martin's Lane) Tucked away from beery, sloppy Micklegate, this locals' inn is as comfortable as old slippers; some of the old guys here look like they've merged with the bar. There's a pleasant beer garden at the back.

**Black Swan** (☎ 01904-686911; Peasholme Green) A classic black-and-white Tudor building where you'll find decent beer, friendly people and live jazz on Sundays.

**ourpick Blue Bell** (☎ 01904-654904; 53 Fossgate) This is what a real English pub looks like – a tiny, wood-panelled room with a smouldering fireplace, decor (and beer and smoke stains) dating from c 1798, a pile of ancient board games in the corner, friendly and efficient bar staff, and Timothy Taylor and Black Sheep ales on tap. Bliss, with froth on top.

**Little John** (☎ 01904-658242; 5 Castlegate) This historic pub – the third oldest in York – is the city's top gay venue, with regular club nights and other events. In 1739 the corpse of executed highwayman Dick Turpin was laid out in the cellar here for the public to view at a penny a head; the pub is said to be haunted by his ghost. Not sure what's scarier though – the ghost story, or the Thursday night karaoke session...

**King's Arms** (☎ 01904-659435; King's Staith; lunch about £6) York's best-known pub is a creaky old place with a fabulous riverside location, with tables spilling out onto the quayside – a perfect spot for a summer's evening.

**Ye Olde Starre** (☎ 01904-623063; 40 Stonegate) Licensed since 1644, this is York's oldest pub – a warren of small rooms and a small beer garden, with half a dozen real ales on tap. It was used as a morgue by the Roundheads during the Civil War, but the atmosphere's improved a lot since then.

## Entertainment

There are a couple of good theatres in York, and an interesting art-house cinema, but as far as clubs are concerned, forget it: historic York is best enjoyed without them anyway.

**York Theatre Royal** (☎ 01904-623568; www.yorktheatreroyal.co.uk; St Leonard's Pl) Stages well-regarded productions of theatre, opera and dance.

**Grand Opera House** (☎ 01904-671818; www.grandoperahouseyork.org.uk; Clifford St) Despite the name there's no opera here, but a wide range of productions from live bands and popular musicals to stand-up comics and pantomime.

**City Screen** (☎ 0871 704 2054; www.picturehouses.co.uk; 13-17 Coney St) Appealing modern building in a converted printing works, screening both mainstream and art-house films; nice cafe-bar on the terrace overlooking the river.

## Shopping

Coney St, Davygate and the adjoining streets are the hub of York's high-street shopping scene, but the real treat for visitors are the antique, bric-a-brac and secondhand book shops, which are concentrated in Micklegate and Fossgate.

**Antiques Centre** (☎ 01904-635888; www.antiquescentre.yorkshire.co.uk; 41 Stonegate) A Georgian town house with a veritable maze of rooms and corridors, showcasing the wares of around 120 dealers; everything from lapel pins and snuff boxes to oil paintings and longcase clocks. And the house is haunted, too...

**Azendi** (☎ 01904-672822; www.azendi.com; 20 Colliergate) This jewellery boutique sells a range of beautiful contemporary designs in silver, white gold and platinum.

**Barbican Books** (☎ 01904-652643; www.barbicanbookshop.co.uk; 24 Fossgate) Wide range of secondhand titles, with special subjects that include railways, aviation, and walking and mountaineering.

**Ken Spelman Booksellers** (☎ 01904-624414; www.kenspelman.com; 70 Micklegate) This fascinating shop has been selling rare, antiquarian and secondhand books since 1910; with an open fire crackling in the grate in winter, it's a browser's paradise.

## Getting There & Away

### BUS

For timetable information call **Traveline Yorkshire** (☎ 0871 200 2233; www.yorkshiretravel.net), or check the computerised 24-hour information points at the train station and Rougier St. All local and regional buses stop on Rougier St, about 200m northeast of the train station.

There are National Express coaches to London (£24, 5¼ hours, four daily), Birmingham (£25, 3¼ hours, one daily) and Newcastle (£14, 2¾ hours, four daily).

**CAR**

A car is more of a hindrance than a help in the city centre; use one of the park and ride car parks on the edge of the city. If you want to explore the surrounding area, rental options include **Europcar** (☎ 01904-656161), by platform 1 in the train station (which also rents bicycles and stores luggage for £4 per bag); and **Hertz** (☎ 01904-612586) near platform 3 in the train station.

**TRAIN**

York is a major railway hub with frequent direct services to Birmingham (£40, 2¼ hours), Newcastle (£25, one hour), Leeds (£10, 25 minutes), London's King's Cross (£103, two hours), Manchester (£20, 1½ hours) and Scarborough (£12, 50 minutes).

There are also trains to Cambridge (£67, 2¾ hours), changing at Peterborough.

**Getting Around**

York is easy to get around on foot – you're never really more than 20 minutes from any of the major sights.

**BICYCLE**

The tourist offices have a useful free map showing York's cycle routes. If you're energetic you could pedal out to Castle Howard (15 miles), Helmsley and Rievaulx Abbey (12 miles) and Thirsk (a further 12 miles), and then catch a train back to York. There's also a section of the Trans-Pennine Trail cycle path from Bishopthorpe in York to Selby (15 miles) along the old railway line.

You can rent bikes from **Bob Trotter** (☎ 01904-622868; 13 Lord Mayor's Walk; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat, 10am-4pm Sun), outside Monk Bar; and **Europcar** (☎ 01904-656161; ☎ 8am-8.30pm Mon-Sat,

9am-8.30pm Sun), by platform 1 in the train station; both charge around £10 per day.

**BUS**

Local bus services are operated by **First York** (☎ 01904-622992; www.firstgroup.com); single fares range from £1 to £2.50, and a day pass valid on all local buses is £3.50 (available at park and ride car parks).

**TAXI**

**Station Taxis** (☎ 01904-623332) has a kiosk outside the train station.

**AROUND YORK**  
**Castle Howard**

Stately homes may be two a penny in England, but you'll have to try pretty damn hard to find one as breathtakingly stately as **Castle Howard** (☎ 01653-648333; www.castlehoward.co.uk; adult/child house & grounds £10.50/6.50, grounds only £8/5; ☎ house 11am-4.30pm, grounds 10am-4.30pm Mar-Oct & 1st three weeks of Dec), a work of theatrical grandeur and audacity set in the rolling Howardian Hills. This is one of the world's most beautiful buildings, instantly recognisable from its starring role in *Brideshead Revisited* – which has done its popularity no end of good since the TV series first aired in the early 1980s.

When the earl of Carlisle hired his pal Sir John Vanbrugh to design his new home in 1699, he was hiring a bloke who had no formal training and was best known as a playwright; luckily Vanbrugh hired Nicholas Hawksmoor, who had worked for Christopher Wren, as his clerk of works – not only would Hawksmoor have a big part to play in the house's design but the two would later work wonders with Blenheim Palace (p236).

If you can, try to visit on a weekday, when it's easier to find the space to appreciate this

**DETOUR: KIRKHAM PRIORY & STONE TROUGH INN**

While the crowds queue up to get into Castle Howard, you could turn off on the other side of the A64 along the minor road to the hamlet of Kirkham. Here, the picturesque ruins of **Kirkham Priory** (EH; ☎ 01653-619768; admission £3; ☎ 10am-5pm Thu-Mon Apr-Sep, daily in Aug, Sat & Sun only in Oct) rise gracefully above the banks of the River Derwent, sporting an impressive 13th-century gatehouse encrusted with heraldic symbols.

After a stroll by the river, head up the hill on the far side to the **Stone Trough Inn** (☎ 01653-618713; www.stonetroughinn.co.uk; mains £9-17; ☎ noon-2pm & 6.30-9.30pm Tue-Sun) for a spot of lunch; this traditional country inn serves gourmet-style pub grub – try pork and herb sausages with thyme-scented mashed potato and real ale gravy – and has an outdoor terrace with a great view over the valley.



hedonistic marriage of art, architecture, landscaping and natural beauty. As you wander about the peacock-haunted grounds, views open up over the hills, Vanbrugh's playful Temple of the Four Winds and Hawksmoor's stately mausoleum, but the great baroque house with its magnificent central cupola is an irresistible visual magnet. Inside, it is full of treasures, such as the chapel's Pre-Raphaelite stained glass.

Castle Howard is 15 miles northeast of York, off the A64. There are several organised tours from York – check with the tourist office for up-to-date schedules. Yorkshire Coastliner bus 840 (40 minutes from York, one daily) links Leeds, York, Castle Howard, Pickering and Whitby.

## THIRSK

pop 9100

Monday and Saturday are market days in handsome Thirsk, which has been trading on its tidy, attractive streets and cobbled square since the Middle Ages. Thirsk's brisk business was always helped by its key position on two medieval trading routes: the old drove road between Scotland and York, and the route linking the Yorkshire Dales with the coast. That's all in the past, though: today, the town is all about the legacy of James Herriot, the wry Yorkshire vet adored by millions of fans of *All Creatures Great and Small*.

Thirsk does a good job as the real-life Darrowby of the books and TV series, and it should, as the real-life Herriot was in fact local vet Alf Wight, whose house and surgery has been dipped in 1940s aspic and turned into the incredibly popular **World of James Herriot** (☎ 01845-524234; www.worldofjamesherriot.org; 23 Kirkgate; adult/child £5.50/3.90; ☎ 10am-5pm Easter-Oct, 11am-4pm Nov-Easter), an excellent museum full of Wight-related artefacts, a video documentary of his life and a re-creation of the TV show sets.

Thirsk's **tourist office** (☎ 01845-522755; thirsk@ybtbc.co.uk; 49 Market Pl; ☎ 10am-5pm Easter-Oct, 11am-4pm Nov-Easter) is on the main square.

If you arrive in time for breakfast or just fancy a quick snack, head for the **Arabica Coffee Shop** (☎ 01845-523869; 87 Market Pl; mains £2-3) on the main square; this smart chrome and black diner is the opposite of chintz, and serves excellent freshly ground coffee, croissants, fry-ups, panini and wraps.

