

The Complete Guide to Ascot

For the first time in its near 300 year history Royal Ascot has been relocated to York racecourse whilst its Berkshire home undergoes a £185m redevelopment.

With this unprecedented move to York, this year race goers will need to be 'in the know' to discover the plushiest hotels, the finest restaurants and where to buy the all important Ascot outfit. Take your readers on a journey of discovery as you present them with the 'Complete Guide to Royal Ascot at York', packed full with essential information on all aspects of the race meeting.

If this is your first trip to Royal Ascot and you don't know your geldings from your stallions then the 'Complete Guide to Ascot' is *the* guide that your readers should not leave home without. Containing all essential horse racing information, where to eat, shop, sleep and drink and tips on Royal Ascot at York, it's an odds on bet that your readers will feel the part in no time.

If you are new to racing, Ascot and Yorkshire, then the only way to discover them for yourself is to book your press trip and pay a visit to the region. We can show you the best that York and Yorkshire has to offer.

How to get there

- It takes less than two hours to get to York station from London and you can travel by most services including GNER and Virgin from anywhere in the country.
- To get to the races in style why not forget the car and arrive at Royal Ascot at York by boat? **York Incoming** will be transporting race goers along the River Ouse from a mooring in Skeldergate to the racecourse, throughout Ascot week.

Your readers can find more information on any of the ideas mentioned here and book online via

www.yorkshirevisitor.com and www.visitYork.org

- If getting to Ascot on water doesn't float your boat, then why not hire a classic car to bring an air of refinement to the proceedings. From classic Porsches to Ferraris, www.classic-car-hire.co.uk has them all.

Where to Stay

From cosy guesthouse to luxury hotel, in York and Yorkshire, you are spoilt for choice:

- Accommodation in York is plentiful. Rates are available by calling the York Tourist Information Centre booking hotline on 0870 225 8866.
- Minutes from the city centre lies **Holmwood House**, an early Victorian town house with four poster beds. **Barbican House** is a fabulous restored Victorian town house overlooking the famous medieval walls. And for good value hotel accommodation, try **York Novotel** or the three star **Monkbar** hotel, overlooking the city walls.
- While Royal Ascot at York gets underway, the hotel that will really give you front row seating is the **York Marriott Hotel**. Situated right next to the racecourse, the spectacular views mean you won't miss a moment and this hotel is perfect for all race goers. With a heated indoor pool, sauna, gym, spa bath, steam room, solarium and beauty therapy, you can truly relax after a winning day at the races.
- The **Royal York Hotel** is conveniently located next to York's railway station. This magnificent four star Victorian hotel is set in three acres of private gardens in the heart of historic York, and offers the luxury and elegance of a bygone era.

If you are looking for a hotel farther a field, other luxurious hotels in Yorkshire include:

- **The Devonshire Arms Country House Hotel**, Yorkshire's 'Hotel of the Year 2004' has been in the family of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire since 1733. Located on the family's Yorkshire Estate at Bolton Abbey, you'll be on the doorstep of the dales and surrounding by some of the finest countryside in England. The hotel is a true luxury and a real glimpse of how the other half live.

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- **Malmaison**, Leeds, boasts a range of individually designed rooms complete with great big beds, slinky lighting, CD players, serious wines, naughty nibbles, interesting art and the best toiletries around.
- **42 the Calls**, Leeds, overlooks the River Aire and is only a few minutes walk from the city centre. This refreshingly different hotel has a fabulous reputation for service, style and quality.
- **The Majestic**, Harrogate, is an impressive 19th century hotel set in 12 acres of award-winning landscaped gardens and offers a traditional setting for a relaxing stay.
- **The Hilton**, Sheffield, is located in Victoria Quays, an attractive and peaceful waterside setting, and is the city's most high profile hotel.

There's still time to book your hotel accommodation in York and Yorkshire. Some hotels have minimum night stays but the majority are accepting one-night bookings.

Where to eat

After a hopefully victorious day at the races, why not discover some of York's finest eateries and enjoy a totally gastro experience.

- **The Blue Bicycle** is an exotic French eatery that was once famously a bordello. The décor is romantically rustic and is a real dining hotspot.
- **Meltons**, the elegant 1930s style murals, classical music, shelves of old books and an excellent wine collection all make for relaxed, but sophisticated romance.
- **Rish** in York is a popular trendy art deco eatery and is complemented by a mix of contemporary British and continental cuisine. Coupled with a comprehensive wine list, this restaurant should not be missed.

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- **St William's College Restaurant** in York's most romantic corner beside the Minster, has a wonderful view of the East Window. The restaurant is within some lovely 15th century college buildings, providing a dark, intimate atmosphere, perfect for candlelight. All that and great food too!

