

Yorkshire



Tough, brazen and renowned for a dogged derring-do that makes it the most ‘English’ of regions, Yorkshire nevertheless eschews such a label and stubbornly holds on to its own sense of self, an irony that is hardly lost on the inhabitants of God’s Own Country, as Yorkshire folk half-jokingly refer to where they’re from – a place so huge it’s divided into four separate counties – South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire.

It’s all to do with history, you see, and Yorkshire’s is pretty special: the term ‘East Riding’ is a geographical clue from the ancient days of the Danelaw, the 9th-century Viking-governed region that roughly covered the same territory when the notion of ‘England’ as we know it didn’t even exist. Indeed, the counties wear their history with enormous pride, and you can explore virtually every facet of the English experience past and present from the Middle Ages to today, in abbeys, castles, historic houses, medieval cities, industrial centres and urban playgrounds.

The landscapes are pretty extraordinary too: from the dark moors and brooding hills that roll their way to the dramatic cliffs of the coast, Yorkshire has been walked on, climbed over, cycled through and written about for centuries.

But ultimately Yorkshire is heaven-blessed on account of the people. Proud, industrious and hard-working, it is their never-sit-on-the-fence opinions about life, love, beer and all of the other incidental things in life – coupled with a warmth that is easily visible beneath the initial gruffness of the first meeting – that makes Yorkshire so bloody wonderful.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Winding your way through the narrow streets and exploring York’s awe-inspiring **cathedral** (p529) and fabulous **museums** (p532)
- Finding your inner Heathcliff and Cathy amid the green valleys and high moors of the **Yorkshire Dales National Park** (p517)
- Lolling in **Leeds** (p508): shopping, eating, drinking, dancing...and more shopping
- Exploring the depths of **Whitby** (p549), a favourite with sea dogs, sun-lovers and lackeys of the Prince of Darkness
- Riding the length of the **Settle–Carlisle Line** (p521) and getting some scenery by steam engine
- Going underground at the dark side of mining at the **National Coal Mining Museum for England** (p514) near Wakefield



■ POPULATION: 4.96 MILLION

■ AREA: 5958 SQ MILES

Information

Yorkshire Tourist Board (☎ 01904-707070; www.yorkshirevisitor.com; 312 Tadcaster Rd, York YO24 1GS) has plenty of general leaflets and brochures. For more detailed information, contact the local tourist offices listed throughout this chapter.

Activities

Within Yorkshire are high peaks, wild hills, tranquil valleys, farmland, moorland and a stupendous coastline. With this fantastic selection, not surprisingly, it’s a great place for outdoor activities.

CYCLING

Cycling is a great way to see Yorkshire; there’s a vast network of country lanes, although the most scenic areas are also attractive to car drivers, so even some minor roads can be busy at weekends. Options include the following: **North York Moors** Off-road bikers can avail themselves of the networks of bridle paths, former railways and disused mining tracks now turned over to two-wheel use. **Whitby to Scarborough** A traffic-free route that includes a disused railway line, and an effortless way to tour this rugged coastline.

White Rose Cycle Route A 120-mile cruise from Hull to York to Middlesbrough, via the rolling Yorkshire Wolds and the dramatic edge of the North York Moors, and a traffic-free section on the old railway between Selby and York. It is part of the National Cycle Network (p88).

Yorkshire Dales Great cycling in the quieter areas in the north around Swaledale and Wensleydale, and the west around Dentdale. The areas just outside the park, like Nidderdale, are also good. Also 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 narrow country lanes in the valleys.

WALKING

For shorter walks and rambles, the best area is the **Yorkshire Dales**, with a great selection of hard and easy walks through scenic valleys or over wild hilltops, with even a few peaks thrown in for good measure. The **Yorkshire Wolds** hold hidden delights, while the quiet valleys and dramatic coasts of the **North York Moors** also have many good opportunities, although the broad ridges of the high moors can be a bit featureless and less attractive for keen walkers.

For general information get the *Walk Yorkshire* brochure from tourist offices or see www.walkyorkshire.com. All tourist offices stock a mountain of leaflets (free or up

to £1.50) on local walks, and sell more detailed guidebooks and maps. At train stations and tourist offices, it’s worth looking out for leaflets produced by companies such as Northern Spirit, 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, p545).

Coast to Coast Walk England’s number one walk, 190 miles across northern England eastwards from the Lake District, crossing the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors. Doing the Yorkshire sections would take 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, p519).

Pennine Way The Yorkshire section of England’s most famous walk starts on day two and runs for more than 100 miles, via Hebden Bridge, Malham, Horton-in-Ribblesdale and Hawes, passing near Haworth and Skipton.

Wolds Way Beautiful but oft-overlooked walk that winds through the most scenic part of eastern Yorkshire (see p524).

Getting There & Around

Yorkshire covers a large part of northern England, and a vast range of landscapes. From the Pennine Hills on the western side of the region (separating Yorkshire from age-old rival Lancashire), you can travel through the green valleys of the Yorkshire Dales, across the plains of the Vale of York and the rolling hills of the North York Moors and Yorkshire Wolds, to finally end at the dramatic east coast.

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 following the flat lands between the Pennines and the Moors, and serving the key cities of Sheffield, Leeds and York.

Yorkshire’s main gateway cities by road and rail are Sheffield in the far south, Leeds for the west and York for the centre and north. If you’re coming 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 in the separate sections throughout this chapter. For inquiries, the national **Traveline** (☎ 0870 608 2608) covers buses and trains all over Yorkshire.

BOAT

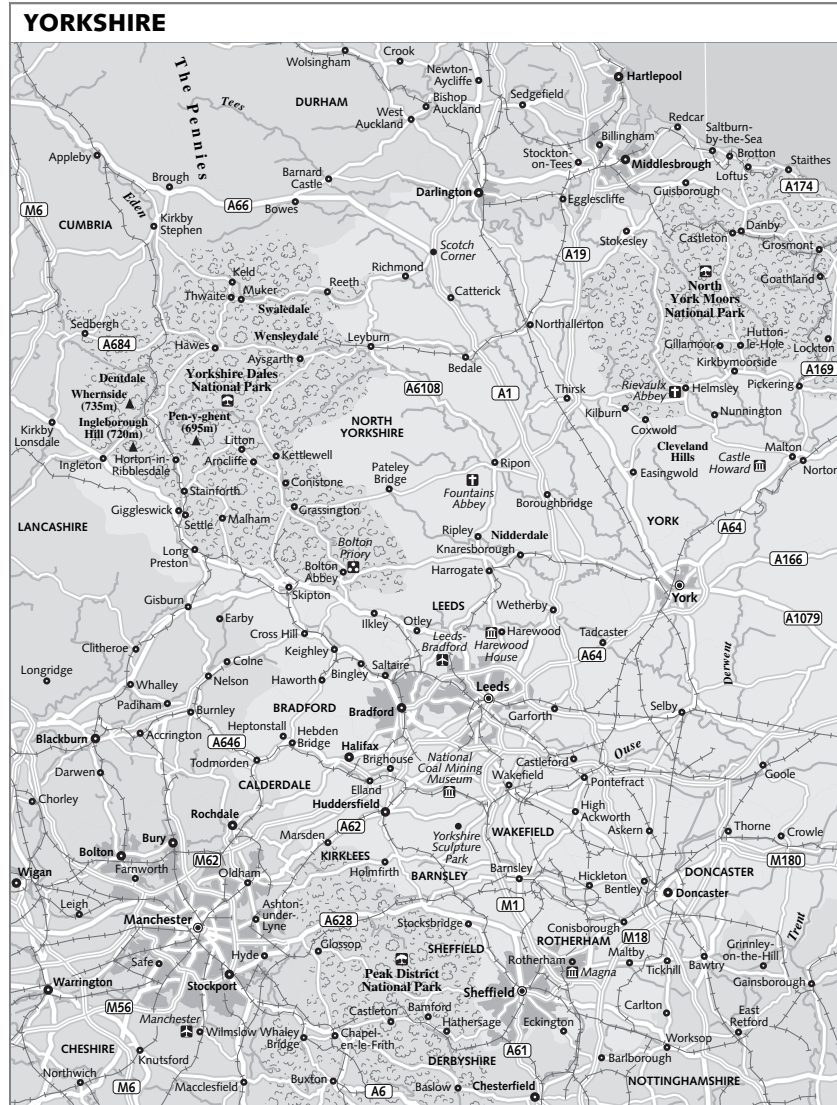
Details on passenger ferries to Hull from northern Europe are given in the main Transport chapter (see p968).

BUS

Long-distances buses and coaches run by **National Express** (☎ 08705 808080) regularly service

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



parcs but still perfectly 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 services per day, via York and Doncaster – where

you might change to reach other places in Yorkshire. There are also direct services between the major towns and cities of Yorkshire and other northern cities such as Manchester and Newcastle. One of England's most famous and scenic railways is the Settle–Carlisle Line (SCL), which crosses the Yorkshire Dales via a spectacular series of tunnels and viaducts. Trains start/end in Leeds, and Carlisle is a good stop on the way to Scotland (see p521). Call or check out **National Rail Enquiries** (☎ 08457 48 49 50; www.nationalrail.co.uk) for timetable details.



SOUTH YORKSHIRE

South Yorkshire is virtually eponymous with Sheffield and steel, especially the kind you use to cut and hold your dinner. This steel was forged, shaped and cooled in the city's mills, which were in turn fuelled by the coal mined in the outlying pits – a most productive arrangement.

Those particularly dark and satanic mills have been consigned to history's dustbin, but the hulking reminders of the irrepressible Victorian Age remain, and not just in the mills or pits, some of which have been turned into enthralling museums of the past or brilliantly converted into art galleries and exhibition spaces, but in the grand civic buildings that crown Sheffield's city centre – fitting testaments to the untrammelled ambitions of their 19th-century patrons.

And, just to prove that it's not all about the grey charms of urbanity, Sheffield's western outskirts brush up against the Peak District National Park, and the city serves as a handy gateway between the south and the north of England.

SHEFFIELD

☎ 0114 / pop 640,720

Like most of northern England's cities, Sheffield has grabbed the opportunities presented by urban renewal with both hands and has worked hard to reinvent itself as something other than the city famous for steel and snooker. The steel industry is long since gone – although the 'Sheffield Steel' stamp on locally made cutlery has quite the touch of boutique class about it – and snooker is only worth talking about for a couple of weeks a year, when Sheffield plays host to the still popular World Championships in late March and early April.

YORKSHIRE

YORKSHIRE

There are smart hotels and interesting galleries all over the town centre (which has been cleaned up and made rather attractive), some excellent restaurants and, inevitably, enough good bars to justify a rampant nightlife for the thousands of young people attending university here. Indeed, the real spark for the city's rebirth was lit by a younger generation, both home-grown and imported: theirs is the vision that is leading the city's transformation, and in their spare time they're indulging in Sheffield's long-standing reputation as a top spot for music. Ever heard of the Arctic Monkeys?

Orientation

You'd think they don't even want tourists. The bus and train stations are ringed by busy roads and high-rise buildings so grotty that your first thought might be to turn around and go back from whence you came. Major works are currently underway, and if all goes to plan Sheffield's welcome to the world (or at least those arriving by train) will have changed for the better by the time you read this.

The city's most interesting bits, however, are just beyond them, in a central area around Church St, Tudor Sq, Fargate and a square called Barker's Pool. Just west of here Division St and Devonshire St have hip clothes and record shops, popular restaurants and trendy bars. A block north is West St, also pretty trendy.

Information

Check your email for free at the **Central Library** (☎ 273 4711; Surrey St; ☹ 10am-8pm Mon, 9.30am-5.30pm Tue & Thu-Sat, 9.30am-5pm Wed). The **post office** (Norfolk Row; ☹ 8.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 3pm Sat) is just off Fargate, and the **tourist office** (www.sheffield.gov.uk; Winter Gardens; ☹ 9.30am-4pm Mon-Sat) – more of an info point than an actual office – is little more than a desk in the Winter Gardens.

Sights & Activities

Pride of place goes to the **Winter Gardens** (admission free; ☹ 8am-6pm), a wonderfully ambitious public space with glass roof, exotic plants and soaring wood-clad arches. The 21st-century architecture contrasts sharply with the Victorian **town hall** next door, and is further enhanced by the nearby **Peace Gardens** – complete with fountains, sculptures and lawns of lurching office workers whenever there's a bit of sun.

Sheffield's cultural revival is spearheaded by the **Millennium Galleries** (☎ 278 2600; www.sheffieldgalleries.org.uk; Arundel Gate; admission free, special exhibitions £4; ☹ 8am-5pm Mon-Sat, 11am-5pm Sun). Displays cover Sheffield steel- and metalworking; contemporary art, craft and design; and an eclectic collection established and inspired by Victorian artist, writer, critic and philosopher John Ruskin.

Nearby, **Graves Art Gallery** (☎ 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.

The **cathedral** on Church St has wonderful stained glass (ancient and modern), a memorial to the crew of the HMS *Sheffield* lost during the Falklands conflict and the grave of the earl of Shrewsbury, famous for being the jailer of Mary Queen of Scots and the husband of Bess of Hardwick (see p444).

Sheffield's prodigious industrial heritage is the subject of the excellent **Kelham Island Museum** (☎ 272 2106; www.simt.co.uk; Alma St; adult/child £4/3; ☹ 10am-4pm Mon-Thu, 11am-4.45pm Sun). The most impressive display is the 12,000-horsepower steam engine (the size of a house) that is powered up twice a day. It's just north of the centre.

For a view of steel from an earlier era, go to **Abbydale Industrial Hamlet** (☎ 236 7731; adult/child £3/2; ☹ 10am-4pm Mon-Thu, 11am-4.45pm Sun mid-Apr-Oct). It's 4 miles southwest of the centre on the A621 (towards the Peak District) and well worth a stop. In the days before factories, metalworking was a cottage industry, just like wool or cotton. These rare (and restored) houses and machines take you right back to that era.

Sleeping

Most of the central options cater primarily to the business traveller, which makes for cheaper weekend rates; there are, alas, no budget options in the city centre.

Riverside Court Hotel (☎ 273 1962; www.riverside.court.co.uk; 4 Nursery St; s/d/tr from £37/47/65) The riverside location and its 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 are fairly bland but utterly inoffensive.

Accor Novotel Sheffield (☎ 278 1781; www.accor.hotels.com; 50 Arundel Gate; r £58-112) The French hotel chain has brought its own modern take on the midrange business hotel to town with some

success: extremely central, well-appointed and utterly contemporary, this hotel is surprisingly stylish.

Houseboat Hotels (☎ 232 6556; www.houseboathotels.com; Victoria Quays, Wharfe St; d/q from £65/86) For a little watery luxury, kick off your shoes and relax on board your very own houseboat, which comes with its own self-catering kitchen and patio area. Available for groups of two or four only; guests are also entitled to use the gym facilities across the road at the Hilton.

St Paul's (☎ 0870 122 6585; www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk; 119 Norfolk St; r £85-145; P) Sheffield's top spot is this brand-new hotel with all the trimmings, a superb central location and great big windows so you can stare down onto the Winter Gardens and the cathedral.

Eating

For a wide range of city-centre options, you can't go wrong on Division St, Devonshire St, West St and Glossop Rd. There are cafés, takeaways, pubs and bars doing food, as well as a wide range of restaurants.

22A (☎ 276 7462; 22a Norfolk Row; wraps about £4; ☹ 8am-5pm Mon-Thu, to 7pm Fri & Sat) Probably our favourite café in town; does a mean wrap – hummus and toasted veggie the current choice – and serves it with a decent cup of java. Perfect ingredients for a spot of people-watching. Nice music, nice people, nice place.

Blue Moon Café (☎ 276 3443; 2 St James St; mains £5-6; ☹ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat) Tasty veggie 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.

Runaway Girl (☎ 270 6160; 111 Arundel St; mains £6-10; ☺; lunch & dinner Tue-Fri, dinner only Mon & Sat; wi-fi) The lunchtime crowd love this French bistro in the city for its tasty and affordable menu – as well as the free wi-fi access and lounge-around atmosphere that sees the students linger long after the suits have gone back to work.

Nonna's (☎ 268 6166; 537 Eccleshall Rd; mains £10-15; ☺; lunch & dinner) Authentic Italian cuisine straight from nana's kitchen is the overpowering draw for the city's groove brigade, who flock to this south-of-the-centre restaurant in their droves, and so should you: the food is so good that the shortish taxi ride is well worth it.

Bosworth's at Bramall Lane (☎ 292 2777; Sheffield United Football Club, Bramall Lane; mains £10-25; ☺; dinner Tue-Sat except match days, lunch Sun) Fine dining at a football ground? Top local chef (and lifelong Blades' fan) Jamie Bosworth thinks it's a good fit, and so far so very good: his new venture has generated rave reviews for its excellent modern British cuisine.

Drinking

Sheffield, a buzzing student town in Yorkshire, equals a really, really good night out. A pretty straightforward formula, really. Virtually every bar does pub grub until about 7pm.

Fat Cat (☎ 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. It's next door to the Kelham Island Museum.

Frog & Parrot (Division St) Home to the world's strongest beer, the 12%–strong 'Roger & Out', unsuspecting ale-heads saunter in looking to down the equivalent of a pint of fortified wine. Which is precisely why they only serve this particular brew in half-pint glasses – so that you have more than a 50/50 chance of walking out under your own steam.

Dog & Partridge (☎ 249 0888; 55 Trippett Lane) A nonsensical Irish pub with a warren of cosy rooms, a fireplace to warm those places beer won't get to and traditional music in the evenings. It's a little bit of the Auld Sod in Sheffield.

Devonshire Cat (49 Wellington St) A beer-lover's haven, this modern bar looks a bit bland, but one look at the wide selection of top-notch beers from around England and the world will explain its enduring popularity.

Cubana (☎ 276 0475; 34 Trippet Lane) Sheffield goes Latino at this top-class bar that is about

as authentic as you're ever likely to find so far from Havana. It's tiny, the *mojitos* (rum-based cocktail with lime) are great and the soundtrack is wonderful.

Entertainment

Sheffield has a good selection of nightclubs, a couple of top-notch theatres, and venues that attract big names in music – both classical and popular. The weekly *Sheffield Telegraph* (75p, every Friday) has the lowdown on Sheffield's entertainment scene, as does the freebie *Exposed*, available most everywhere.

LIVE MUSIC

Boardwalk (☎ 279 9090; www.theboardwalk.live.co.uk; 39 Snig Hill) This institution is excellent for live music: 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 checking what's on.

Leadmill (☎ 275 4500; 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, but they're cheesy rubbish.

NIGHTCLUBS

Gatecrasher One (☎ 279 6777; www.neverstandstill.com; 112 Arundel St; admission £4-8) Sheffield's premier nightclub has abandoned its techno roots in favour of floor-friendly house, crowd pleasers and other safe bets, but it's still immensely popular. Saturdays feature a rotation of big-name DJs.

University of Sheffield Student Union (☎ 222 8500; Western Bank) A varied and generally good schedule of rock gigs and club nights – including appearances by some pretty class DJ names – make this a good spot to spend a night, not to mention the cheap lager.

THEATRE & CINEMAS

Showroom Cinema (☎ 275 7727; Paternoster Row) This is the largest independent cinema in England, with a great mix of art-house, off-beat and not-quite-mainstream films on four screens.

The Crucible and Lyceum theatres on Tudor Sq share the same **box office** (☎ 249 6000). Both are home to excellent regional drama, and the Crucible's respected resident director draws in the big names; the Crucible is also home to the annual snooker world championships.

For all other films, there's the **Odeon** (☎ 272 3981; Arundel Gate).

Getting There & Away

For all travel-related info in Sheffield and South Yorkshire, call ☎ 01709-515151.

BUS

The bus station – called the Interchange – is just east of the centre, about 100m north of the train station. National Express services link Sheffield with most major centres in the north; there are frequent buses linking Sheffield with the Peak District via Leeds (£4.50, 1¼ hours, hourly) and London (£14.50, four hours, eight daily).

TRAIN

Sheffield is served by trains from all directions: Leeds (£6.60, 30 minutes, hourly); London St Pancras (£69.50, 2½ hours, around 10 daily) via Derby or Nottingham; Manchester airport (£16.70, 70 minutes); Manchester Piccadilly (£12.20, one hour); and York (£12.70, 80 minutes).

