



The imposing York Minster

With almost three miles of city walls, more than anywhere else in England, and a reputation as the confectionery capital of the country, **Sam Harrington-Lowe** discovers there's a lot more to York than chocolate

Go cocoa nuts *in York*

Day 1 Itinerary

Arrival

The easiest way to arrive into York is by train. East Coast operates a fast service from London's King's Cross, taking under two hours. Edinburgh is only two-and-a-half hours and there are services from Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. By air, Leeds Bradford and Manchester offer international access.

Hotel check-in

Cedar Court Grand is Yorkshire's only five-star hotel, offering 107 bedrooms. Relaxing and luxurious, it has meeting rooms for groups of between eight and 120. For a four-star alternative, the Royal York Hotel (*top right*), next to the train station, offers unique design and atmosphere. Built as a railway hotel in 1878, the Royal York has 167 bedrooms, some of which overlook the famous York Minster.

Morning meeting

The dedicated conference centre at the Royal York offers 15 meeting rooms for up to 410 delegates and is very close to the station. For a conference with a view, try the Park Inn by Radisson York City Centre, which overlooks the River Ouse and can accommodate 400 theatre-style in the Henley Regatta Suite. The York Racecourse Centre (*bottom right*) is a good out-of-town alternative for those on a budget, with space for up to 90 delegates and rooms for up to 132.

Networking lunch

For small networking groups, the Whippet Inn with its quirky but stylish décor and proudly local menu offers a private dining room with free Wi-Fi and competitive day delegate rates for up to 16.

Afternoon activity

York's proud confectionery heritage encompasses Terry's and Rowntree's – and, of course, the Yorkie! York's Chocolate Story, and its chocolate-making workshops, is an almost Wonka-style museum for devotees of its tasty heritage. The museum also offers reception space and chocolate tastings on site for up to 70 people.

Gala dinner

The National Railway Museum (*above*) is a thrilling place, even if you're not a trainspotter! A stunning venue for a gala dinner, the event space is on the platforms and you're surrounded by vintage rolling stock. Maximum capacity for dinner is 500 and dinner packages start from around £25pp.



Why York?



Laura Freer, Visit York business tourism marketing manager

"Delegates can enjoy state-of-the-art conference facilities in an eclectic mix of modern, historic and unique venues, all surrounded by the majestic backdrop and rich history of this ancient city. From the 1,400-seat York Barbican Centre to the ancient Merchant Adventurers' Hall, still a meeting place some 650 years after its construction began, York has something to suit all sizes and all budgets."



WHO
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Day 2 Itinerary

Corporate board meeting

York's Hotel du Vin is ramping up its meeting product this year, and the venue offers a number of small but elegant meeting spaces for up to 30 theatre-style. With DDRs from £35 pp and 24-hour rates from £165 pp.

High-end lunch

Originally built in 1699, Middlethorpe Hall is a stunning William and Mary style hotel and spa just outside the city, with beautiful grounds and distinctive dining spaces, catering for groups of between 14 and 45.

Afternoon activities

Following a sumptuous lunch, why not take a tour around the gardens at Middlethorpe or travel back into the city centre for a guided walk, including a famous 'Ghost Walk', with spine-tingling storytelling?