Galloping gourmets with discerning palettes should definitely seek out:

- **The Star Inn**, located in the tiny village of Harome, prized for its traditional British style with spiced up old favourites and Anglicised classics. So good it has a Michelin star.
- **The Burlington**, fine dining at it's most opulent. Excellent food served on fine bone china with crystal and silverware and polished antique dining furniture. No surprise it's located in the Duke of Devonshire's Bolton Abbey Estate.
- **The Box Tree**, Ilkley, another Michelin starred offering, the Box Tree is famous for its haute cuisine and the finest wines.
- **Chino Latino**, Leeds, is a fusion Far East and modern Japanese restaurant with a Latino bar offering amazing cocktails.
- **Mumtaz Paan House**, Bradford, does the meanest curries in town and you can even buy their curries in Harrods.
- **The Drum & Monkey**, Harrogate, always rates highly on food, service and ambience and excels in seafood cuisine.
- **Rafters Restaurant**, Sheffield, is an award-winning eatery and boasts a Mediterranean-influenced menu.

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Where to shop

Take your readers on the ultimate shopping journey as you uncover York's chic boutiques:

- **Shiva** offers a huge global collection of jewellery and accessories. Unique pieces of jewellery to accessorize any Ascot outfit perfectly.
- **Azendi** one of only six locations in Britain where you can buy Azendi's own contemporary and unique designs, specialising in titanium, white gold and silver creations.
- **Sarah Coggles** can't be faulted for its hip, chic racing attire. Check out this modern store that carries lines by popular names like Boxfresh, Firetrap, Nigel Hall and Nicole Farhi.
- **Priestley's Vintage Clothing** offers a touch of class without sacrificing an ounce of fun. You'll find upscale pieces for the discriminating shopper, with a great selection of second hand vintage suits and dresses for men and women.
- **Chinellie** is the shoe fetishist's haven, with row after row of Italian leather shoes you won't be able to resist. The boots, sandals, and stiletto heels by names like Chinelli and Rodo add an unmistakable stamp of style to any Ascot outfit.
- Not forgetting the chaps, **Robert Smart Menswear** is a gentleman's favourite place to shop. Robert Smart offers classic styles from the likes of Camel, Gant, Eterna, Hodgson of Scotland, and Hunt and Holditch. Classic suits, sweaters, and shoes are here, as are great gift ideas such as ties, cufflinks, accessories, and umbrellas as a special treat for Ascot attire.
- **Stonegate Tailors** features bespoke tailoring and alterations by on-site experts. They offer an excellent selection of fine shirts, including Eton, Olymp and Pierre Balmain, as well as a variety of suits from Jaeger and shoes by Crocket and Jones. For all discerning male race goers, this tailor should really not be missed.

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Where to be seen

Royal Ascot at York is the high society event of the year and *the* places to be seen in York are:

- **Orgasmic Café** - New to York's bar and restaurant scene last year, Orgasmic is a funky bar overlooking the riverside. With an ultra cool atmosphere artistic photographs are scattered about to add to the café's hip credentials. Delicious food at reasonable prices.
- **The Living Room** – The trendiest new bar in town and reputedly David Beckham's favourite bar chain. The Living Room has a cool, airy piano bar & restaurant in earthy tones and a Manhattan loft with a colonial twist that aims to provide quality without exclusivity. The Living Room's dedication to wholesome, simple food and quality cocktails is paramount as is the high levels of service without high prices.
- **Kennedy's Cafe Bar** boasts a stylish, contemporary layout distributed over three levels, including Parisian style street dining, a VIP room, roof terrace, lounge bar and a live music and dance bar.
- **City Screen** - Art House Cinema and Café Bar, has a fabulous riverside location and is one of York's hippest and most popular venues. The basement bar regularly plays host to live entertainment that attracts a sophisticated younger crowd (www.picturehouse-cinemas.co.uk).
- **Wildes Wine Bar and Bistro** is a well-established favourite and is perfect for couples after a more romantic night for two. Visit www.theyorkguide.com to find out more.

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More attractions

Yorkshire is the biggest region in the UK so it's no surprise to find a vast amount of attractions to visit outside of Royal Ascot at York. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

- **The National Railway Museum** - The largest railway museum in the world, the National Railway Museum in York is home to a wide range of railway icons and millions of artefacts. From Mallard, the world's fastest steam engine, to the only Shinkansen Bullet train to be displayed outside Japan, the museum is now also home to the famous railway icon, The Flying Scotsman. Entrance to the museum is free for everyone.
- **York Minster** - A visit to York would be incomplete without a visit to York Minster. York's Minster is renowned worldwide and is the largest medieval gothic cathedral in northern Europe. This is religious architecture on the very grandest scales: over 500 feet in length, 100 feet wide and with a central tower 200 feet high. The Minster took over 250 years to complete and is the most visited cathedral in Britain.
- **JORVIK** This attraction should not be missed when visiting York. Visitors can travel back in time to experience the sounds, smells and images of the Viking city of York (Jorvik) in AD975. New state-of-the-art flying capsules can even fly the visitors over and through the city.
- **Castle Howard** – Located near to York, this is one of England's grandest Baroque mansions, designed for Charles **Howard**, 3rd Earl of Carlisle, by John Vanbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor. An 18th century treasure house with extensive collections and breathtaking parkland featuring temples, lakes and fountains.
- **Xscape** in Castleford houses the largest indoor real snow slope in the UK and includes a cinema, bowling alley, shops, bars, restaurants, high ice climbing walls and much, much more.