Thirsk is well served by trains on the line between York and Middlesbrough; however, the train station is a mile west of town and the only way to cover that distance is on foot or by **taxi** (☎ 01845-522473). There are also frequent daily buses from York (45 minutes).

## RIPON

pop 16,468

Small town, huge cathedral: Ripon – all winding streets and a broad, symmetrical marketplace lined with Georgian houses – is mostly about its elegant church, but tourists also seem quite taken by the **Ripon Hornblower**, who 'sets the watch' every evening at 9pm in a tradition that supposedly dates back to 886, when Alfred the Great gave the locals a horn to sound the changing of the guard.

The **tourist office** (☎ 01765-604625; Minster Rd; ☎ 10am-1pm & 1.30-5.30pm Mon-Sat, 1-4pm Sun) is near the cathedral and has information on local walks, and will book accommodation. Market day is Thursday.

**Ripon Cathedral** (☎ 01765-602072; www.riponcathedral.org.uk; suggested donation £3, treasury £1; ☎ 7.30am-6.15pm, Evensong 5.30pm) is well worth exploring. The first church on this site was built in 660 by St Wilfred, and its rough, humble crypt lies intact beneath today's soaring edifice. Above ground, the building was begun in the 11th century, with its harmonious Early English west front clocking in at 1220. Medieval additions have resulted in a medley of Gothic styles throughout, culminating in the rebuilding of the central tower – work that was never completed. It was not until 1836 that this impressive parish church got cathedral status. Look out for the fantastical creatures decorating the animated medieval misericords, believed to have inspired Lewis Carroll – his father was canon here from 1852 to 1868.

Until 1888 Ripon was responsible for its own law enforcement, and this has resulted in a grand array of punishing attractions. The **Law & Order Museums** (☎ 01765-690799; www.riponmuseums.co.uk; adult/child £6/free; ☎ 1-4pm Apr-Oct, 11am-4pm during school holidays, closed Nov-Mar) include the **Courthouse Museum**, a 19th-century courthouse (recognisable from sappy TV series *Heartbeat*), the **Prison & Police Museum**, which includes the medieval punishment yard and the clammy cells where no-good Victorians were banged up, and the **Workhouse Museum**, which shows the grim treatment meted out

to poor vagrants from the 19th century to WWII.

Bus 36 runs from Leeds via Harrogate to Ripon (one hour 20 minutes, every 20 minutes). From York, take the train to Harrogate, then bus 36 to Ripon. Bus 159 runs between Ripon and Richmond (1½ hours, every two hours Monday to Saturday) via Masham and Middleham.

## AROUND RIPON

Nestled in the secluded valley of the River Skell lie two of Yorkshire's most beautiful attractions – an absolute must on any northern itinerary. The beautiful and strangely obsessive water gardens of the **Studley Royal** estate were built in the 19th century to enhance the picturesque ruins of 12th-century **Fountains Abbey** (NT; ☎ 01765-608888; www.fountainsabbey.org.uk; adult/child £7.90/4.20; 🕒 10am-5pm Mar-Oct, to 4pm Nov-Feb). Together they present a breathtaking picture of pastoral elegance and tranquillity that have made them a Unesco World Heritage Site, and the most visited of all the National Trust's pay-in properties.

After falling out with the Benedictines of York in 1132, a band of rebel monks came here to what was then a desolate and unyielding patch of land to establish their own mon-

astery. Struggling to make it on their own, they were formally adopted by the Cistercians in 1135; by the middle of the 13th century the new abbey had become the most successful Cistercian venture in the country. It was during this time that most of the abbey was built, including the church's nave, transepts and eastern end, and the outlying buildings (the church tower was added in the late 15th century).

After the Dissolution (p40) the abbey's estate was sold into private hands and between 1598 and 1611 Fountains Hall was built using stone from the abbey ruins. The hall and ruins were united with the Studley Royal estate in 1768.

Studley Royal was owned by John Aislable (once Chancellor of the Exchequer), who dedicated his life to creating the park after a financial scandal saw him expelled from parliament. The main house of Studley Royal burnt down in 1946 but the superb landscaping, with its serene artificial lakes, survives almost unchanged from the 18th century.

Fountains Abbey is 4 miles west of Ripon off the B6265. Public transport is limited to shuttle bus 139 from Ripon on Sunday and bank holidays only (10 minutes, hourly), from mid-May to October.

## BLACK SHEEP OF THE BREWING FAMILY

The village of Masham is a place of pilgrimage for connoisseurs of real ale – it's the frothing fountainhead of Theakston's beers, which have been brewed here since 1827. The company's most famous brew, Old Peculier, takes its name from the Peculier of Masham, a parish court established in medieval times to deal with religious offences, including drunkenness, brawling, and 'taking a skull from the churchyard and placing it under a person's head to charm them to sleep'. The court seal is used as the emblem of Theakston Ales.

To the horror of real ale fans, and after much falling out among members of the Theakston family, the Theakston Brewery was taken over by much-hated megabrewer Scottish and Newcastle in 1987. Five years later, Paul Theakston – who had refused to go and work for S&N, and was determined to keep small-scale, artisan brewing alive – bought an old maltings building in Masham and set up his own brewery, which he called Black Sheep. He managed to salvage all kinds of traditional brewing equipment, including six Yorkshire 'stone square' brewing vessels, and was soon running a successful enterprise.

History came full circle in 2004 when Paul's four brothers took the Theakston brewery back into family ownership. Both breweries now have visitor centres – the **Black Sheep Brewery** (☎ 01765-680100; 🕒 10.30am-4.30pm Sun-Thu, 10.30am-11pm Fri & Sat) and the **Theakston Brewery** (☎ 01765-680000; www.theakstons.co.uk; 🕒 10.30am-5.30pm Jul & Aug, to 4.30pm May, Jun, Sep & Oct); both offer guided tours (best booked in advance).

Masham (pronounced 'massam') is 9 miles northwest of Ripon on the A6108 to Leyburn. Bus 159 from Ripon (25 minutes, every two hours Monday to Saturday) and the Fountains Flyer bus 802 from Leeds (2¾ hours, one daily, Sunday and bank holidays only, late May to late September) stop at Masham.

## HARROGATE

pop 85,128

The quintessential Victorian spa town, prim, pretty Harrogate has long been associated with a certain kind of old-fashioned Englishness, the kind that seems to be the preserve of retired army chaps and formidable dowagers who, inevitably, will always vote Tory. They come to Harrogate to enjoy the formidable flower shows and gardens that fill the town with magnificent display of colour, especially in spring and autumn. It is fitting that the town's most famous visitor was Agatha Christie, who fled here incognito in 1926 to escape her broken marriage.

Yet this picture of Victoriana redux is not quite complete. While it's undoubtedly true that Harrogate remains a firm favourite of visitors in their golden years, the New Britain makeover has left its mark in the shape of smart new hotels and trendy eateries catering to the boom in Harrogate's newest trade – conferences. All those dynamic young sales and marketing guns have to eat and sleep somewhere...

### Orientation & Information

Harrogate is almost surrounded by parks and gardens, notably the 80-hectare **Stray** in the south. The train and bus stations are right in the centre of town, a few minutes' walk from the main sights.

The **tourist office** (☎ 0845 389 3223; www.harrogate.gov.uk/tourism; Crescent Rd; ☎ 9am–6pm Mon–Sat, 10am–1pm Sun Apr–Sep, 9am–5pm Mon–Fri, 9am–4pm Sat Oct–Mar) is in the Royal Baths Assembly Rooms; staff can tell you about free historical walking tours offered daily from Easter to October.

### Sights & Activities

#### THE WATERS

The ritual of 'taking the waters' as a health cure became fashionable in the 19th century and peaked during the Edwardian era in the years before WWI. Charles Dickens visited Harrogate in 1858 and described it as 'the queerest place, with the strangest people in it, leading the oddest lives of dancing, newspaper reading and dining'; sounds quite pleasant, really.

You can learn all about the history of Harrogate as a spa town in the ornate **Royal Pump Room Museum** (☎ 01423-556188; Crown Pl; admission £3; ☎ 10am–5pm Mon–Sat, 2–5pm Sun Apr–Oct, to

4pm Nov–Mar), built in 1842 over the most famous of the sulphur springs. It gives an insight into how the phenomenon shaped the town and records the illustrious visitors that it attracted; at the end you get the chance to sample the spa water, if you dare.

If drinking the water isn't enough, you can immerse yourself in it at the fabulously tiled **Turkish Baths** (☎ 01423-556746; www.harrogate.co.uk/turkishbaths; Parliament St; admission £11.50–17.20; ☎ 9am–9pm) nearby. This mock Moorish facility is gloriously Victorian and offers a range of watery delights – hot rooms, steam rooms, plunge pools and so on; a visit should last around an hour and a half. There's a complicated schedule of opening hours that are by turns single sex and mixed pairs – call or check online for details.

#### MERCER ART GALLERY

Another surviving spa building, the Promenade Room, is now home to this elegant **gallery** (☎ 01423-556188; Swan Rd; admission free; ☎ 10am–5pm Tue–Sat, 2–5pm Sun), a stately space that hosts constantly changing exhibitions of visual art.

