

NORTH TO SOUTH

Scottish Highlands to the Cornish Coast



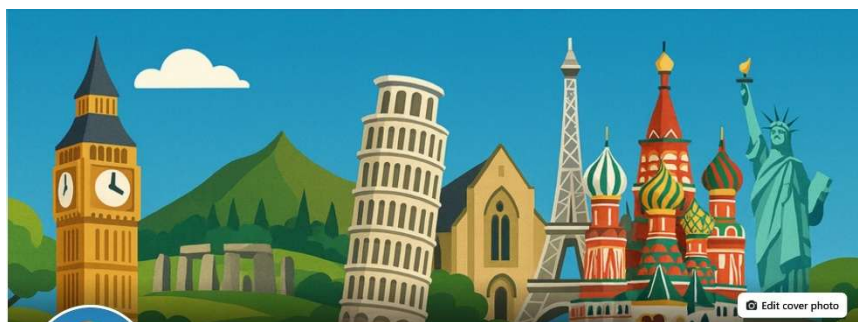
The inside cover for your information.....



This guide is just one of a series of travel guides under 'The Where To Go' banner. You can also find curated videos of the many different places visited on my tours on my YouTube channel which can be found on my website at www.TheWhereToGo.com. Please feel free to like and subscribe.



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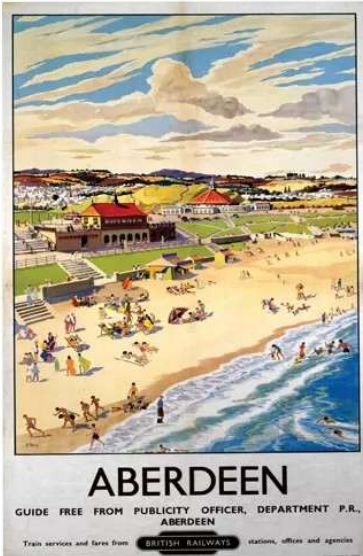


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CONTENTS

<i>Chapter 1: Aberdeen</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Chapter 2: Aberdeen to Penzance</i>	<i>page 10</i>
<i>Chapter 3: Penzance</i>	<i>page 12</i>
<i>Chapter 4: The stations in between</i>	
<i>Stopping at:</i>	
<i>Edinburgh</i>	<i>page 18</i>
<i>Newcastle</i>	<i>page 21</i>
<i>Durham</i>	<i>page 24</i>
<i>York</i>	<i>page 27</i>
<i>Leeds</i>	<i>page 30</i>
<i>Birmingham</i>	<i>page 33</i>
<i>Cheltenham</i>	<i>page 36</i>
<i>Bristol</i>	<i>page 39</i>
<i>Exeter</i>	<i>page 42</i>
<i>Plymouth</i>	<i>page 45</i>

Chapter 1: Aberdeen



It is exceedingly early on Sunday morning and I am wondering how I can get to Heathrow Airport for my early morning flight to Aberdeen. Surprisingly enough, London Underground operates a perfectly decent service at 4 o'clock on a Sunday morning so now I am enjoying my breakfast and waiting for my flight to be called.

This morning's flight to Aberdeen is operated by British Airways and, surprisingly, is cheaper than EasyJet when you factor the price of bringing your 8kg of luggage with you in the cabin. The flight is amazingly quick and soon we are touching down in a very cold and misty Aberdeen.

Taxis are plentiful but the 727 bus is cheaper and takes you into the centre of the city (with a few stops along the way). Riding on the upstairs of this double decker bus affords you a pleasant view of the city and the many church spires which dominate the skyline. A comfortable ride and its money well spent. I decide to get off at Union Street.



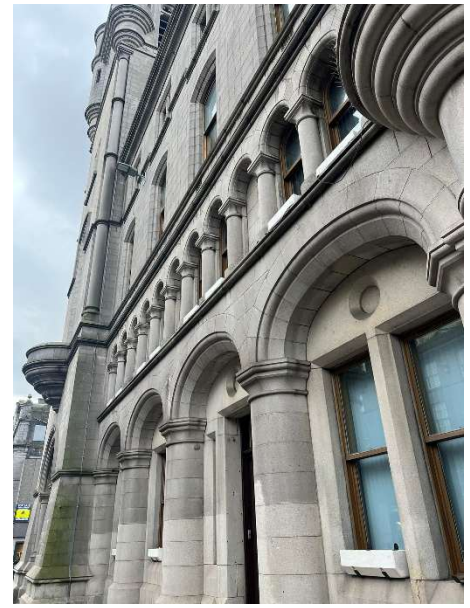


Union Street

Union Street is the main shopping street in Aberdeen. The street is lined with historic buildings, shops and eating places although many of these are boarded up and what is left consists of charity shops, betting shops and pound shops.

Regardless, the City Council is trying hard to upgrade the area although the central area is no worse than many other cities in the north. The various churches, as well as the town hall, art gallery, science museum, maritime museum and music hall, add considerable charm to the city and make you realise the potential still to be tapped.

The Aberdeen Town House, often referred to as Aberdeen's town hall, is located in Castle Street at the end of Union Street. The building was constructed between 1868 and 1874 replacing a tolbooth and courthouse deemed inadequate due to Aberdeen's rapid expansion.



The Mercat Cross

The Mercat Cross, across the road from the Aberdeen Town House, dates back to 1686 and was designed by a local architect called John Montgomery. It is used to symbolise Aberdeen's right to hold markets and was the place where merchants gathered and royal proclamations were announced. The cross features a hexagonal base with six open arches supported by pillars adorned with animal gargoyles and various medallions. These medallions depict the Stewart monarchs from James I to James VII, alongside royal and civic coats of arms.

The original Mercat Cross did have a cross on top, but this was replaced by a white unicorn symbolising Scotland's monarchy. The Mercat Cross sits outside the Salvation Army Citadel in the Castlegate area of Aberdeen. The Citadel stands on the site of Aberdeen Castle which was destroyed by Robert the Bruce in 1308 to prevent English forces from reoccupying it. The Citadel was built between 1893 and 1896 with a 'castellated façade' and a turret inspired by Balmoral Castle.



Aberdeen Art Gallery

Aberdeen is awash with art galleries and museums, including a science museum, a maritime museum and the Gordon Highlanders Museum. However, I am grateful to David for his recommendation to visit the art gallery as it was exactly what I think an art gallery should be.....offering an opportunity to learn about art and appreciate the artist within us.

The art gallery was established in 1885 and designed by Alexander Marshall Mackenzie who was a highly respected Scottish architect. The building was made possible by a £10,000 bequest from Alexander Macdonald, who sought to enrich Aberdeen's cultural life.

The building encapsulates Aberdeen's 'Granite City' identity and features locally quarried granite although the rooftop extension opted for modern materials to contrast with the historic fabric adding a copper-clad rooftop gallery offering panoramic views of the city.

The gallery's 4,500+ artworks cover a range of artists and time periods with a special focus on female artists and the suffragette movement in Scotland. The art gallery is particularly supportive of school age artists who can try out many practical activities including answering questions about particular pieces of art to make them think about what it is saying to them.

It reminded me of the time that I took a small party of my students to visit the local art gallery in Wolverhampton which they never visited despite it being on their doorstep. We gathered around a particularly famous piece of artwork, and I asked them what they thought about it..... nothing was the unanimous response. Art galleries were not for them.



I asked them to tell me what they could see in the picture and what it told them. I acknowledged all their answers and before long we had worked out loads of questions and loads of answers. We discussed subject matter, composition, colour, texture, moods and focal points as well the emotional impact which a piece of art can create for the viewer.

My subject was mathematics and not art, but that day in that art gallery we all learned a lot about art and this art gallery brought all those wonderful memories flooding back.