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Other attractions worth a visit across the Yorkshire region include:

- **National Museum of Photography, Film & Television** – Located in Bradford, the museum's collection includes more than three million items of historical, social and cultural value. These include three 'firsts': the world's first negative, the first television footage and what is regarded as the world's first example of moving pictures, plus a fantastic Imax.
- **The Deep** – The world's only 'submarium', housed in Terry Farrell's iconic landmark building, dominates the Hull skyline. 2.5 million litres of water and 87 tonnes of salt, seven species of shark, huge marine dinosaurs, Conger Eels, Rays and hundreds of other stunning sea creatures are all housed here. Plus the world's only underwater lift and Europe's deepest viewing tunnel!
- **Magna Science Adventure Centre** - The UK's first science adventure centre is set in a space once occupied by the Templeborough steelworks in Rotherham. Four pavilions explore the elements of earth, air, fire and water with a fun approach featuring giant water canons, rockets, an airship, a gyroscopic chair, lightning bolts, fiery tornadoes, exploding rock faces and real JCBs. The original steelworks provides a dramatic backdrop for this ultimate interactive experience.
- **The Royal Armouries Museum** - Based in Leeds with spectacular displays, live interpretations, unique handling collections, jousting tournaments and thousands of breathtaking exhibitions from one of the world's most famous collections of arms and armour; this museum is a real hit. More than 3,000 years of history covered by over 8,000 spectacular exhibits in stunning surroundings can't fail but to impress.
- **Thackray Museum** – Another offering from Leeds, this time dealing with the history of medical science. From Victorian operating theatre to the wonders of modern surgery, the museum's galleries, collections and interactive displays bring to life the history of medicine. Experience life as a character in the Victorian slums of 1840 and discover the incredible lotions and potions offered as treatments. In 'having a baby' experience pregnancy by trying on an empathy belly and then have fun with Sherlock Bones and his trusty hound Baskerville, exploring workings of the body.

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Horse Racing Facts and Stats

- York has one of the premier tracks in Europe, winner of the Flat Racecourse of the Year award and came top in The Times review of Britain's racecourses.
- Royal Ascot at York takes place from the 14th-18th June and racing experts, celebrities and people just after a quick flutter and an excuse to buy a hat will all be there. And of course her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
- If you are a racing novice and need a bit help with the racing jargon then read on to become an expert in no time:

TOP TIPS: Horses

Colt: a young male horse, aged 4 years and under

Gelding: a male horse that has been castrated

Stallion: a male horse that has retired from racing and is mating mares

Filly: young female horse, aged 4 years and under

Mare: female horse aged 5 years and over

On the bridle or on the steel: a horse which is running well, with plenty of energy and the jockey has not asked it for maximum effort.

Plate: the special shoes worn by racehorses

TOP TIPS: Races

Flat racing – the flat season on turf officially begins at the Lincoln meeting at Doncaster in March and ends at the same course in November. Ascot is a flat race

National hunt – generic term used for jump racing

All weather racing – racing on the flat on an artificial, sand-based surface.

Furlong – unit of distance used in horseracing. It is an eighth of a mile which is approx 220yds or 200m

Trip – the distance of the race

Handicap – each horse is rated according to its form in previous races

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TOP TIPS: Racecourse

Going – state of the ground

Parade ring or the Paddock – where horses are paraded 10 mins before a race

Pre-parade ring – where horses are saddled up

Betting jungle – where all the on-course bookmakers have their pitches

Winner's enclosure – where the winning horse is welcomed after the race

Colours or silks – the clothes that jockey's wear to distinguish horses in a race

TOP TIPS: A beginner's guide to betting

Stake: the money you are willing to gamble

Odds: the perceived probability of a horse winning a race

Odds against: When bookmakers offer a return which is more than double the amount staked for a win bet

Even Money: When the bookmaker offers a return which is double the amount staked on a win bet

Odds on: When the bookmaker offers a return which is less than double the amount staked on a win bet

Long odds or short odds – long odds (50/1) mean it's unlikely the horse will win. Short odds (2/1) means that the horse is likely to win

Win - Also referred as 'on the nose', you're selecting a horse to win.

Place - This bet is only available with the Tote. You're selecting a horse to be placed. Generally this means your horse needs to finish 1st, 2nd or 3rd.

Each-way - This gives you a win and place bet on the same horse. If your horse wins, you collect both the win and the place dividend. Because an each-way bet is two bets, your stake is doubled i.e. a £2 each-way bet will cost you £4. If your horse wins, both bets pay out. If your horse is placed (i.e. 2nd, 3rd or 4th), your second bet pays out.

Exacta - You need to select the 1st and 2nd placed horses in the correct order.

Placepot - You need to select a horse to be placed in each of the first six races.

Public Enquiries and Bookings: For more information about Royal Ascot at York visit www.yorkshirevisitor.com www.visitork.org/royalascot or call the York Tourist Information Centre on 0870-225 8866.

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Notes to Editors

- For a whole host of feature ideas, or to organise a press trip to the region, please contact the press team below. We can offer competition prizes, such as tickets to Ascot and weekend breaks, so simply call the team to discuss the opportunities.

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