Getting Around

Buses run every 10 minutes during the day (Monday to Saturday). Sheffield also boasts a modern Supertram that trundles through the city centre.

For a day of sightseeing, a South Yorkshire Peak Explorer pass (adult/concession £6.75/4) is valid for one day on all of the buses, trams and trains of South Yorkshire and north Derbyshire. Buy passes on your first bus, or at the helpful **transport information centre** (☺ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat) just off Pinstone St.

WEST YORKSHIRE

West Yorkshire has a reputation for being tough, unforgiving and hard-bitten – and that's just the textile industry that once drove its economy. As for the working souls who spent an unseemly eternity on the assembly line, well...their bark can be loud enough, but as is usually the way, they will rarely go so far as to bite – although say it gently, for it wouldn't do round these parts to suggest that West Yorkshire folk didn't eat nails for breakfast.

Take Leeds and Bradford. Virtual neighbours yet miles apart: Bradford is a tough old place, industrious and not overly concerned with how it looks, whereas sexy Leeds can't get enough of the mirror and works overtime

to ensure that it's as pretty as it can be for the world to enjoy it.

Beyond the cities, West Yorkshire is all about a landscape of bleak moorland separated by deep valleys dotted with old mill towns and villages – the kind of landscapes so vividly described by the Brontë sisters, West Yorkshire's most renowned literary export and biggest tourist draw.

Activities

CYCLING

West Yorkshire isn't great cycling country; many roads are too urban in flavour, and the hills are darned steep too. The National Cycle Network (see p88) in West Yorkshire includes the short but traffic-free Leeds to Shipley route, which mostly follows a canalside path, passing Saltaire and on to Bradford.

WALKING

The valleys and moors of West Yorkshire make good walking country, although the South Pennines (as this area's called) is wedged between the Peak District and the Yorkshire Dales, and has to defer to these areas in terms of sheer quality. The tourist offices all have leaflets and guidebooks on local walks, or see the main sections on the towns mentioned here, for more ideas. Hebden Bridge and especially Haworth make ideal bases for circular walks, with several long and short options.

The **Haworth to Hebden Bridge Path** is a popular trail that passes through quiet farmland and scenic wooded valleys.

The Pennine Way (p501), England's longest trail, follows the watershed through the area, and some good walks are possible following it for just a day or two.

Getting There & 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 details call **Metroline** (☎ 0113-245 7676; www.wymetro.com) or the national **Traveline** (☎ 0870 608 2 608). The excellent Day Rover (£3.80 for train or bus, £4.50 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 thicket of additional Rovers covering buses and/or trains, plus heaps of useful Metro maps and timetables, all available at tourist offices.

LEEDS

☎ 0113 / pop 715,402

Leeds struts across England's urban stage like John Travolta in *Saturday Night Fever*, oozing the confidence that befits the favourite child of the New Urban Revolution, that unassailable force that has turned punch-drunk postindustrial cities into visions of the future. And the future round these parts is all about retail. For Leeds is the 'Knightsbridge of the North', the shopping mecca whose counter is just getting longer. Its heart is lined with busy pedestrianised streets, packed with shops, restaurants, upstanding Victorian edifices and stunning arcades. From cutting-edge couture to contemporary cuisine, Leeds will serve it to you on a plate...or in a stylishly designed bag. And when you're through for the day, the night awaits, full of pubs, clubs and more restaurants to keep you fed and fuelled for more.

Some critics (OK, us) feel that Leeds is a little light in terms of nonretail attractions compared with its neighbours in Manchester and York, but the city is in the midst of a huge transformation and that may all have changed by the time you read this. In the meantime, besides its own draws, Leeds is an excellent base for excursions to Haworth, Hebden Bridge and Bradford.

Orientation

Easily managed on foot (the preferred method of transport), Leeds' city centre is where most of the action is, between Boar Lane to the south and the Headrow – the main drag – to the north. 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 western end of Boar Lane. In the last few years there has been a substantial waterfront development along both the River Aire and the Leeds–Liverpool Canal.

Information

Central Library (☎ 247 8274; Calverley St; ☎ 9am–8pm Mon–Wed, 9.30am–5.30pm Thu, 9am–5pm Fri, 10am–5pm Sat, noon–4pm Sun) Free internet access.

Gateway to Yorkshire Tourist Office (☎ 242 5242; www.leeds.gov.uk; The Arcade; ☎ 9am–5.30pm Mon–Sat, 10am–4pm Sun) In the train station.

Leeds General Infirmary (☎ 243 2799) West of Calverley St in the city centre.

Post office (City Sq; ☎ 9am–5.30pm Mon–Sat)

Waterstone's (☎ 244 4588; 97 Albion St) Has a good selection of maps.

Sights & Activities

If you're starved of a bit of high culture, get yourself to the **City Art Gallery** (☎ 247 8248; www.leeds.gov.uk/artgallery; The Headrow; admission free; ☎ 10am–5pm Mon, Tue & Thu–Sat, 10am–8pm Wed, 1–5pm Sun) as soon as possible. It is packed with a host of 19th- and 20th-century British heavyweights – Turner, Constable, Stanley Spencer, Wyndham Lewis et al – along with more recent arrivals such as Antony Gormley, sculptor of the *Angel of the North* (p626). 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** (☎ 246 7467; www.henry-moore-fdn.co.uk; admission free; ☎ 10am–5.30pm Mon, Tue & Thu–Sun, 10am–9pm Wed), in a converted Victorian warehouse, showcases the work of 20th-century sculptors from all over but not, despite the name, work by Moore.

Leeds' most interesting museum is undoubtedly the **Royal Armouries** (☎ 220 1940; www.armouries.org.uk; Armouries Dr; admission free; ☎ 10am–5pm), originally built to house the armour and weapons from the Tower of London but 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.

One of the world's largest 'dark satanic mills' has been transformed into the **Leeds Industrial Museum** (☎ 263 7861; www.leeds.gov.uk/armleymills; adult/child £3/1; ☎ 10am–5pm Tue–Sat, noon–5pm Sun) so as to tell the story of Leeds' equally glorious and ignominious industrial past. The city literally became rich off the sheep's back but at some cost: working conditions were, well, Dickensian. Apart from the usual selection of working machinery, there's a particularly informative display on how cloth is actually made. Take bus 14, 66 or 67.

Festivals & Events

The August Bank Holiday (the last week-end) sees 50,000-plus music fans converge on Bramham Park, 10 miles outside the city centre, for the **Leeds Festival** (☎ 0870 060 3775; www.leedsfestival.com), one of England's biggest rock music extravaganzas, spread across four separate stages.

LEEDS

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Sleeping

There are absolutely no budget options in the city centre, and the midrange choices are between total fleapits and the odd chain hotel. If you don't want to spend money, you're forced to head for the suburbs, where there are plenty of decent B&Bs and smallish hotels.

MIDRANGE

City Centre Hotel (☎ 242 9019; www.citycentrehotel.leeds.co.uk; 51a New Briggate; s/d from £45/59) A pretty ramshackle place with pea-sized bathrooms gets our vote – only just – for its central location, which makes it a good option if you're looking for somewhere to crash after a late night.

Golden Lion Hotel (☎ 243 6454; www.thegoldenlion-leeds.co.uk; 2 Lower Briggate; r £59; (P)) Leeds' oldest hotel got a much-needed makeover and can now compete with the rest. The rooms are tidy and modern, if a little small, but the central location is second to none.

Jury's Inn (☎ 283 8800; www.jurysdoyle.com; Bowman Lane, Brewery Pl; r £59-69; (P) (♿) (♿)) 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, just cross the Centenary footbridge from the city centre.

There are a couple of decent hotels about a mile northwest of the city centre near the university on Woodsley Rd; it's five minutes by taxi or catch bus 63 from stand S10 at the train station. The **Glengarth Hotel** (☎ 245 7940; fax 216 8033; 162 Woodsley Rd; s/d from £25/36) is a converted family home with a dozen or so tiny rooms that are nevertheless quite comfortable; just down the street, the **Moorlea Hotel** (☎ 243 2653; www.moorleahotel.co.uk; 146 Woodsley Rd; s/d from £32/44) is a family-friendly hotel with larger, slightly more comfortable rooms.

TOP END

Radisson SAS (☎ 236 6000; www.leeds.radissonsas.com; The Light, Cookridge St; r £90-175; (P) (♿) (♿) (♿)) The newest bit of luxury to hit Leeds is the extraordinary conversion of the listed former headquarters of the Leeds Permanent Building Society. The standard rooms are anything but, and you have a choice of three styles: hi tech, Art Deco and Italian. The public areas are truly elegant and the location is superb.

Malmaison (☎ 398 1000; www.malmaison.com; Sovereign St; s/d/ste £99/140/295) Self-consciously stylish, this typical Malmaison property has a fabulous waterfront location and all of the trademark touches: huge comfy beds, sexy lighting and all the latest designer gear. The entrance is actually on Swinegate, but Sovereign St just sounds classier.

Quebecs (☎ 244 8989; www.theetoncollection.com; 9 Quebec St; s/d/ste from £150/160/235) Victorian grace at its opulent best is the theme of our favourite hotel in town, a brilliant conversion of the former Victorian Leeds & County Liberal Club. The elaborate wood panelling and stunning heraldic stained-glass windows in the public areas are matched by the contemporary but equally luxurious bedrooms. Two of the deluxe suites – the cutely named Sherbert and Liquorice suites – have dramatic spiral staircases.

42 The Calls (☎ 244 0099; www.42thecalls.co.uk; 42 The Calls; r £150-395) 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 indeed. Breakfast is not included; it'll cost you an extra £10.95. In for a penny, in for a pound? Sunday night rates start at £85.

Eating

Eating well is never a problem; the choice is getting better all the time and the quality just keeps going up.

BUDGET

Akbar (☎ 245 6566; 15 Eastgate; mains £4-6; (♿) dinner only) The naan served at this exceptionally popular Indian restaurant are absolutely massive, and that's just one of many reasons to tuck into some of England's favourite cuisine at this particular spot.

Arts Café (☎ 243 8243; www.artscafebar.co.uk; 42 Call Lane; lunch mains about £5, dinner mains about £8; (♿) lunch & dinner, to 2am Fri & Sat) 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 to wash down the excellent food – how about some monkfish lasagne?

Norman (☎ 2343988; 36 Call Lane; mains £5-8; (♿) lunch & dinner) The tasty Japanese noodle menu at one of the city's best bars is the reason to come here before nightfall; this place is as stylish by day as it is popular by night.

MIDRANGE

Bibi's Criterion (☎ 243 0905; Criterion Pl, Swinegate; mains £8-15; (♿) lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat & Sun) The mamma of Leeds' Italian eateries looks increasingly like Donnatella Versace dresses – lots of bling and shine – but with age comes experience and the nosh remains the best Italian in town.

Babycream (☎ 0800 027 7171; 153-155 The Headrow; mains £10-19; (♿) lunch & dinner) Cool drips off the white walls and onto the white leather furniture, where you and your party are gathered to share, fondue-style, in a platter of delicacies from around the globe. As you eat, the background music makes you tap your feet, and before you know it you've settled in for the day and moved on to cocktails. It's the Cream experience, and it's pretty good...

Anthony's at Flannel's (☎ 242 8732; Flannel's, 68-78 Vicar Lane; afternoon tea £10.75; (♿) 9am-6pm Tue-Sat, 11am-

5pm Sun) The brasserie brother of the award-winning (and much more expensive) Anthony's (below), this 3rd-floor café features much of Anthony's style stuffed into the excellent sandwiches, salads and luxurious afternoon tea.

Fourth Floor Café (☎ 204 8000; Harvey Nichols, 107-111 Briggate; mains from £11; (♿) 10am-6pm Mon-Wed & Fri, 9am-10pm Thu & Sat, noon-5pm Sun) A department store with a fancy restaurant? It could only be Harvey Nicks. It's called a café, but don't be fooled: the nosh here is the best of British, even if the portions would only satisfy the models in their catalogue.

TOP END

If you want to splurge, Leeds has a handful of restaurants that are worth every last penny.

No 3 York Place (☎ 245 9922; www.no3yorkplace.co.uk; 3 York Pl; mains £13.95-23.95; (♿) lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat) Any debate over which is the best restaurant in town will feature this superb French eatery, with its regularly changing menu of Gallic delicacies with an English bent – how about roast of lamb with Savoy cabbage, olive mash and a Niçoise sauce?

Anthony's (☎ 245 5922; www.anthonysrestaurant.co.uk; 19 Boar Lane; mains £22-27; (♿) lunch & dinner Tue-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 a making your reservations a day or so earlier.

Drinking

The glammed-up hordes of party animals crawl the clusters of venues around Boar Lane and Call Lane, where bars are opening all the time. Most bars open till 2am; they turn into clubs after 11pm or midnight, with an admission charge of £2 to £4, up to £6 at weekends. The more traditional pubs keep regular hours.

PUBS

Duck & Drake (☎ 246 5806; 43 Kirkgate) High ceilings, obligatory pub characters, real ales and regular, free live music – mostly jazz.

Whitelocks (☎ 245 3950; Turk's Head Yard) Great beer and good, old-fashioned décor in a very popular traditional pub dating from 1715. In summer, the crowds spill out into the courtyard.

Other recommendations:

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

Guildford (☎ 244 9204; 115 The Headrow) An attractive Art Deco classic.

BARS

Babycream (☎ 0800 027 7171; www.babycream.co.uk; 153-155 The Headrow) The Scouse gurus of groove hit Leeds with a stylish bang – hardly surprising that one of the brand names of new-millennium cool should be so popular with virtually everyone.

Dr Wu's (☎ 242 7629; 35 Call Lane) Small and chock-full of black leather seats, this grungy bar would slot comfortably into New York's East Village, and don't the punters just know it. The vibe is studied cool and the DJs play a suitable blend of eclectic (but always alternative) sounds.

Baby Jupiter (☎ 242 1202; 11 York Pl) A retro gem with lots of purple velvet, hanging fishbowls and a very funky soundtrack, this was – at the time of writing – the 'in' place with those who make it their business to define what 'in' actually is.

Sandinista (☎ 305 0372; www.sandinistaleeds.co.uk; 5/5a Cross Belgrave St) Our favourite bar in town has a Latin look but a unifying theme, attracting virtually everyone with its mixed bag of music and unpretentious atmosphere. If you're not too fussed about looking glam, this is the spot for you.

Japanic (☎ 244 9550; 19 Queen Sq) Take a traditional English pub and combine it with a modern, hi-tech karaoke bar and you get Japanic, where students flock to share a £5 bottle of sake, knock back a few ales and take to the microphone. What's not to like? It's just north of the centre.

Bar Fibre (☎ 200888; www.barfibre.com; 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.

Entertainment

In order to make sense of the ever-evolving scene, get your hands on the monthly **Leeds Guide** (www.leedsguide.co.uk; £1.70) or **Absolute Leeds** (www.absoluteleeds.co.uk; £1.50).

NIGHTCLUBS

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 (☎ 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.

Fruit Cupboard (☎ 244 3168; www.leedsclubscene.com; 50-52 Call Lane) Hip-hop, R & B and other urban beats make up the menu at this compact club known by some as 'Fight Cupboard' – but alco-fuelled trouble is a potential feature most everywhere.

Wire (☎ 234 0980; 2-8 Call Lane) The best of the new openings, this super basement club throbs to the sound of virtually everything, from rock and roll to drum 'n' bass. If you're serious about music, queue up and get down.

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 at the appositely named Homo.

Also check out **Warehouse** (☎ 246 8287; 19-21 Somers St), home to the gay bootie-shaker **Speed Queen** (www.speedqueen.co.uk; ☎ 10pm-4am Sat).

THEATRE & CINEMAS

Culture vultures will find plenty to keep them entertained in Leeds.

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

West Yorkshire Playhouse (☎ 213 7700; www.wyplayhouse.com; Quarry Hill Mount) The Playhouse has a sturdy reputation for excellent live drama.

Hyde Park Picture House (☎ 275 2045; www.leeds.gov.uk/hydepark; Brudenell Rd) This Edwardian cinema shows a meaty range of art-house and mainstream choices. Take bus 56 or 63 from the city centre.

The **Grand Theatre & Opera House** (☎ 222 6222; www.leeds.gov.uk/grandtheatre; 46 New Briggate) hosts musicals, plays and opera, including performances by acclaimed **Opera North** (☎ 244 5326; www.operanorth.co.uk).

Otherwise, for mainstream new releases, there's the **Vue Cinema** (☎ 0871 224 0240; 22 The Light, The Headrow) on the second floor of The Light entertainment complex.

SPORT

Leeds United Football Club (☎ 226 1000; www.leedsunited.com; Elland Rd) Supporters know all about pain: relegation from the Premiership in 2004

to the relative wilderness of the Championship was bad enough, but in 2006 they lost out to Watford in a promotion play-off. Loyal fans have to wait another year, but they continue to pack the Elland Rd stadium. Take bus 51, 52 or 54 from Kirkgate Market.

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 278 7394; www.yorkshireccc.org.uk; test match from £28.50). Take bus 74 or 75 from Infirmary St.

Shopping

Kirkgate Market (☎ 214 5162; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, to 1pm Wed, open-air market Thu-Tue) This market, once home of Marks, who later joined Spencer, sells fresh produce and cheap goods.

Corn Exchange (☎ 234 0363; Vicar Lane; ☎ 9am-6pm) The circular Corn Exchange, built in 1865 to house the grain trade, has a wonderful wrought, armadillo-like lid, and is the place to come for one-off clothes, eclectic jewellery or records.

Leeds' city centre has so many shopping arcades that they all seem to blend into one giant mall. Most of them are unremarkable, but the designer-ridden **Victoria Quarter** (☎ 245 5333) is worth visiting for aesthetic reasons alone. A handful of mosaic-paved, stained-glass roofed Victorian arcades have been beautifully restored (check out the County Arcade). Here, the biggest name is undoubtedly **Harvey Nichols** (☎ 204 8000; 107-111 Briggate), which has its usual selection of upmarket clothes.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Eight miles north of the city via the A65, **Leeds-Bradford airport** (☎ 250 9696) offers domestic and charter flights, plus international flights to a few major European cities. The Airlink 757 (£1.80, 45 minutes) operates every 30 minutes between the airport and the bus station and train station. A taxi costs about £17.

BUS

National Express (☎ 08705 808080; www.nationalexpress.com) serves most major cities, including hourly services from London (£19.20, 4¼ hours) and half-hourly services from Manchester (£7.80, one hour).

Yorkshire Coastliner (☎ 01653-692556; www.yorkshirecoastliner.co.uk; Coastliner Freedom Ticket adult per day £11) has useful services linking Leeds, York,

Castle Howard, Goathland and Whitby (840, 842 and X40); and York and Scarborough (843, 845 and X45).

TRAIN

Leeds City station has hourly services from London King's Cross (£84, 2½ hours), Sheffield (£7.15, 45 minutes), Manchester (£12.70, one hour) and York (£8.80, 30 minutes).

Leeds is also the starting point for services on the famous Settle–Carlisle Line. For more details, see p521.

Getting Around

Metro buses go from the Central Bus Station and on or near City Sq. The various Day Rover passes (see p507) covering trains and/or buses are good for reaching Bradford, Haworth and Hebden Bridge.

AROUND LEEDS

A day out from Leeds opens up a fascinating range of options: stately splendour at Harewood; dust and darkness at the National Coal Mining Museum; or technology and *pop-podums* 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

☎ 01274 / pop 293,717

Their suburbs are so close that they've virtually merged into one sprawling urban conurbation, but Bradford remains far removed from its much more glamorous neighbour, Leeds. Or so they would have you believe in Leeds. But even Bradford is getting a facial: much of the dour city centre is scheduled for 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.

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 right).

SIGHTS

The top sight for any visit to Bradford is the **National Museum of Photography, Film & Television** (NMPFT; ☎ 202030; www.nmpft.org.uk; admission free, special events & cinemas adult/child £5/3.30, IMAX adult/child £6.50/4.30; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun). Five

exhibit-packed floors in this impressive, glass-fronted building tell the story of the recorded visual image 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 oft-overlooked **SDC Colour Museum** (☎ 390 955; www.sdc.org.uk; Providence St; adult/child £2/1.50; ☎ 10am-4pm Tue-Sat), run by the Society of Dyers and Colourists, is a little gem, just a 10-minute walk from the centre. It tells the story of Bradford's wool-dyeing trade, and has a fascinating section on how our eyes perceive colour, including a display contrasting the visual sense of different species (what's blue to you isn't blue to Fido).

