



Sunrise on Ilkley Moor is something to behold

North Stars

Leeds is surrounded by some of the UK's most unforgettable sights, from landscapes of remarkable beauty to spots that give you a glimpse into Yorkshire's past. **Abi Bliss** takes you on a tour of the region's highlights

Leeds lies at the centre of Great Britain, in a landscape shaped by both human activity and the forces of nature. In whichever direction you choose to explore, the places you find will delight, surprise and inspire you.

Just a few miles from Leeds city centre, the atmosphere changes from that of urban buzz to one of tranquillity. Streets



Dean Clough

give way to a patchwork of pleasant country fields, farms and woods, amongst which are dotted numerous attractive small towns and villages such as **Otley** and **Wetherby**. Each is worth a visit in order to discover its distinctive character.

A short journey north of Leeds is the historic spa town of **Harrogate**, whose luxurious Turkish baths are decorated in intricate Victorian mosaic work, providing a modern pampering experience in unforgettable surroundings. Harrogate itself is full of quality restaurants, as well as stylish shops selling everything from designer-wear to local food delicacies.

The famous walled city of **York** lies to the north-east; you'll need a whole day to fully explore its attractions, which include **York Minster**, one of the country's most

“**For a holiday with a difference, hire a canal boat and spend a few days enjoying life on the water.**”

beautiful cathedrals. The **Jorvik Viking Centre** recreates the sights (and smells) of York's often bloody Viking past, whilst the **National Railway Museum's** locomotive collection contains superb examples of engineering and craftsmanship that will fascinate all members of the family.

Travel north-west away from Leeds, and follow the route taken by the historic **Leeds-Liverpool canal**.

One point on the canal not to be missed is **Saltaire**, on the northern fringes of Bradford. Now a UNESCO World Heritage Centre, this 'model village' was built by Victorian tycoon and philanthropist Sir Titus Salt to provide his workers with a better standard of living. Saltaire's neat terraces and cobbled streets are still inhabited, although **Salts Mill** no longer produces

regional highlights - weekend itinerary

day one

While Leeds is famed for its nightlife, if you prefer a quiet one to ease you into your weekend break, there's plenty more to see and do once darkness falls than bar-hop.

One of Britain's best-preserved abbeys, **Kirkstall Abbey**, whose stunning ruins date back to the 12th century, is just a few minutes out of the city centre by bus or car, and by night or day it is one of Leeds' most stunning sights. For an evening meal with a true taste of West Yorkshire, Kirkstall is blessed with **The Millrace**, an acclaimed organic restaurant that sources the best local produce and boasts a breathtaking wine list.



Elegant decay - Kirkstall Abbey



...marauding Vikings in York...



...and some young apprentices

day two

There's no better base than Leeds if you want to take in the whole of Yorkshire. The historical, beautiful walled city of York is just 35 minutes drive away, and direct trains run from Leeds City Station.

York is home to some great museums and galleries. The **Jorvik Viking Centre** brings visitors face-to-face with the city's heritage as they stroll reconstructed streets of the Viking age, take in the hundreds of uncovered artefacts and join in with the all-year-round events and workshops.

The **Impressions Gallery** and **York Art Gallery** never fail to house intriguing art exhibitions, with Impressions displaying modern works from international artists and York Art Gallery showing an outstanding collection of British and European Art that spans 600 years.

day three

No Yorkshire break is complete without a day trip to the **Dales**; 1,600 square miles of some of the finest scenery in the world. Thrill-seekers can go mountain-biking or horse-riding — there are a number of excellent trekking centres catering for all abilities dotted throughout the Yorkshire Dales.

Visitors who would rather travel on two feet than four can stroll along riversides, hike across the romantic, blustery moors or take advantage of the **Yorkshire Dales Heritage Trails**, and for foodies, there's always the joyful challenge of eating your way across the Dales. Watch Wallace and Gromit's favourite grub being made at the **Wensleydale Creamery**, before stopping off at Mackenzie's Yorkshire Smokehouse in Harrogate to stock up on local cured meats before heading back to Leeds for afternoon tea.



As they say, 'God's own country'

Short Breaks

Why not use Leeds as a touring base? With Harrogate, York and the Yorkshire Dales less than an hour from Leeds you are perfectly placed to explore the best of the rest of Yorkshire.

Visit www.leedsliveitloveit.com/shortbreaks, or call our free accommodation booking hotline on **0800 808 050**

Bunch of Fives

Pen-y-ghent

Climb this dramatic peak and you'll be rewarded with breathtaking views of the Yorkshire Dales.

National Railway Museum

This national collection boasts everything from Queen Victoria's private train to the record-breaking Mallard. Free admission.

Harrogate Turkish Baths

The beautifully restored Victorian décor will invigorate your eyes while the rest of you relaxes.

