

# HIGHLIGHTS OF NORTHERN ENGLAND

## ITINERARY

DAY

1

### DAY 1: ARRIVAL IN EDINBURGH

Welcome to Edinburgh. For an easy and comfortable way to get from Edinburgh Airport to your hotel in the city centre, we are happy to arrange a private transfer for you (at additional cost). After settling in, go out and explore. Edinburgh has a long and storied history, so there's no shortage of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, museums and landmarks to visit, including the majestic Edinburgh Castle.

Spend the night in Edinburgh.

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Edinburgh

DAY

2

### DAY 2: THE SCOTTISH BORDERS & ENGLAND'S LAKE DISTRICT

Head for the scenic Scottish Borders area today with its charming old villages and gently rolling hills. On the way you can visit Glenkinchie Distillery and taste its 12-year-old single malt whisky, which was named Best Lowland Single Malt in the 2013 World Whiskies Awards. For a great photo opportunity, don't miss a stop at the scenic Scott's View, one of the best known lookouts in the southern Scotland!

Another suggestion is to visit the area's historical abbeys. Perhaps the most famous is the St Mary's Abbey, also called Melrose Abbey, a partly ruined monastery of the Cistercian order, the first of its kind in Scotland. The ruins make for a hauntingly beautiful sight, especially with moody clouds hanging low overhead. We also recommend a visit to Abbotsford House, the ancestral home of Sir Walter Scott, the famous 19th century novelist and poet, beautifully located on the banks of the River Tweed.

Continue making your way south passing Hawick, Langholm and eventually the Scottish-English border, to arrive at Keswick, your destination tonight in the beautiful Lake District.

Spend the night in the Keswick area.

*Total driving distance: approx. 150 miles / 240 km*

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Abbotsford House - Glenkinchie Distillery - Melrose Abbey - Scott's View

DAY

3

### DAY 3: THE NORTHERN LAKES & SCENIC VIEWS FROM KESWICK

Enjoy an easy day of exploring beautiful Keswick and its surroundings in the northern Lake District. Keswick itself is an attractive town on the shores of Lake Derwentwater, and from the boat landings you can catch a cruise across the lake or rent a rowing boat. Friar's Crag, a viewpoint with beautiful vistas over the lake and distant mountains, is another popular spot. If you're keen on heritage exhibitions, the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery are both worth a visit.

A short drive from town brings you to the ethereal Castlerigg Stone Circle, offering a 360-degree view of mountainous landscapes. For more fantastic views, take a walk to the Lattrigg fell viewpoint overlooking Keswick. You can also take a scenic drive along the eastern shore of Lake Derwentwater, passing the Ashness Bridge, Lodore Falls and Borrowdale and then over the Honister Pass to Buttermere, one of the most picturesque locations in the Lake District. After all the walking today, treat yourself to some homemade ice cream at the Syke Farm Tearoom on the way back to Keswick.

Spend another night in the Keswick area.

*Total driving distance: 30 miles / 50 km*

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Buttermere - Castlerigg stone circle - Keswick & Lake Derwentwater

DAY

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## DAY 4: THE CENTRAL LAKES & VICTORIAN CHARM IN AMBLESIDE

Today head south and explore the heart of the Lake District. The entire region was recently inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List on account of its natural beauty and literary connections, and today you'll get to visit sites that perfectly reflect both of these attributes.

Take some time to wander around Ambleside, a lovely Victorian market town with many little shops and cafes in a serene lakeside setting. Then head to Hawkshead, a quaint village with narrow streets and whitewashed houses. Here you can visit the Beatrix Potter Gallery, a 17th century building housing an exhibition of original illustrations by one of world's most beloved children's authors.

For a nice place for a nature walk, we recommend the Tarn Hows, one of the most popular picnic spots in the area. Whilst the ponds here are man-made, they are surrounded by thick woodlands and beautiful views. Then head to Coniston, where you can opt for a lake-cruise on Coniston Water aboard a rebuilt Victorian steam-powered yacht.

Continue your drive on small, scenic roads through Little and Great Langdale, past the picturesque Blea Tarn – a great spot to stretch your legs again and soak in the magnificent views of the Langdale Pikes.

Spend the night in the Windermere/Ambleside area.

*Driving distance 45 miles / 75 km*

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Ambleside - Coniston - Little & Great Langdale - Tarn Hows - Windermere

DAY

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## DAY 5: YORKSHIRE DALES & THE SPA TOWN OF HARROGATE

It's time to leave the beautiful Lake District today for an equally stunning destination, the Yorkshire Dales National Park. This is an area characterised by picturesque villages, drystone walls and winding roads between rolling hills. This relaxing drive offers plenty of picnic spots, great views and pretty towns to explore, including Hawes, Settle, Malham and Skipton.

You can also take a walk to marvel at some of the impressive limestone formations, such as the Twistleton Scar with its unusual rock patterns and eerie gnarled trees – a unique photo site! Another interesting spot is Malham Cove, a huge carved limestone cliff that is 80 metres high and 300 metres wide.

Continue to Harrogate, one of Yorkshire's most elegant destinations, a fashionable spa town with broad tree-lined streets and beautiful parks and gardens. A visit here would not be complete without stopping for a scone and traditional afternoon tea at the famous Betty's Tea Rooms!

Spend the night in the York area.