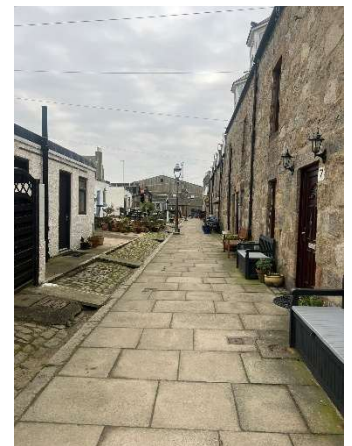
Footdee

Footdee locally known as Fittie, is advertised as a picturesque area of Aberdeen. The area is a former fishing village and lies at the entrance to Aberdeen Harbour. The area was established in the early 19th century and was originally designed to house fishermen and their families.

The village is characterised by its unique architecture featuring small cottages with distinctive corrugated iron roofs although many of these are now in a rather bad state of repair, so the place is not quite as picturesque as it used to be.

The village is clearly a close-knit community with a rich maritime tradition which is hardly evidenced in this location. The North Sea provides a fitting backdrop to the area but I am guessing that the fishing heritage is not what it used to be.

In addition to its historical significance, Footdee is popular for its scenic walks along the waterfront, and it often attracts artists and photographers looking to capture its charm in paintings and photographs which can be bought at a reasonable price.



Aberdeen Beach

Aberdeen Beach is a popular coastal destination located along the North Sea. It is known for its long sandy shoreline offering a refreshing escape for both locals and visitors. The area is full of cafés and arcades with the semblance of what used to be an amusement park.

Like most of Aberdeen, there was a lot of work going on to redevelop the area and the plans look impressive. In the meantime the area is a popular for walking, cycling and buying unhealthy food from burger vans which line the promenade.

Although I would not attempt to call this place a resort, one of the highlights is its stunning views, particularly during sunrise and sunset. The beach is also home to a variety of wildlife, and it provides many opportunities for water sports such as kayaking and windsurfing.



Reflections on Aberdeen

Aberdeen is often referred to as the 'Granite City' due to its distinctive grey stone architecture..... and it is that grey stone architecture that makes the place look so terribly boring. This is a city with history and culture which so far has been totally untapped in spite of the City Council pursuing some interesting projects which have much potential.

Aberdeen benefits from affordable housing and a low crime rate. Education and healthcare are better than many similar places. The city has several historical cathedrals, loads of museums, an excellent art gallery and a magnificently popular theatre. The coastal scenery is stunning, but that is not enough for the winter months when it is just damn right cold.



Chapter 2: Aberdeen to Penzance

The longest train ride in the UK



The longest train ride in the UK is the journey from Aberdeen in Scotland to Penzance in Cornwall. The journey covers 785 miles and takes about 13.5 hours stopping at 36 stations along the way offering views of the Scottish Highlands and Cornish coast. The route passes through Edinburgh, Newcastle, Durham, York, Leeds, Birmingham, Cheltenham, Bristol, Exeter and Plymouth and should get me to Penzance at 9.30pm.

The route was first introduced in 1921 and paused during the pandemic but reinstated in 2023. The route will be discontinued in May 2025 when a new timetable comes into force. Under the new timetable the longest train ride will terminate at Plymouth and will take about 11.5 hours stopping at 34 stations which is why I am taking this trip now and not in the summer.

It is late on Monday evening when we finally pull into Penzance Station which opened in 1852 and is the terminus of this line. I suppose that 9.30pm is considered late in these parts because the station is closed and we arrive at an external platform and exit by the side door. Fortunately for me, my hotel is next to the station which is a good job because the reception closes at 10 o'clock.

Reflections on the longest train ride in the UK

Thirteen hours and twenty minutes is a long time to stay put and watch the scenery move rather than the other way around. Regardless, it is surprisingly relaxing to see the landscape change as you travel from north to south via the industrial heartlands.

While thirteen hours and twenty minutes may seem like a long time, it is dwarfed by the Trans-Siberian Railway which runs from Moscow to Vladivostok in Russia, covers 5772 miles and takes about eight days and seven nights.

Back in the UK and as the scenery changes, so does the train staff and so does the clientele. Morning commuters are replaced by leisure travellers and evening commuters by those avoiding the rush hour stampede. There is plenty to see outside and inside the railway carriage.

Soon it is getting dark, and you realise that you are two thirds of the way to your destination. You also realise that you are not going to see an awful lot of Bristol, Exeter or Plymouth. To cap it all, the refreshment trolley got off at Bristol, so I am glad that I brought my own (considerable) supplies.



On reflection, this journey is probably best made in stages so that you can do a little bit more than just admire the railway stations as interesting as some of these are. The countryside looks different at night, and I missed out on the Cornish Coast but maybe I will see that on my way home.

If you fancy doing the trip yourself sometime, then here are my handy hints:

- Choose a seat on the left-hand side (as you face the front) for the best coastal/countryside views.
- Watch out for the highlights along the way..... coastline, bridges, castles and the Angel of the North.
- Bring plenty of food as the trolley service is irregular and, invariably, under-stocked. Staff are nice.
- The free Wi-Fi is frustratingly poor and cannot be relied upon. Best not to bring any work with you.
- Luggage space is tight so place luggage overhead or under your seat if you don't want it on your lap.

UPDATE (MAY 2026)

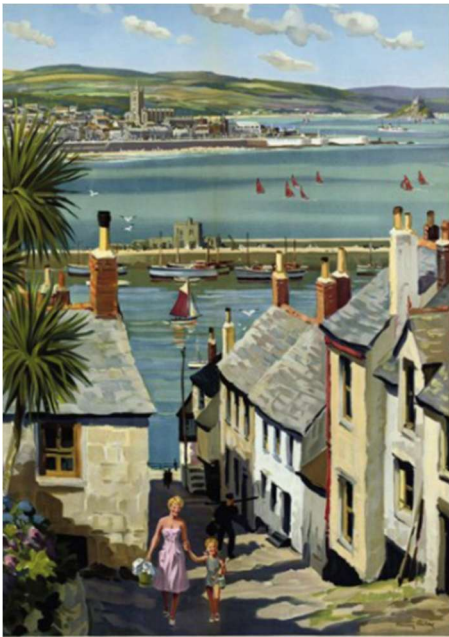
The CrossCountry service from Aberdeen to Penzance was discontinued with the introduction of a new timetable in May 2025.....

The UK's longest train ride is now from Aberdeen to Plymouth taking 11.5 hours, calling at 34 stations, leaving Aberdeen at 0820 and arriving in Plymouth at 1947. You can use this train to get to Penzance, but you will now need to change at Taunton.

If you fancy something faster (and cheaper) then you can always catch the same 0820 train from Aberdeen and change at Haymarket, Wolverhampton and Taunton to arrive in Plymouth at 1920 thus saving yourself 27 minutes....how does that work???

Today, the UK's longest direct train journey by scheduled time is the overnight Caledonian Sleeper service from London Euston to Fort William. The train leaves London Euston at 20:55 and arrives in Fort William at 10:00 the following morning, taking 13 hours and 5 minutes. The journey previously took 12 hours and 45 minutes.