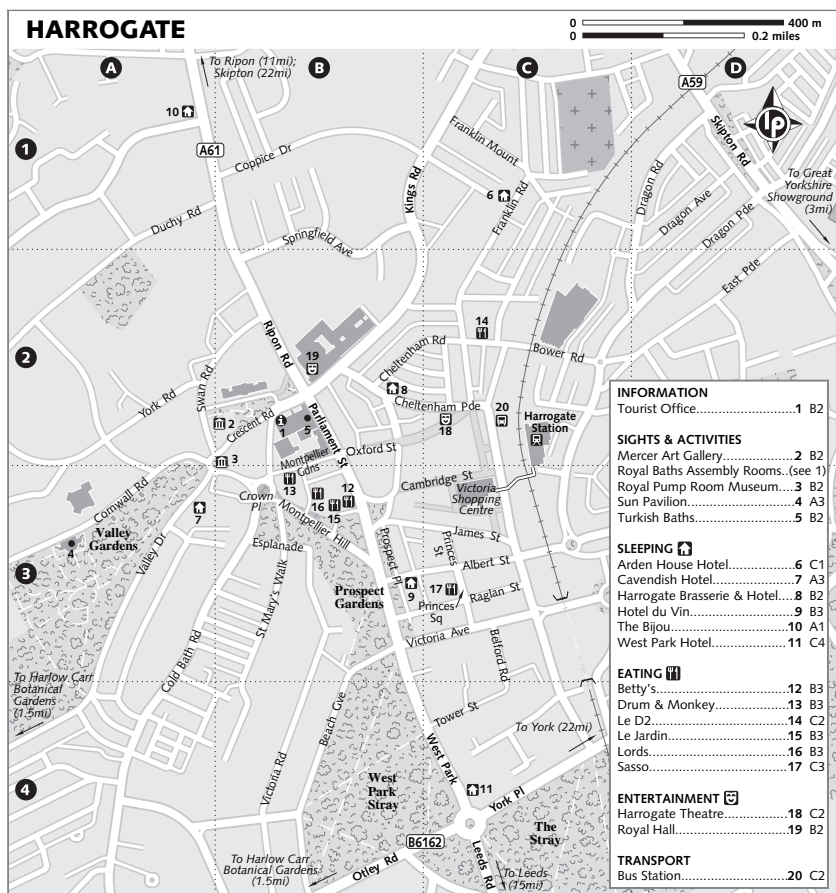
#### GARDENS

A huge green thumbs-up to Harrogate's gardeners; the town has some of the most beautiful public gardens in England. The **Valley Gardens** are overlooked by the vast, glass-domed **Sun Pavilion**, built in 1933. The nearby bandstand houses concerts on Sunday afternoons from June to August. Flower-fanatics should make for the **Harlow Carr Botanical Gardens** (☎ 01423-565418; www.rhs.org.uk; Crag Lane, Beckwithshaw; adult/child £6.50/2.20; ☎ 9.30am–6pm Mar–Oct, to 4pm Nov–Feb), the northern showpiece of the Royal Horticultural Society. The gardens are 1.5 miles southwest of town; to get here, take the B6162 Otley Rd or walk through the Pine Woods southwest of the Valley Gardens.

#### Festivals & Events

The year's main event is the immense **Spring Flower Show** (☎ 0870 758 3333; www.flower.show.org.uk), held in late April, followed in late September by the **Autumn Flower Show**. Both take place at the Great Yorkshire Showground; admission prices range from £10 to £14.

If prize delphiniums aren't your thing, there's a lot more fun to be had at the **Great Yorkshire Show** (☎ 01423-541000; www.greatyorkshire.show.org; adult/child £18/8), an exhibition staged



INFORMATION	
Tourist Office.....	1 B2
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	
Mercer Art Gallery.....	2 B2
Royal Baths Assembly Rooms.....(see 1)	3 B2
Royal Pump Room Museum.....	3 B2
Sun Pavilion.....	4 A3
Turkish Baths.....	5 B2
SLEEPING	
Arden House Hotel.....	6 C1
Cavendish Hotel.....	7 A3
Harrogate Brasserie & Hotel.....	8 B2
Hotel du Vin.....	9 B3
The Bijou.....	10 A1
West Park Hotel.....	11 C4
EATING	
Betty's.....	12 B3
Drum & Monkey.....	13 B3
Le D2.....	14 C2
The Jardin.....	15 B3
Lords.....	16 B3
Sasso.....	17 C3
ENTERTAINMENT	
Harrogate Theatre.....	18 C2
Royal Hall.....	19 B2
TRANSPORT	
Bus Station.....	20 C2

over three days in mid-July by the Yorkshire Agricultural Society (also held at the showground). It's a real treat, with all manner of primped and prettified farm animals competing for prizes, and entertainment ranging from show-jumping and falconry to cookery demonstrations and hot-air balloon rides.

## Sleeping

### MIDRANGE

**Cavendish Hotel** (☎ 01423-509637; [cavendishhotel@gmail.com](mailto:cavendishhotel@gmail.com); 3 Valley Dr; s/d from £55/65, 4-poster £90) There are several guest houses ranged along tree-lined Valley Dr, a quiet and peaceful corner of town that is only a short walk from the centre. The Cavendish is one of

the best – the rooms are homely but show a touch of style, and many have a view over Valley Gardens.

**Arden House Hotel** (☎ 01423-509224; [www.ardenhousehotel.co.uk](http://www.ardenhousehotel.co.uk); 69-71 Franklin Rd; s/d from £45/75; ) This grand old Edwardian house has been given a modern makeover with stylish contemporary furniture, Egyptian cotton bed linen and posh toiletries, but still retains some lovely period details including tiled, cast-iron fireplaces. Attentive service, good breakfasts and a central location are the icing on the cake.

**West Park Hotel** (☎ 01423-524471; [www.westparkhotel.co.uk](http://www.westparkhotel.co.uk); 19 West Park; d from £75; ) Not quite sure what's going on with the decor here – old-style Harrogate having a go at contemporary

but not quite pulling it off; a bit like your dad trying to dance to house music. Still, the location is lovely – the best rooms have views over the park – and the staff are really friendly and helpful.

**The Bijou** (☎ 01423-567974; www.thebijou.co.uk; 17 Ripon Rd; s/d from £75/85; (P) (Q)) Bijou by name and bijou by nature, this Victorian villa sits firmly at the boutique end of the B&B spectrum – you can tell that a lot of thought and care has gone into the design of the place. The husband and wife team who own the place make fantastic hosts, warm and helpful but unobtrusive.

**Harrogate Brasserie & Hotel** (☎ 01423-505041; www.harrogatebrasserie.co.uk; 28-30 Cheltenham Pde; s/d from £60/90) Stripped pine, leather armchairs and subtle colour combinations make this one of Harrogate's most appealing places to stay. The cheerful cosy accommodation is complemented by an excellent restaurant and bar, with live jazz Wednesday to Sunday evenings.

## TOP END

**Hotel Du Vin** (☎ 01423-856800; www.hotelduvin.com; Prospect Pl; r/ste from £125/165; (P) (Q)) An extremely stylish boutique hotel that has made the other lodgings in town sit up and take notice. The loft suites with their exposed oak beams, hardwood floors and designer bathrooms are the nicest rooms we've seen in town, but even the standard rooms are spacious and very comfortable, each with a trademark huge bed draped in soft Egyptian cotton.

## Eating

**Le Jardin** (☎ 01423-507323; www.lejardin-harrogate.com; 7 Montpellier Parade; mains £8; (☎) lunch & dinner Tue-Fri, 10am-8pm Sat, noon-3pm Sun) This cool little bistro has a snug, intimate atmosphere, especially in the evening when candlelight adds a romantic glow. During the day locals throng the tables to enjoy great salads, sandwiches and homemade ice cream.

**Betty's** (☎ 01423-502746; www.bettys.co.uk; 1 Parliament St; mains £8-10, afternoon tea £15; (☎) 9am-9pm) A classic tearoom in a classic location with views across the park, Betty's is a local institution. It was established in 1919 by a Swiss immigrant confectioner who took the wrong train, ended up in Yorkshire and decided to stay. Exquisite home-baked breads, scones and cakes, quality tea and coffee, and a downstairs gallery lined with Art Nouveau

marquetry designs of Yorkshire scenes commissioned by the founder in the 1930s.

**Drum & Monkey** (☎ 01423-502650; 5 Montpellier Gardens; mains £8-12; (☎) lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) This is a classic seafood restaurant of the old school, with traditional decor of mahogany and polished brass buffed up like the medals on a retired major's blazer, and a menu that would not have looked out of place in the 1930s, ranging from lobster bisque and asparagus with hollandaise, to Dover sole *bonne femme* and hearty seafood pie.

**Le D2** (☎ 01423-502700; 7 Bower Rd; 2-course lunch/dinner £9/15; (☎) lunch & dinner Tue-Sat) This bright and airy bistro is always busy, with diners drawn back again and again by the relaxed atmosphere, warm and friendly service, and a menu that takes fresh local produce and adds a twist of French sophistication.

**Lords** (☎ 01423-508762; 8 Montpellier St; mains lunch £10, dinner £15-18; (☎) lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, noon-8.30pm Sun) An elegant little place with a cosy, clubbish atmosphere enhanced by prints of cricket scenes and a collection of autographed cricket bats. The menu runs to Harrogate versions of classic comfort food – this not just any burger, this is a Yorkshire venison and Ribblesdale cheese burger...

**Sasso** (☎ 01423-508838; 8-10 Princes Sq; mains £14-21; (☎) lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, dinner Mon) A top-class basement trattoria where homemade pasta is served in a variety of traditional and authentic ways, along with a host of other Italian specialties.

## Entertainment

There are two main entertainment venues in Harrogate. **Harrogate Theatre** (☎ 01423-502116; www.harrogatetheatre.com; Oxford St) is a historic Victorian building that dates from 1900, while the **Royal Hall** (☎ 0845 130 8840; www.royalhall.co.uk; Ripon Rd) is a gorgeous Edwardian theatre that is now a part of the Harrogate International conference centre. Both venues stage a varying program of drama, comedy and popular musicals.

## Getting There & Away

Trains run to Harrogate from Leeds (£6.20, 40 minutes, about half-hourly) and York (£6.20, 45 minutes, hourly).

National Express coaches 561 and 381 run from Leeds (£3.40, 40 minutes, five daily). Bus 36 comes from Ripon (30 minutes, every 20 minutes), continuing to Leeds.