Bradford Industrial Museum (☎ 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 spinning mill was like at the peak of the Industrial Revolution. 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.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The excellent **Bradford Mela** (www.bradfordfestival.com) is a two-day celebration (from the Sanskrit word 'to meet') 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 the rogan josh from the rubbish nosh.

Kashmir (☎ 726513; 27 Morley St; mains £4-5; ☎ evenings to 3am) Bradford's oldest curry house has top 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 around the corner from the NMPFT.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Bradford is on the Metro train line from Leeds, 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. Overlooking the rows of neat honey-coloured cottages was the largest factory in the world at that time. Heating, ventilation and good lighting were high on Titus Salt's list of priorities, but there was no way on earth this sober humanitarian was going to give his workers somewhere to indulge in the demon drink, so the town had no pub.

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 cathedral-like building where the main draw is a permanent exhibition of work by local boy David Hockney (b 1937). There are also shops of books and crafts, and a café.

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 £3/2) of the town throughout the year.

Saltaire is 9 miles west of Leeds centre, and 3 miles north of Bradford centre (effectively an outer suburb of Bradford). It's easily reached by Metro rail from both.

Harewood

Only 7 miles north of Leeds, tiny Harewood is all about the great park, sumptuous gardens and mighty edifice of **Harewood House** (☎ 0113-218 1010; www.harewood.org; admission £12.50, Sun & Bank Holidays £14.50; ☞ grounds 10am-6pm, house 11am-4.30pm Feb-mid-Nov, house & grounds 10am-4pm mid-Nov-Jan). A classic example of a stately English pile, the house was built between 1759 and 1772 by the era's designer superstars: John Carr (exterior), Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (grounds), and Thomas Chippendale (furniture). 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.

Hours of entertainment can be had in the **Bird Garden**, with many colourful species including penguins (feeding time at 2pm is a highlight), and there's also a boating lake, café and adventure playground. For more activity, there's a network of walking trails around the lake or through the parkland.

From Leeds, use 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 too (so hang on to your ticket). From the main gate, it's a 2-mile walk through the grounds to the house and gardens. At busy times there's a free shuttle service.

National Coal Mining Museum

Once a working colliery, 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 the coal mine.

The highlight of a visit is the tour underground; complete with helmet and head-torch you ride in a 'cage' almost 150m down, then follow passages all the way to the coal seam where massive drilling machines now stand idle. Former miners now 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.

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

Yorkshire Sculpture Park

One of England's most impressive collections of sculpture is housed within the formidable 18th-century estate of Bretton Park, 200-odd hectares of lawns, fields and trees dotted with statues and abstract work. The **sculpture park** (☎ 01924-830302; www.ysp.co.uk; Bretton, near Wakefield; admission free; ☞ 10am-6pm Apr-Sep, to 5pm Oct-Mar) features the work of dozens of sculptors both national and international, but the main focus is on the work of local kids Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth (1903-75); the latter was born in nearby Wakefield.

The park is 12 miles south of Leeds and 18 miles north of Sheffield, just west of the M1 motorway, making it a cinch to get to for drivers. 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 bus X41 runs between Wakefield and Barnsley via Bretton Park (30 minutes, hourly Monday to Saturday). Bus 231 (hourly on Sunday) from

Wakefield goes to Bretton Park then continues on to the National Coal Mining Museum.

HEBDEN BRIDGE

☎ 01422 / pop 4086

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 turned itself into an attractive little tourist trap with a slightly off-centre reputation. Besides the honest-to-God Yorkshire folk who have lived here for years, the town is home to university academics, die-hard hippies and a substantial gay community – all of which explains the inordinate number of craft shops, organic cafés and secondhand bookstores.

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 the curious visitors, for here is buried the poet Sylvia Plath (1932-63), wife of another famous rhymist, Ted Hughes (1930-98), who was born in these parts.

Plath's grave lists her full name as 'Sylvia Plath Hughes', with the 'Hughes' in bronze: this is because it had been repeatedly chiselled off by Plath lovers who believe that Hughes' adultery with Assia Wevill provoked Sylvia's suicide (Wevill later also committed suicide) and so leading church authorities to ensure that the name couldn't be removed.

The **Hebden Bridge Visitor & Canal Centre** (☎ 843 831; 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 saunters in **Hardcastle Craggs**, two unspoilt wooded valleys run by the National Trust (NT), 1.5 miles northwest of town off the A6033. There are streams and waterfalls, and numerous walking trails, some of which link to the Pennine Way, and another that takes you all the way to Haworth.

Sleeping & Eating

Mankinholes YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 5952; www.yha.org.uk; Todmorden; dm £12.50) 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 is only half a mile from here.

White Lion Hotel (☎ 842197; www.whitelionhotel.net; Bridge Gate; s/d from £46/60) 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 a popular pub and a pretty good restaurant with a standard pub grub menu (mains £6 to £11).

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

Getting There & Away

Hebden Bridge is on the Leeds-Manchester Victoria Metro train line (45 minutes, services about every 30 minutes Monday to Saturday, hourly on Sunday). Get off at Todmorden for the Mankinholes YHA Hostel.

HAWORTH

☎ 01535 / pop 6078

It seems that only Shakespeare himself is held in higher esteem and affection than the beloved Brontë sisters Emily, Anne and Charlotte, at least judging from the sheer numbers who trudge up the hill from the station to pay homage to them in the handsome parsonage where a handful of literary classics were born, including *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*.

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

STEAM ENGINES & RAILWAY CHILDREN

Haworth is on the **Keighley & Worth Valley Railway** (KWVR; ☎ 645214; www.kwvr.co.uk; adult/child single £8/4, adult/child Day Rover £12/6), which runs steam and classic diesel engines between Keighley and Oxenhope. 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 around hourly at weekends all year; in holiday periods they run hourly every day.

Information

The **tourist office** (☎ 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. Another good source of information is www.brontecountry.co.uk.

Main St is lined with cafés, tearooms, pubs and shops selling everything imaginable (and more) bearing the Brontë name. Handy stops might include: the **post office** (Rawdon Rd; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat); **Venables & Bainbridge** (Main St), selling used books, including many vintage Brontë volumes; and **Rose & Co Apothecary** (84 Main St), the beautifully restored drug-gist so favoured by Branwell Brontë.

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 growing trees, which gives the whole place a tremendous feeling of age.

BAD LUCK BRONTËS

The Rev Patrick Brontë, his wife Maria and six children moved to Haworth Parsonage in 1820. On 15 September 1821 Maria died of cancer, after which her unmarried sister Elizabeth Branwell arrived from Penzance to help raise the children. Three years later, the eldest girl, Maria, was sent home from school on account of ill-health and died in May 1825, aged 11. A few weeks later, her younger sister Elizabeth arrived home sick from the same school and died, aged 10, on June 15. (Years later, Charlotte immortalised the school as the infamous Lowood in *Jane Eyre*.)

The double 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 countries, and produced miniature homemade 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 he 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 he died of tuberculosis on 24 September 1848. The family was devastated, but things quickly got worse. Emily contracted a cold at the funeral that also developed into tuberculosis; 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, however, 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.

Set in a pretty garden overlooking the church and graveyard, the **Brontë Parsonage Museum** (☎ 642323; www.bronte.info; admission £5; ☎ 10am-5.30pm Apr-Sep, 11am-5pm Oct-Mar) is where the Brontë family lived from 1820. 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

Haworth is surrounded by the moors of the South Pennines – immediately familiar to Brontë fans – and the tourist office has leaflets on local **walks** to endless Brontë features. 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 farmhouse 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, the Pennine Way runs west of Haworth and can be followed south to Hebden Bridge. There's also a direct walking route

between Haworth and Hebden Bridge, via the scenic valleys of Hardcastle Crags.

Sleeping & Eating

Virtually every second house on Main St does 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 cafés that are good for a spot of tourist lunch – mediocre servings of local dishes and nice safe bets such as sandwiches.

Aitches (☎ 642501; www.aitches.co.uk; 11 West Lane; s/d from £35/50; ☎) A very classy Victorian stone bungalow with four beautiful rooms, each with wrought-iron beds and handsome furnishings. There's a residents' restaurant on the premises; a three-course meal will cost £15.

Old Registry (☎ 646503; www.theoldregistryhaworth.co.uk; 2-4 Main St; r £57-85) This is a favourite place in town, a stylishly rustic (or rustically stylish) hotel where each of the carefully themed rooms has a four-poster bed: the Blue Heaven room is just that – at least for fans of Laura Ashley's delphinium blue. We're just that little bit dramatic, so we loved the Stage Room, complete with theatrical memorabilia.

Weaver's (☎ 643822; 15 West Lane; bar suppers £5-12, 3-course meal £20-26; ☎ Tue-Sat) Smart and stylish, with simply the best food in town and a menu featuring local specialities. Get there early to try the tasty two-course bar 'sampler' menu (£12.95).

Other options:

Haworth YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 5858; www.yha.org.uk; Longlands Dr; dm £13.95; ☎ Feb-Nov, Fri & Sat only Nov-Jan) A big old house with plenty of facilities, including a games room, lounge, cycle store and laundry. It's on the northeastern edge of town, off Lees Lane.

aworth Old Hall (☎ 642709; Sun St; snacks £3, salads £6, mains £6-10) A highly rated inn, with decent food, wine and beer, all served in convivial surroundings. The steak-and-ale pie is a classic. If you want to linger longer, two comfortable doubles cost £50.

Haworth Tea Rooms (68 Main St; lunch mains £6-10, dinner mains £7-12) A selection of healthy options including baked spuds and veggie nachos.

Getting There & Away

From Leeds, the easiest approach to Haworth is via Keighley, which is on the Metro train network. Bus 500 runs between Keighley and Haworth (15 minutes, six daily), and also serves Todmorden and Hebden Bridge. However, the most interesting way to get to Haworth from

Keighley is via the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (see the boxed text, p515).

YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK

Sitting snugly between the brooding North York Moors to the east and the dramatic Lake District to the west are the Yorkshire Dales (from the Viking word *dalr*, meaning 'valleys'), a marvellous area of high hills and moors, cut through by rugged stone walls and spotted with extravagant houses and the faded, spectral grandeur of monastic ruins.

Thankfully, nature's feast has been protected as a national park since the 1950s, assuring its status as a walker's and cyclist's wonderland. But the fabulous scenery attracts plenty of four-wheeled visitors, making the roads very crowded, especially during the summer. If you can't avoid busy summer weekends, try to come by bus or train, and even then it's well worth getting off the beaten track.

Orientation & Information

The 683-sq-mile 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 south, the main valleys – Ribblesdale, Malhamdale, Littondale and Wharfedale – all run north-south and are the most popular areas for tourists.

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 (some are called park visitor centres), 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 can also make handy jumping-off points, although both these spots are outside the national park boundary, and 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 is similarly 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 still 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.

Just one example is the **Yorkshire Dales Cycle Way**, an energetic and exhilarating 130-mile loop, taking in the best of the park. Skipton is a convenient start, from where you ride up Wharfedale, then steeply over Flatmoss 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.

WALKING

The Yorkshire Dales has a vast footpath network, with options for everything from easy strolls to challenging hikes; we suggest a few options throughout this section. Look out at tourist offices for leaflets on organised walks from train stations, notably on the Settle-

Carlisle Line. Serious walkers should equip themselves with *OS Outdoor Leisure Maps Nos 2, 10 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 the three weeks required to cover all 259 miles, a few days in the Dales, between Malham and Hawes for example, will repay the effort. The Coast to Coast Walk (a 190-mile classic; p501) goes through lovely Swaledale in the northern Dales. Following the route for a few days is highly recommended; see p523.

Another long-distance possibility is the **Dales Way**, 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 60-mile journey. A handy companion is *Dales Way Route Guide* by Arthur Gemmell and Colin Speakman (1996, £5.99), mostly strip maps at 1:25,000 in scale, available at most bookshops.

Sleeping

There are many villages in and around the park with a good range of hotels, B&Bs, hostels and camp sites. Most rural pubs also do B&B. Walkers and hardy outdoor types can take advantage of camping barns. Usually owned by farmers, booking is organised centrally through the **YHA** (☎ 0870 870 8808). For details, tourist offices have a *Camping Barns in England* leaflet.

Getting There & Around

The main gateway towns of Skipton and Richmond are well served by public transport, and local bus services radiate out from there. Get hold of the very useful *Dales Explorer* timetable from tourist offices; as well as covering every bus in the region it contains maps, B&B listings, local information and an excellent selection of walks that tie in with bus services.

Going by train, the best and most interesting access to the Dales is via the famous Settle-Carlisle Line (p521). 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.

SKIPTON

☎ 01756 / pop 14,313

This busy market town on the southern edge of the national park was once known as 'Sheeptown' – no prizes for guessing where they made their 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** (☎ 792809; www.skiptononline.co.uk; 35 Coach St; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat) is right in the middle of town.

Sights & Activities

Skipton Castle (☎ 792442; www.skiptoncastle.co.uk; High St; admission £5.40; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Sat, noon-6pm Sun Mar-Sep, to 4pm Oct-Feb), at the top of the main street, is one of the best-preserved medieval castles in England – a fascinating contrast to the ruins you'll see elsewhere – and well worth a visit.

If you fancy a cruise on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal that runs through the middle of town, **Pennine Boat Trips** (☎ 790829; www.canaltrips.co.uk; adult/child £5/2.50) has daily hour-long trips April to October; call for departure times.

Sleeping

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 (☎ 700921; www.carltonhouse.rapidial.co.uk; 46 Keighley Rd; s/d from £25/45) 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.

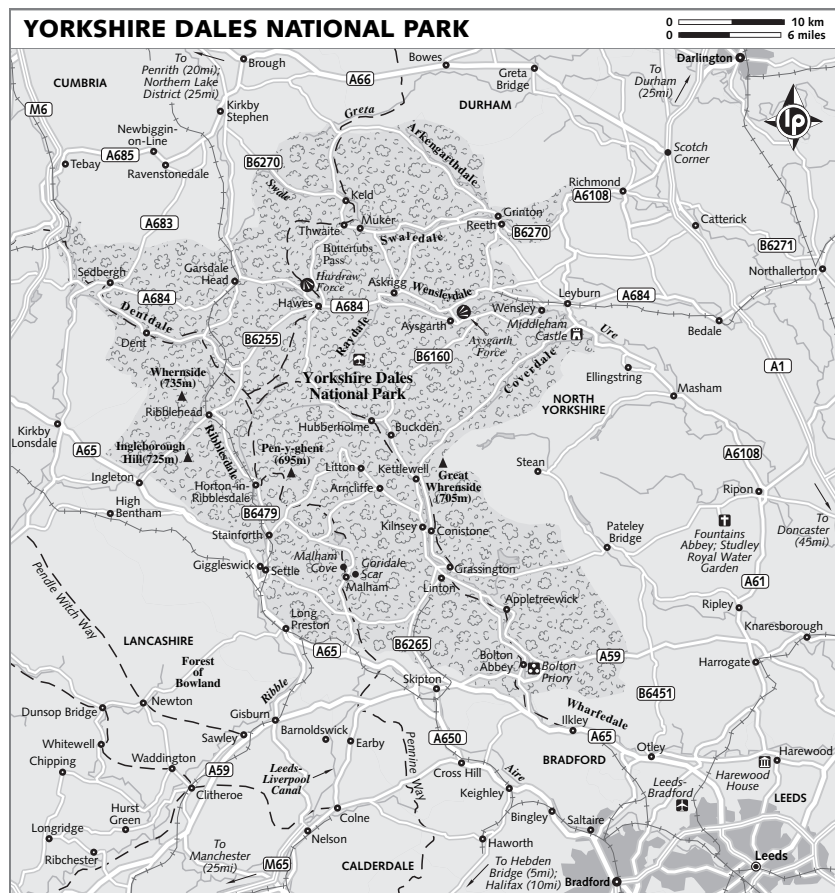
Eating & Drinking

Bizzie Lizzies (☎ 793189; 36 Swadford St; mains £5-6; ☎ lunch & dinner) This modern fish-and-chip restaurant overlooking the canal has won awards for quality, a rare thing for what is essentially deep-fried goodness. There's also an attached takeaway.

Of the pubs, the **Black Horse** (Coach St) is a large place with an outside terrace and meals daily, but our favourite is the **Narrow Boat** (☎ 797922; 38 Victoria St), a traditionally styled place with a great selection of local ales and foreign beers, friendly service and bar food (not on weekends).

Getting There & Away

Skipton is the last stop on the Metro network from Leeds (40 minutes, at least hourly). For heading into the Dales, see the boxed text, p521. For Grassington, take bus 72 (£4.30, 30 minutes,



six per day Monday to Saturday) or 67 (hourly, Sunday); most go via the train station.

GRASSINGTON

☎ 01756 / pop 1120

The perfect base for south Dales jaunts, 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 rustication – is as attractive and traditional as you'll find in these parts. It is 6 miles north of Skipton.

The **tourist office** (☎ 752774; ☎ 9.30am–5pm Apr–Oct, shorter hours Nov–Mar) is at 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 (☎ 718111; www.devonshirefell.co.uk; Burnsall; s/d from £75/125) The style of this one-time gentleman's club for mill owners is distinctly contemporary, with beautiful modern furnishings crafted by local experts. It's more like a big city boutique hotel than a rustic country property.

Ashfield House (☎ 752584; www.ashfieldhouse.co.uk; Summers Fold; r from £85; ☎ Feb–Nov) 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 (☎ 753208; 51 Main St; mains about £5.50; ☎ 9am–6pm) Classic Yorkshire munchies – rarebits, local sausage and, of course, Wensleydale – in a lovely tearoom in the middle of town.

Getting There & Away

To reach Grassington, see p519. For onward travels the 72 bus continues up the valley to the nearby villages of Kettlewell and Buckden.

AROUND GRASSINGTON

North of Grassington, narrow roads lead up the beautiful valley of Wharfedale. Drivers take the road on the west side of the river; if you're cycling, take the quieter east-side option. If you're walking, follow the charming stretch of the Dales Way long-distance footpath through a classic Yorkshire Dales landscape of lush meadows surrounded by dry-stone walls, with traditional field-barns dotting the hillsides.

About 7 and 11 miles respectively from Grassington, the villages of **Kettlewell** and **Buckden** make good places to aim for; between them they offer a good choice of camp sites, B&Bs, tearooms and pubs (all doing food and accommodation).

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

MALHAM

☎ 01729 / pop 130

At the northern end of the quiet and beautiful valley of Malhamdale, this small, traditional village is probably the most visited place in the valley, not only for its charm but also for the natural wonders nearby – all easily reached by foot.

The excellent **tourist office** (☎ 830363; malham@ybtic.co.uk; ☎ 10am–5pm daily Apr–Oct, Fri–Sun Nov–Mar) has the usual wealth of information, local walks leaflets, maps and guidebooks.

Walking

The 5-mile **Malham Landscape Trail** (the tourist office has details) takes in **Malham Cove**, a huge rock amphitheatre that was once a waterfall to rival Niagara, and **Gordale Scar**, a deep limestone canyon with scenic cascades and the remains of an Iron Age settlement.

The long-distance Pennine Way passes right through Malham, and you can go north or south for as many days as you like. A day's walk away is Horton-in-Ribblesdale.

Sleeping & Eating

Malham YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 5946; www.yha.org.uk; dm £13.95; ☎ mid-Feb–Nov, Fri & Sat only Dec–mid-Feb) In the village centre is this purpose-built hostel; the facilities are top-notch and young children are well catered for.

Beck Hall (☎ 830332; www.beckhallmalham.com; s/d from £23/48) This rambling 17th-century country house on the edge of the village is a favourite place to stay; of the 11 different 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).

SETTLE

☎ 01729 / pop 3621

The largish town of Settle is far too bustling to be really homely and quaint, but it retains

THE SETTLE–CARLISLE LINE

The Settle–Carlisle Line (SCL), built between 1869 and 1875, is one of the great engineering achievements of the Victorian era and a very scenic ride to boot. The railway's construction was a Herculean task: 5000 navvies armed with picks and shovels built 325 bridges, 21 viaducts and blasted 14 tunnels in Dickensian conditions that defy the imagination – nearly 200 of them died on the job.

