



Rail itineraries - Northern Heritage and Countryside 9 day trip



[northern-heritage-and-countryside-9-day](#) 

The Lake District - Edinburgh - Newcastle and Durham - York

9 days 


The North of England has been charming visitors with its rich heritage and captivating countryside for centuries. With its enticing mix of Roman ruins, ancient castles and distinctive cities it has been the backdrop for dozens of blockbuster movies.



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

Only two hours from London and with rail links to all major cities, Manchester is a natural starting point for a tour of Northern England. Adventures begin at either Manchester Airport or Manchester Piccadilly station, taking a train for Windermere (1 hr 40 mins) via Oxenholme.

Day 1-3

The Lake District 

After 1 hour 40 minutes rolling through the Cumbrian countryside, the train from Manchester arrives into the traditional grey stone station of Windermere. Set on the shores of England's longest lake and sitting under the watchful gaze of Orrest Head, the small market town is the perfect base for exploring the Lake District. A place of superlatives, the [Lake District's](#)  shimmering lakes and rugged hills have been attracting (and inspiring) artists, writers and nature lovers for hundreds of years. Home to England's tallest mountain, Scafell Pike, it's a favourite location for walkers and hikers while literary fans will enjoy the area's connection with [Beatrix Potter](#)  and William Wordsworth. It's easy to idle away a week leisurely touring the pretty villages and lakes but we recommend 2-3 days to cover the highlights.

Check out [Windermere Lake Cruises](#)  for more details on ferry times.

For more information on bus timetables, visit the [Traveline](#)  website.

Things to do in The Lake District

Windermere Lake Cruises

One of the best ways to take in the beauty of the lake is from the water; Windermere Lake Cruises offers a scenic circular cruise around the islands as well as a regular shuttle service from Lakeside, Bowness and Ambleside.

[Website: Windermere Lake Cruises](#) 





Dove Cottage and Grasmere

In the pretty village of Grasmere, Dove Cottage is the former home of William Wordsworth and the place where he penned many of his famous works. Almost exactly as it was when he lived here, the popular museum can be reached by the 599 or 555 bus from Windermere train station - [Traveline](#) has the latest bus information.

[Website: Dove Cottage and the Wordsworth Museum](#)

Hill Top

Hill Top is the country escape where Beatrix Potter was inspired to create many of her famous characters. Now a time capsule of her life, the 17th century farmhouse is a must for all fans of the Peter Rabbit series. The route includes the Stagecoach 596 bus to Bowness-on-Windermere, a boat to Ferry House, and then a [Mountain Goat](#) bus. It runs from March to October; for further information refer to the [Windermere Lake Cruises website](#).

[Website: Hill Top](#)



Day 4 & 5

Edinburgh



Edinburgh's rich heritage is evident from the moment of arrival. 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 in 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.

[Website: the Royal Yacht Britannia](#)

Edinburgh Historic Vaults Walking Tour

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

[Book on the Visit Britain shop](#)



The 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.

[Book on the Visit Britain shop](#)

Time to leave Edinburgh and take the train (approx. 1hr 30 mins direct) to the bright lights of [Newcastle](#). Once known only as an industrial centre, the city has bloomed into a modern metropolis, renowned for its vibrant nightlife and top-class galleries, restaurants and shopping. Alongside the shiny new buildings, the area's history and heritage shines through in the elegant Victorian facades of its central district and the cultural marvels of the surrounding countryside.

Find the [X18 bus timetable here](#) and the [Waggonway bus timetable here](#).

Newcastle

Beamish Museum

A living, working museum spread over 300 acres, Beamish gives a real sense of what life was like in Northern England during the 1820s, 1900s and 1940s. Complete with farm animals, authentic restaurants and costumed guides, this uniquely English attraction makes a great family day out. If visitors take Waggonway bus 28/28A from Newcastle they will save 25% on their entrance fee.

[Website: Beamish Museum](#)



Alnwick Castle

A magnificent medieval castle set in manicured gardens, Alnwick is one of the most impressive heritage estates in the country. History lovers will appreciate the castle's dramatic history while those on the *Harry Potter* trail will relish the chance to get a selfie at the real-life incarnation of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The train from Newcastle to Alnmouth takes just 45 minutes, followed by the X18 bus (10 mins).

[Website: Alnwick Castle](#)

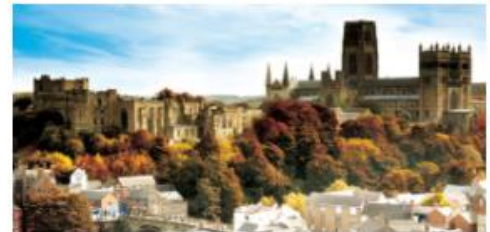


Durham

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](#)




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 around 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 true highlight, as is climbing the steps of the central tower for a bird's eye view of the city.

[Website: York Minster](#) 



Castle Howard

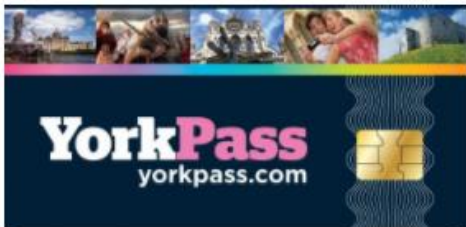
A gem amongst English stately homes, Castle Howard is a majestic house surrounded by lush gardens. Splendidly maintained, the house's ornate rooms are filled with antiques and offer stunning vistas of the surrounding countryside. A bus runs direct from York city to Castle Howard.

[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](#)

Britrail Pass

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](#) 