Chapter 3: Penzance



PENZANCE
THE CENTRE FOR WEST CORNWALL
Illustrated guide (P.O.6d.) from Town Clerk, Penzance
TRAVEL BY TRAIN

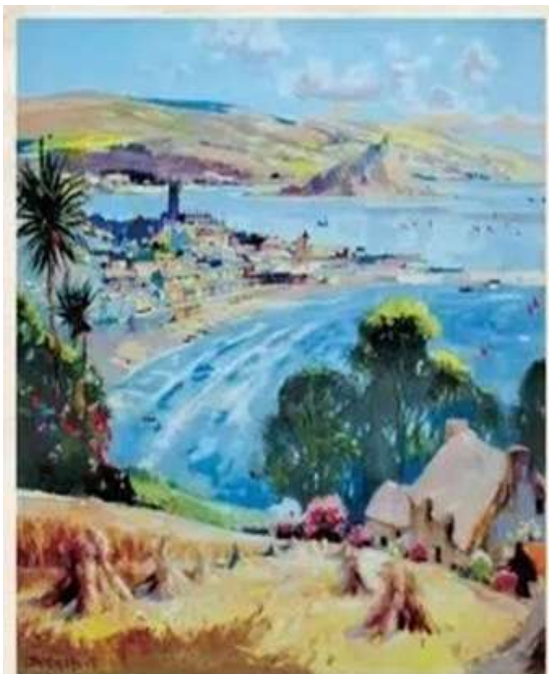


PENZANCE
GATEWAY TO WEST CORNWALL
Illustrated Guide (6d.) from Town Clerk, Penzance
TRAVEL BY TRAIN



PENZANCE
FOR THE LIZARD AND LAND'S END PENINSULAS
Illustrated guide (P.O.6d.) from Town Clerk, Penzance.
TRAVEL BY TRAIN

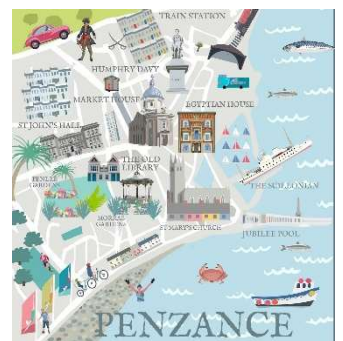
Introduction



PENZANCE
FOR THE LIZARD AND LAND'S END PENINSULAS
Illustrated guide (P.O.6d.) from Town Clerk, Penzance.
TRAVEL BY TRAIN

Next morning I am in Penzance enjoying a full Cornish breakfast, which is not much different from a full English breakfast. Penzance is known for its scenic beauty, rich history and the fact that it is a gateway to the Isles of Scilly. Penzance has a long maritime history and was once a bustling port. Its name is believed to be derived from the Cornish words *pen* (head) and *zans* (holy), meaning 'Holy Head.'

Penzance has a vibrant cultural scene, with events, galleries, and theatres. It is also famous for its association with the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta 'The Pirates of Penzance.' It is a popular destination for those seeking a mix of culture, history, and natural beauty.



Penlee House Gallery & Museum

The Penlee House Gallery & Museum offers a useful introduction to the history and culture of Penzance. The gallery and museum are housed in a beautiful Victorian villa whilst the museum features a collection centred around the Newlyn School of painters, which flourished in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This group of artists was known for their naturalistic depictions of life in Cornwall, often focusing on the local landscape, fishing communities, and everyday activities.

In addition to the artwork, Penlee House also includes exhibits related to the history and archaeology of the region, offering insights into the cultural heritage of West Cornwall. The house is surrounded by gardens and a must-visit for art lovers, historians, and anyone interested in the rich cultural tapestry of Cornwall.



Penzance Promenade and the Seafront

The Penzance Promenade is a picturesque walkway that runs along the seafront of Penzance, providing stunning views of Mount's Bay and the surrounding coastline. The promenade features beautifully landscaped gardens and a variety of public art installations as well as benches to sit down, catch your breath and admire the scenery.

The promenade also allows views of Mount's Bay and St. Michael's Mount which is a small tidal island that is home to a historic castle and church. The island is connected to the mainland by a causeway that is only accessible during low tide. St. Michael's Mount dates back to the 12th century and has been an important site for both worship and defence.

Unfortunately, I decided it was best not to visit the island as I was concerned to get cut off by the tide and miss my train home.



Morrab Gardens



The gardens were established in 1889 when Penzance Corporation purchased Morrab House and its surrounding land. The house, which was built in 1841 by a local brewer and was later owned by Charles Campbell Ross, a prominent MP and banker.

The name 'Morrab' is believed to come from the Cornish words 'mor' (sea) and 'app' (shore), reflecting its proximity to the coast. The gardens are well known for their Sub-tropical and Mediterranean plants which thrive in Penzance's mild climateas well as the Victorian Bandstand.



Egyptian House

The Egyptian House is a Grade I listed building and an example of 'Egyptian Revival architecture.' The site originally housed two 18th-century houses which were purchased at auction for £396 and transformed into a flamboyant Egyptian-style building inspired by Napoleon's 1798 Egyptian campaign.

The building was neglected and painted in drab colours until it was purchased by the Landmark Trust who restored its original 1830s façade including the lotus columns, the eagle sculpture and the Royal Coat of Arms of William IV (later replaced) symbolizing British imperial pride.

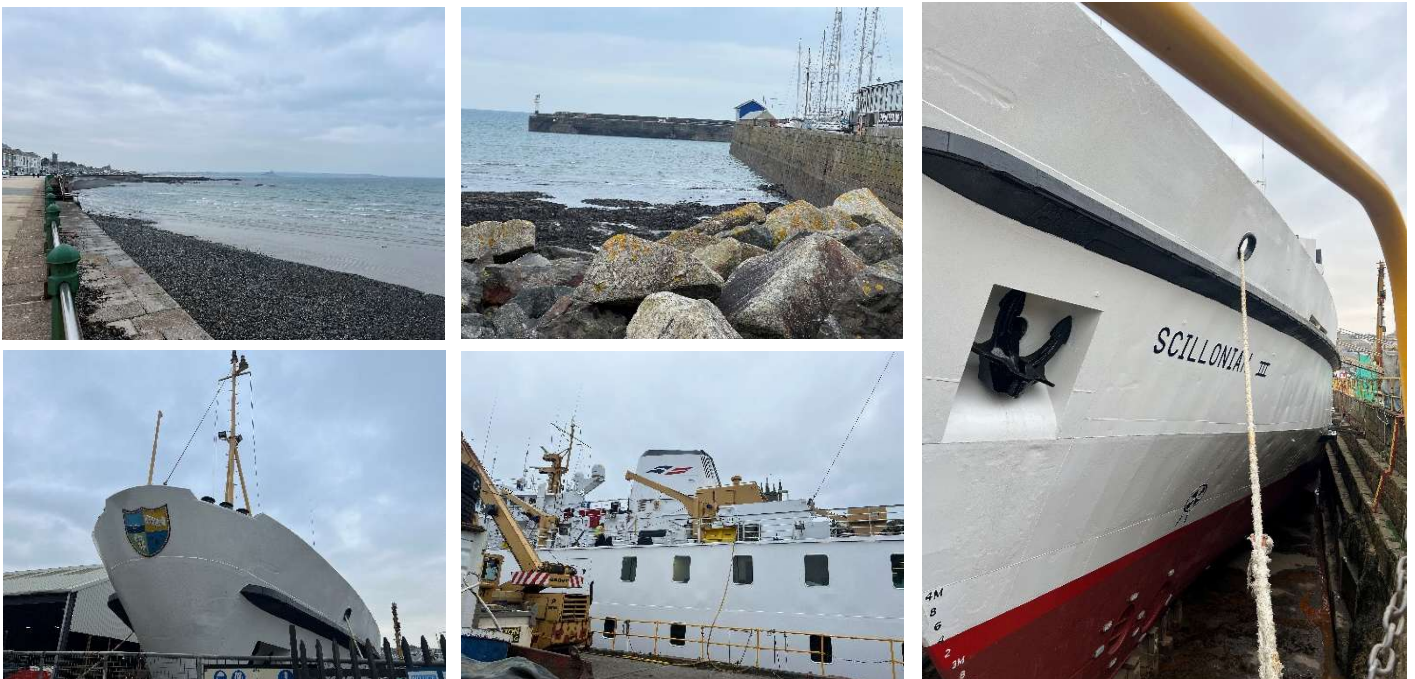




The Egyptian House is situated in Chapel Street which is a historic street in the heart of Penzance. The street contains a range of craft shops and cafes as well as the Admiral Benbow Pub and another called the Turks Head which is reputed to be the oldest public house in Penzance.