The line was part of the national rail network until 1983, but the public outcry upon its announced closure ensured that it remained open; today it is a huge tourist attraction (as well as a working railway).

The Journey

Trains run between Leeds and Carlisle via Settle about eight times a 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, Skipton – gateway to the southern Dales – and Settle. The train chugs up the valley beside the River Ribble, through Horton-in-Ribblesdale, across the spectacular Ribbleshead Viaduct and then through Blea Moor Tunnel, popping out at Dent station, one of the highest in the country.

It heads upwards and onwards to its highest point (356m) at Ais Gill, before leaving the Dales behind and trundling down to Kirkby Stephen. The last halts are Appleby then Langwathby, just northwest of Penrith (a jumping-off point for the Lake District), then the train finally pulls into Carlisle.

The Nuts & Bolts

The entire journey takes two hours and 40 minutes and costs £35 return. 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 48 49 50) or click on to www.settle-carlisle.co.uk or www.settle-carlisle-railway.org.uk.

enough of its traditional character to make it a worthwhile stop. Narrow cobbled streets lined with shops and decent pubs lead out from the central market square, which still sees stalls and traders every Tuesday. Access from the main A65 to the east is easy, and there are plenty of accommodation options.

The **tourist office** (☎ 825192; settle@ybtic.co.uk; Town Hall; ☎ 9.30am–5pm) has maps and guidebooks, and an excellent range of local walks leaflets (free).

Sleeping & Eating

Stainforth YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 5946; www.yha.org.uk; dm £13.95) A three-star hostel in an old Georgian country house with excellent facilities, including a shop, TV lounge, laundry, barbeque areas and a restaurant as well as a self-catering kitchen. It is 2 miles north of Settle on the B6479 to Horton-in-Ribblesdale.

Golden Lion Hotel (☎ 822203; www.goldenlionhotel.net; Duke St; s/d £41/72, without bathroom £34/60) This handsome 17th-century coaching inn has 12 warm and comfortable rooms, an old-style pub and a pleasant restaurant that is one of

the most popular in town (lunch mains about £7, evening £9 to £13).

Around Market Pl are several cafés, including the excellent **Shambles** (☎ 822652; fish & chip supper £6.25) and **Ye Olde Naked Man** (☎ 823230), formerly an undertakers and now a bakery with cakes, snacks and ice cream.

Getting There & Away

The easiest way to get here is by train. From the south, trains from Leeds or Skipton heading for Carlisle (see the boxed text, above) 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.

AROUND SETTLE Horton-in-Ribblesdale

☎ 01729 / pop 558

A favourite with walkers, cyclists and cavers, the little village of Horton is 5 miles north of Settle. Everything centres on the **Pen-y-ghent Cafe** (☎ 860333; ☎ 9am–6pm Mon & Wed–Fri, 8am–6pm Sat & Sun), which serves up filling meals, homemade

cakes and pint mugs of tea. The friendly owners sell maps, guidebooks and walking gear, and the café acts as the village **tourist office** (horton@ybtbic.co.uk). Walkers on a long hike should avail themselves of the 'safety service', whereby they can register in and out. There's also a post office shop for groceries and takeaways.

SLEEPING & EATING

Horton is popular, so your best bet is to book your accommodation in advance.

Golden Lion (☎ 860206; www.goldenlionhotel.co.uk; dm/s/d £9/27.50/55) Popular with walkers, the Golden Lion is a lively pub with dorms and basic private rooms upstairs, and three public bars downstairs where you can tuck into a bit of grub and wash it down with a pint of hand-pumped ale. It also does evening meals (three courses £10) and makes packed lunches (£4.95). Breakfast (£6.50) is not included.

Crown Hotel (☎ 860209; www.crown-hotel.co.uk; s/d from £28.50/54) Another popular rest stop with walkers, the Crown has a variety of basic rooms (with slightly over-the-top floral patterns) and a cosy bar that serves a range of meals.

Other options:

Dub-Cote Farm Camping Barn (☎ 860238; www.threepkarn.co.uk; dm £9.50) A basic-but-lovely 17th-century stone barn half a mile southeast of the village, well equipped with self-catering facilities (BYO sleeping bag and pillow case).

Knoll (☎ 860283; s/d £28/48; ☞ Mar-Oct) A handsome house near the village centre with the Pennine Way on its doorstep.

Three Peaks

The countryside north of Settle is dominated by the Three Peaks – Whernside (735m), Ingleborough (723m) and Pen-y-ghent (694m) – and the summits are linked by a long circular route that has been a classic walk for many years. The traditional start is the Pen-y-ghent Cafe in Horton-in-Ribblesdale and walkers try to complete the whole 25-mile route in under 12 hours. Others knock it off in six hours or less. You can also do just a section of the walk – for instance walking from Horton as far as Ribbleshead, and returning by train – which is highly recommended.

HAWES

☎ 01969 / pop 700

Hawes is right at the heart of Wensleydale and probably the best base for exploring the northern Yorkshire Dales. The main street and the

narrow lanes off it are lined with everything you'll need, from shops to ATMs.

The **tourist office** (☎ 667450; hawes@ybtbic.co.uk; ☞ 10am-5pm) shares the Old Station building with the **Dales Countryside Museum** (adult/child £3/free), a beautifully presented social history of the area. There's still an old train in the yard too.

About 1.5 miles north of town is **Hardraw Force**, the highest above-ground waterfall in the country. For most of the year it's little more than a trickle on the rocks and not really worth the £1 'toll' you pay at the Green Dragon pub to walk up to it.

Sleeping & Eating

Bainbridge Ings Caravan & Camp Site (☎ 667354; www.bainbridge-ings.co.uk; car & 2 adults/hikers & cyclists £9.50/3.50) Tent sites are around the edges of stone-walled fields located around a spacious farmhouse about half a mile east of town. Gas, milk and eggs are sold on-site.

Hawes YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 5854; www.yha.org.uk; Town Head; dm £13.95) A modern place on the western edge of town, at the junction of the main A684 (Aysgarth Rd) and B6255.

Green Dragon Inn (☎ 667392; www.greendragonhardraw.co.uk; Hardraw; s/d with breakfast £28/49, without breakfast from £22/40) About 1.5 miles north of town is this 'famous' inn where you pay the fee for the nearby waterfall. It's terrific, with unspectacular but thoroughly comfortable rooms, good beer, home-cooked food (mains about £6) and live bands at weekends.

Cocketts (☎ 667312; www.cocketts.co.uk; Market Pl; d from £58) The most stylish place in town is a handsome 17th-century stone house with eight pretty delightful rooms decorated in traditional style, two with four-poster beds. Two-/three-course meals in the restaurant are £17/19.

There are plenty of pubs, including the **Fountain** (☎ 667206; Market Pl; bar food about £6). The traditional **White Hart** (Market Pl; pub grub about £8) is also good for a pint or a bar meal.

Getting There & Away

Hawes is a public transport nightmare. From Northallerton, buses 156/157 run to Hawes (two hours, four Monday to Friday) via Leyburn, where you can connect with transport to/from Richmond. On Sunday (March to October) there are buses to Hawes from Manchester (X43) via Skipton and Grassington, and from Leeds (803). Between Hawes and the Lake District, bus 112 runs to/from Kendal (90 minutes, twice daily), very early in the

morning and late in the evening, with a few extra services on some other weekdays. The tourist office can advise on other bus services aimed at visitors.

RICHMOND

☎ 01748 / pop 8178

If Richmond was at the heart of the English tourist trail, you'd probably have to jostle for position with busloads of tourists and film crews, for this is surely one of England's most handsome market towns. Instead, you can have this gorgeous town pretty much to yourself – from the cobbled centre right up to the rocky outcrop overlooking the rushing River Swale and the ruins of the massive castle.

Orientation & Information

Richmond is east of the Yorkshire Dales National Park but makes a good gateway for the northern area. Centre of everything is Trinity Church Sq (with market day on Saturday). Just north of here, the **tourist office** (☎ 850252; www.richmond.org.uk; Friary Gardens, Victoria Rd; ☞ 9.30am-5.30pm Apr-Oct, to 4.30pm Nov-Mar) has the usual maps and guides, plus several leaflets (around 80p) showing walks in town and the surrounding countryside.

Sights

Top of the pile is the impressive heap that's left of **Richmond Castle** (EH; ☎ 822493; admission £3.60; ☞ 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. The best part of a visit is the view from the top of the remarkably well-preserved 30m-high tower; you can look down on the market place or over the surrounding hills.

The **Richmondshire Museum** (☎ 825611; Ryder's Wynd; adult/child £2/1; ☞ 10.30am-4.30pm Easter-Oct) is a delightful little gem, with very informative staff and local history exhibits including an early Yorkshire cave-dweller, James Herriot's surgery, and informative displays on lead mining, which forever altered the Swaledale landscape a century ago.

Activities

West from Richmond walkers can follow paths along the River Swale, upstream and downstream from the town. A longer option is along the north side of Swaledale, following the famous long-distance Coast to Coast route (p501) all the way to Reeth. For a grand

day out, take the first bus from Richmond to Reeth then walk back; the tourist office has route and bus time details.

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

Sleeping

Frenchgate Hotel (☎ 822087; www.frenchgatehotel.com; 59-61 Frenchgate; s/d from £58/98; Ⓟ) Eight immaculate bedrooms occupy the upper floors of this converted Georgian town house, now an elegant boutique guesthouse. One of the bedrooms has a beautiful canopied bed, which fits somewhat snugly into the room (the others are equally compact). Downstairs there's a hospitable lounge with oak beams and an open fire.

King's Head Hotel (☎ 850220; www.kingsheadrichmond.co.uk; Market Pl; s/d £80/112) Right on Market Pl, Richmond's fanciest hotel was once described by the painter Turner as 'the finest in Richmondshire'. That was a long time ago. It's still pretty fancy though; each of the traditionally furnished 30 bedrooms have wrought-iron or hardwood beds and plenty of comfort.

our pick **Millgate House** (☎ 823571; www.millgatehouse.com; Market Pl; r £85-95; Ⓟ) Behind the unassuming green door and plaque is the unexpected pleasure of one of the nicest guesthouses in England. While the house itself is wonderful, it is overshadowed by the breathtaking and multi-award-winning garden at the back, which has views over the River Swale and the Cleveland Hills. If you can, go for the Garden Suite.

SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND

One of England's best-kept secrets is the elegant Georgian town of Richmond: a maze of cobbled streets guarded by the ruins of its massive **castle** (left).

Base yourself in the truly exceptional **Millgate House** (above), with a marvellous garden that will be hard to leave if the weather is in any way clement. On Saturday, explore the town itself, take in a museum or two and clamber about the ruins of the castle.

From the castle tower you will catch a glimpse of the northern section of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, which should be the focus of your Sunday activities.

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 **Pottergate Guesthouse** (☎ 823 826; gary53uk@hotmail.com; 4 Pottergate), **66 Frenchgate** (☎ 823421; paul@66french.freeserve.co.uk; 66 Frenchgate) and **Emmanuel House** (☎ 823584; 41 Maison Dieu). Singles/doubles cost about £25/50.

Eating & Drinking

Trinity Church Sq and the surrounding streets have a huge choice of pubs, takeaways, cafés and takeaways.

Frenchgate Café (☎ 824949; 29 Frenchgate; lunches about £5, evening mains £7-12; ☎ 10am-10pm Tue-Sun) An all-meals-in-one kind of place, here you can tuck into a tidy breakfast in the morning, a large sandwich or pasta dish at lunch and enjoy the delights of its quasi-Continental bistro menu in the evening.

A Taste of Thailand (☎ 829696; 15 King St; mains about £10; ☎ dinner only) Does exactly what it says on the tin. An extensive menu of Thai favourites and a convenient BYO policy.

Surprisingly, despite a vast choice, few of the pubs in Richmond are up to much. After extensive research, the best we found was the **Black Lion Hotel** (☎ 823121; Finkle St), with cosy bars, low beams, good beer and food (bar food £5, mains in restaurant about £9.50), plus B&B.

Getting There & Away

From Darlington (on the railway between London and Edinburgh) it's easy to reach Richmond on bus 34 (30 minutes, hourly, four on Sunday). All buses stop in Trinity Church Sq.

EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

Its Viking roots still present in the name, the East Riding of Yorkshire (from Old Danish *Thriding*, or third) was one of three administrative regions of the Danelaw created in the 9th century – west and north ridings are now the slightly less evocative West and North Yorkshires.

The county's beating heart is the tough old sea dog of Hull, a no-nonsense port that goes about its business with little fuss between the broad horizons of the Rivers Humber and Hull.

Activities

The Yorkshire Wolds are ideal for gentle walks and cycle tours. Whether you're on two feet or two wheels, the town of Beverley makes a good base, and the northern Wolds can also be easily reached from York.

The area's main long-distance walk is the 80-mile **Wolds Way**. This national trail starts at Hessle, 4 miles west of Hull, close to the Humber Bridge, and leads northwards through farmland, hills and quiet villages, to 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, as the landscape is not high and conditions not too strenuous.

The Cleveland Way (p545) also ends at Filey, and for a shorter walk in bracing sea air you can follow the Cleveland Way along a scenic stretch of coast northwards 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. There's a useful website at www.gettingaround.eastriding.gov.uk.

HULL

☎ 01482 / pop 301,416

Tough, uncompromising Hull is a curmudgeonly English seaport with a proud seafaring tradition, a hard-bitten attitude to all things in life, and an almost lunatic nightlife – surely its only concession to any kind of indulgence. Its full and proper name – Kingston-upon-Hull – seems like an unnecessary extravagance when plain old Hull will do, and it seems apt that jaundiced, rueful poet Philip Larkin (1922–85) presided over its university library for many years.

Orientation & Information

The Old Town of Hull, which retains a sense of the prosperous Victorian era, is bounded by Ferensway and Freetown Way and the Rivers Humber and Hull. Perched on the waterfront overlooking the Humber is the city's main attraction, the Deep aquarium. It's all walkable.

Central library (☎ 223344; Albion St) For internet access.
Post office (57 Jameson St; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat)
Tourist office (☎ 223559; www.hullcc.gov.uk; 1 Paragon St; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 11am-3pm Sun)
Waterstone's (☎ 580234; 19-21 Jameson St)

Sights

THE DEEP

The colossal, angled monolith that is the **Deep** (☎ 381000; www.thedeep.co.uk; Tower St; adult/child £8/6; ☎ 10am-6pm, last entry 5pm) stands at the edge of the port, with great views across the Humber. Inside it's just as dramatic, as echoing commentaries and computer-generated interactivities run you through the formation of the seas, and onwards. The largest aquarium contains 2.5 million litres of water (and 87 tonnes of salt) and even has a glass lift. To get a good view of the tank's seven different types of sharks, eels, rays and other watery dwellers, it's best (if more pedestrian) to take the stairs, as the lift ride is over no sooner than you start it. And it's rare you see a pod full of people zoom through a tank.

OTHER SIGHTS

Hull has a remarkable collection of city-run museums (☎ 613902; www.hullcc.gov.uk/museums; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 1.30-4.30pm Sun). All share the same phone number and opening hours and are free.

The serene **Ferens Art Gallery** (Queen Victoria Sq), built in 1927, has a decent collection that includes works by Stanley Spencer and Peter Blake.

The dusty-feeling but interesting **Maritime Museum**, in the former dock offices (1871), celebrates Hull's long maritime traditions, and includes some daunting whale skeletons.

The well-preserved High St has some eclectic museums. The **Streetlife Transport Museum** has re-created 1930s streets, all sorts of historic vehicles to get on and off, and a pleasant garden. Next door, attractive, Georgian **Wilberforce House** (1639) was the birthplace in 1759 of the antislavery crusader William Wilberforce. It covers the history of slavery and the campaign against it – a major renovation saw its closure through 2006 but at the time of writing it was expected to reopen early in 2007. Behind it is the **Arctic Corsair**; tours demonstrate the hardships of trawling in the Arctic Circle.

The **Hull & East Riding Museum** traces local history from Roman times to the present, with new Anglo-Saxon, medieval and geology galleries.

At the heart of the Old Town, **Holy Trinity Church** (☎ 324835; Market Pl; ☎ 11am-2pm Tue-Fri Oct-Mar, 11am-3pm Mon-Fri & 9.30am-noon Sat Apr-Sep, services Sun year-round) is 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** is now anchored in the marina. It once provided guidance for ships navigating the notorious Humber estuary.

Sleeping & Eating

Good accommodation options are pretty thin on the ground – most of them are made up of business-oriented hotels and mediocre guesthouses. The tourist office will help book accommodation for free.

Clyde House Hotel (☎ 214981; www.dydehousehotel.co.uk; 13 John St; s/d £30/50) Next to leafy Kingston Sq, Clyde House Hotel is one of the best B&B options near the Old Town. The rooms are nothing fancy, but they're very tidy and comfortable.

Kingston Theatre Hotel (☎ 225828; www.kingstontheatrehotel.com; 1-2 Kingston Sq; s/d/ste from £40/55/90) This 19th-century building is a privately owned hotel in a quiet part of the centre. The rooms are perfectly charming if not quite memorable; upgrade to a suite if you're looking for a little leg room.

Venn (☎ 224004; www.vennrestaurant.co.uk; 21 Scale Lane; brasserie mains £7-10, restaurant mains £18-24; ☎ Tue-Sat) Modern British cuisine in all its cool, posh guises hits Hull and – guess what? – sticks nicely. This trendy brasserie serves fancy sandwiches, pizzas and salads, while the more upmarket upstairs restaurant goes to town with dishes such as leg and saddle of local rabbit with Parma ham...gorgeous.

Cerutti (☎ 328501; 10 Nelson St; mains about £13; ☎ lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat) Hull's best Italian restaurant is an attractive spot that specialises – unsurprisingly – in seafood.

Entertainment

Come nightfall – especially at weekends – Hull gets raucous and often rowdy. What else did you expect from sea dogs in a seaport? Groups of dangerously underdressed kids party like tomorrow doesn't matter. If you're that pissed, it won't.

Welly Club (☎ 326131, 221676; 105-107 Beverley Rd; admission free-£5; ☎ till 2am, closed Wed & Sun) Best known these days for its devotion to trance and drum 'n' bass, this is the place to go if you like your beats hard and extremely fast.

Lamp (☎ 326131; 2 Norfolk St) One of the more modern watering holes in town, with DJs, cocktails, a plush atmosphere and all the other devices to attract the beautiful kids.

Hull Truck Theatre (☎ 323638; www.hulltruck.co.uk; Spring St) Home to acclaimed down-to-earth playwright John Godber, it presents vibrant drama, comedy and Sunday jazz. It's just northwest of the Old Town.

Hull New Theatre (☎ 226655; Kingston Sq) A traditional regional theatre hosting popular drama, concerts and musicals.

Getting There & Away

The bus station is on Ferensway, just north of the train station. National Express has buses to/from London (£21.50, 5½ hours, two daily) and Manchester (£12.75, 4¼ hours, one daily). Both National Express and bus X46 run frequently to/from York (£6.25, 1½ hours). Local services also leave from here.

The train station is west of Queen Victoria Sq, in the town centre. Hull has good rail links north and south, as well as west to York (£13.50, 1¼ hours, hourly) and Leeds (£13.10, one hour, hourly).

The ferry port is 3 miles east of the centre at King George Dock. A bus to/from the train station connects with the ferries. For details of departures, see p968.

BEVERLEY

☎ 01482 / 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

Beverley is small and easily walked to from either the train or bus stations. There's a large market in the main square on Saturday.

Beverley Bookshop (☎ 0800 616394; 16 Butcher Row)
Library (☎ 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 (☎ 391672; www.visiteastyorkshire.com; 34 Butcher Row; ☎ 9.30am–5.15pm Mon–Fri, 10am–4.45pm Sat year-round, plus 10am–2pm Sun Jun–Aug)

Sights

The third church to be built on this site (the first was constructed during the 7th century), **Beverley Minster** (☎ 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) dates from 1220, but construction continued for two centuries, spanning the Early English, Decorated and perpendicular periods. Hailed for its unity of forms, the church has a magnificent Gothic perpendicular west front (1390–1420).

Inside, the nave is strikingly high. Extraordinary medieval faces and demons peer down from every possible vantage point, while expressive stone musicians play silent instruments. Note particularly the 10th-century *fridstol* (Old English for 'peace chair' which gave sanctuary to anyone escaping the law; the fruit- and angel-laden Gothic canopy of the Percy Tomb; the 68 medieval misericords (the largest collection in the country) and the late Norman font (c 1170).

