



Rail itineraries – Heritage Cities



[heritage-cities-5-day-trip](#) 

Lincoln - York - Durham - Edinburgh

5 days 

This 5 day railway itinerary encompasses a whistle-stop tour of some of the Britain's historical highlights, from the spectacular Norman relics of Lincoln to the Viking heritage of York and all the way north to the medieval gems of Edinburgh.


For shorter trips, individual rail tickets can be booked in advance through [the Trainline](#). For longer journeys, one of the easiest and most relaxing ways to explore Britain is with a [BritRail](#) Pass, which allows unlimited journeys and the freedom to explore.

Start your Journey

The first destination on the Heritage Cities tour is Lincoln in the East Midlands. Just 2 hours north of London by train, there's a regular service from London King's Cross station via Peterborough or Newark North Gate.

Day 1

Lincoln 

A mighty cathedral, an ancient castle and a warren of medieval streets make up the hilltop city of Lincoln. Small with a village feel, Lincoln boasts a wealth of historic treasures mingled amid quaint tea rooms, excellent restaurants and independent shops. Avoid the hilly climb up to the Cathedral by taking the [Steep Hill Shuttle Bus](#)  from the station.

Things to do in Lincoln

Lincoln Cathedral

Commissioned by William the Conqueror and consecrated in 1092, the huge gothic towers of Lincoln Cathedral have been dominating the city's skyline for nearly a thousand years. Taking a guided tour is the best way to learn more about the architecture and rich history.

[Website: about Lincoln Cathedral](#) 



Lincoln Castle

It's a short stroll from the cathedral across the cobbles to the towering entrance of Lincoln Castle. Home to an original copy of the Magna Carta, the chance to see one of the world's most important documents first-hand should not be missed.

[Website: Lincoln Castle](#) 

Doddington Hall

A privately owned Elizabethan Mansion with stunning gardens, Doddington Hall was built in 1600 and is unique in that it has never been sold or cleared out since. The Hall is a 15 minute taxi ride from Lincoln centre and its website lists opening days and times.

[Website: Doddington Hall](#) 



Day 2

York



Time to trade the Norman charms of Lincoln for the Viking heritage of [York](#) . Trains run from Lincoln to Newark North Gate (30 mins), from where there is a connection to York (45 mins).

A place of extraordinary cultural and historical wealth, York is a must-visit. Seemingly unchanged for centuries, the modestly sized city is packed with attractions: from the narrow cobbles of The Shambles, to the dramatic architecture of York Minster and the rolling countryside that surrounds Castle Howard.

Things to do In York

York Minster


Truly awe-inspiring, York Minster is one of the most beautiful gothic cathedrals in the world and one of the largest examples of medieval architecture in Northern Europe. The stunning stained glass on display is a real highlight, as is the climb to the top of the central tower, for a magnificent bird's eye view of the city.

[Website: York Minster](#) 



Castle Howard

A gem amongst English stately homes, Castle Howard is a majestic house surrounded by lush gardens. Splendidly maintained, the house's ornate rooms are filled with antiques and offer stunning vistas of the surrounding countryside. A bus runs direct from York city to Castle Howard.

[Website: Castle Howard](#) 

York - City Sightseeing Bus Tour

An open-top bus tour gives a great insight into the sights and attractions that tell the story of York's 2,000 years of history. There are 22 stops across the city and there is an audio guide in 9 languages. The bus stops at all of the key attractions, including: York Minster, York Dungeon, Clifford's Tower and the city walls.

[Book on the Visit Britain shop](#)



York Pass

The York Pass includes entry to over 30 top attractions in Yorkshire, such as museums, castles, galleries, dining out or entertainment.


Attractions include Castle Howard, York Minster, Clifford's Tower, Yorkshire Air Museum and many more.

[Book on the Visit Britain shop](#)

DAY 3

Durham



The third destination on the trail is beautiful riverside Durham City, 45 minutes north of York by rail. As the train pulls into town, it is greeted by the hilltop famous landmarks, Durham Cathedral and [Durham Castle](#) , which together make up a UNESCO World Heritage Site. And while heritage and history are around every corner in Durham, the young university population ensures a sense of youthful vibrancy in the city's many cafes and pubs.

[The Cathedral bus](#)  connects the train station and bus station with the Castle and Cathedral Square.

Things to do In Durham

Durham Cathedral

Raised up above the city on a rocky promontory, the Norman church is a sight to behold. Founded in 1093, the building has seen hundreds of years of political, social and religious intrigue, and more recently found fame when the cloisters doubled as Hogwarts in the Harry Potter films. Tours of the cathedral are available.

[Website: Durham Cathedral](#) 





Durham Castle

Standing side by side with the cathedral, the ancient castle forms the other part of this unique and fascinating World Heritage site. Now home to University of Durham students, the grand site is best explored on a guided tour.

[Website: Durham Castle](#)

Crook Hall and Gardens

Just a short walk from the bustling market, the medieval Crook Hall dates back to the 13th century. A place of 'history, romance and beauty', laid-back living is the order of the day here, exploring the rooms and idyllic gardens before stopping for cream tea in the courtyard café. Crook Hall is closed on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

[Website: Crook Hall and Gardens](#)



DAYS 4 and 5

Edinburgh



The ancient Scottish capital is a fitting final stop on this history tour. A scenic 2 hour train journey from Durham, Edinburgh's rich heritage is evident the moment that visitors step off the train. From the many medieval charms of the Old Town to the elegant Georgian facades of Princes Street and the New Town, there's a wonderful array of history, culture, art and Scottish eccentricities to discover.

For those wishing to spend some time exploring Scotland, an [Explorer Pass](#) will give them great-value access to 77 historic sites.

Things to do around Edinburgh

Edinburgh Castle

Presiding over the city from its lofty seat atop a rocky cliff, Edinburgh Castle is the city's most iconic attraction, wowing visitors with its impressive views, legendary 1 o'clock gun salute and dazzling display of Scottish Crown Jewels.

[Book on the Visit Britain shop](#)



Royal Yacht Britannia

Used by The Queen and the Royal family for state visits and holidays for more than 40 years, The Royal Yacht Britannia is now berthed in the harbour of Leith. The no 22 bus from Princes Street stops here.

[Book on the Visit Britain shop](#)

Edinburgh Historic Vaults Walking Tour

This fascinating guided tour reveals the vaults hidden beneath Edinburgh's South Bridge and the darker side of the 18th Century boom years.

[Book on the Visit Britain shop](#)



Edinburgh Dungeon

Edinburgh Dungeon is a thrilling attraction that offers 11 live action shows and 2 underground rides! It displays the city's terrifying past for all to see, hear and smell, using chillingly amusing characters to bring stories to life.

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Britrail

For those exploring Britain by train, a BritRail Pass is the easiest and most cost-effective way to travel. For a single fixed price, pass holders can make unlimited train journeys around the whole country or a region of their choice. BritRail tickets are exclusive to overseas visitors so they will need to buy their ticket before they arrive in the UK.

[Book on the Visit Britain shop](#)