Penzance Harbour

Penzance Harbour is a bustling port serving as a gateway for ferries to the Isles of Scilly. The harbour is known for its picturesque views and historical significance. It features a mix of fishing boats, leisure vessels, and commercial ferries, making it a hub of activity, especially during the tourist season.





SAINT MICHAEL'S MOUNT

TRAVEL
BY
TRAIN

PENZANCE

GUIDE FROM DEPT. 'P' PUBLICITY MANAGER, PENZANCE



The main passenger ferry service to the Isles of Scilly takes about 2 hours and is operated by several companies, offering a comfortable and scenic ride across the Atlantic waters. The ferries typically accommodate both passengers and vehicles, making it convenient for those looking to explore the islands.



Reflections on Penzance

I quite enjoyed my short stopover in Penzance, which is a charming coastal town located in Cornwall. The area is known for its beautiful scenery, historic sites and vibrant arts scene. But now it is time to catch my train back to London. Paddington courtesy of the Great Western Railway.

The Great Western Railway (GWR) is one of the most iconic and historically significant railway companies in the UK. It was founded in 1833 and played a crucial role in the development of Britain's railway network. The railway's chief engineer was Isambard Kingdom Brunel who was one of the most celebrated engineers of the Victorian era.

Brunel's vision was to create a broad-gauge railway (7 ft ¼ in or 2,140 mm) for faster and more comfortable travel, which set the GWR apart from other railways using the standard gauge (4 ft 8½ in or 1,435 mm). The GWR converted to the standard gauge in 1892 allowing for greater integration with other networks.

The first section of the GWR, between London Paddington and Maidenhead opened in 1838 and was extended to Bristol in 1841 then later to Exeter, Plymouth and Penzance. The GWR became known for its efficiency, innovation and high-quality service including luxurious express trains and the first railway hotel, the Great Western Royal Hotel, at Paddington, in 1854.

My GWR train back to London passes some amazing sights as it weaves its way along the Cornish coastline. The views are stunning on both sides of the carriage, although your best views are on the right-hand side if you face the front. All too soon, I am back in London and my mini adventure is sadly over.



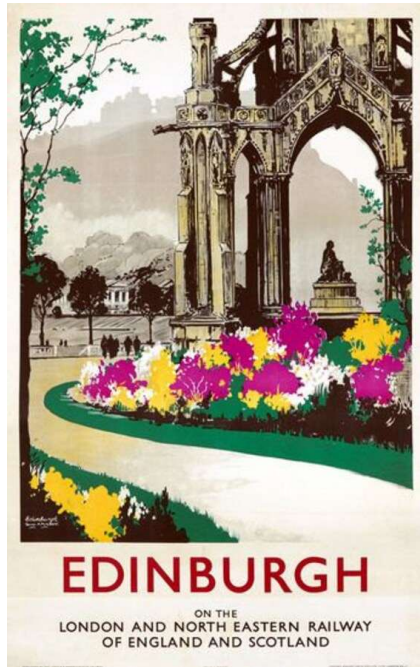
Chapter 4: The stations in between



Edinburgh

Edinburgh Waverley Station is the principal railway station in Scotland and is located in the centre of the city. The present station was formed by merging three separate stations in 1866 and is named after Sir Walter Scott's novel 'Waverley'. It is well known for its impressive Victorian architecture including the sizable glass roof which was added in 1897. The station serves as a central hub for ScotRail services as well as long-distance trains to England.

Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, is a captivating tourist destination renowned for its rich history, stunning architecture, vibrant culture, breathtaking landscapes and a dramatic skyline dominated by Edinburgh Castle. Edinburgh is also home to the world-famous Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the largest arts festival in the world, and The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo set against the stunning backdrop of Edinburgh Castle.



My top 5 places to visit in Edinburgh.....

Scottish National Gallery

Art lovers will adore this gallery, which houses an impressive collection of European paintings, including works by Van Gogh, Botticelli, and Rembrandt.





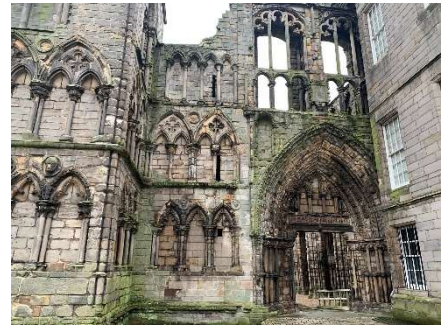
Edinburgh Castle

Perched on top of Castle Rock, this historic fortress is the city's most iconic landmark. Explore its ancient chambers, see the Crown Jewels of Scotland, and enjoy breathtaking views of the city.



Palace of Holyroodhouse

The official residence of the British monarch in Scotland, this palace is steeped in history. Tour the lavish state apartments and explore the ruins of Holyrood Abbey.



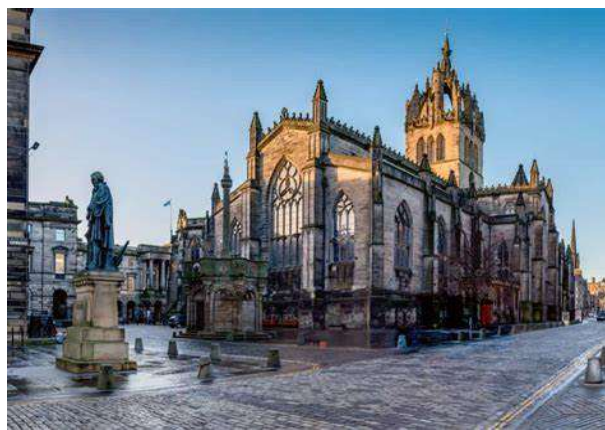
The Royal Yacht Britannia

Docked in Leith, this former royal yacht offers a fascinating glimpse into the lives of the British royal family. Explore its luxurious decks and learn all about its fascinating history.



Royal Mile

This historic stretch connects Edinburgh Castle to the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Lined with shops, pubs, and historic buildings, the Royal Mile is the heart of the Old Town and a hub of activity.



Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in **Calton Hill** which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and home to several monuments as well as **Arthur's Seat** which is an extinct volcano offers stunning panoramic views of the city and beyond.

Newcastle



Newcastle Central Station is a major railway hub in the northeast of England. The station was designed by John Dobson and opened in 1850. It is one of the oldest stations in the UK and is a Grade I listed building. The station is one of the finest examples of Victorian railway architecture and is known for its impressive facade and large train shed. The station provides services to destinations including London, Edinburgh and Manchester.



Newcastle upon Tyne, often simply called Newcastle, is a vibrant city in northeast England known for its rich industrial heritage, lively cultural scene and friendly locals. Situated along the River Tyne, this city is known for its iconic bridges and medieval castle as well as world-class museums and buzzing nightlife. Newcastle offers a dynamic mix of attractions. Whether you are exploring its historic Quayside, enjoying the green spaces, or immersing yourself in its thriving arts and music scene, Newcastle is a city full of energy and charm.



My top 5 places to visit in Newcastle.....

Newcastle Castle

The city's namesake is a medieval fortress offering a glimpse into Newcastle's history. You can climb to the top of the Keep for some stunning views of the city and the river.