There's an interesting display showing the history of the minster and town. Check out the rebuilt treadwheel crane, where workers ground around like hapless hamsters to lift the huge loads necessary to build such medieval structures.

Doomed to play second fiddle to the mother church, **St Mary's** (☎ 865709; admission free; ☎ 9.15am–noon & 1.30–5pm Mon–Fri, 10am–5.30pm Sat, 2–5pm Sun Apr–Sep, 2–4.15pm Oct–Mar) is a glorious church, built in stages between 1120 and 1530. In the North Choir Aisle look out for a carving (c 1330) thought to have inspired Lewis Carroll's White Rabbit. The West Front is considered one of England's finest (early 15th century).

Sleeping & Eating

Friary YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 5696; www.yha.org.uk; Friar's Lane; dm £11.95; ☎ Mon–Sat Easter–end Oct) Here's your chance to stay in a beautiful, restored 14th-century Dominican friary mentioned in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. This place might just have the best setting in town, only 100m southeast of the minster.

Number One (☎ 862752; http://numberone-bedandbreakfast-beverley.co.uk; 1 Woodlands; s/d from £25/50) Three very comfortable rooms in a friendly, welcoming house packed with pictures, books and bric-a-brac just west of the town centre.

Eastgate Guest House (☎ 868464; 7 Eastgate; s/d £41/53, without bathroom from £27/42) This relatively

central B&B is highly recommended for sheer friendliness and relaxed atmosphere more than for the floral, simple rooms.

Swallow Beverley Arms (☎ 869241; www.swallowhotels.com; North Bar Within; s/d from £56/92) Beverley's top spot is a very elegant Georgian coaching house with all the trimmings, a handsome combination of old-world style and contemporary comfort.

White Horse Inn (☎ 861973; 22 Hengate; mains £7–9; ☎ lunch & dinner) Also known as Nellie's, this lovely, dimly lit place has rambling rooms, open fires and tables outside. There's regular live music and poetry.

Cerutti 2 (☎ 866700; Station Sq; mains £10–19; ☎ dinner Mon–Sat) The only restaurant of note in town is unusually positioned inside the old waiting room of the train station. Italian dishes of all kinds are on offer, without the seafood leanings of its sister restaurant in Hull. Attached is the 'C' Horse Delicatessen, perfect for takeaway meals.

Getting There & Away

The train station lies east of the town centre. The bus station is north on Sow Hill.

Bus X46/X47 links Beverley with York (70 minutes, hourly). There are frequent services to Hull (buses 121, 122, 246 and X46/X47, 30 minutes).

There are regular trains to/from Scarborough via Filey (£11.90, 1½ hours). Trains to/from Hull (20 minutes) run at least hourly.

Details on boats to Hull from northern Europe are given in the main Transport chapter, p968.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

The largest of Yorkshire's four counties is also the most beautiful, if only because unlike the rest of northern England, mills and mines are nowhere to be found. Blissfully free of the landmarks of the Industrial Revolution, North Yorkshire has, since the Middle Ages, always been about sheep and the woolly wealth that they produced.

Much of North Yorkshire's untamed, untouched quality is preserved within the confines of the county's two superb national parks – the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors. But the county's star attraction is unquestionably urban. Sure, the genteel spa town of Harrogate and the blowsy, dramatically situ-

ated resorts of Scarborough and Whitby have many fans, but literally nothing compares to the unparalleled splendour of York, northern England's most visited town.

Activities

The best walking and cycling is in the Yorkshire Dales (p518) and the North York Moors (p545).

Getting There & Around

The main gateway town is York and a web of buses and trains connect places in North Yorkshire. More specific details on the Yorkshire Dales and the North York Moors are given in those sections. For countywide information, call the national **Traveline** (☎ 0870 608 2 608). There are various Explorer passes, and individual bus and train companies also offer their own saver schemes, so it's always worth asking for advice on the best deal when you buy your ticket.

YORK

☎ 01904 / pop 137,505

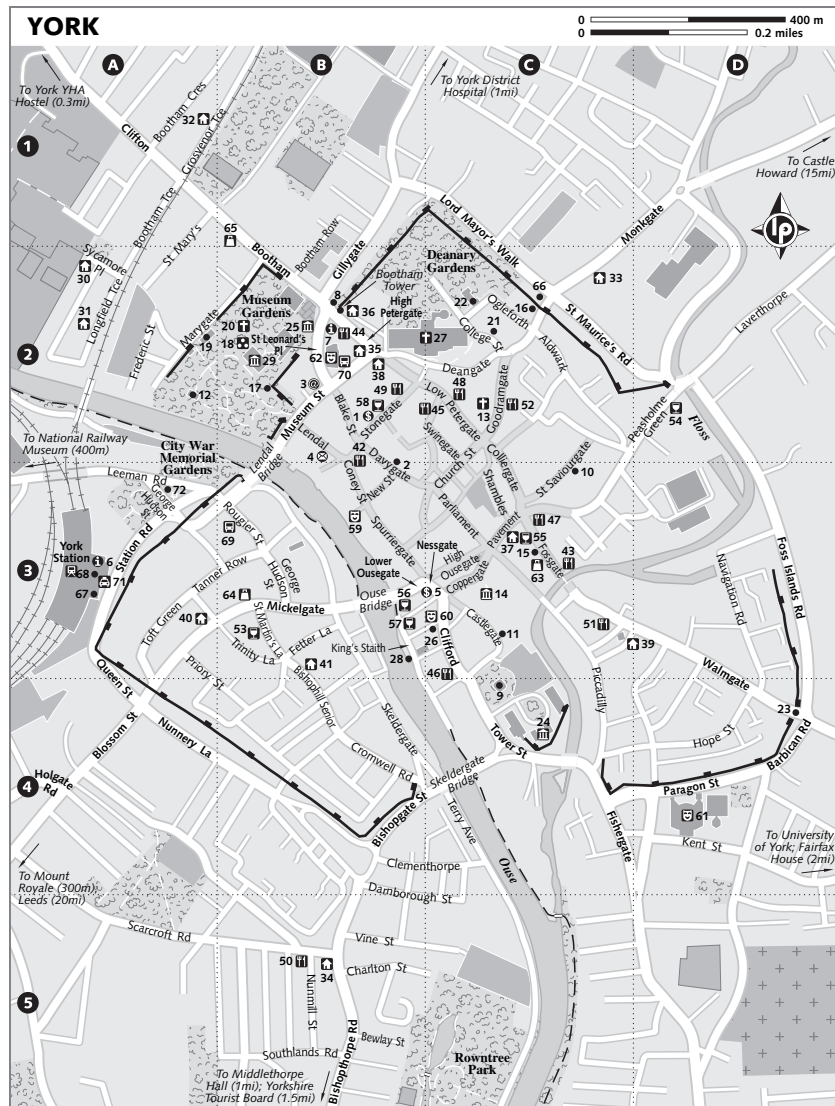
Nowhere in northern England says 'medieval' quite like York, a city of extraordinary cultural and historical wealth that has lost little of its preindustrial lustre. Its medieval spider's web of narrow streets is enclosed by a magnificent circuit of 13th-century walls. At its heart lies the immense, 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; modern, tourist-oriented York – with its myriad museums, restaurants, cafés 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 small city centre; the minster at the northern corner; Clifford's Tower at the southern end; the River Ouse that cuts 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; ☎ 676501; 6 Stonegate; ☎ 9am–5.30pm Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm Sat) With foreign exchange service.



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

City Library (☎ 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)

This Is York (www.thisisYork.co.uk)

Thomas Cook (☎ 653626; 4 Nessgate) A travel agent offering a full service.

Tourist office (☎ 550099; www.visitYork.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.

York District Hospital (☎ 631313; Wigginton Rd) A mile north of the centre.

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Sights

YORK MINSTER

Get your camera ready. Make sure your neck muscles are loose and relaxed. Prepare to be bowled over. England's largest medieval cathedral and Yorkshire's most important historic building is the simply awesome **minster** (☎ 624426; www.yorkminster.org; adult/child/concession £5/free/4, undercroft £4/2/3, minster & undercroft £7/5/5; ☞ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, noon-3.45pm Sun Apr-Oct, 9.30am-5pm Mon-Sat, noon-3.45pm Sun Nov-Mar, undercroft, treasury & crypt 9.30am-5pm Mon-Sat, noon-5pm Sun Sep-Jun, to 5.30pm Jul & Aug) that dominates the city. Seat of the archbishop of York, the primate of England, it is second in importance only to Canterbury, home of the primate of *all* England (the two titles were given to settle a debate over whether York or Canterbury was the true centre of the church in England), 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 viewfinder.

The first church on the site was a wooden chapel built for Paulinus' baptism of King Edwin on Easter Day 627; its site is marked

in the crypt. With deliberate symbolism, the church was built on the site of a Roman basilica, a vast central assembly hall; parts can be seen in the foundations. A stone church was started but fell into disrepair after Edwin's death. St Wilfred built the next church but this was destroyed during William the Conqueror's brutal suppression of the north. The first Norman church was built in stages to 1080; you can see surviving fragments in the foundations and crypt.

The present building, built mainly from 1220 to 1480, manages to represent all the major stages of Gothic architectural development. The transepts were built in Early English style between 1220 and 1255; the octagonal chapter house was built between 1275 and 1290 in the Decorated style; the nave from 1291 to 1340; and the west towers, west front and central (lantern) tower were built in perpendicular style from 1470 to 1472.

You enter from 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

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 stonework surrounds a wonderful uninterupted space. There are more than 200 expressive carved heads and figures.

Back in the main church, you should notice the unusually wide and tall nave, the aisles (to the sides) of which are roofed in stone in contrast to the central roof, which is wood painted to look like stone. On both sides of the nave are painted stone shields of the nobles who

met 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 dominating is the **Great West Window**, from 1338, with 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.

The minster's heart is dominated by the awesome **central tower** (adult/child £3.50/2; ☎ every 30min 10am–5pm Mon–Sat, noon–5pm Sun Apr–Jun & Sep–Oct, to 6.30pm Jul & Aug, to 30min before dusk 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, which is 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 p48).

Another set of stairs in the south transept leads down to the **undercroft**, where you'll also find the **treasury** and the **crypt**. These should on no account be missed. In 1967 the foundations were excavated when the central tower threatened to collapse; while engineers worked frantically to save the building, archaeologists uncovered Roman and Norman ruins 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 Paulinus' original wooden chapel.

AROUND THE MINSTER

Owned by the minster since the 15th century, **St William's College** (☎ 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; ☎ 624247; Minster Yard; admission £5, house & basement £7; ☎ 11am–4.30pm Sat–Thu Apr–Oct) 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 supply 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;

THE YORK PASS

If you plan on seeing virtually everything in town, we strongly recommend the **York Pass** (1/2/3 days adult £19/25/32, child £10/16/22); it grants you free access to every single pay-in sight in town, as well as free passage on a handful of tours, including the Citysight-seeing bus tour (see p533). It is available at the tourist offices.

his story remains popular if unproven – but you can explore the cellar to find out.

CITY WALLS

You can get onto the walls, built in the 13th century, via steps by **Bootham Bar** (on the site of a Roman gate) and follow them clockwise to Monk Bar, a walk offering particularly beautiful views of the minster. There are oodles more access points including off Station Rd and Monk Bar.

Monk Bar is the best-preserved medieval gate, with a small **Richard III Museum** (☎ 634191; www.richardiiimuseum.co.uk; admission £2.50; ☎ 9am–5pm Mar–Oct, 9.30am–4pm Nov–Feb) upstairs. 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 p48).

Walmgate Bar is England's only city gate with an intact barbican (an extended gateway to ward off uninvited guests); it was built during the reign of Edward III.

MERCHANT ADVENTURERS' HALL

Built between 1357 and 1361, the outstanding **Merchant Adventurers' Hall** (☎ 654818; Fossgate; admission £2; ☎ 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. This stunning building testifies to the power of the medieval guilds, which controlled all foreign trade into and out of York until 1830 – a handy little monopoly.

JORVIK

Interactive bells-and-whistles exhibits aimed at 'bringing history to life' usually result in the opposite, but the much-trumpeted **Jorvik** (☎ 543403; www.vikingjorvik.com; Coppergate; adult/child £7.20/5.10, Jorvik & Dig £11/8.30; ☎ 10am–6pm Apr–Oct, to 5pm Nov–Mar), the most visited attraction in town besides the minster, manages to convey the essence of the Viking settlement with admirable

YORK: FROM THE BEGINNING

It seems everybody has wanted a piece of this land at some point in history. In AD 71 the Romans built a fort called Eboracum here, so their troops would have somewhere to sleep after a busy day bashing the local tribes. Over time, a largish civilian settlement grew up around the fort; by the time Constantine the Great was proclaimed emperor here in AD 306 it was a fully fledged town. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, the town was taken by the Anglo-Saxons who renamed it Eborwic and made it the capital of the independent kingdom of Northumbria.

In 625 a Roman priest called Paulinus came to town and converted the king 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.

Danish rule ended in 954 when King Eadred of Wessex drove out the last Viking king and reunited Danelaw with the south, but trouble brewed again in 1066 when King Harold II got his comeuppance at the hands of William the Conqueror at Hastings.

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. However, Henry established a branch of the King's Council here to help govern the north, and this was to contribute 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 pro-monarchist 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 confectionary. 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.

success. It's a smells-and-all reconstruction of the settlement unearthed in this area during excavations in the late 1970s, brought to you courtesy of a 'time-car' monorail that transports you through 9th-century Jorvik.

It is a bit of fun (for kids at least) and the staff in the ubiquitous shop go to great lengths to answer questions with great enthusiasm. To cut the queue time considerably, book your tickets online – it only costs £1 more.

DIG

York's newest attraction, run by the folks who brought you Jorvik, is **Dig** (☎ 543403; www.vikingjorvik.com; St Saviour's Church, St Saviourgate; adult/child £5.50/5, Dig & Jorvik £11/8.30; ☎ 10am–5pm), which is pretty much self explanatory. This time, you're an 'archaeological detective', unearthing the 'secrets' of York's distant past as well as discovering something of the archaeologist's world – what they do, how they do it and that kind of thing. Much more hands-on than Jorvik, it is plenty of fun and a little bit educational too.

CLIFFORD'S TOWER

There's precious little left of York Castle except for this evocative stone **tower** (EH; ☎ 646940; admission £2.30; ☎ 10am–6pm Apr–Sep, to 5pm Oct, to 4pm Nov–Mar), a highly unusual figure-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, where 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

Near Clifford's Tower, this excellent **museum** (☎ 653611; adult/child £6.50/5, with Yorkshire Museum £9.50/5; ☎ 9.30am–5pm) contains displays of everyday life from the last four 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 Dick Turpin's. There's a bewildering array of evocative everyday objects, 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

Most railway museums are the sole preserve of lone men with dog-eared notebooks and

grandfathers looking to bond with their grandchildren. While there's no shortage of either here, this **museum** (☎ 621261; www.nrm.org.uk; Leeman Rd; admission free; ☎ 10am–6pm) stands apart on account of its sheer size and incredible collection. Trainspotters and nostalgics will salivate at the massive gathering of engines and carriages from the past, but the attractions for regular folk are the gleaming carriages of the royal trains used by Queen Victoria and Edward VII; the speed-record-breaking *Mallard* (a mighty 2 miles a minute in 1938, still a record for a steam train); and a Series 'O' Japanese bullet train (1964–86), which you can sit in – it is a testament to the speed of technology that the train now appears a tad dated. Just next to it is a **simulator** (£3), which allows you to travel from London to Brighton in real time at supersonic speed – the journey takes four minutes. You can also wander around a vast annexe including the restoration workshops. Allow two hours to do the museum justice.

The museum is slightly out of the way (about 400m west of the train station), so if you don't fancy the walk, you can ride the **road train** (adult/child £2/1) that runs every 30 minutes from noon to 5pm between the minster and the museum.

OTHER SIGHTS

The **Museum Gardens** (☎ dawn–dusk) make a peaceful 4-hectare city-centre oasis. Assorted picturesque ruins and buildings include the **Museum Gardens Lodge** (Victorian Gothic Revival), dating from 1874, and a 19th-century working **observatory**. The **Multangular Tower** was the western tower of the Roman garrison's defensive wall. The small Roman stones at the bottom have been built up with 13th-century additions.

The **Yorkshire Museum** (☎ 629745; adult/child £5.50/2.50, with York Castle Museum £9.50/5; ☎ 10am–5pm) is linked with the Castle Museum (left) and has some interesting Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Viking and medieval exhibits and good temporary exhibitions.

The ruins of **St Mary's Abbey** (founded 1089) date from 1270 to 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 guesthouse. **St Mary's Lodge** was built around 1470 to provide VIP accommodation.

St Olave's Church (☎ 9am–5pm Mon–Fri) dates from the 15th century, but there has been a church dedicated to Norway's patron saint here since at least 1050.

Adjacent to Museum Gardens on Exhibition Sq is the 19th-century **York City Art Gallery** (☎ 551861; Exhibition Sq; admission free; ☎ 10am–5pm), which includes works by Reynolds, Nash, Boudin and LS Lowry.

Back inside the walls, the wonky lines inside **Holy Trinity** (☎ 613451; Goodramgate; ☎ 10am–5pm Tue–Sat May–Sep, 10am–4pm Oct–Apr) almost induce seasickness. The church was started in the 13th century and added to over the next 200 years. Rare 17th- to 18th-century box pews surround a two-tier pulpit.

If 18th-century Georgian houses are for you, then a visit to **Fairfax House** (☎ 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. This exquisitely restored property was designed by John Carr (of Harewood House fame; see p514) and features the best example of rococo stucco work to be found in the north of England.

North of here, the quaintly cobbled **Shambles** (www.yorkshambles.com), complete with overhanging Tudor buildings, hints at what a medieval street might have looked like if it was overrun with people trying to buy something silly and superfluous before being back on the tour bus in 15 minutes. It takes its name from the Saxon word *shamel*, meaning 'slaughterhouse'.

York Dungeon (☎ 632599; www.thedungeons.com; 12 Clifford St; adult/child £11.45/8.45; ☎ 10.30am–5pm Apr–Sep, 11am–4pm Nov–Jan, 10.30am–4.30pm Oct, Feb & Mar) is a series of exultantly gruesome and overpriced historical reconstructions. For the especially hardened there's a lovely bit on the plague.

Tours

There's a bewildering array of tours on offer, from historic walking tours to a host of ever-competitive night-time ghost tours – pretty popular in what is reputed to be England's most haunted city. For starters, check the tourist office's own website for walking itineraries (www.visitork.org/explore).

BOAT

York Boat (☎ 628324; www.yorkboat.co.uk; Lendal Bridge; 1hr cruises adult/child £6.50/3.30, ghost cruises adult/child £7.50/4) runs one-hour Ouse cruises from Lendal Bridge at 10.30am, noon, 1.30pm and 3pm February to November. The obligatory ghost

cruise runs nightly at 6.30pm in high season (April to October) from King's Staith.

BUS

York Citysightseeing (☎ 655585; www.city-sightseeing.com; day tickets adult/child £8.50/4; ☎ 9am–5pm Apr–Oct) runs two hop-on hop-off services calling at all the main sights; buses leave every 15 minutes from Exhibition Sq outside the tourist office.

WALKING

Association of Voluntary Guides (☎ 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 from Exhibition Sq in front of York City Art Gallery.

Breadcrumbs Trail (☎ 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 p535).

Complete York Tour (☎ 706643) A walk around the city and the minster that can be adapted to your preferences. Call for details.

Ghost Hunt of York (☎ 608700; www.ghosthunt.co.uk; adult/child £5/4; ☎ tours 7.30pm) Award-winning and highly entertaining 75-minute tour beginning at the Shambles.

Original Ghost Walk of York (☎ 01759-373090; adult/child £4/2.50; ☎ tours 8pm) Ghouls and ghosts 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) History and specialist tours (adult/child £4/2) or you can take its DIY audio tour (£4.50).

Yorkwalk (☎ 622303; www.yorkwalk.co.uk; adult/child £5/2) 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 Walls – 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** (☎ 643211; www.vikingjorvik.com; Coppergate), which features battle re-enactments, themed walks, markets and other bits of Nordic fun.

