



DISCOVER THE HEART OF ENGLAND LEICESTERSHIRE

Uncover the story of a city and county with over 2,000 years of history where you are guaranteed a traditional 'taste' of England and a landscape of woodland and waterways perfect for gentle adventures.

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WELCOME TO LEICESTERSHIRE

Uncover the story of a city and county with over 2,000 years of history where visitors are guaranteed a traditional 'taste' of England and a landscape of woodland and waterways perfect for gentle adventures. Leicester and Leicestershire are centrally located in the heart of England with easy access by road, rail and air.

The area is famous for its connection with one of the bloodiest battles in English history and the gravesite where, over 500 years later, King Richard III's remains were discovered beneath a city car park. Unique visitor experiences include pork pie making workshops, a heritage railway that follows the route of Thomas Cook's first popular excursion, tours of the last working bell foundry in Britain, the Triumph Factory Visitor Experience, afternoon tea in the 17th century home of Gunpowder plotter Sir Everard Digby or a tour of the opulent interiors of the castle that featured in Netflix's *The Crown*.

Leicestershire also offers an authentic taste of England with the ancient market town of Melton Mowbray claiming the title of Rural Capital of Food through its association with the pork pie and Stilton cheese.

Please see our day activity itineraries below for inspiration and ideas for visits to Leicestershire.



SAMPLE PROGRAMME FOR EXPLORING **LEICESTERSHIRE**

Day 1

‘Taste the heart of England’ in and around Melton Mowbray, the third oldest market town in England.

In the charming town centre, guests can visit the [Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe](#), the oldest pie shop in England. Groups can book a Pork Pie Experience in the magnificent surroundings of St Mary’s Parish Church in the heart of Melton Mowbray.

Your alternative would be a pie making workshop at [Brockleby’s Pies](#), which includes a bakery tour, talk and workshop where you will ‘hand raise’ a pork pie with traditional equipment. Why not opt for an Ultimate Experience that includes lunch or afternoon tea?

Melton Mowbray is equally famous for its [wide range of markets](#) including livestock, farmers markets, antique & collectables and the Sunday Market. The market features a micro brewery that is the world’s most awarded brewery over the past three years. Go on a brewery tour and enjoy a tasting flight in the tap room to discover why [Round Corner Brewing](#) is so successful.

There still might be time left to visit nearby [Belvoir Castle](#), home of the Duke of Rutland, whose opulent interiors, regularly featured in films and TV dramas including Netflix’s The Crown, can be enjoyed on a guided tour. Don’t miss the formal gardens that have recently been restored to bring to life the lost plans of Capability Brown or the exclusive Engine House rural retail village.



Accommodation options

- [Stapleford Park Country Hotel](#) - Luxury hotel with spa and golf breaks. Country pursuits including archery, falconry and clay pigeon shooting.
- [Scalford Country House Hotel](#) – Former hunting lodge surrounded by gardens and woodland.
- [Best Western](#) Sysonby Knoll Hotel
- [Premier Inn](#) Hotel Melton Mowbray

SAMPLE PROGRAMME FOR EXPLORING LEICESTERSHIRE

Day 2

Uncover the fascinating story of King Richard III and his defeat at the Battle of Bosworth in the place that changed the course of English history.

Start the day in Leicester, a city with 2000 years of history and the discovery story of [King Richard III](#). At the visitor centre guests will have an introduction to the **Wars of the Roses**, a series of bloody battles for the throne of England.

Fast forward 500 years from there and to a car park in Leicester city centre where the amazing discovery of the long-lost remains of King Richard were revealed.

Alternatively, you can hire a Blue Badge Guide for your group who will take you on a King Richard III [Walking Trail](#). While on the walk look out for the over 100 heritage panels around the city that tell the story of the city's historic buildings. The Old Town Area - The Lanes and St Martins – invite for a stroll or a refreshment break. Guests will find **boutique, vintage and independent shops** as well as cafes, bars and restaurants located in a former hosiery factory, an ancient schoolhouse, Edwardian Banking Hall, former suitcase factory and a Victorian businessmen's club.

In the afternoon travel on to Market Bosworth, a charming and ancient English market town, to discover medieval battlefields and a **steam train**.

To continue the historic theme of the day a visit to the [Bosworth Battlefield](#) Visitor Centre and Country Park can be included. This is the battlefield site where Richard III was defeated and killed in battle and the start of the King Richard III story.

Alternatively give the theme a twist and journey on the [heritage railway, the Battlefield Line](#) which runs from Shackerstone via Market Bosworth to Shenton in Leicestershire.