The Angel of the North

Just outside the city but not to be missed is the iconic sculpture by Antony Gormley which is one of the UK's most famous landmarks. Standing 20 meters tall, it is a must-see for art and architecture enthusiasts.



St. James' Park

This is the home of Newcastle United Football Club, and the stadium is a pilgrimage site for football fans. Take a stadium tour to learn about the club's history and soak in the atmosphere.



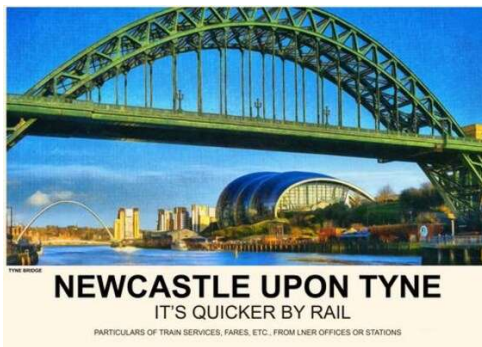
BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art

Located in a converted flour mill on Gateshead's side of the river, BALTIC is one of the largest contemporary art galleries in the world with rotating exhibitions and a rooftop restaurant with panoramic views of the city.



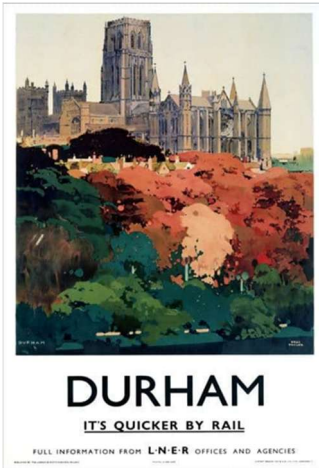
The Quayside

The heart of Newcastle, the Quayside is a bustling area alongside the River Tyne. Stroll along the waterfront and admire the iconic Tyne Bridge and Millenium Bridge as well as bars, restaurants and markets.



*Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in the **Discovery Museum** which is a family-friendly museum showcasing Newcastle's industrial and maritime history. A short metro will also take you to the **Tynemouth Priory and Castle** offering breathtaking views of the North Sea.*

Durham



Durham Railway Station was opened in 1844 and is situated on the East Coast Main Line. The station is well placed and close to the historic Durham Cathedral and Castle which are both UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The station is perched on a hill and also offers stunning views of the surrounding architecture. The station has been modernised extensively whilst retaining much of its original structure and charm including its iconic roof.

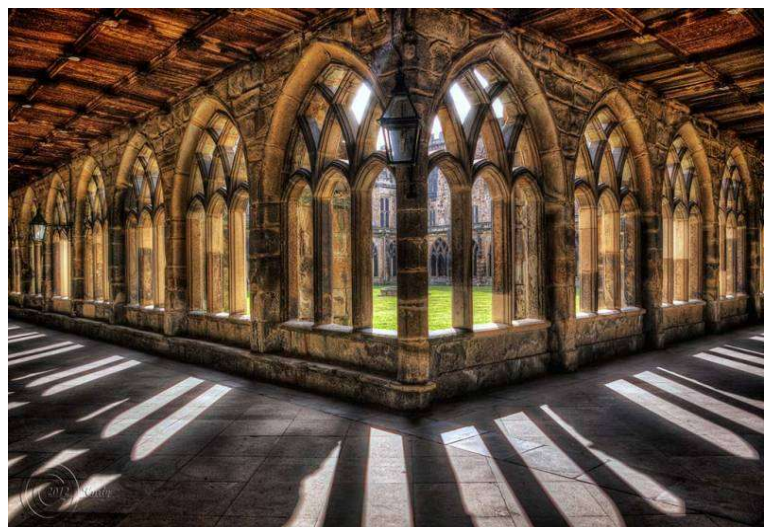
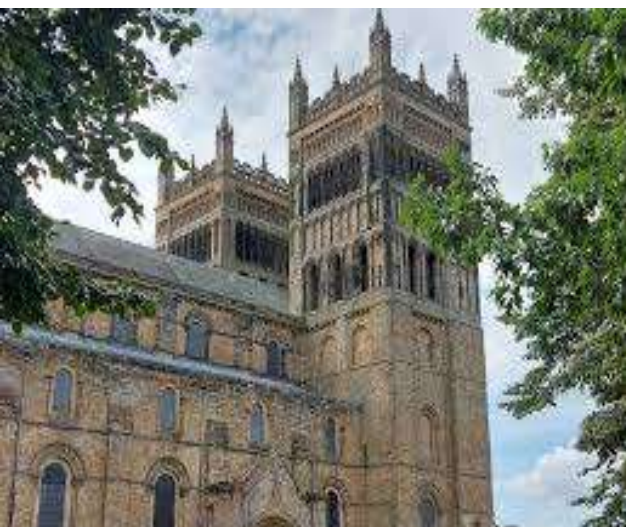
Durham is a picturesque city renowned for its rich history and stunning architecture dominated by its magnificent cathedral and castle, which are both UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The city's compact size makes it easy to explore on foot with its winding cobbled streets and charming riverside paths alongside the River Wear. Durham is a city that effortlessly combines history, culture and beauty whilst inviting you to slow down, explore and immerse yourself.



My top 5 places to visit in Durham.....

Durham Cathedral

One of the finest examples of Norman architecture in Europe, Durham Cathedral is a true masterpiece with an awe-inspiring interior, the tomb of St. Cuthbert and the Central Tower for panoramic views of the city.



Crook Hall and Gardens

This charming medieval manor house is surrounded by beautiful gardens, including a Shakespeare Garden and a secret walled garden. It is a delightful place to explore and to relax.



River Wear and the Prebends Bridge

Enjoy a peaceful walk along the River Wear, which loops around the historic city centre. Then cross the picturesque Prebends Bridge or take a relaxing boat ride for stunning views of the cathedral and castle.



Oriental Museum

The museum is part of Durham University and houses an impressive collection of art and artifacts from Asia and beyond. It is a hidden gem for history and art enthusiasts.



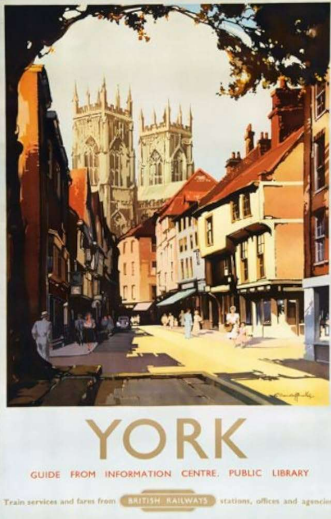
Durham Castle

Durham Castle is adjacent to the cathedral and was built in the 11th-century. The castle is now part of Durham University offering guided tours the grand halls, medieval kitchen and stunning Black Staircase.



*Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in **Durham Market Place** which is home to the historic **Town Hall** as well as the **Durham University Botanic Garden** which is just outside the city centre and offers a variety of plants, woodlands and glasshouses. It is a perfect spot for relaxation.*

York



York Railway Station opened in 1877 and is a major railway junction on the East Coast Main Line. The station is notable for its grand Victorian design and its stunning curved roof which is one of the largest of its kind in the world. The station's clock tower and historical signage add to the station's charm. The station is close to York's many historical attractions as well as the National Railway Museum which houses iconic locomotives such as Mallard and the Flying Scotsman.

Situated at the heart of North Yorkshire, York is a city that effortlessly blends ancient history with modern charm. The city is known for its rich heritage, cobbled street and stunning architecture. It is a veritable treasure trove of cultural and historical wonders with another surprise around every corner. Whether you are exploring its ancient streets, marvelling at its grand cathedral or enjoying its vibrant culture, York will leave a lasting impression.



My top 5 places to visit in York.....