Sleeping

Beds are tough to find midsummer, even at the spiked prices of the high season. The tourist office's efficient accommodation booking

service charges £4, which might be the best four quid you spend in town.

There are plenty of decent B&Bs on the streets north and south of Bootham, the north-west continuation of High Petergate; Grosvenor Tce, a handsome street along the railway tracks, is particularly full of them. Southwest of the town centre, B&Bs are clustered around Scarcroft, Southlands and Bishopthorpe Rds.

BUDGET

York Backpackers (☎ 627720; www.yorkbackpackers.co.uk; 88-90 Micklegate; dm/d from £14/34; ☑) In a Grade I Georgian building that was once home to the High Sheriff of Yorkshire, this large, well-equipped hostel has all the usual facilities as well as internet access and a residents-only bar that serves cheap beer until 1am.

York Youth Hotel (☎ 625904; www.yorkyouthhotel.demon.co.uk; 11 Bishophill Senior; dm £14-18, s/d £30/50; ☑) Offering the cheapest single rooms within the city walls, this is a good option for travellers who are on a budget but still want to stay close to the action.

York YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 6102/3; www.yha.org.uk; Water End, Clifton; dm £18.50) Once the Rowntree (Quaker confectioners) mansion, this handsome Victorian house in its own grounds is almost entirely self-contained – there's even a bar on the property. Most of the rooms are four-bed dorms. It's about a mile northwest of the tourist office; turn left into Bootham, which becomes Clifton (the A19), then left into Water End. There's a riverside footpath from Lendal Bridge, but it's ill lit so avoid it after dark. Alternatively, take bus 2 from Museum St.

MIDRANGE

Fairfax House (☎ 434784; www.york.ac.uk; 99 Heslington Rd; s/d £26.50/52; ☑ Jun-Sep only) Part of the University of York, this ivy-clad building offers accommodation in standard, well-equipped rooms, but only outside of term. It is 2 miles southeast of the city. Take bus 4.

Dairy Guesthouse (☎ 639367; www.dairyguesthouse.co.uk; 3 Scarcroft Rd; s/d £35/60; ☑) A wonderful 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, off of which are the cottage-style rooms. The name comes from the time when it served as a town dairy.

Brontë House (☎ 621066; www.bronte-guesthouse.com; 22 Grosvenor Tce; s/d from £36/64) Five wonderful

en-suite rooms all decorated completely differently: particularly good is the double with a carved, 19th-century sleigh bed, William Morris wallpaper and assorted bits and bobs from another era.

Golden Fleece (☎ 625171; www.goldenfleeceyork.com; 16 Pavement; s/d from £40/80) Four distinctive rooms (including the Shambles Room, with views over York's most famous street) that are said to be haunted. We've yet to see a ghost, but we liked what we did see: nice furnishings, comfortable beds and great hospitality.

Other options:

Briar Lea Guest House (☎ 635061; www.briarlea.co.uk; 8 Longfield Tce; s/d from £26/52) Clean, simple rooms and a friendly welcome in a house just off Bootham.

Alcuin Lodge (☎ 632222; alcuinlodge@aol.com; 15 Sycamore Pl; d from £30) Pretty doubles in a cluttered Victorian house.

City Guesthouse (☎ 622483; www.cityguesthouse.co.uk; 68 Monkgate; s/d from £37/64; ☑) Very tidy house with meticulously arranged furniture and bric-a-brac; vegetarians catered for.

St Denys Hotel (☎ 622207; www.stdenyshotel.co.uk; St Denys Rd; s/d from £45/65) Slightly worn but still comfortable rooms. Good location inside the city walls.

TOP END

Four High Petergate (☎ 658516; www.fourhighpetergate.co.uk; 4 High Petergate; s/d £65/100) This stunning 18th-century house next to Bootham Bar has been converted into a gorgeous boutique hotel. Indonesian teak furniture, crisp white linen, flat-screen TV and DVD player are standard in all 14 bedrooms, even if the standard single and doubles are substantially more compact than the superior rooms (£110 to £125). Highly recommended for its class and location. The bistro next door is also excellent.

Guy Fawkes (☎ 671001; www.theguyfawkeshotel.com; 25 High Petergate; r £90-120) Directly opposite the minster is this comfortable new hotel, the premises of which include a cottage that is reputed to be the birthplace of Guy Fawkes himself. We're not convinced, but the cottage is now the hand-somest room in the building, complete with a four-poster bed and lots of red velvet.

Dean Court Hotel (☎ 625082; www.deancourt-york.co.uk; Duncombe Pl; s/d from £95/125) With a commanding position directly across from the minster (you'll get a church view from the superior rooms only), this fine hotel has large, comfortable rooms, although we'd have to put a question mark next to some of the chintzy, pseudo-Georgian décor.

Mount Royale (☎ 628856; www.mountainroyale.co.uk; The Mount; r from £107; ☑) A grand, William IV listed building converted into a superb luxury hotel, with solarium, beauty spa and outdoor heated tub and swimming pool. The rooms in the main house are gorgeous, but the best are the open-plan garden suites, reached via a corridor of tropical fruit trees and bougainvillea.

Middlethorpe Hall (☎ 641241; www.middlethorpe.com; Bishopthorpe Rd; s £115-150, d £150-475; ☑) York's top spot is this breathtaking 17th-century country house set in 8 hectares 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. The magnificent grounds include a white and walled garden and a small lake; guests are invited to use the facilities of the attached spa. Bus 11 stops outside.

Eating

Eating well in York is not a problem – there are plenty of fine options throughout the centre; many of the city's pubs also do grub – they're listed in the Drinking section.

BUDGET

Café Concerto (☎ 610478; 21 High Petergate; cakes £2-3, starters £5-8, mains £12.50-13.95; ☑ 10am-10pm) 'Music for your mouth' is the theme of this lovely café facing the minster. The walls are papered with sheet music, but it's the delicious food that makes the most noise – the chicken and avocado sandwich is sensational.

Betty's (☎ 659142; St Helen's Sq; sandwiches about £4.50, cream tea £6.50; ☑ 9am-9pm) Afternoon tea, old-school style, in a Yorkshire institution. Hardly surprising that most of the people in the fast-moving queue are of the older generations. Still, it's a bit of class, especially after 6pm, when the pianist adds colour to the proceedings.

El Piano (☎ 610676; www.elpiano.co.uk; 15 Grape Lane; mains £6; ☑ 10am-1am Mon-Sat, noon-midnight Sun) A vegetarian haven, this colourful, Hispanic-style spot has a lovely café downstairs and three themed rooms upstairs: check out the Moroccan room, complete with floor cushions.

Siam House (☎ 624677; 63a Goodramgate; mains £7-10; ☑ lunch & dinner Mon-Sat, dinner Sun) Delicious, authentic Thai food in about as authentic an

atmosphere as you could muster up 6000km from Bangkok. The early bird, three-course special (£10.95) is an absolute steal.

Fiesta Mexicana (☎ 610243; 14 Clifford St; burritos £9.95; ☑ dinner) *Chimichangas* (crisp, deep-fried tortillas), *tostadas* (fried tortillas with toppings) and burritos served in a relentlessly happy atmosphere. Students and party groups on the rip add to the fiesta; it's not subtle or subdued, but when is Mexican food ever so?

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Melton's Too (☎ 629222; 25 Walmgate; mains £8-12; ☑ lunch & dinner) A very comfortable, booth-lined restaurant that does modern Brit cuisine such as Yorkshire sirloin steak as well as a host of salads and sandwiches. It's the slightly scruffier younger brother to Melton's.

La Vecchia Scuola (☎ 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.

Little Betty's (☎ 622865; 46 Stonegate; afternoon tea £12.75; ☑ 10am-5.30pm) Betty's younger sister is more demure, less frequented, but just as good; you go upstairs and back in time to what feels like the interwar years – it's possible to spot a couple of Agatha Christie lookalikes. The afternoon tea would feed a small village.

Melton's (☎ 634341; 7 Scarcroft Rd; mains £14-20; ☑ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, dinner only Mon, lunch only Sun) 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 Yorkshire beef to the asparagus risotto with pinenuts and herbs. There's an excellent lunch and early dinner set menu (£17).

Blue Bicycle (☎ 673990; 34 Fossgate; mains £15-24; ☑ 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, served in a romantic, candlelit room, makes for a top-notch dining experience.

J Baker's (☎ 622688; 7 Fossgate; 2-/3-course meal £18.95/24.50; ☑ 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 defiantly traditional menu offers classics such as ox tongue, egg

'n' chips and steaks – these days, it's all about being one of the lads, so long as Messrs Michelin are paying close attention.

Drinking

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

Ackhorne (☎ 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 morphed with the place. There's a pleasant beer garden at the back.

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

Blue Bell (☎ 654904; 53 Fossgate) A tiny, tiny pub with décor dating from 1798 and a surprisingly contemporary crowd (read: lots of young people).

Capital (☎ 639971; 1a Lower Ousegate) Trendy Casa was bought out in 2006 and remodelled so that it's newest incarnation is even trendier: lots of glass, plenty of beautiful people and great views over the River Ouse.

King's Arms (☎ 659435; King's Staith) York's best-known pub is a creaky place with a fabulous riverside location – hence its enduring popularity. A perfect spot for a summer's evening. Lunch is served for around £6.

Ye Olde Starre (☎ 623063; 40 Stonegate) Licensed since 1644, this is a bit of a tourist trap, but an altogether excellent pub that is popular with locals. It was used as a morgue by the Roundheads, but the atmosphere's improved since then. It has decent ales and a heated outdoor patio overlooked by the minster.

Entertainment

There are a couple of good theatres in York, a fairly interesting cinema, but as far as clubs are concerned, forget it: historic York is best enjoyed without them.

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

York Barbican Centre (☎ 656688; Barbican Rd) Big-name concerts in a partly pyramidal, modern building.

City Screen (☎ 541144; www.picturehouses.co.uk; 13-17 Coney St) Mainstream and art-house films.

Grand Opera House (☎ 671818; Clifford St) Despite its name puts on a wide range of productions.

Shopping

Coney St and its adjoining streets are the hub of York shopping, but the real treat for visitors are the secondhand and antiquarian bookshops, mostly clustered in two main areas, Micklegate and Fossgate.

Worm Holes Bookshop (☎ 620011; www.worm-holes.co.uk; 20 Bootham) Our favourite of York's dusty bookshops, with a decent and far-reaching selection of old and new titles.

Ken Spellman Booksellers (☎ 624414; 70 Micklegate) This fine shop has been selling rare, antiquarian and secondhand books since 1910.

Fossgate Books (☎ 641389; 36 Fossgate) Cheap paperbacks and unusual books.

Getting There & Away

BUS
The very useful **York Travel Bus Info Centre** (☎ 551 400; 20 George Hudson St; ☎ 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri) has complete schedule information and sells local and regional tickets. All local and regional buses stop along Rougier St, off Station Rd inside the city walls on the western side of Lendal Bridge.

National Express coaches also stop here as well as outside the train station. Tickets can be bought at the tourist offices. There are services to London (£24.50, 5½ hours, four daily), Birmingham (£23, three hours, one daily) and Edinburgh (£30.50, 5½ hours, one daily).

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

You won't need a car around the city, but it comes in handy for exploring the surrounding area. Rental options include: **Europcar** (☎ 656161), by platform one in the train station, which also rents bicycles and stores luggage (£5); and **Hertz** (☎ 612586), near platform three.

TRAIN

York train station is a stunning masterpiece of Victorian engineering. It also has plenty of arrivals and departures: Birmingham (£35, 2½ hours); Edinburgh (£65, 2½ hours, hourly); Leeds (£8.80, 50 minutes, hourly); London's King's Cross (£85, two hours, hourly); Manchester (£16.80, 1½ hours, six daily); and Scarborough (£10.30, 45 minutes).

Trains also go via Peterborough (£44.50, 1¾ hours, every 30 minutes) for Cambridge and East Anglia.

Getting Around

York is easily walked on foot. You're never really more than 20 minutes from any of the major sights or areas.

BICYCLE

The Bus Info Centre has a useful free map showing York's bike routes. If you're energetic you could pedal out to Castle Howard (15 miles), Helmsley and Rievaulx Abbey (12 miles) and Thirsk (another 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. The tourist offices have maps.

Two hire places are: **Bob Trotter** (☎ 622868; 13 Lord Mayor's Walk; rental per day £10), outside Monk Bar; and **Europcar** (☎ 656161; rental per day from £12), by platform one in the train station.

BUS

The local bus service is provided by **First York** (☎ 622992), which sells a day pass (£2.20) valid on all of its local buses – although you'll hardly need it if you're sticking close to town. The Bus Info Centre (opposite) has service details.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

York gets as congested as most English cities in summer and parking in the centre can be expensive (up to £9 for a day); but most guest-houses and hotels have access to parking.

TAXI

Station Taxis (☎ 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 stunning as **Castle Howard** (☎ 01653-648333; www.castlehoward.co.uk; adult/child house & grounds £9.50/6.50, grounds £7/6.50; ☎ house 11am-4.30pm, grounds 10am-4.30pm mid-Mar–Oct), a work of supreme theatrical grandeur and audacity set in the rolling Howardian Hills with wandering peacocks on its terraces. This is one of the world's most beautiful buildings, and instantly recognisable for 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 mate Sir John Vanbrugh in 1699 to design his

new home, 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 do wonders with Blenheim Palace (p354).

If you can, try to visit on a weekday, when it's easier to find the space to appreciate this hedonistic marriage of art, architecture, landscaping and natural beauty. Wandering about the 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, 4 miles off the A64. It can be reached by several 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. The Coastliner Freedom ticket (adult £11) is good for unlimited rides all day; buy tickets on the bus.

THIRSK

☎ 01845 / pop 9099

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** (☎ 524234; www.worldofjamesherriot.org; 23 Kirkgate; adult/child £4.99/3.50; ☎ 10am-5pm Apr-Oct, 11am-4pm Nov-Mar), an excellent museum full of Wight artefacts, a video documentary of his life and a re-creation of the TV show sets. It's all quite well done and you'll be in the company of

true fans, many of whom have that look of pilgrimage on their faces.

Almost directly across the street is the less-frequented **Thirsk Museum** (☎ 527707; www.thirskmuseum.org; 14-16 Kirkgate; admission £1.50; ☞ 10am-4pm Mon-Wed, Fri & Sat), which crams a collection of items from Neolithic times to the Herriot era into a tiny house where Thomas Lord (of Lord's Cricket Ground fame) was born in 1755.

Thirsk's **tourist office** (☎ 522755; thirsk@ytbtic.co.uk; 49 Market Pl; ☞ 10am-5pm Easter-Oct, 11am-4pm Nov-Easter) is on the main square; it can book B&Bs and has an accommodation list.

The **Three Tuns Hotel** (☎ 523124; www.the-three-tuns-thirsk.co.uk; Market Pl; s/d from £50/70) is a fairly imposing 18th-century coaching inn best known as having hosted the Wordsworths on their honeymoon in 1802. The bedrooms have changed somewhat since then, and today offer comfortable if unspectacular accommodation. Restaurant mains start from £7.

Getting There & Away

There are frequent daily buses from York (45 minutes).

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** (☎ 522473).

AROUND THIRSK

Sheltered in the secluded valley of the River Skell are two of Yorkshire's most beautiful attractions and an absolute must on your northern itinerary. The strangely obsessive and beautiful formal **Studley Royal water gardens**

were built in the 19th century so as to enhance the extensive ruins of the 12th-century **Fountains Abbey** (NT; ☎ 01765-608888; www.fountainsabbey.org.uk; abbey, hall & garden £6.50; ☞ 10am-5pm Mar-Oct, to 4pm Nov-Feb). Together they create a breathtaking picture of pastoral elegance and tranquility that have made them the most visited of all the National Trust's pay-in properties and Yorkshire's only World Heritage Site.

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 found their own monastery. 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 today's ruins were built, including the church's nave and transepts, outlying buildings and the church's eastern end (the tower was added in the late 15th century).

After the dissolution the estate was sold into private hands and between 1598 and 1611 Fountains Hall was built with stone from the abbey ruins. The hall and ruins were united with the Studley Royal Estate in 1768.

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

Fountains Abbey is 4 miles west of Ripon off the B6265. The **deer park** (admission free, car park

£2) opens during daylight hours. **St Mary's Church** (☞ 1-5pm Apr-Sep) features occasional concerts. There are free one-hour guided tours (11am and 2.30pm April to October and 3.30pm April to September, garden 2pm April to October).

Public transport is limited to summer Sunday services; call for details of any buses that might be running.

HARROGATE

☎ 01423 / pop 85,128

The doyen of the 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 Conservative. They come to Harrogate to enjoy the formidable flower shows and gardens that fill the town with an almost unparalleled array of colour, especially in spring and autumn, when the floral displays are at their height. It is truly 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 host of smart new hotels and trendy eateries that dot the town, catering to the boom in Harrogate's newest trade, conferences. All those dynamic young guns have to eat and sleep somewhere...

Orientation & Information

Harrogate is almost surrounded by gardens including the 80-hectare Stray in the south. The mostly pedestrianised shopping streets, Oxford and Cambridge Sts, are lined with smart shops and the **post office** (11 Cambridge Rd; ☞ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat). The **tourist office** (☎ 537300; 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 give information about free historical walking tours offered daily from Easter to October.

Sights & Activities

THE WATERS

Take the plunge into the waters and the past in the fabulously tiled **Turkish Baths** (☎ 556746; www.harrogate.co.uk/turkishbaths; Tue/Sat & Sun to 5pm/all other

times £10/15/13; ☞ 9am-9pm) in the Royal Baths Assembly Rooms. The mock Moorish facility is gloriously Victorian and offers a range of watery delights – steam rooms, saunas, and so on. A visit should last at least two hours.

There's a complicated schedule of opening hours that are at turns single sex and mixed pairs – call or look online for more details. You can prebook a range of reasonably priced massages and other therapies.

Just around the corner is the ornate **Royal Pump Room Museum** (☎ 556188; Crown Pl; admission £2.80; ☞ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 2-5pm Sun Apr-Oct, 10am-4pm Mon-Sat, 2-4pm Sun Nov-Mar), built in 1842 over the most famous of the sulphur springs. It gives an insight into how the phenomenon created the town and the illustrious visitors that it attracted, and there's a chance to tuck into some stinky spa water.

GARDENS

A huge green thumbs-up to Harrogate's gardeners; the town has some of the most beautiful public gardens you'll ever see. The quintessentially English **Valley Gardens** are overlooked by the vast, ornate, 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** (☎ 565418; www.rhs.org.uk; Crag Lane, Beckwithshaw; adult/child £6/1.60; ☞ 9.30am-6pm, to dusk if earlier), the northern show-piece 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.

The **West Park Stray** is another fine garden and park, south of the centre.

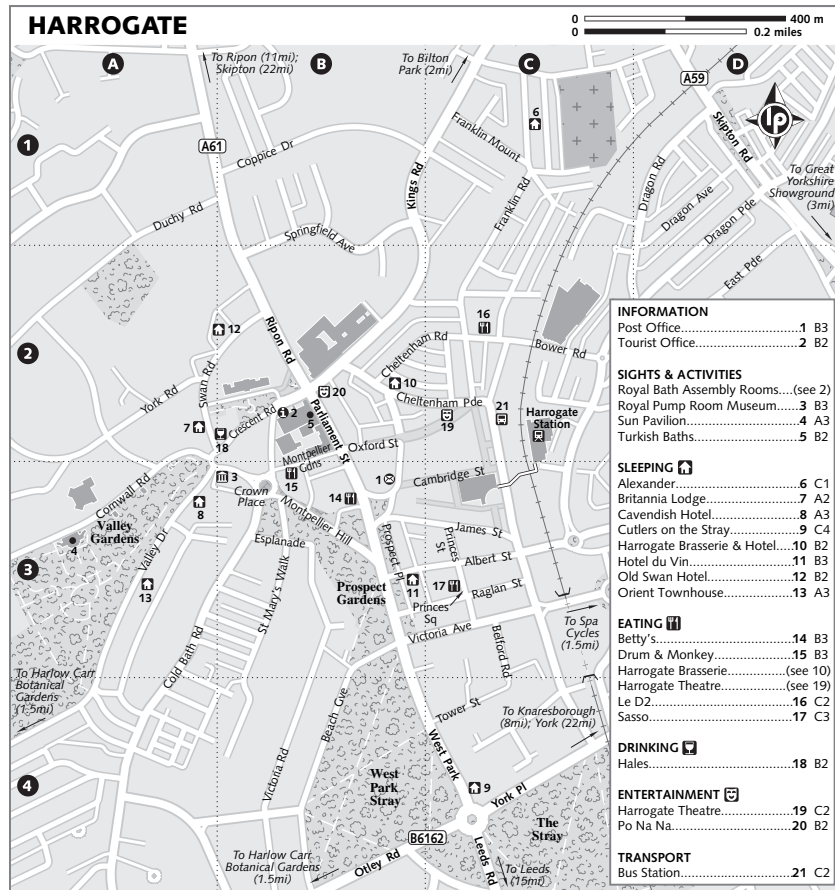
Festivals & Events

The year's main event is the immense **Spring Flower Show** (☎ 0870 758 3333; www.flowershow.org.uk; admission £11-14), held in late April, followed in late September by the **Autumn Flower Show** (admission £11). Both take place at the Great Yorkshire Showground.