## SCARBOROUGH

pop 57,649

Scarborough is where the whole tradition of English seaside holidays began. And it began earlier than you might think – it was in the 1660s that a book promoting the medicinal properties of a local spring (now the site of Scarborough Spa) pulled in the first flood of visitors. A belief in the health-giving effects of sea-bathing saw wheeled bathing carriages appear on the beach in the 1730s, and with the arrival of the railway in 1845 Scarborough's fate was sealed. By the time the 20th century rolled in it was all donkey rides, fish and chips, seaside rock and boat trips round the bay, with saucy postcards, kiss-me-quick hats and blokes from Leeds with knotted handkerchiefs on their heads just a decade or two away.

Like all British seaside towns, Scarborough has suffered a downturn in recent decades as people jetted off to the Costa Blanca on newly affordable foreign holidays, but things are looking up again. The town retains all the trappings of the classic seaside resort, but is in the process of reinventing itself as a centre for the creative arts and digital industries – the Victorian spa is being re-developed as a conference and entertainment centre, a former museum has been converted into studio space for artists, and there's free, open-access wi-fi along the promenade beside the harbour – an area being developed as the town's bar, cafe and restaurant quarter.

As well as the usual seaside attractions, Scarborough offers excellent coastal walking, a new geology museum, one of Yorkshire's most impressively sited castles, and a renowned theatre that is the home base of popular playwright Alan Ayckbourn, whose plays always premier here.

### Orientation

Scarborough is built around a high headland with the castle perched on top, and beaches to its north and south. The train station and town centre are on a plateau above the South Beach, which has the harbour at its north end.

Most of the resort activity – bars, restaurants, amusements, funfair – are concentrated on Sandside, beside the harbour; the North Beach is less frantic. The walk from train station to harbour is about 15 minutes.

## Information

**Laundrette** (☎ 01723-375763; 48 North Marine Rd)

**Post office** (11-15 Aberdeen Walk; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat)

**Scarborough Library** (☎ 01723-383400; Vernon Rd; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-noon Sat; per 30min £1) Internet access.

**Tourist office** (☎ 01723-383637; www.discoveryorkshirecoast.com; Brunswick Shopping Centre, Westborough; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm daily Easter-Oct, 10am-4.30pm Mon-Sat Nov-Easter)

**Waterstone's** (☎ 01723-500414; 97-98 Westborough; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat, 10am-4pm Sun) Books & maps.

## Sights & Activities

Scarborough is not exclusively about sandcastles, seaside rock and walks along the prom. The massive medieval keep of **Scarborough Castle** (EH; ☎ 01723-372451; admission £4; ☎ 10am-6pm Apr-Sep, 10am-5pm Thu-Mon Oct, 10am-4pm Thu-Mon Nov-Mar) occupies a commanding position atop its headland – legend has it that Richard I loved the views so much his ghost just keeps coming back. Take a walk out to the edge of the cliffs where you can see the 2000-year-old remains of a **Roman signal station** – the Romans appreciated this viewpoint too.

Below the castle is **St Mary's Church** (☎ 01723-500541; Castle Rd; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 1-4pm Sun May-Sep), dating from 1180; in the little cemetery across the lane from the church is the grave of Anne Brontë.

The newly restored **Rotunda Museum** (☎ 01723-374839; www.rotundamuseum.co.uk; Vernon Rd; adult/child £4.50/free; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun) is dedicated to seaside rock of a different kind – the coastal geology of northeast Yorkshire, which has yielded many of Britain's most important dinosaur fossils. There's also a gallery illustrating how geology has shaped Scarborough's history and landscape.

Of all the family-oriented attractions on the waterfront, the best of the lot is the **Sea Life Centre & Marine Sanctuary** (☎ 01723-373414; www.sealife.co.uk; Scalby Mills; adult/child £12.95/9.50; ☎ 10am-6pm) overlooking North Bay. You can see coral reefs, turtles, octopuses, sea horses and many other fascinating sea creatures, though the biggest draw is the seal rescue centre. It's at the far north end of North Beach; a **miniature railway** (☎ 01723-260004; www.nbr.org.uk; ☎ 10.30am-4.45pm Apr-Sep) runs the 0.75-mile route (return fare £2.80).

There are some decent waves on England's northeast coast, which support a growing



surfing scene. **Scarborough Surf School** (☎ 01723-585585; [www.scarboroughsurfschool.co.uk](http://www.scarboroughsurfschool.co.uk); Cayton Bay) is based 4 miles south of town, but you can get information and advice from the **Secretspot Surf Shop** (☎ 01723-500467; 4 Pavilion Tce) near the train station.

## Sleeping

In Scarborough, if a house has four walls and a roof it'll offer B&B; competition is intense and in such a tough market multi-night-stay special offers are two a penny, which means that single-night rates are the highest of all.

## BUDGET

**Scalby Close Caravan Park** (☎ 01723-366212; [www.scalbyclosepark.co.uk](http://www.scalbyclosepark.co.uk); Burniston Rd; sites £18; 📅 Easter-Oct)

A small park about 2 miles north of town with plenty of pitches for vans and tents (rate includes car and up to four people) as well as fixed holiday caravans for rent (£160 to £350 per week). Take bus 12 or 21.

**Scarborough YHA** (☎ 0845 371 9657; [www.yha.org.uk](http://www.yha.org.uk); Burniston Rd; dm £18; 📅) This idyllic hostel set in a converted 17th-century water mill has comfortable four- and six-bed dorms and family-friendly facilities. It's 2 miles north of town along the A166 to Whitby; take bus 3, 12 or 21.

**Brambles Lodge Guest House** (☎ 01723-374613; [www.brambleslodgeguesthouse.co.uk](http://www.brambleslodgeguesthouse.co.uk); 156-158 Filey Rd; s/d from £30/50; 📅) Set in a modern house on the A165 to Filey about 1.5 miles south of the town centre, this B&B offers bright and

cheerful rooms, a warm welcome and excellent value. You can take a bus into town or walk there in 20 minutes or so.

## MIDRANGE

**Interludes** (☎ 01723-360513; www.interludeshotel.co.uk; 32 Princess St; s/d from £30/54; 📍) Owners Ian and Bob have a flair for the theatrical and have brought it to bear with visible success on this lovely, gay-friendly Georgian home plastered with old theatre posters, prints and other thespian mementos. The individually decorated rooms are given to colourful flights of fancy that can't but put a smile on your face. Children, alas, are not welcome.

**Windmill Hotel** (☎ 01723-372735; www.windmill-hotel.co.uk; Mill St; s/d from £32/64; 📍) Quirky doesn't begin to describe this place – a beautifully converted 18th-century windmill in the middle of town. There are tight-fitting but comfortable doubles around a cobbled courtyard, but try to get the balcony flat (£85–100 a night) in the upper floors of the windmill itself, with great views from the wrap-around balcony.

**Hotel Helaina** (☎ 01723-375191; www.hotelhelaina.co.uk; 14 Blenheim Tce; r £54-84; 📍) Location, location, location – you'd be hard pushed to find a place with a better sea view than this elegant guest house perched on the cliff top overlooking North Beach. And the view inside the rooms is pretty good too, with sharply styled contemporary furniture and cool colours. The standard rooms are a touch on the small side – it's well worth splashing out on the deluxe room with the bay window.

**our pick** **Beiderbecke's Hotel** (☎ 01723-365766; www.beiderbeckes.com; 1-3 The Crescent; s/d from £65/105; 📍) Set in an elegant Georgian terrace in the middle of town, on a quiet street overlooking gardens, this hotel combines stylish and spacious rooms with attentive but friendly and informal service. It's not quite boutique, but with its intriguing modern art on the walls and snazzily coloured toilet seats it's heading in that direction.

## TOP END

**Crown Spa Hotel** (☎ 0800 072 6134; www.crownspahotel.com; Esplanade; s/d from £75/130; 📍) This grand old hotel opened its doors in 1845 and has been going strong ever since, changing constantly with the times. After a recent refurbishment it's more opulent than ever, offering superb sea views and a luxurious spa.

**Wrea Head Country House Hotel** (☎ 01723-378211; www.englishrosehotels.co.uk; Barmoor La, Scalby; s/d £80/135; 📍) This fabulous country house about 2 miles north of the centre is straight out of *Remains of the Day*. The 20 individually styled bedrooms have canopied, four-poster beds, plush fabrics and delicate furnishings, while the leather couches in the bookcased, wood-heavy lounges are tailor-made for important discussions over cigars and expensive brandy.

## Eating

**Bonnet's** (☎ 01723-361033; 38-40 Huntriss Row; mains £4-7; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, 11am-4pm Sun) One of the oldest cafes in town, open since 1880, Bonnet's serves delicious cakes and light meals in a quiet courtyard, and sells handmade chocolates in the adjoining shop.

**Roasters** (☎ 07971 808549; 8 Aberdeen Walk; mains £5; ☎ 9am-5pm) A funky coffee shop with chunky pine tables, brown leather chairs, and an excellent range of freshly ground coffees. There's a juice and smoothie bar too, and the lunch menu includes ciabatta sandwiches, salads and jacket potatoes.

**Golden Grid** (☎ 01723-360922; 4 Sandside; mains £7-12; ☎ 11am-11pm) Whoever said fish and chips can't be eaten with dignity hasn't tried the Golden Grid, a sit-down fish restaurant that has been serving the best cod in Scarborough since 1883. It's staunchly traditional, with starched white tablecloths and starched white aprons, as is the menu – as well as fish and chips there's steak pie, mushy peas and Yorkshire pud with onion gravy.

**Marmalade's** (☎ 01723-365766; 1-3 The Crescent; mains £12-16; ☎ noon-9.30pm) The stylish brasserie in Beiderbecke's Hotel – cream and chocolate colours, art with a musical theme, and cool jazz in the background – has a menu that adds a gourmet twist to traditional dishes – steak and ale pie with pease pudding, roast rack of lamb with forest berries, sea bass stuffed with lemon and herbs.

