

From gritty mill towns to wild moorlands and secluded coves, Yorkshire is England's best-kept secret.

England's White Rose

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DRYSTONE walls climb the hills as they have always done. Those wonderful limestone walls that symbolise the very soul of Yorkshire – England's largest county.

Imprinted on them are endlessly varying patterns of grey against green, ragged squares and oblongs marching to impossible heights till they disappear into the heather-cloaked moorlands on the summits.

The county's terrain ranges from moorlands and broad vales with tumbling streams to magnificent mountainous uplands. Ancient Roman roads wind through medieval hamlets and towns still strongly marked by the Industrial Revolution, while mystical abbeys and castles cast shadows over the hills.

The medieval city of York is a must for any visitor to Yorkshire. As King George VI once said, "The history of York is the history of England".

It's certainly easy to agree with him as you stroll atop the city's 13th century walls and gaze down from treetop height on the story of England.

Through the centuries, this ancient city has witnessed the weaving of history's colourful tapestry: Anglo Saxon invaders building a settlement on the ruins of the Roman fort, Vikings sailing their longships up the River Ouse in 867 to conquer northern England to make York the capital.

On a visit to York, you must allow plenty of time to experience and savour the centuries revealed. One memorable way to begin is to walk all or part of the city's encircling walls; originally built as earth ramparts erected by York's Viking kings to repel invaders. The present structure has been lovingly restored through the years since the 13th century.

You can access the wall by climbing worn steps at a number of "bars", the Viking word for a fortified gate in the wall. In the turrets of Monk Bar, ferocious stone men stand frozen in the motion of hurling boulders down onto enemy heads. A short walk from Bootham Bar is York Minster, England's largest gothic cathedral.

Begun in 1220 and completed more than



Charming: Narrowboats on the Rochdale Canal, Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire, England.

250 years later, the Minster contains the world's largest single area of medieval stained glass. With its soaring columns and spires and its magnificent ornamentation, the Minster has been described as England's greatest ancient monument.

If you have a head for heights, don't miss the climb up the 275 winding steps of the great central tower for a panorama of the city and the surrounding Yorkshire Moors.

Within the city walls is a dense web of narrow twisting streets, with grand names like Whip-ma-Whop-ma-Gate, Stonegate and the Shambles. These lanes were once walked by legendary men who helped shape the land: Hadrian, Guy Fawkes, William the Conqueror, Oliver Cromwell and Eric Bloodaxe the Viking.

The Shambles is a perfectly preserved medieval street, where storybook houses and half-timbered stores lean towards each other

at drunken angles. In one particular spot, it is possible for two people to shake hands across the street from one second-floor window to another.

The cobbled Shambles was originally a street of butchers, and the hooks they used for displaying meat outside their shops can still be seen today. In York, you become a time-traveler, as 2,000 years of history rolls by.

Northeast of York lies the North York



A walker in the Yorkshire Dales, with its distinctive landscape of drystone walls.



York Minster is England's largest gothic cathedral.



Monday to Sunday

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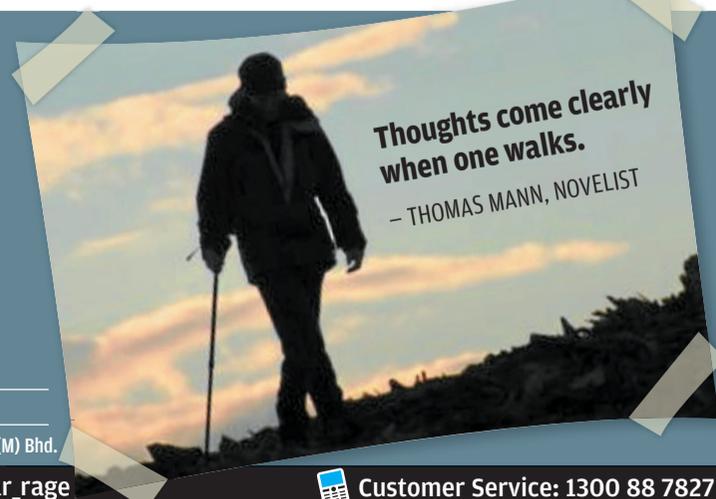
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Thoughts come clearly when one walks.
— THOMAS MANN, NOVELIST