If fancy shrubs aren't your thing, there's a lot more fun to be had at the **Great Yorkshire Show** (☎ 541000; www.greatyorkshireshow.org; adult/child £18/8), a three-day exhibition staged in mid-July by the Yorkshire Agricultural Society (also held at the showground). It's a real treat, with all manner of farm critters competing for prizes and last year's losers served up in a variety of ways.

THE WHITE MONKS

Founded at Cîteaux in Burgundy in 1098, the Cistercians were hard-core. They rejected the free-lovin', toga-party antics of those wild and crazy Benedictines in favour of an even more austere form of living: they lived in the most inhospitable parts of the kingdom and refused to wear underwear. Their habits were made of undyed sheep's wool – hence their nickname – and they survived on a starvation diet. Nobody complained either, because they were committed to long periods of silence and eight daily services. But, with so much time given over to starving themselves in silent prayer, there was no room for work so they ordained lay brothers who tilled their lands, worked their lead mines and tended their flocks of sheep. And so it was that their commitment to a superdisciplined 1st-century Christianity made them powerful and rich – and encouraged other orders such as the Augustinians and their old nemesis the Benedictines to follow suit. The Scottish Wars and the Black Death threw an economic spanner in the works though, and they were eventually forced to lease their lands to tenant farmers and live off the proceeds. When Henry VIII went to war with the monasteries in 1536, he used their perceived greed and laziness as partial justification. Surely a case of king pot calling the white kettles black?



Sleeping

BUDGET

Bilton Park (☎ 863121; biltonpark@tcsmail.net; Village Farm, Bilton; tent sites £11; ☞ Apr-Oct) A convenient camp site 2 miles north of town. Take bus 201, 203 or 204 from the bus station.

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Britannia Lodge (☎ 508482; www.britlodge.co.uk; 16 Swan Rd; s/d £55/85;) The Britannia is a beautiful home on a leafy street, and has three immaculate doubles and a fabulous, self-contained two-bedroom suite (with a real fireplace) on the lovely garden. Nice little touches like a welcome coffee – from a cafetiere, no less – make this place a very good choice.

Old Swan Hotel (☎ 500055; www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk; Swan Rd; s/d from £69/90;) An ivy-coated 18th-century country hotel set in 2 hectares of gardens – right in the middle of town. It was here that Agatha Christie holed up in 1926; the interiors have been spruced up and are now as handsome as they were when Agatha put her head on the pillows.

Cutlers on the Stray (☎ 524471; www.cutlers-web.co.uk; 19 West Park; d from £85;) A touch of the Mediterranean comes to Yorkshire in the shape of this stylish boutique hotel and brasserie in a converted coaching inn. Yellows, creams and reds are used to great effect in the rooms, which are thoroughly modern in design.

Orient Townhouse (☎ 565818; www.orienttownhouse.com; 51 Valley Drive; s/d from £105/130) The Eastern

flavours of this handsome town house don't extend much further than the duvet covers and the odd bit of decoration, but this fine guesthouse is an excellent choice if you're looking for a bit of pampering.

Hotel Du Vin (☎ 856800; www.hotelduvin.com; Prospect Pl; r/ste from £105/150;) A very stylish boutique hotel to make the other lodgings in town sit up and take notice. Inside the converted town house, standard rooms are spacious and extremely comfortable; each has a trademark huge bed draped in soft Egyptian cotton. The loft suites – with their exposed oak beams, hardwood floors and designer bathrooms – are the nicest rooms we've seen in town. Breakfast (£9.95 to £13.50) is not included. The Sunday-to-Thursday rate is about £20 cheaper than the weekend rate.

Other options:

Alexander (☎ 503348; thealexander@amservice.net; 88 Franklin Rd; s/d £30/60;) Handsome Victorian mansion with immaculate, unstintingly floral rooms.

Cavendish Hotel (☎ 509637; 3 Valley Dr; s/d from £38/57, 4-poster £75) Comfortable rooms with a touch of flourish, the best of which overlook the Valley Gardens.

Harrogate Brasserie & Hotel (☎ 505041; www.brasserie.co.uk; 28-30 Cheltenham Pde; s/d from £52.50/85) Has 14 stylish rooms, an excellent restaurant and frequent live jazz.

Eating

BUDGET

Harrogate Theatre (Oxford St; sandwiches about £5; ☞ 10am-6pm Mon-Sat) A grand old café that's popular at lunchtime.

Betty's (☎ 502746; www.bettysandtaylor.co.uk; 1 Parliament St; mains around £7.50; ☞ 9am-9pm) A classic tearoom dating from 1919, founded by a Swiss immigrant confectioner who got on a wrong train, ended up in Yorkshire and decided to stay. It heaves with scone groupies (tea and scones about £5). A pianist tinkles among the teacups from 6pm.

Le D2 (☎ 502700; 7 Bower Rd; mains £6-9; ☞ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat) Mediterranean colours and red-and-white tablecloths are often a substitute for proper food, but they're merely the backdrop for a genuinely good menu at this smart brasserie. The fresh bread rolls and salads are terrific.

MIDRANGE

Sasso (☎ 508838; 8-10 Princes Sq; lunch menu £8, mains £8-15; ☞ 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 Italian specialities.

Drum & Monkey (☎ 502650; 5 Montpellier Gardens; mains £8-12; ☞ lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) Our favourite restaurant in town serves up mouthwatering seafood dishes to an enthusiastic and loyal clientele.

Harrogate Brasserie (☎ 505041; 30 Cheltenham Pde; 2-course meal £15.95; ☞ dinner) There's more than a hint of New Orleans at this friendly, popular brasserie serving up some pretty good French cuisine. Photos of jazz greats adorn the red walls to complement the regular live performances.

Drinking

Hales (☎ 725571; 1-3 Crescent Rd) Have a decent pint of ale or some filling pub grub by flickering gaslight at this traditional pub.

Entertainment

Po Na Na (☎ 509758; 2 Kings Rd; free before 11pm; ☞ 10pm-2am Wed-Sat) Harrogate's only half-decent late bar-club, with a none-too-outlandish soundtrack of funky stuff, from cheesy '70s disco to contemporary house.

Harrogate Theatre (☎ 502116; www.harrogatetheatre.com; Oxford St) Drama, comedy and music staged in Art Deco surroundings.

Getting There & Away

Trains serve Harrogate from Leeds (50 minutes, about half-hourly) and York (45 minutes, 10 to 12 daily).

National Express bus 561 runs from Leeds (50 minutes, six daily). Bus 383 comes from Ripon (25 minutes, four daily). Buses 36 and 36A also run regularly between Ripon, Harrogate and Leeds.

SCARBOROUGH

☎ 01723 / pop 57,649

At first glance, Yorkshire's favourite seaside resort stands up quite well. It has a pretty spectacular setting above two beautiful white-sand bays; it is graced by a host of handsome buildings built at various times during the reigns of Edward, Victoria and the four Georges; and is topped by the romantic hulk of a castle. It sounds very inviting, but once you're on the waterfront the seaside kitsch overwhelms what is left of Scarborough's more genteel side: neon-lit amusement arcades and casinos draw punters away from the donkey rides and tacky souvenir stands.

It has been popular since the mid-18th century, and it is the vestiges of that era that



are most interesting about Scarborough today. Its renowned theatre is the base of England's popular playwright, Alan Ayckbourn, whose plays always premier here.

Orientation

Modern suburbs sprawl west of the town centre, which is above the old town and the South Bay. The town is on a plateau above the beaches; cliff lifts, steep streets and footpaths provide the links. The Victorian development to the south is separated from the town centre by a steep valley, which has been landscaped and is crossed by high bridges.

The main shopping street, Westborough, has a dramatic view of the castle rising in the distance. The North Bay is home to all the tawdry

seashore amusements; the South Bay is more genteel. The old town lies between St Mary's Church, the castle and the Old Harbour.

Information

Laundrette (☎ 375763; 48 North Marine Rd)

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

Scarborough Library (☎ 383400; Vernon Rd; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to noon Sat; per 30min £1) For internet use.

Tourist office (☎ 383637; www.discoveryyorkshire.co.uk; Brunswick Shopping Centre, Unit 15a, Westborough; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Sat, 11am-5pm Sun Apr-Oct, 10am-4.30pm Mon-Sat Nov-Mar)

Waterstone's (☎ 500414; 97-98 Westborough) For books and magazines.

Sights & Activities

Scarborough is not exclusively about bingo, buckets and burgers – there are a number of sights to distract you from the beach and its goings-on.

Battered **Scarborough Castle** (EH; ☎ 372451; admission £3.50; ☎ 10am-6pm Apr-Sep, 10am-4pm Thu-Mon Nov-Mar) has excellent views across the bays and the town. There's been some kind of fortification here for nearly 2500 years, but the current structure dates from the 12th century. Legend has it that Richard III loved the views so much his ghost just keeps coming back. More corporeal beings can get to it via a 13th-century barbican.

Below the castle is **St Mary's Church** (☎ 500541; Castle Rd; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 1-4pm Sun May-Sep), dating from 1180 and rebuilt in the 15th and 17th centuries, with some interesting 14th-century chapels. Anne Brontë is buried in the churchyard.

Of all the family-oriented attractions on the bays, the best of the lot is the **Sea Life Centre & Marine Sanctuary** (☎ 376125; www.sealife.co.uk; Scalby Mills; adult/child £10.95/8.95; ☎ 10am-6pm) overlooking North Bay. Here you can explore the Jurassic seas, coral reefs and the newest addition, Turtle Reef, all about the shelled creatures. The rescue work done with woe-begone seals is quite uplifting.

The Pre-Raphaelite, high Victorian interior of the **Church of St Martin-on-the-Hill** (☎ 360437; Albion Rd; ☎ 7.30am-5.30pm) was worked on by Burne-Jones, Morris, Maddox Brown and Rossetti.

The **Rotunda Museum** (☎ 374839; Vernon Rd) traces local matters from prehistory to the present, but is currently closed for a major renovation.

There are some decent waves out in the North Sea. The friendly **Secret Spot Surf Shop** (☎ 500467; www.secretspot.co.uk; 4 Pavilion Tce) can advise on conditions, recommend places for lessons and rent all manner of gear. The best time for waves is September to May.

See p551 for more information about the 20-mile Whitby-Scarborough Coastal Cycle Trail.

Sleeping

If something stays still long enough in town, it'll offer B&B; competition is intense and it's difficult to choose between places. In such a tough market, multnight-stay special offers are two a penny, which means that single-night rates are the highest of all.

BUDGET

Scalby Close Caravan Park (☎ 366212; www.scalbyclosepark.co.uk; Burniston Rd; sites £12-15; ☎ Easter-Oct) A small park about 2 miles north of town with plenty of sites for vans and tents as well as five fixed holiday caravans for rent (£140 to £325 per week). The park has all the usual facilities. Take bus 12 or 21.

Scarborough YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 6022; www.yha.org.uk; Burniston Rd; dm £13.95; ☎ Apr-Aug) This simply idyllic hostel in a converted water mill from around 1600 has comfortable four- and six-bed dorms as well as a lounge, self-catering kitchen and laundry. It is 2 miles north of town along the A166 to Whitby. Take bus 3, 12 or 21.

MIDRANGE

Interludes (☎ 360513; www.interludeshotel.co.uk; 32 Princess St; s/d from £29/51; (P)) Owners Ian and Bob have a flair for the theatrical, and have brought it to bear with incredible success on this lovely, gay-friendly Georgian home plastered with old theatrical 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 (☎ 372735; www.windmill-hotel.co.uk; Mill St; s/d from £30/60; (P)) A beautifully converted 18th-century mill in the middle of town offers tight-fitting but comfortable doubles around a cobbled courtyard – the upstairs rooms have a small veranda.

Royal Hotel (☎ 364333; www.englishrosehotels.co.uk; St Nicholas St; s/d from £40/80) Scarborough's most famous hotel has a lavish Regency interior, grand staircase for Shirley Bassey-style entrances, and smart rooms, some with sea views. The perfectly comfortable but characterless rooms just don't compare with the grandeur of the public spaces.

Red Lea Hotel (☎ 362431; www.redleahotel.co.uk; Prince of Wales Tce; s/d £41/82; (P)) An elegant terrace of six Georgian houses makes up this popular choice, which has large rooms rich in velvet drapes, lush carpets and king-size beds. Downstairs is a heated, kidney-shaped swimming pool and, next door, a small leisure centre with sauna, sunbeds and a gym.

TOP END

Crown Hotel (☎ 373491; www.scarboroughhotel.com; Esplanade; s/d from £60/110; (P)) This grand old hotel opened its nearly regal doors in 1845 and has been going strong ever since, changing

Sleeping

The national park is ringed with towns and villages, all with a good range of accommodation – although options thin out in the central area. Walkers and outdoor fans can take advantage of the network of camping barns. Most are on farms, with bookings administered by the **YHA** (☎ 0870 870 8808). For more details tourist offices have a *Camping Barns in England* leaflet.

Getting There & Around

If you're coming from the south, from York (17 miles outside the park) there are regular buses to Helmsley, Pickering, Scarborough and Whitby.

From the north, head for Middlesbrough, then take the Esk Valley railway line through the northern moors to Whitby via Grosmont and several other villages which make useful bases. A second line, the North Yorkshire Moors Railway (NYMR), runs through the park from Pickering to Grosmont. Using these two railway lines, much of the moors area is easily accessible for those without wheels.

The highly useful **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. A standard Moorsbus day pass costs £3, and for £12.50 the pass covers you on the Esk Valley and NYMR trains too – a good deal if you plan to really make a day of it. Family tickets and one-off fares for short journeys are also available.

Call the national **Traveline** (☎ 0870 608 2 608) for all public bus and train information.

HELMSLEY

☎ 01439 / pop 1620

Beneath the watchful gaze of a sturdy Norman castle, Helmsley is a classic North Yorkshire market town, a handsome old place full of old houses, historic coaching inns and – inevitably – a cobbled square where Friday is market day. Nearby are the dreamlike ruins of Rievaulx Abbey and there is a fistful of decent walks in the area. All told, you could do far worse than base yourself here to explore this gorgeous southwest corner of the moors.

Orientation & Information

The centre of everything is Market Pl; all four sides are lined with twee shops, cosy pubs and several cafés. The helpful **tourist office**

(☎ 770173; www.ryedale.gov.uk; ☹ 9.30am–5.30pm Mar–Oct, 10am–4pm Fri–Sun Nov–Feb) sells maps, books and helps with accommodation.

Sights

The impressive ruins of 12th-century **Helmsley Castle** (EH; ☎ 770442; admission £4; ☹ 10am–6pm Apr–Oct, 10am–4pm Thu–Mon Nov–Mar), just southwest of the Market Pl, have a striking series of deep ditches and banks (aka earthworks), 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 following the Civil War. The castle's tumultuous history is well explained in the newish visitor centre.

Just outside the castle, **Helmsley Walled Garden** would be just another plant and produce centre, were it not for its dramatic position and its 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** with the grand stately home of **Duncombe Park House** (☎ 770213; www.duncombepark.com; house & grounds £6.50, park only £3.50; ☹ house by guided tour only, every 30min 12.30–3.30pm, gardens 11am–5.30pm Sun–Thu late Apr–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.

Activities

Of the numerous walks in Duncombe Park, the 3.5-mile route to Rievaulx Abbey is the real star. 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 overture to the Cleveland Way (p545). Cycling to Rievaulx Abbey is also possible, but the roads are quite busy; a better option for cyclists is the network of quiet (and relatively flat) country lanes east of Helmsley.

Sleeping

Wrens of Rydale (☎ 771260; www.wrensofryedale.fsnet.co.uk; Gale Lane, Nawton; car & 2 adults/hikers £10/8.50) Three acres of pristine parkland divided into

sections for tents and caravans. This excellent camp site is 3 miles east of Helmsley, just south of Beadlam.

Helmsley YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 5860; www.yha.org.uk; Carlton Lane; dm £13.95) This purpose-built hostel just outside the centre is a bit like an ordinary suburban home; its location at the start of the Cleveland Way means that it's virtually 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 (or more) of hand-pumped real ale. The **Feathers Hotel** (☎ 770275; www.feathershotelhelmsley.co.uk; Market Pl; s/d from £44/80) has four-poster beds in some rooms and historical trimmings throughout, with mains for £8 to £11, while for something a lot plusher, head for the **Feverish Arms** (☎ 770766; www.feverisharms.com; s/d £130/140; P ☹), with mains for £16 to £23, which even has its own pool.

Eating & Drinking

Star Inn (☎ 770397; www.thestaratharome.co.uk; Harome; mains £10–17; ☹ lunch & dinner Tue–Sat) This thatched-cottage pub is like hitting the rustic gastro-jackpot. In the middle is the kind of pub you could happily get slowly sloshed in, but the only thing to tear you away is the Michelin-starred feast that awaits you in the dining room. Each dish is a delicious rendering of some local favourite with a flight of fancy to make it really special: how about Nawton-bred middle white pig casserole with baked apples, black pudding and sage and Somerset brandy cream? You won't want to leave, and the good news is you don't have to: the adjacent lodge has eight magnificent bedrooms, each decorated in classic but luxurious country style (rooms £130 to £210). If we could, we'd live here. It's about 2 miles south of town just off the A170.

Royal Oak (Market Pl) The liveliest of the town's pubs, with good beer and bar meals.

Getting There & Away

All buses stop in the Market Pl. From York to Helmsley, take bus 31, 31A or 31X (three daily Monday to Saturday, 1½ hours). Between Helmsley and Scarborough, bus 128 (£6.40, 1½ hours, hourly Monday to Saturday, four on Sunday) goes via Pickering.

AROUND HELMSLEY

Rievaulx

The moors' most visited attraction is the famous remains of **Rievaulx Abbey** (EH; ☎ 01439-

798228; admission £4.20; ☹ 10am–6pm Apr–Sep, to 5pm Thu–Mon Oct, to 4pm Thu–Mon Nov–Mar), about 3 miles west of Helmsley in the small eponymous village. Rievaulx (ree-voh) is everything a ruin should be: battered enough by the passage of time to give a venerable air, but with enough beautiful stonework, soaring pillars and graceful arches remaining so you can imagine how it looked in its 13th-century heyday.

The site is quite simply idyllic – a secluded, wooded valley overlooking fields and the River Rye – with a view pretty much as it was 900 years ago, when Cistercian monks first arrived. And it seems they enjoyed the scenery just as much as we do today: one abbot, St Aelred, famously described the abbey's surroundings as 'everywhere peace, everywhere serenity, and a marvellous freedom from the tumult of the world.' If only he'd known how enduring his words would be. Ponder his words over a picnic. Or a spot of contemplation. Or both.

Near the abbey, **Rievaulx Terrace & Temples** (NT; ☎ 01439-798340; admission £4; ☹ 10.30am–6pm Apr–Sep, to 5pm Oct–Nov) is a wooded escarpment once part of extensive Duncombe Park (opposite). In the 1750s landscape-gardening fashion favoured a natural or Gothic look, and many aristocrats had mock ruins built in their parks. The Duncombe family went one better, as their lands contained a medieval ruin – Rievaulx Abbey – and the half-mile-long grassy terrace was built, with classical-style temples at each end, so lords and ladies could stroll effortlessly in the 'wilderness' and admire the ruins in the valley below. Today, we can do the same, with views over Ryedale and the Hambleton Hills forming a perfect backdrop.