**Lanterna** (☎ 01723-363616; 33 Queen St; mains £13-19; ☎ dinner Mon-Sat) A snug, old-fashioned Italian trattoria that specialises in fresh local seafood and classic dishes from the old country – as well as sourcing Yorkshire produce, the chef imports delicacies direct from Italy, including truffles, olive oil, prosciutto and a range of cheeses.



## Entertainment

**Stephen Joseph Theatre** (☎ 01723-370541; www.sjt.uk.com; Westborough) Stages a good range of drama – renowned chronicler of middle-class mores Alan Ayckbourn premieres his plays here.

**Scarborough Spa** (☎ 01723-376774; www.scarboroughspa.co.uk; South Bay) The revitalised spa complex stages a wide range of entertainment, especially in the summer months – orchestral performances, variety shows, popular musicals and old-fashioned afternoon tea dances.

## Getting There & Away

Bus 128 goes along the A170 from Helmsley to Scarborough (1½ hours, hourly) via Pickering, while buses 93 and X93 come from Whitby (one hour, every 30 minutes) via Robin Hood's Bay (hourly). Bus 843 arrives from Leeds (£16, 2¾ hours, hourly) via York.

There are regular trains from Hull (£12, 1½ hours, hourly), Leeds (£20, one hour 20 minutes, hourly) and York (£15, 50 minutes, hourly).

## Getting Around

Tiny, Victorian-era funicular railways rattle up and down Scarborough's steep cliffs between town and beach daily from February till the end of October (60p). Local buses leave from the western end of Westborough and outside the train station.

For a taxi call ☎ 361009; £5 should get you to most places in town.

## FILEY

pop 6468

None of yer nudge-nudge, saucy-postcard-style seaside tat here, thank you very much. Filey has a prim and proper prom – even the miniature golf is designer mini-golf, all bronze, hemp and limestone with a sea-creature theme – and looks upon its brasher neighbours in Bridlington and Scarborough with a vaguely superior air.

A former fishing village – there are still a handful of traditional Yorkshire cobbles working nets from the beach – Filey is a popular hiking centre, being a hub for both the Cleveland Way (p588), and the Wolds Way (p588), while five miles of sandy Blue Flag beach offer ample scope for cooling off weary feet with a paddle in the sea.

Filey's **tourist office** (☎ 01723-518000; www.discover.yorkshirecoast.com; John St; ☎ 10am-6pm May-Sep, 10am-12.30pm & 1-4.30pm Oct-Apr) is on the way down hill from train station to beach.

Filey is 7 miles south of Scarborough on the A165, and is served by trains on the line between Hull and Bridlington to the south and Scarborough to the north (every two hours); the bare-bones station is about a mile west of the beach. Buses 120 and 121 run from Scarborough (30 minutes, hourly).

# NORTH YORK MOORS NATIONAL PARK

Inland from the north Yorkshire coast, the wild and windswept North York Moors rise in isolated splendour. Three-quarters of all the world's heather moorland is to be found in Britain, and this is the largest expanse in all of England. Ridge-top roads climb up from lush green valleys to the bleak open moors where weatherbeaten stone crosses mark the line of ancient drove roads, and where in summer the heather blooms in billowing drifts of purple haze.

This is classic walking country, and the moors are criss-crossed with footpaths old and new, and dotted with pretty, flower-bedecked villages. The national park is also home to one of England's most picturesque steam railways.

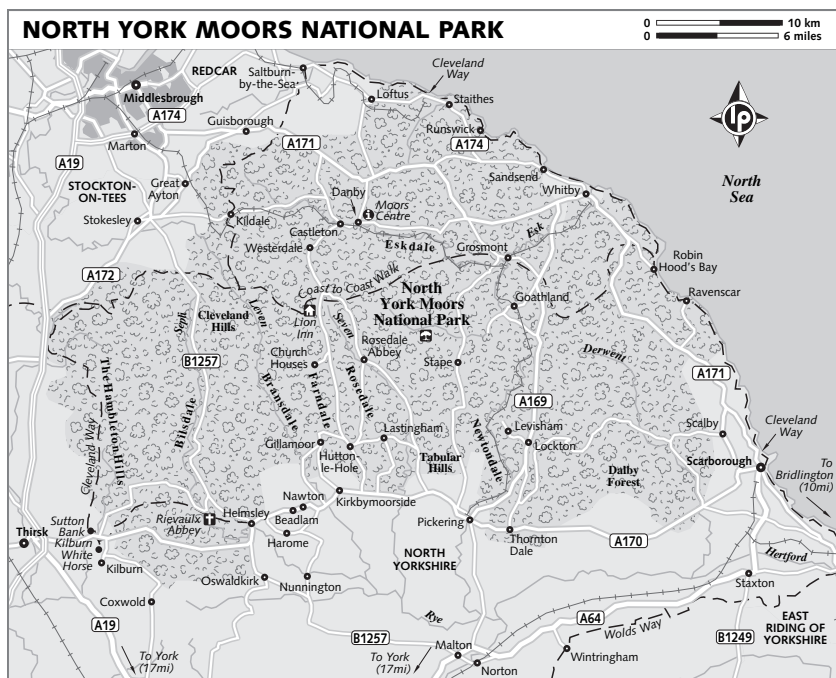
## Orientation & Information

The main gateway towns are Helmsley and Pickering in the south, and Whitby in the northeast – all have good tourist offices. The national park also has visitor centres at Sutton Bank, Danby and Robin Hood's Bay; see also www.visithemoors.co.uk.

The park produces the very useful *Moors & Coast* visitor guide, available at tourist offices, hotels etc, with information on things to see and do. The OS Landranger 1:50,000 map, sheet 94, covers most of the national park.

## Activities

Tourist offices stock an excellent range of walking leaflets (around 60p to 75p), as well as more comprehensive walking and cycling guidebooks.



## WALKING

There are more than 1400 miles of footpaths criss-crossing the moors. The most scenic walking areas are along the western escarpment and the cliff tops on the coast, while the green and tranquil valleys offer relaxed rambling.

The famous **Coast to Coast walk** (p588) passes through the park, and the **Cleveland Way** covers three sides of the moors' outer rim on its 109-mile, nine-day route from Helmsley to Filey.

The **Cook Country Walk**, named after explorer Captain Cook who was born and raised in this area, links several monuments commemorating his life. This 40-mile, three-day route follows the flanks of the Cleveland Hills from Marton (near Middlesbrough) to Staithes, then south along the coast to Whitby.

## CYCLING

Once you've climbed up onto the escarpment, the North York Moors make fine cycling country, with quiet lanes through the valleys and scenic roads over the hills.

There's also a great selection of off-road tracks for mountain bikes (see [www.mtb-routes.co.uk/northyorkmoors](http://www.mtb-routes.co.uk/northyorkmoors)).

## Getting There & Around

From the south, there are regular buses from York (17 miles outside the park) to Helmsley, Pickering, Scarborough and Whitby. From the north, head for Middlesbrough then take the Esk Valley railway line, which stops at Danby, Grosmont and several other villages in the park. The **North Yorkshire Moors Railway** (NYMR, see p645) runs north-south across the park from Pickering to Grosmont. Using these two railway lines, much of the moors area is easily accessible for those without wheels. Call **Traveline Yorkshire** (☎ 0871 200 2233; [www.yorkshiretravel.net](http://www.yorkshiretravel.net)) for all public bus and train information.

The **Moorsbus** (☎ 01845-597000) operates on Sunday from May to October, daily from mid-July to early September, and is ideal for reaching out-of-the-way spots. Pick up a timetable and route map from tourist offices, or go to [www.visithemoors.co.uk](http://www.visithemoors.co.uk) and click on 'Discover the Place' then 'Public

Transport'. A standard day pass costs £4, and for £12 the pass is valid on the Esk Valley railway too. Family tickets and one-off fares for short journeys are also available.

There's also a free public transport map, the *Moors Explorer Travel Guide*, available from tourist offices.

Note – if you're planning to drive on the minor roads over the moors, beware of wandering sheep and lambs – hundreds are killed by careless drivers every year.

## HELMSLEY

pop 1620

Helmsley is a classic North Yorkshire market town, a handsome place full of old houses, historic coaching inns and – inevitably – a cobbled market square, all basking under the watchful gaze of a sturdy Norman castle. Nearby are the romantic ruins of Rievaulx Abbey and a fistful of country walks.

### Orientation & Information

The centre of everything is Market Pl (market day is Friday); all four sides are lined with specialty shops, cosy pubs and cafes. The **tourist office** (☎ 01439-770173; ☹ 9.30am–5.30pm Mar–Oct, 10am–4pm Fri–Sun Nov–Feb) sells maps and books, and helps with accommodation.

### Sights & Activities

The impressive ruins of 12th-century **Helmsley Castle** (EH; ☎ 01439-770442; admission £4; ☹ 10am–6pm Apr–Sep, 10am–5pm Mar & Oct, 10am–4pm Thu–Mon Nov–Mar) are defended by a striking series of deep ditches and banks to which later rulers added the thick stone walls and defensive towers – only one tooth-shaped tower survives today following the dismantling of the fortress by Sir Thomas Fairfax after the Civil War. The castle's tumultuous history is well explained in the visitor centre.

Just outside the castle, **Helmsley Walled Garden** (☎ 01439-771427; admission £4; ☹ 10.30am–5pm daily Easter–Oct, Mon–Fri Nov–Easter) would be just another plant and produce centre were it not for its dramatic position and fabulous selection of flowers, fruits and vegetables – some of which are quite rare – not to mention the herbs, including 40 varieties of mint. If you're into horticulture with a historical twist, this is Eden.

South of the castle stretches the superb landscape of **Duncombe Park** estate with the stately home of **Duncombe Park House** (☎ 01439-770213; [www.duncombepark.com](http://www.duncombepark.com); house & gardens £7.25,

gardens only £4; ☹ house by guided tour only, hourly 12.30–3.30pm, gardens 11am–5.30pm Sun–Thu Easter–Oct) at its heart. From the house and formal gardens, wide grassy walkways and terraces lead through woodland to mock-classical temples, while longer walking trails are set out in the parkland – now protected as a nature reserve. The house, ticket office and information centre are 1.5 miles south of town, an easy walk through the park.