*Driving distance 120 miles / 200 km*

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Harrogate - Yorkshire Dales National Park

DAY

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## DAY 6: EXPLORE THE MEDIEVAL HEART OF YORK

Today you have a full day to explore historic York, often considered one of the most beautiful cities in the UK. Wandering through the twisting, narrow lanes of the city centre is like stepping back in time, particularly on the Shambles, one of the best preserved medieval streets in the world with overhanging timber-framed buildings dating back to the 14th century.

For an even bigger step back in time, check out the Jorvik Viking Centre, which displays remains from the

ancient settlement of Jorvik, as York was known during the Viking Age over a thousand years ago. Another historical landmark in the city is York Minster, the largest gothic cathedral in Northern Europe, containing medieval stained glass, stone masterpieces and foundations that date back to the UK's earliest history. Train enthusiasts, on the other hand, may enjoy a visit to the National Railway Museum, telling the story of over 300 years of railway history.

Spend another night in the York area.

**HIGHLIGHTS:** York

DAY

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## DAY 7: CASTLE HOWARD, THE MOORS & YORKSHIRE HERITAGE COAST

Leaving York, your first stop today is Castle Howard, a grand 18th century estate with a walled garden in the Howardian Hills, surrounded by small lakes, fountains, temples and lush woodlands. Continue your drive through the North York Moors, where in late summer the purple heather blooms in all directions.

Then head for the North Yorkshire Heritage Coast where you can visit the postcard-perfect, charming villages of Robin Hood's Bay and Staithes. The resort town of Whitby is another fantastic stop with its lively pier, quaint streets and sandy coastline with colourful little beach huts. For even more spectacular views in Whitby, don't miss the ruins of the cliff-top abbey that inspired Bram Stoker's tale of Dracula.

Spend the night in the Durham area.

*Driving distance 120 miles / 200 km*

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Castle Howard - Robin Hood's Bay - Whitby & Whitby Abbey

DAY

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## DAY 8: HISTORIC DURHAM & ROMAN RUINS AT HADRIAN'S WALL

Spend the morning exploring Durham, a historic city with winding cobbled streets and scenic riverside setting. Take some time to enjoy its many little cafes, artisan workshops, boutiques, art galleries and museums. The main highlight here is Durham Cathedral, one of Europe's most impressive structures and among England's most intact medieval monastic buildings.

Continue your journey north towards Hadrian's Wall, also called the Roman Wall, which stood for around three centuries as the northern frontier of the mighty Roman Empire. Stretching for almost 80 miles it has 16 permanent bases along the wall, including the Housesteads Fort, the most complete example of a Roman fort in the UK. A visit here gives you a good imagination for how 800 soldiers worked and lived nearly 2000 years ago.

Another great site to explore is Vindolanda, the location of nine ancient forts, providing a home to several generations of soldiers and their families. During the summer it becomes a live excavation site, giving visitors the unique opportunity to see what archaeologists discover in real time. Remains include a 3rd century bathhouse, a headquarters building, a temple to a Roman god and a mausoleum.

Spend the night in the Alnwick area.

*Driving distance 95 miles / 155 km*

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Durham - Hadrian's Wall & the Roman forts

DAY

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## DAY 9: CASTLES OF NORTHUMBERLAND & RETURN TO EDINBURGH

Explore Alnwick today, an old market town where you can visit Alnwick Castle, the second largest inhabited castle in the UK. It has been home to the Duke of Northumberland's family for over 700 years and has been featured as Hogwarts in the Harry Potter films and as Brancaster Castle in the Downtown Abbey TV series. Adjacent to the castle is the magnificent Alnwick Garden. Nearby Alnmouth is a picture-postcard seaside village at the estuary of the river Aln, with quaint colourful cottages along a gorgeous stretch of golden sand

beach.

As you start your drive north back towards Edinburgh, you can opt to visit one of two castles. The first option is the ruins of the grand Dunstanburgh Castle, set on a remote headland of the Northumberland coast accessible by a scenic coastline walk from Craster. The second option is the iconic Bamburgh Castle, situated dramatically on a basalt outcrop above the dunes, overlooking miles and miles of golden sand beach.

Your next optional stop will depend on the tides. The Holy Island of Lindisfarne lies just off the Northumberland coast, reached via a causeway that is accessible only at low tide. To learn about the island's Viking and Celtic history, visit the island's exhibition centre. In the afternoon, head back to Edinburgh, return your car and enjoy the rest of the evening at your leisure.

Spend the night in Edinburgh.

*Driving distance: 110 miles / 180 km*

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Alnwick Castle & Garden - Bamburgh Castle - Dunstanburgh Castle - Edinburgh - Holy Island & Lindisfarne Priory

DAY

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## DAY 10: DEPARTURE FROM EDINBURGH

To get to Edinburgh Airport, simply take the Airport Express bus from Waverley Bridge or a taxi directly from your hotel. If your flight is in the afternoon, enjoy some last-minute shopping or visit a museum you may have missed at the beginning of your trip.

If you wish to spend more time in Edinburgh (or Glasgow) before or after the tour, ask your travel consultant about adding extra nights. We can also arrange optional services such as private airport transfers or even extend your trip to include Nordic destinations, such as Iceland or Norway.

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Durham - Hadrian's Wall & the Roman forts

*Whatever your needs, we are here to help. If you have any questions about our packages or services, please do not hesitate to contact us.*

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