A visit to these two historic sites makes a great day out from Helmsley, but note that there's no direct access between the abbey and the terrace. Their entrance gates are about a mile apart and easily reached along a lane – steeply uphill if you're going from the abbey to the terrace.

Sutton Bank

Sutton Bank is a dramatically steep escarpment 8 miles west of Helmsley. If you're driving, this may be your entry to the North York Moors. And what an entry. The road climbs steeply up, with magnificent views westwards across to the Pennines and Yorkshire Dales. At the top, there's a **tourist office** (☎ 01845-597426; ☹ 10am–5pm Apr–Oct, 11am–4pm Nov, Dec &

Mar, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Jan & Feb) with exhibitions about the moors, books and maps for sale, and handy leaflets on short walks to nearby viewpoints. If you don't have your own wheels, the Moorsbus service M3 links Sutton Bank with Helmsley, from where all other parts of the park can be reached.

Coxwold

☎ 01347 / pop 190

Coxwold is an immaculate village of golden stone with a serene sense of symmetry, nestling in beautiful countryside about 7 miles southwest of Helmsley. It may be in the north but it shouts Middle England (it even *sounds* like Cotswold), and Yorkshire accents are pretty scarce hereabouts.

Apart from the quiet picture-postcard beauty of the place, the main attraction is the 15th-century **Shandy Hall** (☎ 868465; 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), home to 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; ☎ 868614; admission £3; ☎ 10am-5pm Jul, 10am-5pm Thu-Mon 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 the **Coxwold Schoolhouse B&B** (☎ 868077; www.coxwoldyorkshire.com; s/d £30/50). For a bite to eat, try the **Fauconberg Arms** (☎ 868214; Main St; mains £10-15), a cosy local in the heart of the village with a fine Continental-style menu in its elegant restaurant.

HUTTON-LE-HOLE

☎ 01751 / pop 210

A contender for best-looking village in Yorkshire, Hutton-le-Hole may sound odd but it's actually a wonderful collection of gorgeous stone cottages centred on a village green, an undulating grassy expanse with a stream creating a small valley that divides the village in two. The dips and hollows on the green might give the village its name – it was once called simply Hutton Hole, but posh wannabe Victorians added the Frenchified 'le', which the locals defiantly pronounce 'lee'. Its popularity as an understated tourist destination has

twice-ified the place somewhat, but it's lovely for a stroll and a streamside picnic.

The **tourist office** (☎ 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** (☎ 417367; www.ryedalefolkmuseum.co.uk; adult/child £4.50/3; ☎ 10am-dusk Mar-Oct, to 5.30pm Nov-Feb), 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 2.5-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

Hutton-le-Hole has a small choice of places to stay in the village itself, and the tourist office can help with more suggestions if you want to stay in a B&B on a farm in the surrounding countryside.

Burnley House (☎ 417548; www.burnleyhouse.co.uk; d from £65) This elegant Georgian home offers comfortable B&B, a hearty breakfast and a separate four-poster bedroom (off the main house) that sounds luxurious but is far too small for such a huge bed!

Crown (bar meals £7-11) The village pub, this is a straightforward spot that's popular with locals and visitors.

The main street also boasts a handful of tearooms, all offering drinks, snacks and lunches.

Getting There & Away

Hutton-le-Hole is 2.5 miles north of the main A170 road, about equidistant from the market towns of Helmsley and Pickering. Moorsbus services (p546) 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). Outside times when the Moorsbus runs, you'll need your own transport to get here. Alternatively catch bus 128 along the A170, get off at the junction east of Kirkbymoorside and walk the 2.5 miles up the lane to Hutton-le-Hole.

PICKERING

☎ 01751 / pop 6616

The lively market town of Pickering has its charms – most notably the Norman castle and the fabulous North Yorkshire Moors Railway, for which Pickering serves as a terminus – but it is too big and bustling to keep you in thrall. It is, however, a handy staging post from which to explore the eastern moors.

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

Sights & Activities

Pickering Castle (EH; ☎ 474989; admission £3; ☎ 10am-6pm Apr-Sep, 10am-4pm Thu-Mon Oct) is a lot like the castles we drew as kids: thick stone outer walls circling the keep, and the lot perched atop a high motte (mound) with great views of the surrounding countryside. Founded by William the Conqueror, it was added to and altered by later kings.

The privately owned **North Yorkshire Moors Railway** (NYMR; ☎ Pickering Station 472508, recorded timetable 473535; www.northyorkshiremoorsrailway.com, www.nymr.demon.co.uk) runs for 18 miles through beautiful countryside to the village of Gros-mont. Lovingly restored steam locos pull period carriages, resplendent in polished brass and bright paintwork, and the railway appeals to train buffs and day-trippers alike. For visitors without wheels, it's excellent for reaching out-of-the-way spots. Even more useful, Grosmont is also on the main railway line between Middlesbrough and Whitby, which opens up yet more possibilities for walking or sightseeing.

Sleeping & Eating

White Swan Hotel (☎ 472288; www.white-swan.co.uk; Market Pl; s/d from £89/129) The top spot in town successfully combines a smart pub, a superb restaurant serving local dishes with a Continental twist (mains £9 to £15) and a luxurious little boutique hotel all in one. Nine new rooms in the converted coach house up the ante with LCD flat-screen TVs and other stylish paraphernalia to add to the luxury found elsewhere.

There's a strip of similar B&Bs on tree-lined Eastgate (which becomes the A170 to/from Scarborough). Decent options include **Eden House** (☎ 472289; www.edenhouseandb.co.uk; 120 Eastgate; s/d from £26/52), a pretty house with cottage-style décor, and flower- and plant-clad **Rose**

Folly (☎ 475067; www.rosefolly.freeserve.co.uk; 112 Eastgate; s/d £28/52), with lovely rooms and a beautiful breakfast conservatory.

Drinking

There are several cafés and tearooms on Market Pl, and for drinks of another sort the **Bay Horse** (Market Pl) is a good no-nonsense pub.

Getting There & Away

Bus 128 between Helmsley (40 minutes) and Scarborough (50 minutes) runs hourly via Pickering. Yorkshire Coastliner services (840, 842 and X40) run to/from York (£9.10, hourly, 70 minutes).

For train details, see left.

DANBY

☎ 01287 / pop 290

Danby is an isolated stone village deep in the moors at the head of Eskdale, where the surrounding countryside is particularly beautiful. It makes a good base, as the **Moors Centre** (☎ 01439-772737; www.moors.uk.net; ☎ 10am-5pm Apr-Oct, 11am-4pm Nov, Dec & Mar, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Jan & Feb), the park headquarters, is just half a mile from the village, and has displays, information, a café, an accommodation-booking service and a huge range of local guidebooks, maps and leaflets as well as all the information you'll need on walking routes.

There are several short circular walks from the centre, but first on your list should be **Danby Beacon**; it's a stiff 2 miles uphill to the northeast, but the stunning 360-degree views across the moors sweeten the sweat.

The **Duke of Wellington** (☎ 660351; www.danby-dukeofwellington.co.uk; s/d from £34/65), a fine traditional pub – used as a recruitment centre during the Napoleonic Wars – serves good beer and meals (mains about £7); upstairs there are nine well-appointed rooms.

Using the delightful **Esk Valley Railway** (☎ 0845 748 4950; www.eskvalleyrailway.co.uk), access is easy: Whitby is 20 minutes east; Middlesbrough is 45 minutes west. There are four departures Monday to Saturday, two on Sunday.

WHITBY

☎ 01947 / pop 13,594

When it comes to a bit of classy charm, Whitby blows all of northern England's coastal resorts out of the water. The narrow medieval streets are lined with restaurants, pubs and cute little shops, and everything more or less leads down

to the handsome harbour, where colourful fishing boats move in and out throughout the day. Keeping a watchful eye over the whole scene is the ruined and utterly atmospheric abbey atop one of the cliffs that hems the town.

Whitby wouldn't be a coastal resort without the requisite amusements and pleasure arcades, but here they are merely a part of the overall aesthetic rather than the defining feature. In spite of them, Whitby manages to retain much of its 18th-century character, harking back to the time when the town's most famous (adopted) son, James Cook, was making his first forays to sea on his way towards becoming one of the best-known explorers in history.

Besides the caravan of ordinary sun worshippers and beachcombers that flood the town throughout the summer months, Whitby is popular with good-time girls and boys, retirees, hikers, bikers and even Goths – who flock here for two festivals honouring the king of the vampires: Bram Stoker set part of *Dracula* here (see the boxed text, opposite).

And finally there's the all-important matter of fish and chips, and in Whitby you'll find the best in the *whole* country.

Orientation

Whitby is divided in two by the harbour and River Esk estuary. On the east bank (East Cliff) is the older part of town; the newer (19th-century) town grew up on the other side, West Cliff. An intriguing feature of Whitby is that many streets have two names. For example, Abbey Tce and Hudson St are opposite sides of the same street, as are West St and The Esplanade.

Information

Java Café-Bar (☎ 820832; 2 Flowergate; per 20min £1) Internet access.

Laundrette (72 Church St)

Post office (☎ 8.30am–5.30pm Mon–Sat) Across from the tourist office inside the Co-op supermarket.

Tourist office (☎ 602674; www.discoveryyorkshire.co.uk, www.visitwhitby.com; Langborne Rd; ☎ 9.30am–6pm May–Sep, 10am–4.30pm Oct–Apr) A wealth of information on the town and the surrounding moors and coast.

Sights

There are ruins, and then there's **Whitby Abbey** (EH; ☎ 603568; admission £4.20; ☎ 10am–6pm Apr–Sep, 10am–4pm Thu–Mon Oct–Mar). Dominating the town,

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), but you shouldn't miss the stone jetty in the harbour, where the Russian boat chartered by Dracula was wrecked as it flew in ahead of the huge storm.

After the town sites, you can climb the same 199 stone steps that the heroine Mina ran up when trying to save her friend Lucy. At the top of the steps is moody St Mary's Church, where Mina first saw Lucy sitting next to a suspicious black being. By that time, of course, it was too late. Cue music. The End.

in a stunning location, this ancient holy place dates from the 11th to 14th centuries, with huge solid pillars, soaring arches and gaping windows made all the more dramatic with the North Sea sky behind. Nearby, **St Mary's Church** (☎ 10am–5pm Apr–Oct, to 4pm Nov–Mar) has an atmospheric interior full of skewed and tilting galleries and box pews. You reach the abbey and the church via the famous 199 steps up the cliff side. Take time out to catch your breath and admire the view.

Cook-related links are a big deal in Whitby, but the best place to find out about the famous seafarer is at the **Captain Cook Memorial Museum** (☎ 601900; www.cookmuseumwhitby.co.uk; Grape Lane; adult/child £3.50/2.50; ☎ 9.45am–5pm Apr–Oct, 11am–3pm Sat & Sun Mar), a house once occupied by the ship-owner to whom Cook was apprenticed. Highlights include Cook's own maps and writings, etchings from the South Seas and a wonderful model of the *Endeavour*, with all the crew and stores laid out for inspection.

At the top of the cliff near East Tce, the **Captain Cook Monument** shows the great man looking out to sea, usually with a seagull perched on his head. Nearby the **Whalebone Arch** (it's just that), remembers Whitby's days as a whaling port.

South of here, in a park overlooking the town, is the wonderfully eclectic **Whitby Museum & Art Gallery** (☎ 602908; Pannett Park; museum adult/child £3/1, art gallery admission free; ☎ 9.30am–5.30pm Mon–Sat, 2–5pm Sun May–Sep, 10am–1pm Tue, 10am–4pm Wed–Sat, 2–4pm Sun Oct–Apr), with fossils, Cook memorabilia, ships in bottles and weird stuff like an amputated hand and an invention for weather forecasting using live leeches. The gallery contains work by the Staithes group of artists.

Activities

Although it's hardly tranquil, a walk up the main road to the new bridge high above the

Esk is worth it for great views. For something a bit longer, the 5.5-mile clifftop walk south to Robin Hood's Bay is a real treat (allow three hours). Or head north for 11 miles to reach Staithes (five hours). A bus from Middlesbrough will get you home again (see p553).

First choice for a bike ride is the excellent 20-mile Whitby to Scarborough **Coastal Cycle Trail**, which starts a few miles outside town, following the route of an old railway line. It's particularly good for reaching Robin Hood's Bay. Bikes can be hired from **Dr Crank's Bike Shack** (☎ 606661; 20 Skinner St).

Festivals & Events

There's a full programme of festivals throughout the year; during these the town is particularly lively. Tops include the following: **Whitby Gothic Weekends** (www.wgw.topmum.co.uk; tickets from £35) Goth heaven during the last weekends of April and October; anyone in town not wearing black or false fangs is a weirdo.

Moor & Coast Festival (www.moorandcoast.co.uk; tickets £35) A traditional folk festival of music, dance and dubious Celtic art over the May Bank Holiday.

Musicport Festival (www.musicport.fsnet.co.uk; tickets £82.50) A weekend-long world-music festival in mid-October.

Sleeping

Most of the B&Bs are concentrated on West Cliff around Hudson St; if a place isn'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

Whitby YHA Hostel (☎ 0870 770 6089; www.yha.org.uk; Church Lane; dm £11.95; ☎ Apr–Aug, Mon–Sat Sep–Oct, Fri & Sat Nov & Jan–Mar) With an unbeatable position next to the abbey on East Cliff overlooking

WHITBY

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CAPTAIN COOK – WHITBY'S FAMOUS (ADOPTED) SON

Although he wasn't actually born in Whitby, the town has adopted the famous explorer Captain James Cook, and since the first tourists got off the train in Victorian times, local entrepreneurs have mercilessly cashed in on his memory, as endless 'Endeavour Cafés' and 'Captain Cook Chip Shops' testify.

Still, Whitby played a key role in Cook's eventual success as a world-famous explorer, in that the design of the ships used for his voyages of discovery – including the famous *Endeavour* – were based on that of Whitby 'cats', unique flat-bottomed ships carrying coal from Newcastle to London that the young Cook served his apprenticeship on from 1746 to 1755, when he eventually joined the Navy.

the town, 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.

Harbour Grange (☎ 600817; www.whitbybackpackers.co.uk; Spital Bridge; dm £12) Overlooking the harbour, this tidy hostel is conveniently located but has the inconvenience of an 11.30pm curfew – good thing we're all teetotalling dogooders, right?

MIDRANGE

Shepherd's Purse (☎ 820228; fax 820287; 95 Church St; s/d from £25/40) This place began life as a beads-and-baubles boutique in 1973, added a wholefood shop and vegetarian restaurant and now offers guesthouse accommodation. The plainer rooms that share a bathroom are perfectly adequate, but we recommend the en-suite bedrooms situated around a lovely courtyard; each has a handsome brass or four-poster bed and nice pine furniture.

White Horse & Griffin (☎ 604857; www.whitehorseandgriffin.co.uk; 87 Church St; s/d from £35/60) Walk through the suitably olde-worlde frontage of this handsome 18th-century coaching inn and discover a boutique hotel with individually designed, superstylish rooms that have managed 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 guesthouse.

Langley Hotel (☎ 604250; www.langleyhotel.com; 16 Royal Cres; s/d £35/66; ☐) The whiff of Victorian splendour may have faded, but the panoramic views from West Cliff are as good as ever. The rooms are tidy and neat, if a little cramped.

Other options:

Rosslyn House (☎ 604086; rosslyn_gh@btconnect.com; 11 Abbey Tce; s/d £24/48)

Argyle House (☎ 602733; www.argyle-house.co.uk; 18 Hudson St; s/d £25/48)

Bramblewick (☎ 604 504; www.bramblewick.co.uk; 3 Havelock Pl; s/d from £25/50; ☐)

Eating & Drinking

For many visitors, Whitby cuisine extends no further than a fish-and-chip supper (served with peas, bread and tea), obtainable most everywhere for between £4 and £5 but preferably at the world's most famous chipper. If you want to keep your cholesterol in check, there are a few other options.

Shepherd's Purse (☎ 820228; 95 Church St; mains about £7) A veggie place behind a wholefood shop with the same name, with a great range of healthy, interesting snacks and meals, and a very nice courtyard.

Maggie Café (☎ 602058; 14 Pier Rd; mains £7-10; ☒ lunch & dinner) The world's best fish and chips, or so the reputation would have it. They are bloody delicious, but the one downer is that the world and his wife knows about this place, and summertime queues can be off-putting.

Trenchers (☎ 603212; New Quay Rd; mains £7-10; ☒ lunch & dinner) Excellent fish and chips minus the reputation, Trenchers is your best bet if you want to avoid the queues. Don't be put off by the modern look.

Greens (☎ 600284; www.greensofwhitby.com; 13 Bridge St; mains £14-22; ☒ lunch & dinner Fri-Sun, dinner Mon-Thu) The fanciest restaurant in town does wonderful things with fish, caught fresh and delivered from the harbour: the filets of turbot are sensational. There are meat dishes on the menu, but the menu's real strength is seafood.

Many pubs also serve food, including, of course, fish and chips or crab sandwiches, all for about £5 to £7. A good first choice is the popular **Duke of York** (Church St) at the bottom of the 199 steps, with plentiful food and a classic Whitby atmosphere, while next door the smaller **Board Inn** (Church St) is another place with views, good beer and seafood. The **Dolphin** (Bridge St) has tables inside or out on the pavement, while the **Shambles** (Market Pl) is modern and spacious with huge picture windows over-

looking the harbour. The **Tap & Spile** (☎ 603937; New Quay Rd) is a straightforward place with good local rock and folk bands.

Getting There & Away

Whitby is 230 miles from London and 45 miles from York.

Buses 93 and 93A run to/from Scarborough (one hour, hourly), and to Middlesbrough (about hourly), with fewer services on Sunday. Yorkshire Coastliner (buses 840 and X40) runs between Whitby and Leeds (£9.20, three hours, seven per day) via Pickering and York.

If you're coming from the north, you can get to Whitby by train along the Esk Valley line from Middlesbrough (£10.70, 1½ hours, four per day). 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 those 199 steps help burn off the fish and chips. But if you need one, there's a taxi rank near the tourist office. West Cliff is also accessible via a lift (75p), which perishes the thought of clambering up the steep roads.

AROUND WHITBY Robin Hood's Bay

Just 6 miles south of Whitby, Robin Hood's Bay has a lot more to do with smugglers than the Sherwood Forest hero, but this picturesque haven is well worth a visit, although like so many places it's very busy on summer weekends.

A single main street called New Rd winds through the old part of town, dropping steeply down from the clifftop to the sea. (There's compulsory parking at the top – don't even think about driving down as there's hardly room to turn at the bottom.) Off New Rd there's a honeycomb of cobbled alleys, secret passages and impossibly small houses. There are gift shops, teashops and a trail of pubs (it

might be safer to start from the bottom and work your way up), many with seats outside, so this is an excellent place to just sit and watch the world go by.

Among the pubs, our favourite for ambience is the old **Dolphin** (☎ 01947-880337; King St); the **Victoria Hotel** (☎ 01947-880205; Station Rd) has the best beer and good food; and the **Bay Hotel** (☎ 01947-880278; The Dock) is notable for being the end of the famous Coast to Coast Walk (p501). Some pubs do B&B and there are several other accommodation options – the tourist office in Whitby can advise.

It's eminently possible to walk or cycle here from Whitby. Also, buses 93 and 93A run 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.

Staithe

Tucked beneath high cliffs and running back along the steep banks of a river, the small fishing town of Staithe seems to hide from the modern world, focusing still on its centuries-old battle with the sea. It's a lot less touristy than Robin Hood's Bay: the houses are less prettified, you can see fishermen's jackets drying on lines, and seagulls the size of vultures swoop down the narrow alleys that lead off the main street.

The town's claim to fame is that explorer James Cook worked as a grocer here when a boy. Legend says that fishermen's tales of the high seas, and bad treatment by his master, led him to steal a shilling and run away to Whitby. The rest of the tale is told in great detail in the fascinating and lovingly maintained **Captain Cook & Staithe Heritage Centre** (admission £3; ☒ 10am-5.30pm), packed to the gunwales with nautical relics.

Staithe is 11 miles from Whitby. To get here, the buses on the Whitby-to-Middlesbrough run can drop you at the top of the hill. If you're feeling fit, walking one way and busing the other makes for a great day out.

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