You could easily spend a day here, especially if you take in one of the many **walks** in Duncombe Park. Cream of the crop is the 3.5-mile route to **Rievaulx Abbey** (p644) – the tourist office can provide route leaflets and advise on buses if you don't want to walk both ways. This route is also the opening section of the **Cleveland Way** (p588).

### Sleeping

**Wrens of Rydale** (☎ 01439-771260; [www.wrensofrydale.co.uk](http://www.wrensofrydale.co.uk); Gale Lane, Nawton; tent & 2 adults £8, with car £14; ☹ Apr–Oct) This excellent, sheltered camp site with three acres of pristine parkland is 3 miles east of Helmsley, just south of Beadlam.

**Helmsley YHA** (☎ 0845 371 9638; [www.yha.org.uk](http://www.yha.org.uk); Carlton Lane; dm £16; Ⓟ) This family-friendly hostel 0.25 miles east of the market square looks a bit like an ordinary suburban home; its location at the start of the Cleveland Way means that it's almost always full, so book in advance.

There are a number of old coaching inns on Market Pl that offer B&B, half-decent grub and a pint of hand-pumped real ale. The **Feathers Hotel** (☎ 01439-770275; [www.feathershotelhelmsley.co.uk](http://www.feathershotelhelmsley.co.uk); Market Pl; s/d from £44/80) has four-poster beds in some rooms and historical trimmings throughout. For something plusher head for the **Feversham Arms** (☎ 01439-770766; [www.fevershamarms.com](http://www.fevershamarms.com); s/d from £130/140; Ⓟ), where country charm meets boutique chic.

### Eating

**Star Inn** (☎ 01439-770397; [www.thestaratharome.co.uk](http://www.thestaratharome.co.uk); Harome; mains £15–20; ☹ dinner Mon–Sat, lunch Tue–Sat, noon–6pm Sun) This thatch-roofed country pub is home to one of Yorkshire's best restaurants, with a Michelin-starred menu that revels in top quality produce from the surrounding farms – slow roast belly pork with black pudding and apple salad, or wood pigeon with roast hazelnut pesto. It's the sort of place you won't want to leave, and the good news is you don't have to: the adjacent lodge has eight

magnificent bedrooms (£130 to £150), each decorated in classic but luxurious country style. It's about 2 miles south of Helmsley just off the A170.

Helmsley is a bit of a foodie town, sporting a couple of quality delicatessens on the main square. There's **Perns** (☎ 01439-770249; 18 Market Pl), a butcher, deli and wine merchant under the same ownership as the Star at Harome; and flower-bedecked **Hunters of Helmsley** (☎ 01439-771307; www.huntersofhelmsley.com; 13 Market Pl), a cornucopia of locally made chutneys, jams, beers, cheeses, bacon, humbugs and ice cream – a great place to stock up for a gourmet picnic.

### Getting There & Away

All buses stop in the main square. Bus 31X runs from York to Helmsley (1¼ hours, two daily Monday to Saturday). From Scarborough take bus 128 (£7, 1½ hours, hourly Monday to Saturday, four on Sunday) via Pickering.

## AROUND HELMSLEY

### Rievaulx

In the secluded valley of the River Rye, amid fields and woods loud with birdsong, stand the magnificent ruins of **Rievaulx Abbey** (EH; ☎ 01439-798228; admission £5; 📅 10am–6pm Apr–Sep, to 5pm Thu–Mon Oct, to 4pm Thu–Mon Nov–Mar). This idyllic spot was chosen by Cistercian monks in 1132 as a base for missionary activity in northern Britain. St Aelred, the third abbot, famously described the abbey's setting as 'everywhere peace, everywhere serenity, and a marvellous freedom from the tumult of the world.' But the monks of Rievaulx (pronounced ree-voh) were far from unworldly, and soon created a network of commercial interests ranging from sheep farms to lead mines that formed the backbone of the local economy. The extensive ruins give a wonderful feel for the size and complexity of the community that once lived here – their story is fleshed out in a series of fascinating exhibits in the neighbouring visitor centre.

In the 1750s landscape-gardening fashion favoured a Gothic look, and many aristocrats had mock ruins built in their parks. The Duncombe family went one better, as their lands contained a real medieval ruin – Rievaulx Abbey. They built **Rievaulx Terrace & Temples** (NT; ☎ 01439-798340; admission £4.80;

📅 11am–6pm Apr–Sep, to 5pm Oct & Nov) (p643) so that lords and ladies could stroll effortlessly in the 'wilderness' and admire the abbey in the valley below. Today, we can do the same, with views over Ryedale and the Hambleton Hills forming a perfect backdrop.

Rievaulx is about 3 miles west of Helmsley. Note that there's no direct access between the abbey and the terrace – their entrance gates are about a mile apart, though easily reached along a lane – steeply uphill if you're going from abbey to the terrace.

### Sutton Bank & Kilburn White Horse

Sutton Bank is a steep escarpment 8 miles west of Helmsley, where the A170 to Thirsk drops down a very steep and winding hill (caravans not allowed!). From the top, where you'll find a car park and **tourist office** (☎ 01845-597426; 📅 10am–5pm Apr–Oct, 11am–4pm Nov, Dec & Mar, 11am–4pm Sat & Sun Jan & Feb), there are magnificent views westwards to the Pennines and Yorkshire Dales.

From the car park, you can follow the Cleveland Way footpath south for 1.5 miles along the crest of the escarpment to the **Kilburn White Horse**, a chalk figure cut into the hillside in 1857. Said to be the largest white horse in England, it's best seen from the village of Kilburn, reached via a minor road off the A170 about a half mile east of the car park.

### Coxwold

#### pop 190

Coxwold is a neatly symmetrical village of golden stone – just two rows of cottages perched atop grassy banks on either side of the single street – that nestles in beautiful countryside about 7 miles southwest of Helmsley.

Apart from the picture-postcard beauty of the place, the main attraction is 15th-century **Shandy Hall** (☎ 01347-868465; www.shandean.org; admission gardens/house £4.50/2.50; 📅 house 2–4.30pm Wed, 2.30–4.30pm Sun May–Sep, gardens 11am–4.30pm May–Sep), the former home of ebullient eccentric Laurence Sterne (1713–68), author of *Tristram Shandy*. The house is full of 'Sterneana', with lots of information on this entertaining character who was seemingly the first to use the expression 'sick as a horse'.

Nearby is **Byland Abbey** (EH; ☎ 01347-868614; admission £3.50; 📅 11am–6pm daily Jul & Aug, Wed–Sun Apr–Jun & Sep), the elegant remains of a fine Cistercian creation, now a series of lofty arches surrounded by open green slopes.

A decent option for a good night's sleep is **Fauconberg Arms** (☎ 01347-868214; www.fauconbergarms.com; Main St; s/d £75/85, mains £11-16; (P)), a cosy local in the heart of the village that also offers a fine Continental-style menu in its elegant restaurant.

## HUTTON-LE-HOLE

pop 210

With a scatter of gorgeous stone cottages, a gurgling brook and a flock of sheep grazing contentedly on the village green, Hutton-le-Hole must be a contender for the best-looking village in Yorkshire. The dips and hollows on the green may have given the place its name – it was once called simply Hutton Hole but wannabe posh Victorians added the Frenchified 'le', which the locals defiantly pronounce 'lee'.

The **tourist office** (☎ 01751-417367; ☏ 10am-5.30pm mid-Mar-early Nov) has leaflets on walks in the area, including a 5-mile circuit to the nearby village of Lastingham.

Attached to the tourist office is the largely open-air **Ryedale Folk Museum** (☎ 01751-417367; www.ryedalefolkmuseum.co.uk; adult/child £5/3.50; ☏ 10am-5.30pm mid-Mar–Oct, 10am-dusk Nov–mid-Mar, closed 21 Dec-20 Jan), a constantly expanding collection of North York Moors buildings from different eras, including a medieval manor house, simple farmers' houses, a blacksmith's forge and a row of 1930s village shops. Demonstrations and displays throughout the season give a pretty fascinating insight into local life as it was in the past.

The **Daffodil Walk** is a 2½-mile circular walk following the banks of the River Dove. As the name suggests, the main draws are the daffs, usually at their best in the last couple of weeks in April.

## Sleeping & Eating

**Lion Inn** (☎ 01751-417320; www.lionblakey.co.uk; Blakey Ridge; s/d from £35/54; mains £9-16; (P)) From Hutton, the Blakey Ridge road climbs over the moors to Danby and, after 6 miles passes one of the highest and most remote pubs in England (altitude 404m). With its low-beamed ceilings and cosy fireplaces, hearty grub and range of real ales, the Lion is a firm favourite with hikers and bikers.

**Burnley House** (☎ 01751-417548; www.burnleyhouse.co.uk; d £70-90; (P)) This elegant Georgian home offers comfortable bedrooms and a hearty breakfast, but the best features are the lovely

sitting room and garden where you can relax with a cup of tea and a book.

## Getting There & Away

Hutton-le-Hole is 2.5 miles north of the main A170 road, about halfway between Helmsley and Pickering. Moorsbus services (p642) through Hutton-le-Hole include the M3 between Helmsley and Danby (seven per day) and the M1 and M2 between Pickering and Danby (eight per day) via the Lion Inn. Outside times when the Moorsbus runs, you'll need your own transport to get here.

## PICKERING

pop 6600

Pickering is a lively market town with an imposing Norman castle that advertises itself as 'the gateway to the North York Moors'. That gateway is the terminus of the wonderful North Yorkshire Moors Railway, a picturesque survivor from the great days of steam.

The **tourist office** (☎ 01751-473791; www.ryedale.gov.uk; The Ropery; ☏ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Sat, to 4pm Sun Mar-Oct, 10am-4pm Mon-Sat Nov-Feb) has the usual details as well as plenty of NYMR-related info.