Accommodation options in Leicester

- [The Gresham Aparthotel](#)
- [St Martins Lodge boutique hotel](#)
- [Holiday Inn](#) Leicester City
- [Mercure The Grand Hotel](#)
- [Ramada Encore](#)

Or near Leicester city centre:

- [Hilton hotel](#)
- [Marriott hotel](#)

In Market Bosworth

[Bosworth Hall Hotel & Spa](#)

SAMPLE PROGRAMME FOR EXPLORING **LEICESTERSHIRE**

Day 3

'**The National Forest and the Forest Town**'. Enjoy gentle adventures and an 'English cottages to castles' heritage experience.

The National Forest is right in the heart of the country, embracing 200 square miles of the Midlands. It spans across parts of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire and aims to link the two ancient Forests of Charnwood and Needwood. With a history of coalmining and heavy industry, the landscape is now that of rolling farmland, ancient forests and new planted woodlands. Its main towns and villages include Burton upon Trent (famous for its brewing), Coalville and Swadlincote and the historic and quintessential English market town of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, with a range of boutiques and eateries.



Nearby you find [Ashby Castle](#), an English Heritage site. The property began as a manor house in the 12th Century and reached castle status in the 15th Century. Ashby Castle formed the backdrop to the famous jousting scenes in Sir Walter Scott's classic novel, Ivanhoe.

[Stoneywell Arts & Crafts Cottage and gardens](#) make a wonderful visit, it is a real National Trust gem. It is the largest of a small group of cottages designed in the Arts & Crafts style and was built in 1899 as a summer residence. It still contains much of its original furniture and has a wonderful garden and woodland to explore.

If you are looking for something a little grander, Staunton Harold Hall and Church with landscaped country park can be found nearby - a traditional country estate of some 2000 acres, centred on the great Georgian mansion. You can stroll around the estate and visit the church but the Hall is not accessible. In the stables complex is the [Ferrers Arts Centre](#) which is a craft / retail village where visitors can **see craftsmen at work** in their studios, including a Victorian model artist. There are also cafes and a deli. It is the perfect place to find a special gift or souvenir.



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Day 3

'The National Forest and the Forest Town' . Enjoy gentle adventures and an 'English cottages to castles' heritage experience.

In fact, the choice does not end here. [Calke Abbey](#) is described by the National Trust as an unstately, Grade I listed country house estate near Ticknall, Derbyshire, England. The site was an Augustinian priory from the 12th Century until its dissolution by Henry VIII. The present building, named Calke Abbey in 1808, was never actually an abbey, but is a Baroque mansion built between 1701 and 1704. Owned by the Harpur family for nearly 300 years it was passed to the Trust in 1985 in lieu of death duties. Open to the public today, many of its rooms are deliberately displayed in the state of decline in which the house was handed to the Trust. There are a number of walking trails that can be built into a programme as soft activity.

Another gem in the area is [Mount St Bernard Abbey](#). Enjoy the tranquillity of the monastery grounds and visit the Abbey shop where you can buy Tynt Meadow, the Trappist ale brewed by the monks on site. It is one of only 12 Trappist breweries in the world.

For more active experiences, why not try:

- [Hicks Lodge cycle hire](#) to cycle around the National Forest
- [Greenwood Experience](#) woodworking activity in the heart of the National Forest
- [Forest trails for walking](#)
- Charnwood Forest [Alpaca Experience](#)

Accommodation options

- [Best Western](#) Premier Yew Lodge Hotel

Or:

- [Hilton East Midlands Airport](#)
- [Radisson Blu East Midlands Airport](#)



SAMPLE PROGRAMME FOR EXPLORING LEICESTERSHIRE

Day 4

'The Great Age of Steam and the Great Outdoors' for a relaxing day in the heart of England.

Loughborough, a short drive from Leicester, is the home to the [Great Central Railway](#) – the UK's only **main line heritage railway** and the only place in the world where full sized steam engines can be seen passing each other.

A series of stations along the line have been beautifully restored to reflect different periods in the railway's history and have charming cafes. The railway has a range of Pullman carriages for **first class dining experiences** – carriages are available for private group bookings or public dining. Enjoy spectacular views of the Leicestershire countryside as you dine.

Combine your visit with a guided tour of the unique [Loughborough Bellfoundry](#), now the last major bellfoundry in Britain. The manufacturing processes such as casting and tuning, were established in the middle of the 19th century and remain the same today.



Accommodation options

Leicester is the most convenient accommodation centre for this day, other local hotels include:

- [Burleigh Court](#)
- [Quorn Grange Hotel](#)
- [Rothley Court Hotel](#)

For more information about days out in Leicestershire, please contact:
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Or visit www.visitleicester.info