The Shambles

Step back in time as you wander through this narrow, cobbled street lined with timber-framed buildings. Once a bustling market street it is now home to quaint shops, cafes, and Harry Potter-inspired stores.



York Minster



York Minster is a masterpiece of medieval architecture and one of the largest Gothic cathedrals in Northern Europe. Admire the stunning stained-glass windows and climb the Central Tower for panoramic views.



York City Walls



Walk along the well-preserved medieval walls that encircle the city. The two-mile route offers breathtaking views of York's landmarks and provides a unique perspective on its history.



Jorvik Viking Centre



You can discover York's Viking past at this award-winning museum. Ride through a reconstructed Viking village (complete with sights, sounds and smells) offering an immersive experience of Viking life.



National Railway Museum



A must-visit for train enthusiasts, this museum houses an impressive collection of locomotives, including the Flying Scotsman and the Mallard. It is one of the largest railway museums in the world.



Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in the **York Castle Museum** and the **York Dungeon** as well as **Clifford's Tower** including the remains of a 13th-century castle keep, offering panoramic views of York from the top of the tower.

Leeds



Leeds Railway Station, also known as Leeds City Railway Station, was opened in 1869 and has undergone multiple renovations to modernise its facilities. The station is the third busiest station in the UK outside London, serving over 30 million passengers annually. It features a grand entrance with impressive glass roofing and extensive concourse areas. It serves as a major interchange for trains to London, Manchester and other key destinations in the north.

Nestled in the heart of West Yorkshire, Leeds is a vibrant and dynamic city known for its thriving cultural scene, stunning architecture and bustling shopping districts. Leeds has a fascinating industrial past and was once a major centre for wool and textile production which is reflected in its museums, buildings and cultural attractions. Leeds proximity to the beautiful Yorkshire countryside means you can easily combine a city break with outdoor adventures.



My top 5 places to visit in Leeds.....

Leeds Corn Exchange



A stunning architectural gem, the Corn Exchange is now a hub for independent shops, boutiques, and eateries. It is the perfect spot to pick up unique gifts or enjoy a coffee in a historic setting.



Roundhay Park

One of the largest city parks in Europe, Roundhay Park offers 700 acres of lush greenery, lakes, and gardens. It is ideal for a leisurely stroll, a picnic, or even a boat ride on Waterloo Lake.



Leeds Art Gallery



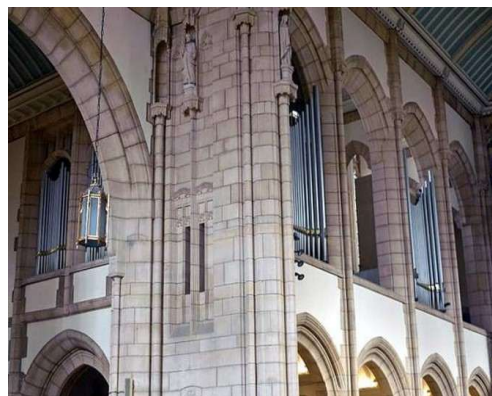
Home to an impressive collection of 19th and 20th-century British art, Leeds Art Gallery is a haven for art lovers. You can also pop next door to the Henry Moore Institute for more sculptures and exhibitions.



Leeds Cathedral



Also known as the Cathedral Church of St. Anne, is a stunning cathedral offering visitors a peaceful retreat and a chance to admire its beautiful architecture and spiritual significance.



Royal Armouries Museum

Dive into the fascinating world of arms and armour with exhibits spanning centuries, from medieval knights to modern warfare. This place is a treasure trove for history enthusiasts including jousting reenactments.



Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in **Kirkstall Abbey** which is a 12th century beautifully preserved Cistercian monastery as well as **Leeds Dock**, **City Museum** and **Grand Theatre** as well as **Temple Newsam House** which is a historic Tudor-Jacobean mansion.

Birmingham



Birmingham New Street Station is a major railway and metro station in the centre of Birmingham. The station underwent a £750 million redevelopment in 2015, featuring a futuristic atrium and improved passenger facilities with improved accessibility. It is the busiest station in the UK outside London serving over 60 million passengers annually. The station has been a central transport hub since its opening in 1854 connecting major cities across the UK.

Birmingham, which competes with Edinburgh in calling itself the UK's second city, is a bustling metropolis in the heart of England. Known for its rich industrial heritage, diverse culture and vibrant arts scene,

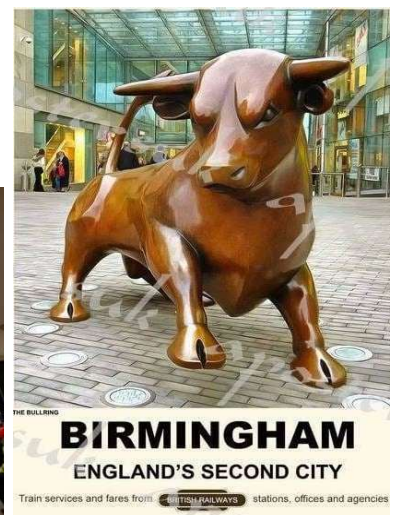
Birmingham is a city that continually reinvents itself and blends its industrial past with a forward-thinking, cosmopolitan present. Birmingham offers a diverse and enriching experience for every visitor....and I should know as I was born here, went to university here and took my first proper job here.



My top 5 places to visit in Birmingham.....

The Bullring & Grand Central

The Bullring is one of the UK's most famous shopping destinations and a perfect place to indulge in some retail therapy while Grand Central, located above New Street Station, offers even more opportunities.



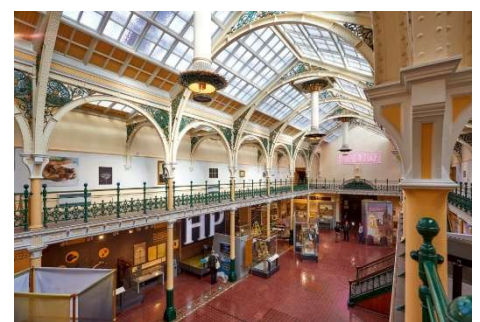
Victoria Square

Victoria Square is surrounded by some of the city's most iconic buildings, including the Town Hall and the Library. The square is also home to the famous 'Floozie in the Jacuzzi' fountain...just go and have a look!!!!



Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

Home to an impressive collection of art and artifacts, this museum highlights everything from pre-Raphaelite paintings to ancient Egyptian mummies. The exhibits make it a must-visit for history and art enthusiasts.



Jewellery Quarter

Steeped in history, the Jewellery Quarter is home to hundreds of jewellery businesses, historic workshops, and museums. Visit the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter to learn about the area's rich heritage.



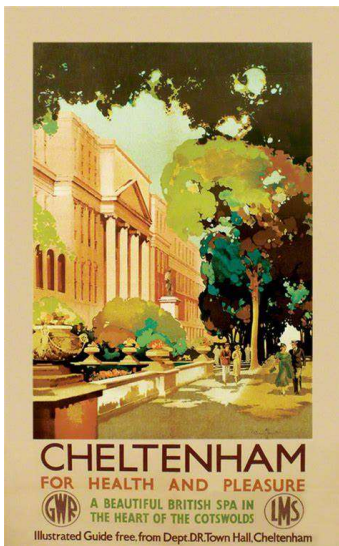
The Birmingham Canal Navigations

Take a leisurely walk along the towpaths or enjoy a boat tour to learn about their crucial role in the city's industrial past. In fact, Birmingham has 35 miles of canals which is more than Venice!!



*Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in visiting **Cadbury World** which offers a delightful journey through the history of chocolate and the Cadbury brand. Enjoy interactive exhibits, chocolate-making demonstrations and plenty of samples.*

Cheltenham



Cheltenham Spa Railway Station was opened in 1840 and is situated on the Bristol to Birmingham main line. The station features a traditional Victorian layout with canopies and waiting areas. The station has a quaint charm reflecting Cheltenham's Regency architecture with its original building still in use. Proposals to redevelop and extend the station in 2013 were never followed through. The station serves as a gateway to the Cotswolds, which is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Cheltenham is a quintessential English town renowned for its Regency architecture, vibrant cultural scene and natural beauty. Often referred to as the 'Gateway to the Cotswolds,' Cheltenham exudes an air of sophistication with its tree-lined promenades, elegant squares and historic buildings. Famous for its annual festivals, including the Cheltenham Literature Festival and the Cheltenham Gold Cup horse racing event, this spa town offers a delightful mix of history, culture, and outdoor adventure.



My top 5 places to visit in Cheltenham.....

Cheltenham Town Hall and Imperial Gardens

Visit this historic venue, which hosts concerts, exhibitions and events throughout the year. Outside, the beautifully manicured Imperial Gardens are perfect for a leisurely walk or a quiet moment.



Montpellier District

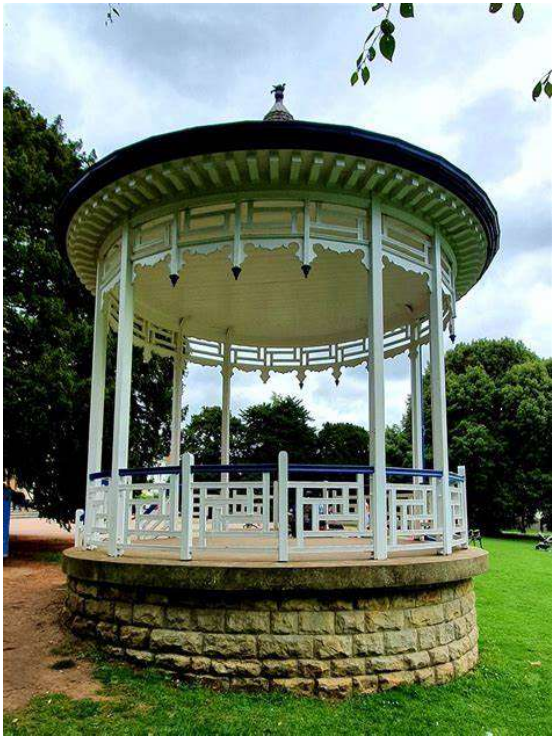
A chic area filled with boutique shops, trendy cafes and stylish bars. Montpellier is a must-visit for its unique blend of Regency charm and modern flair. The iconic Neptune's Fountain is a highlight.



The Promenade

Stroll along Cheltenham's most famous street, lined with elegant Regency buildings, high-end shops and fancy cafes. The Promenade is the perfect place to soak in the town's refined atmosphere.





Pittville Park and Pump Room

Explore Cheltenham's largest ornamental park but don't miss the historic Pittville Pump Room which is a stunning Regency building where you can sample the town's famous spa waters.....if you must!!!



Cheltenham Racecourse

Cheltenham Racecourse hosts the prestigious Cheltenham Festival, including the Gold Cup. Even if you're not a racing fan, the atmosphere and architecture are worth experiencing.

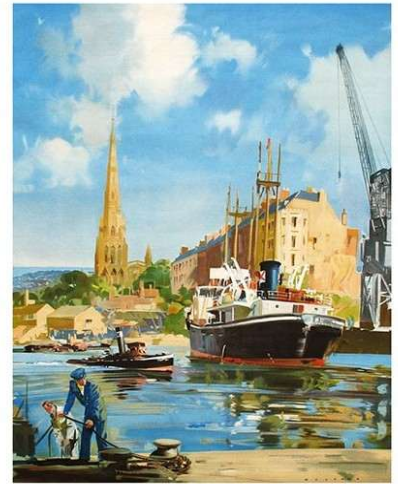


*Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in visiting **Sudeley Castle and Gardens** which is just a short drive from Cheltenham. Explore the stunning gardens, ancient ruins, and exhibitions, including the tomb of Katherine Parr, Henry VIII's sixth wife.*

Bristol

Bristol Temple Meads Station is the main railway station in Bristol and a significant transport hub in the southwest of England. The station was opened in 1840, and it is one of the oldest railway stations in the world. The station was designed by the famous engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, showcasing a mix of Gothic and Renaissance architectural styles. It features a grand entrance and a distinctive clock tower as well as Brunel's original wooden roof which is a masterpiece of Victorian engineering.

Bristol, a vibrant city in the southwest of England, is a captivating blend of maritime history, creative energy, and natural beauty. Known for its iconic suspension bridge, bustling harborside and rich cultural heritage, Bristol offers a unique and eclectic experience for visitors. Whether you are exploring its historic landmarks or simply soaking in its laid-back atmosphere, Bristol is a city that will charm and inspire you as you explore its historic landmarks, enjoy its green spaces, or immerse yourself in its cultural scene.



BRISTOL

Booklet from City Information Bureau, The Centre, Bristol I.

TRAVEL BY TRAIN

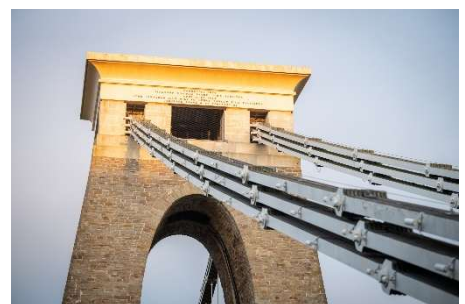
BRISTOL RAILWAYS



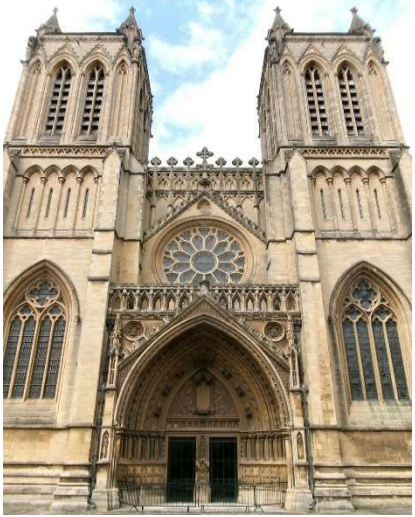
My top 5 places to visit in Bristol.....

Clifton Suspension Bridge

An iconic symbol of Bristol, this engineering marvel designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel offers breathtaking views of the Avon Gorge. The nearby visitor centre will tell you all about its history.



Bristol Cathedral



This stunning example of Gothic architecture is a must-visit for history and architecture enthusiasts. Explore its beautiful cloisters, intricate stained-glass window, and peaceful gardens.



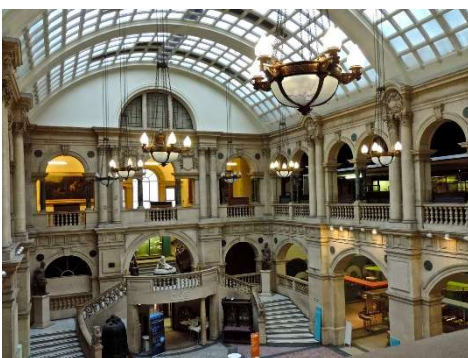
SS Great Britain

Step aboard Brunel's revolutionary steamship, the SS Great Britain, and explore its meticulously restored decks and cabins. This historic ship offers a fascinating glimpse into maritime history and innovation.



Bristol Museum & Art Gallery

With a diverse collection of art, archaeology and natural history, this museum offers something for everyone. Highlights include Egyptian mummies, dinosaur skeletons and works by famous artists.