## Sights & Activities

The privately owned **North Yorkshire Moors Railway** (NYMR; ☎ Pickering Station 01751-472508, timetable 473535; www.nymr.co.uk; Pickering–Grosmont Day Rover ticket adult/child £14.50/7.30, Pickering–Whitby £20/12) runs for 18 miles through beautiful countryside to the village of Grosmont. Lovingly restored steam locos pull period carriages, resplendent in polished brass and bright paintwork. For visitors without wheels, it's ideal for reaching out-of-the-way villages in the middle of the moors. Grosmont is also on the main railway line between Middlesbrough and Whitby, opening up yet more possibilities for walking and sightseeing.

Dating mostly from the 13th and 14th centuries, **Pickering Castle** (EH; ☎ 01751-474989; admission £3.50; ☏ 10am-6pm Apr-Sep, 10am-4pm Thu-Mon Oct) is a lot like the castles we drew as kids: thick stone walls around a central keep, perched atop a high motte (mound) with great views of the surrounding countryside.

## Sleeping & Eating

**White Swan Hotel** (☎ 01751-472288; www.white-swan.co.uk; Market Pl; s/d from £110/145, mains £9-15; (P) (A)) The top spot in town successfully combines a

smart pub, a superb restaurant serving local dishes with a Continental twist, and a luxurious boutique hotel all in one. Nine modern rooms in the converted coach house up the ante with flat-screen TVs and other stylish paraphernalia that add to the luxury found throughout the hotel.

There's a strip of B&Bs on tree-lined Eastgate (the A170 to Scarborough), and a few more on Westgate (heading towards Helmsley). Decent options include the flower-clad **Rose Folly** (☎ 01751-475057; www.rosefolly.freeserve.co.uk; 112 Eastgate; s/d £30/55; (P)), with lovely rooms and a beautiful breakfast conservatory; and **Eleven Westgate** (☎ 01751-475111; www.elevenwestgate.co.uk; 11 Westgate; d £60-68), a pretty house with patio and garden.

There are several cafes and teashops on Market Pl, but don't overlook the **tearoom** (mains £2-6) at Pickering station, which serves excellent home-baked goodies and does a tasty roast pork roll with apple sauce, crackling and stuffing.

### Getting There & Away

In addition to the NYMR trains, bus 128 between Helmsley (40 minutes) and Scarborough (50 minutes) runs hourly via Pickering. Yorkshire Coastliner services 840 and 842 between Leeds and Whitby link Pickering with York (£11, 70 minutes, hourly).

## DANBY

pop 290

The Blakey Ridge road from Hutton-le-Hole swoops steeply down to Danby, a compact, stone-built village set deep amid the moors at the head of Eskdale. It's home to the **Moors Centre** (☎ 01439-772737; www.visitthemoors.co.uk; ☎ 10am-5pm Apr-Oct, 10.30am-3.30pm Nov, Dec & Mar, 10.30am-3.30pm Sat & Sun Jan-Feb), the national park's HQ, which has interesting exhibits on the natural history of the moors as well as a cafe, an accommodation booking service and a huge range of local guidebooks, maps and leaflets.

There are several short circular walks from the centre, but a more challenging objective is **Danby Beacon**, a stiff 2 miles uphill to a stunning 360-degree panorama across the moors. Or you can cheat, and just drive up.

The **Duke of Wellington** (☎ 01287-660351; www.danby-dukeofwellington.co.uk; s/d from £45/70, mains £7-8) is a fine traditional pub that was used as a recruitment centre during the Napoleonic

Wars; it serves good beer and food and has nine well-appointed bedrooms.

You can reach Danby on the delightful **Esk Valley Railway** (☎ 08457 484950; www.eskvalleyrailway.co.uk) – Whitby is 20 minutes east, Middlesbrough 45 minutes west. There are four departures daily Monday to Saturday, and two on Sunday.

## WHITBY

pop 13,600

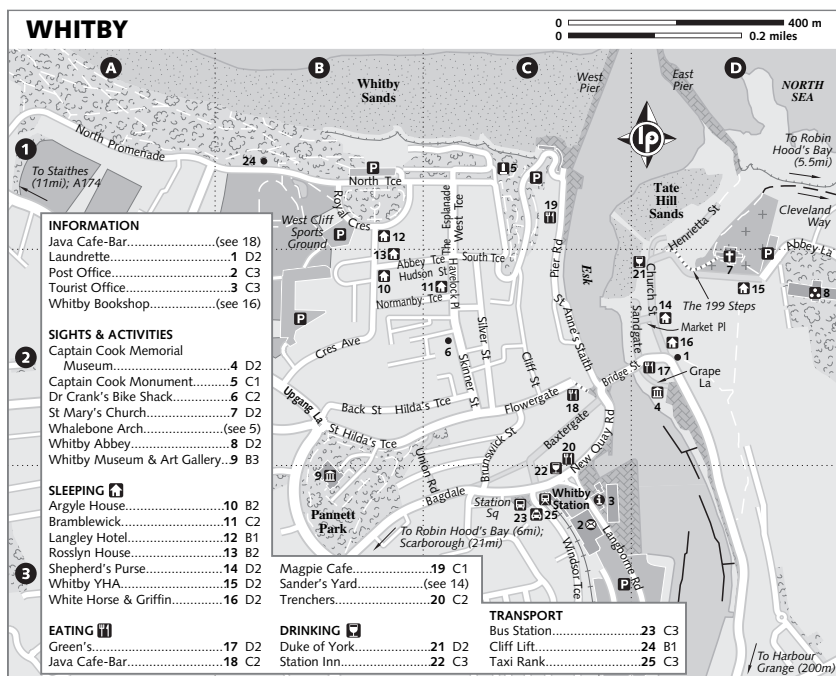
Whitby is a town of two halves, split down the middle by the mouth of the River Esk. It's also a town with two personalities – on the one hand a busy commercial and fishing port, with a bustling quayside fishmarket; on the other a traditional seaside resort, complete with sandy beach, amusement arcades and promenading holidaymakers slurping ice cream cones in the sun.

It's the combination of these two facets that makes Whitby more interesting than your average resort. The town has managed to retain much of its 18th-century character, recalling the time when James Cook – Whitby's most famous adopted son – was making his first forays at sea on his way towards becoming one of the best-known explorers in history. The narrow streets and alleys of the old town hug the riverside, now lined with restaurants, pubs and cute little shops, all with views across the handsome harbour where colourful fishing boats ply to and fro. Keeping a watchful eye over the whole scene is the atmospheric ruined abbey atop the East Cliff.

But Whitby also has a darker side. Most famously, it was the inspiration and setting for part of Bram Stoker's Gothic horror story *Dracula* (see the boxed text, p648). Less well known is the fact that Whitby is famous for the jet (fossilised wood) that has been mined from the local sea cliffs for centuries; this smooth, black substance was popularised in the 19th century when Queen Victoria took to wearing mourning jewellery made from Whitby jet. In recent years these morbid associations have seen the rise of a series of hugely popular Goth festivals (p648).

### Orientation

Whitby is cut in half by the River Esk, with only one very busy bridge linking the two sides. The east side (East Cliff) is the older part of town; the newer (19th-century) town



grew up on the West Cliff. The bus and train stations are in the town centre on the west side of the river.

Note that many streets have two names – for example, Abbey Tce and Hudson St are opposite sides of the same street, as are West Tce and The Esplanade.

## Information

**Java Cafe-Bar** (☎ 01947-820832; 2 Flowergate; per 10 min £1) Internet access.

**Laundrette** (72 Church St)

**Post office** (☎ 8.30am–5.30pm Mon–Sat) Inside the Co-op supermarket.

**Tourist office** (☎ 01947-602674; www.visitwhitby.com; Langborne Rd; ☎ 9.30am–6pm May–Sep, 10am–4.30pm Oct–Apr)

**Whitby Bookshop** (☎ 01947-606202; 88 Church St; ☎ 9.30am–5pm daily) Local history and secondhand books.

## Sights

There are ruined abbeys and there are picturesque ruined abbeys, and then there's **Whitby Abbey** (EH; ☎ 01947-603568; admission £5; ☎ 10am–6pm Apr–Sep, 10am–4pm Thu–Mon Oct–Mar), dominat-

ing the skyline above the East Cliff like a great Gothic tombstone silhouetted against the sky. Looking more like it was built as an atmospheric film set than as a monastic establishment, it is hardly surprising that this medieval hulk inspired the Victorian novelist Bram Stoker – who holidayed in Whitby – to make it the setting for *Count Dracula's* dramatic landfall.

The 199 steps of **Church Stairs** lead steeply up to the abbey from the end of Church St, passing the equally atmospheric **St Mary's Church** (☎ 10am–5pm Apr–Oct, to 4pm Nov–Mar) and its spooky graveyard, a favourite haunt of Goth courting couples.

The fascinating **Captain Cook Memorial Museum** (☎ 01947-601900; www.cookmuseumwhitby.co.uk; Grape Lane; adult/child £4/3; ☎ 9.45am–5pm Apr–Oct, 11am–3pm Sat & Sun Mar) occupies the house of the ship owner with whom Cook began his seafaring career. Highlights include the attic where Cook lodged as a young apprentice, Cook's own maps and letters, etchings from the South Seas and a wonderful model of the *Endeavour*, with all the crew and stores laid out for inspection.

### WHITBY'S DARK SIDE

The famous story of *Dracula*, inspiration for a thousand lurid movies, was written by Bram Stoker while staying at a B&B in Whitby in 1897. Although most Hollywood versions of the tale concentrate on deepest, darkest Transylvania, much of the original book was set in Whitby, and many sites can still be seen today. The tourist office sells an excellent *Dracula Trail* leaflet (80p).

Atop the cliff on the harbour's west side, the **Captain Cook Monument** shows the great man looking out to sea, often with a seagull perched on his head. Nearby is the **Whalebone Arch**, which recalls Whitby's days as a whaling port. Below, Whitby's days as a seaside resort continue with donkey rides, ice cream and bucket-and-spade escapades on **Whitby Sands**.

