

Easy trips from Leicester



LEICESTER 2013

Leicester is very centrally placed in England, which makes it a great base for any number of day trips. The places noted below are easy to reach via public transport (usually train), and there are many, many other excellent heritage sites which are well worth a visit, but are rather easier to reach by road. There is a good Tourist Information bureau in Leicester situated on Gallowtree Gate in the city centre: <http://www.goleicestershire.com/useful-information/leicester-tic.aspx>

<http://nationalrail.co.uk/> - go to 'journey planner' to find train times and prices; and check to see whether the service you want to use is direct (all of the destinations below can be reached by direct trains) or whether a change is involved.

1. Stamford and Burghley House (grounds)

Stamford is often described as one of the best preserved stone towns in Britain, and at its core are many 17th–18th century stone buildings, older timber framed buildings and five medieval parish churches. It is the setting of many films and historical TV series, and it really is a beautiful place to visit. It has coaching inns – a legacy of the Great North Road which ran through the town – real ale pubs and many good tearooms, cafes and restaurants. <http://www.stamford.co.uk/> has more information, and Stamford can be reached by train from Leicester – trains run every hour, the journey takes approximately 45 minutes and a return journey costs c. £12.50 for tickets bought on the day.

Burghley House <http://www.burghley.co.uk/> itself is now closed for the winter, but the grounds are open and free – Burghley is a one mile walk from the centre of Stamford and calls itself the greatest Elizabethan house in England. It is lovely (even from the outside) and it is an easy walk from Stamford.

2. Melton Mowbray

Melton is a great example of an English market town, and is also gaining a reputation as the food capital of England. Home to such delicacies as stilton cheese and the pork pie, Melton is a nice place to visit and wander. <http://www.melton.co.uk/> is one useful web site, and <http://www.meltonmowbraymarket.co.uk/> tells you about the different markets, their days and times. Trains to Melton run every hour and the journey takes about 15mins, and a return ticket purchased on the day costs c. £8.00.

3. Great Central Railway

<http://www.gcrailway.co.uk/> the UK's only mainline heritage railway! Trains run every weekend, though check the very good web site for the timetable. Picturesque scenery and great trains; the different stations on the line have each been restored to a different historic period, e.g. Edwardian, 1940s. The closest station is Leicester North (newly opened in 2012) which is within walking distance (or a short taxi ride) of Leicester city centre – see the map on the web site.

4. London

London is just over an hour by train from Leicester (St Pancras mainline station) and with the SHA discount for off-peak journeys, should cost around £25 return. See the Leicester SHA web

site for details of how to obtain the SHA rail tickets for London journeys, and check the 'Visit London' website: <http://www.visitlondon.com/> which has a list of free things to do there: <http://www.visitlondon.com/tag/free-attractions>

5. Birmingham

Birmingham is around 50 minutes by train from Leicester and trains run about every half hour. A return journey will cost c. £12.50 when tickets are purchased on the day. Birmingham has excellent industrial history, art galleries, museums, and shopping: <http://visitbirmingham.com/>

6. Nottingham

Nottingham of course is the home of Robin Hood, Nottingham Castle, some great pubs, galleries, museums and good shopping opportunities:

<http://www.experiencenottinghamshire.com/> Trains from Leicester to Nottingham run approximately every half hour, take about 30 minutes, and will cost around £10.20 return when tickets are purchased on the day.

7. Cambridge

This beautiful old university city is well worth a visit if you have time – in addition to the graceful university and college buildings there are many good museums here:

<http://www.visitcambridge.org/> Trains run about every hour, and take around 2 hours to reach Cambridge. The ticket prices are very variable depending on time of day and the actual service, so worth checking on-line first.

8. Lincoln

<http://www.visitlincolnshire.com/> Stunning cathedral, castle, river, boutique shops. Lincoln is an easily manageable city, though it does have some good hills. Trains run every hour, take about 2 hours each way, and the return journey cost is about £14.10.

Destinations within Leicester itself:

9. National Space Centre

<http://www.spacecentre.co.uk/> Museum of all things space with lots of interactive displays (closed Mondays), about 2 miles north of Leicester city centre – walkable or get a taxi.

10. Highcross

Shopping mall in Leicester city centre, next door to lots of restaurants and a multiscreen cinema.

11. Museums

Check here for all Leicester's museums and their opening times and location:

<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/museums/>

12. Belgrave Road

http://www.goleicestershire.com/see-and-do/Belgrave_Road.aspx is the centre of South Asian jewellery, fashion and food shops, plus many excellent South Asian restaurants to suit all budgets.