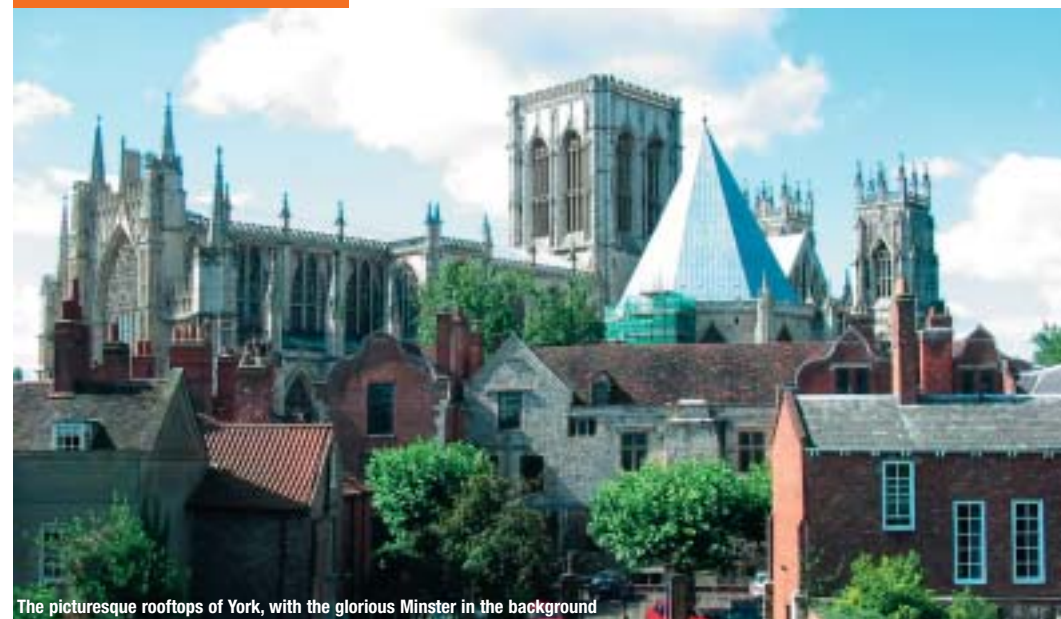
Dean Clough

Once the world's largest mill complex, now a combined office space, theatre and gallery hosting cutting-edge exhibitions.

Ilkley

Wander on the moors discovering ancient stone carvings and curiously shaped boulders, before refuelling in the famous Betty's Cafe Tearooms.

“ Harrogate's luxurious Turkish Baths provide a modern pampering experience in unforgettable surroundings. ”



The picturesque rooftops of York, with the glorious Minster in the background

cloth. Instead it's an innovative development, with stylish shops and **The 1853 Gallery** dedicated to the work of Bradford native David Hockney.

Continuing on, we reach **Skipton**, a market town with a memorable castle, but also the 'gateway to the Dales'. One of Britain's most popular National Parks, the **Yorkshire Dales** receive over eight million visitors every year; yet it's surprisingly easy to find yourself alone, enjoying absolute tranquility. The Dales have often been called 'Herriot Country', but the area has also provided the backdrop to many of Britain's best-loved TV series, including 'Heartbeat', 'Emmerdale' and, of course, 'All Creatures Great and Small'.

The landscape is a walker's paradise, with green, wooded valleys and pasture rising to dramatic rocky slopes — ideal for rock-climbing — and where cascading waterfalls and rugged limestone pavements provide a haven for rare flora. Potholers are drawn to labyrinthine caves whilst, for the less daring, many of the prettiest Dales villages are easily accessible from Leeds



via a trip on the glorious **Settle-Carlisle** railway.

Just west of Bradford lies **Haworth**, famed as the home of Charlotte, Emily and Anne Brontë: visitors can step out of their former residence, now the Brontë Parsonage Museum, and breathe in the same fresh air and rugged landscapes that so inspired the sisters.

Finally, head south or west into the Pennine hills, to discover former wool towns such as **Huddersfield** or **Halifax**, whose industrial origins manifest themselves through some enduringly attractive Victorian architecture. Huddersfield can boast over 200 listed buildings, whilst the wool trade in Halifax produced the **Piece Hall**, an impressive enclosed marketplace which even now is a bustling focal point for the town's retail business. Nowadays, both towns are becoming hubs for the creative and media industries: Halifax's massive **Dean Clough** mill is a thriving gallery, theatre and business space, whilst Huddersfield has a **Media Centre**, and each year hosts the internationally admired **Contemporary Music Festival**.

The scenery around Huddersfield may well inspire you to set out further south-west into the hills, to the small town of **Holmfirth** (the setting for long-running BBC comedy series 'Last Of The Summer Wine') and on into the wild, heather-topped moorland of the **Peak District**. But wherever you want to go, it's Leeds that provides the best base for exploring the North.



“ I think the people of Leeds are brilliant. I really love them. ”

They make life so easy — they're very open and interested in people. They make it easy to make friendships with them. They are very helpful as well, even if they don't know you. Just, like, make a joke when you pass and have a laugh with them. It's so different from Germans, who are a bit reserved!

Sabine Flugel, Nordic Walking personal trainer