Set in a park to the west of the town centre is the wonderfully eclectic **Whitby Museum & Art Gallery** (☎ 01947-602908; www.whitbymuseum.org.uk; Pannett Park; adult/child £3/1; 🕒 9.30am-4.30pm Tue-Sun), with displays of fossil plesiosaurs and dinosaur footprints, Cook memorabilia, ships in bottles, jet jewellery and the 'Hand of Glory' – a preserved human hand reputedly cut from the corpse of an executed criminal.

### Activities

For a cracking day out, take a bus to Robin Hood's Bay, explore the village, have lunch, then hike the 6-mile **cliff-top footpath** back to Whitby (allow three hours).

First choice for a bike ride is the excellent 20-mile Whitby to Scarborough **Coastal Cycle Trail**, which starts a mile south of the town centre and follows the route of an old railway line via Robin Hood's Bay. Bikes can be hired from **Dr Crank's Bike Shack** (☎ 01947-606661; 20 Skinner St; 🕒 10am-5pm, closed Wed & Sun).

### Festivals & Events

**Whitby Gothic Weekends** (www.wgw.topmum.co.uk; tickets £45) Twice yearly, last weekend of April and October. Goth heaven, with gigs, events and the Bizarre Bazaar – dozens of traders selling Goth gear, jewellery, art and music.

**Moor & Coast Festival** (www.moorandcoast.co.uk; tickets £35) May Bank Holiday weekend. Beards, sandals and real ale galore at this traditional festival of folk music, dance and dubious Celtic art.

**Musicport Festival** (www.whitbymusicport.com; tickets £75) Mid-October. A weekend-long festival of world music.

### Sleeping

B&Bs are concentrated in West Cliff in the streets to the south and east of Royal Crescent; if a house here ain't offering B&B, chances are it's derelict. Accommodation can be tough to find at festival times; it's wise to book ahead.

### BUDGET

**Harbour Grange** (☎ 01947-600817; www.whitbybackpackers.co.uk; Spital Bridge; dm £15) Overlooking the harbour and less than 10 minutes' walk from the train station, this tidy hostel is conveniently located but has an 11.30pm curfew – good thing we're all teetotal early-to-bedders, right?

**Whitby YHA** (☎ 0845 371 9049; www.yha.org.uk; Church Lane; dm £22; 📍) With an unbeatable position next to the abbey, this hostel doesn't have to try too hard, and it doesn't. You'll have to book well in advance to get your body into one of the basic bunks. Hike up from the station, or take bus 97 (hourly Monday to Saturday).

### MIDRANGE

**White Horse & Griffin** (☎ 01947-604857; www.whitehorseandgriffin.co.uk; 87 Church St; s/d/f from £35/60/85) Walk through the appropriately olde-worlde frontage of this handsome 18th-century coaching inn and discover a boutique hotel with individually designed, superstylish rooms that manage to mix the best of tradition (antique panelling, restored period furniture, real flame fires) with the kind of sleek, contemporary lines and modern comforts you'd expect from a top-class guest house.

**Shepherd's Purse** (☎ 01947-820228; www.theshepherdspurse.com; 95 Church St; r £45-60) This place combines a beads-and-baubles boutique with a wholefood shop and guest house accommodation in the courtyard at the back. The plainer rooms that share a bathroom are perfectly adequate, but we recommend the rustic en suite bedrooms situated around the courtyard; the four-poster beds feel a bit like they've been shoehorned in, but the atmosphere is cute rather than cramped.

**Langley Hotel** (☎ 01947-604250; www.langleyhotel.com; 16 Royal Cres; s/d from £70/90; 📍) With a cream and crimson colour scheme, and a gilt four-poster bed in one room, this grand old hotel exudes a whiff of Victorian splendour. Go for room 1 or 2, if possible, to make the most of the panoramic views from West Cliff.



## CAPTAIN COOK – WHITBY'S ADOPTED SON

Although he was born in Marton (now a suburb of Middlesbrough), Whitby has adopted the famous explorer Captain James Cook, and ever since the first tourists got off the train in Victorian times local entrepreneurs have mercilessly cashed in on his memory, as endless 'Endeavour Cafes' and 'Captain Cook Chip Shops' testify.

Still, Whitby played a key role in Cook's eventual success as a world-famous explorer. It was here that he first went to sea, serving his apprenticeship with local ship owners, and the design of the ships used for his voyages of discovery – including the famous *Endeavour* – were based on the design of Whitby 'cats', flat-bottomed ships that carried coal from Newcastle to London.

Other recommendations:

**Rosslyn House** (☎ 01947-604086; rosslynhouse@googlemail.com; 11 Abbey Tce; s/d from £29/50) Bright and cheerful with a friendly welcome.

**Bramblewick** (☎ 01947-604504; www.bramblewick.co.uk; 3 Havelock Pl; s/d from £27/60; (P)) Friendly owners, hearty breakfasts, abbey views from top floor room.

**Argyle House** (☎ 01947-602733; www.argyle-house.co.uk; 18 Hudson St; s/d £32/60) Comfortable as old slippers, and kippers for breakfast.

## Eating & Drinking

**Java Cafe-Bar** (☎ 01947-820832; 2 Flowergate; mains £4-6) A cool little diner with stainless steel counters and retro decor, with internet access, music vids on the flat screen and a menu of healthy salads, sandwiches and wraps washed down with excellent coffee.

**Sander's Yard** (☎ 01947-820228; 95 Church St; mains £6-8) A veggie place in a pleasant courtyard behind the Shepherd's Purse wholefood shop, Sander's serves a great range of healthy, interesting snacks, sandwiches and home-baked cakes.

**Magpie Cafe** (☎ 01947-602058; 14 Pier Rd; mains £8-15; ☺ lunch & dinner) Flaunts its reputation for serving the 'world's best fish and chips'; damn fine they are too, but the world and his dog knows about it, and summertime queues can stretch along the street.

**Trenchers** (☎ 01947-603212; New Quay Rd; mains £9-15; ☺ lunch & dinner) Top-notch fish and chips minus the 'world's best' tagline – this place is your best bet if you want to avoid the queues at the Magpie (don't be put off by the modern look).

**Green's** (☎ 01947-600284; www.greensofwhitby.com; 13 Bridge St; bistro mains £10-18, restaurant 2-/3-course dinner £34/40; ☺ lunch & dinner Fri-Sun, dinner Mon-Thu) The classiest eatery in town is ideally situated to take its pick of the fish and shellfish freshly landed at the harbour, which makes its way onto the menu as crab with linguini, scallops

with parmesan, pesto and prosciutto, and langoustine tempura.

Most of Whitby's pubs serve food, including the popular **Duke of York** (Church St) at the bottom of the Church Stairs, which has great views over the harbour and serves Timothy Taylor ales. But the best place in town for atmosphere and real ale is the **Station Inn** (New Quay Rd), which offers an impressive range of cask-conditioned beers including Theakston's Black Bull and Black Dog Abbey Ale.

## Getting There & Away

Buses 93 and X93 run south to Scarborough (one hour, every 30 minutes) via Robin Hood's Bay (15 minutes, hourly), and north to Middlesbrough (hourly), with fewer services on Sunday. See p599 for details of the Yorkshire Coastliner service from Leeds to Whitby.

Coming from the north, you can get to Whitby by train along the Esk Valley Railway from Middlesbrough (£4.40, 1½ hours, four per day), with connections from Durham and Newcastle. From the south, it's easier to get a train from York to Scarborough, then a bus from Scarborough to Whitby.

## Getting Around

Whitby is a compact place and hiking up and down the steep hills helps to burn off the fish and chips. But if you need one, there's a **taxi rank** outside the train station. Whitby Sands can be reached from West Cliff via the **cliff lift** (75p; ☺ May-Sep only), an elevator that has been running since 1931.

## AROUND WHITBY

### Robin Hood's Bay

Picturesque Robin Hood's Bay (www.robin-hoods-bay.co.uk) has nothing to do with the hero of Sherwood Forest – the origin of the name is a mystery, and the locals call it Bay Town, or just Bay. But there's no denying that

this fishing village is one of the prettiest spots on the Yorkshire coast.

Leave your car at the parking area in the upper village, where 19th-century ship's captains built comfortable Victorian villas, and walk downhill to **Old Bay**, the oldest part of the village (don't even think about driving down). This maze of narrow lanes and passages is dotted with tearooms, pubs, craft shops and artists' studios – there's even a tiny cinema – and at low tide you can go down onto the beach and fossick around in the rock pools.

There are several pubs and cafes – best pub for ambience and real ale is **Ye Dolphin** (☎ 01947-880337; King St), while the **Swell Cafe** (☎ 01947-880180; Chapel St) does great coffee and has a terrace with a view over the beach.

Robin Hood's Bay is 6 miles south of Whitby; you can walk here along the coastal path in two or three hours, or bike it along the cycle trail in 40 minutes. Also, bus 93 runs hourly between Whitby and Scarborough via Robin Hood's Bay – the bus stop is at the top of the hill, in the new part of town.

## Staithes

Tucked beneath high cliffs at the mouth of a small river, the fishing village of Staithes seems to hide away from the modern world. It's a lot less touristy than Robin Hood's Bay; the houses are less prettified – you can see fishermen's oilskins drying on washing lines – and seagulls the size of vultures swoop down the narrow alleys leading off the steep, narrow main street.

Captain James Cook worked for a grocer here when he was a boy; legend says that fishermen's tales of the high seas, and poor treatment from his master, led him to steal a shilling and run away to Whitby. The rest of the tale is told in detail in the fascinating **Captain Cook & Staithes Heritage Centre** (admission £3; ☎ 10am-5.30pm), packed to the gunwales with nautical relics.

Staithes is 11 miles northwest of Whitby; buses from Whitby to Middlesbrough can drop you at the top of the hill. If you're feeling fit, walking one way and bussing the other makes for a great day out