

11 Reasons to Visit England's Historic Cities

Together, England's Historic Cities offer the trade the opportunity to create compelling multi-city itineraries that showcase the country's rich heritage, culture and regional diversity. From Roman frontiers and medieval cathedrals to royal maritime history and world-famous universities, each city contributes a distinctive experience while sharing the authentic character that today's visitors seek.

Northern England

Carlisle



Carlisle

As England's northern frontier city, Carlisle combines nearly 2,000 years of history with access to some of the country's most spectacular landscapes. Visitors can explore its medieval castle, historic cathedral and Roman heritage before discovering nearby Hadrian's Wall. Gateway to Cumbria and the Lake District, Carlisle adds both cultural depth and scenic beauty to touring itineraries.

Durham

Home to one of England's most spectacular UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Durham City offers an inspiring blend of heritage, culture and accessibility. Its magnificent Norman Cathedral and Castle dominate a compact, walkable city rich in history and character. With world-class attractions, vibrant events and a welcoming atmosphere, Durham is an ideal addition to itineraries exploring England's historic treasures.

York

York is one of England's most iconic heritage destinations, where Roman, Viking and medieval history combine with vibrant contemporary culture. Encircled by ancient walls, the city boasts an exceptional concentration of attractions within its compact centre. Renowned for its chocolate-making heritage, year-round festivals and UNESCO City of Media Arts status, York delivers a rich and memorable experience for visitors of all interests.

Lancaster



Williamson Park and Ashton Memorial

Lancaster's rich heritage is centred around its remarkable castle, one of England's best-preserved Norman fortresses. With nearly 1,000 years of history, including its role in the 1612 Pendle Witch Trials and as a working prison until 2011, the city offers compelling stories at every turn. Combined with charming streets and a strong cultural scene, Lancaster brings a distinctive historical dimension to touring programmes.

Chester

Chester packs over 2,000 years of history into a city centre you can easily explore on foot. Walk the most complete Roman walls in Britain, step inside the magnificent cathedral, and wander the medieval Rows, unique covered galleries found nowhere else in the country. Beyond the city walls you'll find Britain's largest Roman amphitheatre, gentle riverside walks along the Dee, and Chester Zoo, one of the UK's best-loved family days out. Whatever brings you to Chester, whether it's the history, the shopping, or simply a change of scenery, there's plenty to fill a weekend or a week.

Midlands

Lincoln



Lincoln © Ioan Said Photography

Lincoln offers an extraordinary journey through England's history, from its Roman origins to its medieval golden age. The city's dramatic hilltop quarter is home to a magnificent cathedral and castle, while its historic streets reveal layers of heritage at every turn. As the only place to display original copies of both Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest, Lincoln holds a uniquely significant place in English history.

Stratford-upon-Avon

The birthplace of William Shakespeare offers an authentic English experience filled with heritage, culture and charm. Visitors can explore beautifully preserved Tudor buildings, enjoy world-class theatre performances and stroll along the picturesque River Avon. Ideally located between London, Oxford and the Cotswolds, Stratford-upon-Avon provides a natural addition to a wide range of touring itineraries.

Southern England

Cambridge

Cambridge is internationally renowned for its prestigious university, magnificent colleges and timeless riverside setting. Visitors can experience centuries of academic excellence while enjoying punting on the River Cam, world-class museums, beautiful green spaces and vibrant cultural life. Blending heritage with innovation, Cambridge offers a quintessential English experience that complements itineraries across southern and eastern England.

Greenwich

Located on London's riverside, Greenwich brings together maritime heritage, royal history and world-famous landmarks within an easily walkable setting. Visitors can stand on the Prime Meridian, explore the Royal Observatory, discover the National Maritime Museum and admire the grandeur of the Old Royal Naval College. Combined with panoramic views and a lively market, Greenwich offers a distinctive London experience.

Canterbury

Canterbury is one of England's most celebrated historic cities, where centuries of history unfold among cobbled streets, medieval architecture and picturesque waterways. A UNESCO-recognised destination, it combines iconic heritage with vibrant shopping, cultural events and a lively atmosphere. The city's enduring appeal and wealth of storytelling opportunities make it a compelling stop on multi-city tours.

Salisbury



Salisbury Cathedral

Salisbury is a city where centuries of history are woven into everyday life. Centred around its magnificent cathedral and medieval streets, it offers a captivating blend of heritage, culture and independent spirit. Original events, thriving creative businesses and a welcoming atmosphere complement its historic appeal, making Salisbury an engaging destination for groups seeking authentic English experiences.