Bristol Harbourside

Bristol Harbourside is a lively area filled with restaurants, bars and cultural attractions. Take a stroll along the waterfront, enjoy a boat tour or visit the M Shed Museum to learn all about Bristol's history.



*Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in visiting **Cabot Tower and Brandon Hill**. You can **climb to the top of Cabot Tower** on Brandon Hill for panoramic views of Bristol. The surrounding park is a peaceful retreat and ideal for a leisurely walk or a quiet moment with nature.*



EXETER
SEE BRITAIN BY TRAIN
SOUTHERN REGION

Exeter

Exeter St Davids is the main railway station in Exeter. The original station opened in 1844 and was designed by the famous Victorian architect Sir William Tite. The station was reopened and expanded in 1860 at a cost £29,760 for the station and an additional £20,000 for other work. The redevelopment in 1860 aimed to meet the increased demands of rail travel including larger facilities and more platforms. The station offers services to London as well as local trains serving Devon and Cornwall.

With its roots dating back to Roman times, Exeter is a treasure trove of historical landmarks, charming streets and stunning natural surroundings. The city is home to a magnificent Gothic cathedral, a bustling waterfront and a lively cultural scene, making it a perfect destination for history buffs, nature lovers, and urban explorers. Whether you are wandering through its cobbled streets, exploring its rich heritage or enjoying the scenic beauty of the River Exe, Exeter will not fail to disappoint.



My top 5 places to visit in Exeter.....

Underground Passages

Explore Exeter's unique medieval underground passages, originally built to bring fresh water to the city. Guided tours take you through these fascinating tunnels offering a fascinating glimpse into the city's history.



The Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM)

This award-winning museum offers a fascinating journey through Exeter's history, from its Roman origins to its natural wonders. The art gallery features an impressive collection of fine and decorative arts.



Exeter City Walls

Take a walk along the well-preserved sections of Exeter's ancient city walls. These Roman and medieval fortifications offer stunning views of the city and a chance to step back in time.



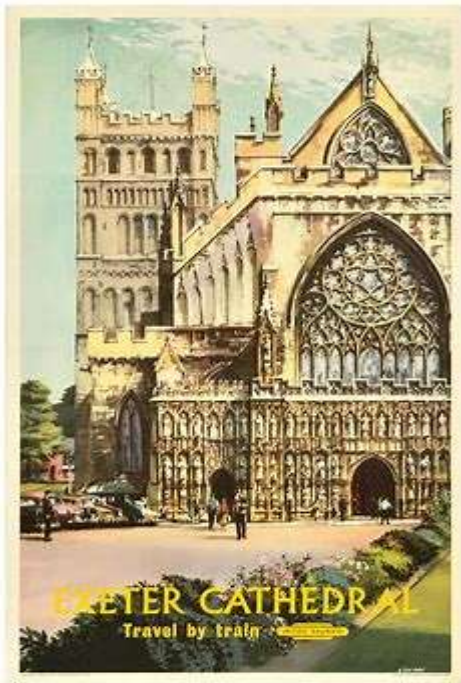
St Nicholas Priory

This historic Tudor house, once part of a medieval monastery, has been beautifully restored to showcase life in Exeter during the 16th century. It is a hidden gem for history enthusiasts.



Exeter Cathedral

Exeter Cathedral is one of the city's most iconic landmarks and a masterpiece of Gothic architecture. Marvel at its stunning vaulted ceiling, intricate carvings, and the famous astronomical clock.



Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in taking a stroll along **The Quayside** or a visit to **Exeter Castle (Rougemont Castle)** and the neighbouring **Northernhay and Rougemont Gardens** which are the oldest public open spaces in England.

Plymouth



PLYMOUTH
DELIGHTFUL CENTRE FOR HOLIDAYS
Guide free from Publicity Manager (Dept. B.R.)
TRAVEL BY TRAIN 

Plymouth Railway Station is an important terminal in the southwest of England providing services to London, Exeter and other regional destinations. The original station was opened in 1849 by the South Devon Railway and significantly extended in 1877 to allow for more trains to pass through and better services for passengers. The station features a classic Victorian design with a grand entrance and a large concourse as well as extensive views of Plymouth Sound.

Plymouth is a historic port city nestled on the south coast of Devon offering a captivating blend of maritime heritage, scenic beauty and modern attractions. Known as the gateway to the Atlantic, Plymouth played a pivotal role in England's naval history including the departure of the Mayflower in 1620, which carried the Pilgrims to the New World. Today, the city offers a rich tapestry of cultural landmarks, stunning coastal views, and family-friendly activities.



My top 5 places to visit in Plymouth.....

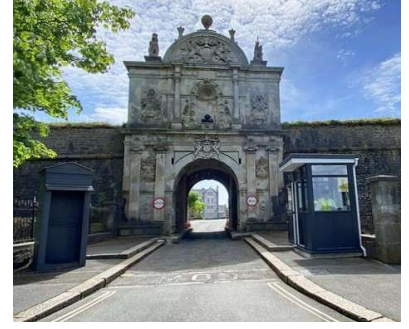
Plymouth Hoe

This park offers breathtaking views of Plymouth Sound and includes the iconic Smeaton's Tower, a historic lighthouse as well as the Armada Monument commemorating the defeat of the Spanish Armada.



Royal Citadel

This 17th-century fortress is a testament to Plymouth's military history. Guided tours offer insights into its role in defending the coastline and visitors can explore the Royal Chapel of St. Katherine-upon-the-Hoe.



Saltram House

A stunning Georgian mansion surrounded by 500 acres of gardens and parkland, Saltram House is a National Trust property. It boasts an impressive art collection and offers scenic views of Plymouth Sound.



The Barbican

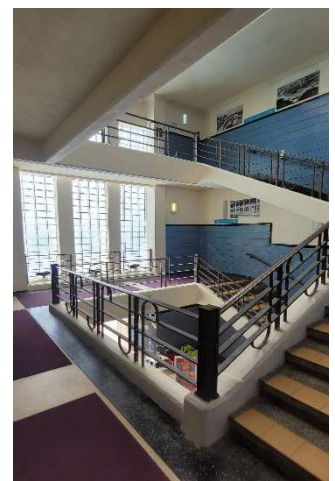
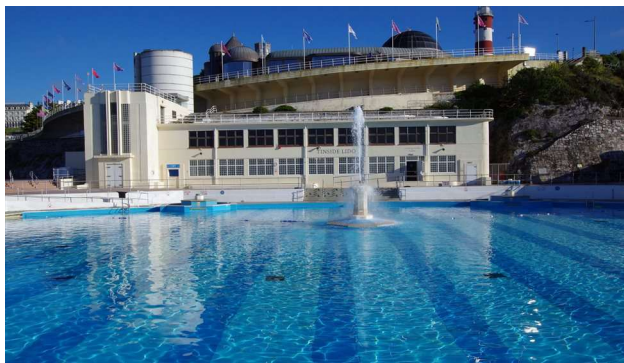


Plymouth's historic quarter with a mix of Tudor architecture, cobbled streets and a bustling waterfront. Don't miss the Mayflower Museum and the Mayflower Steps, where the Pilgrims embarked for America.



Tinside Lido

This iconic outdoor swimming pool, perched on the edge of Plymouth Sound, is a favourite during summer. Its Art Deco design and stunning sea views make it a unique spot for a refreshing dip.



Depending on how much time you have, you might also be interested in the **National Marine Aquarium** as well as **Mount Edgumbe House and Country Park** which is located a short ferry ride away across the water. This 865-acre estate features beautifully landscaped gardens, a historic house, and walking trails.

The outside cover if you enjoyed this guide.....



This guide is just one of a growing series of documentary travel guides collated under 'The Where To Go' banner. The following titles are presently available or coming really soon.....

