



WALL TO WALL



group

AC Group, 17th Floor Millbank Tower, London, SW1P 4QP
t: +44 20 7737 3414 e: reservations@acgroup.travel w: acgroup.travel

PRICE FROM* **GBP £459.00 PER PERSON**

3 Nights, 4 Days

DAY ONE - CHESTER • 2hrs by rail direct from London

Around two hours after boarding your train at London Euston, you will arrive at the ancient city of Chester in the North West of England. The city was founded as the Roman fortress of *Deva Victrix* in the 1st century A.D. - some of the red sandstone walls built by the Romans to defend the city still stand today. Newer sections added by the Normans, and during the English Civil War form an almost complete circuit, almost 2 miles long - the most complete system of defensive town walls in Britain. You can explore them using the elevated walkway that runs along the top of the walls.

Chester is known also for its Tudor-style half-timber buildings, the unique two-tiered covered shopping arcades known as 'The Rows', and the Eastgate Clock - built on top of a bridge to celebrate Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee - it's the second most photographed clock in England after Big Ben!

Upon arriving in Chester we recommend you head straight for your hotel, the centrally-located 4-Star Macdonald New Blossoms. Having left your luggage with the hotel concierge, you are free to explore! We suggest a morning cycle tour, a great way to get to know the layout of the city. The tour in question conveniently starts from your hotel. Meet the guide in reception at 10:30am for a two hour Orientation Tour which takes you around the city walls and landmarks. The tour rounds off with a quintessentially English afternoon tea served with sandwiches, cake, tea and coffee back at the New Blossoms Hotel. Enjoy - you've earned it!

Only five minutes' walk from the New Blossoms Hotel is magnificent Chester Cathedral. It was originally founded as a Benedictine abbey in 1092, shut down in 1540 as part of Henry VIII's disbandment of England's monasteries, and reconsecrated as a cathedral the following year. We recommend taking the Tower Tour at 2:00pm. This 60 minute guided tour allows you to ascend to the rooftop at a leisurely pace, taking in the ornate ceilings and architecture along the way. Your guide will tell you stories from over 900 years of Cathedral history, including the tale of the escape of a King, the story of Hugh the Wolf, the formidable Norman Earl who founded the building, and will describe the austere lives of the monks who once lived here. Upon reaching the roof top you'll experience spectacular views in all directions - on a clear day you can see two countries, five counties and the city of Liverpool around 17 miles away. Chester Cathedral is currently being recreated using LEGO bricks, and for a £1 donation to charity, you too can help build history, literally, when adding a brick to the 350,000 LEGO bricks already in place!

To finish off the day, take a serene half-hour cruise on the beautiful River Dee. You'll pass beneath the Queen's Park suspension bridge, glide past Grosvenor Park and the Earl's Eye, and through the meadows where you'll see dozens of swans - keep an eye out for kingfishers and cormorants too!

DAY TWO - LANCASTER • Chester to Lancaster 1hr 20 minutes by rail via Warrington Bank Quay (1 change)

Next morning, take the train north to Lancaster. The city once had the unfortunate label of 'The Hanging Town' because its Assize court passed more death sentences than any court in England (around 265 between 1782 and 1865!) Today, the city has a more genteel atmosphere!

The condemned prisoners would have been held at Lancaster Castle (parts of which are still used as a prison today). A tour of the Castle will reveal gruesome tales of some of its former inmates, such as George Lyon, the notorious 'King of The Robbers', the ten women who were found guilty in the infamous Pendle Witch Trials in 1612, and the fifteen Lancaster Martyrs, executed during the reign of Elizabeth I for their Catholic faith.



Just a stone's throw away from the castle gates is Lancaster Priory, parts of which date back to 1094. Step inside and marvel at its vast, ten metre high ceilings. You might hear an organist playing the 'Henry Wells of Liverpool' organ, the same firm which installed organs in the Royal Albert Hall and St. Paul's Cathedral. Take a look at the carved choir stalls - they are made of oak and date back to 1340!

Just around the corner, grab some superb coffee and cake at *Atkinsons Coffee Roasters* - who have been supplying coffee and tea to the good people of Lancaster since 1837. If you happen to be visiting Lancaster on a Wednesday or Saturday head to nearby Market Square and enjoy bustling stalls selling local produce, freshly cooked food and arts and crafts in the Charter Market - it has been held regularly since 1193!

Few people realise that Lancaster was once one of England's busiest ports, with tall ships bringing sugar, spices, tea and coffee up the River Lune. Learn more at Lancaster Maritime Museum, housed in an impressive Georgian Building on Lancaster's Quayside. Round off the day in 54-acre Williams Park, and marvel at the majestic 150 foot high Edwardian Baroque Ashton Memorial. Some call it the 'Taj Mahal of Lancaster', while others liken it to St. Paul's Cathedral! It was commissioned by Lord Ashton, Lancaster's 'Lino King' to commemorate his late wife. Views from the memorial will take your breath away, with Morecambe Bay and the Lake District Fells visible on a clear day.

Tonight you will be staying at the 4 Star Lancaster House Hotel.

DAY THREE - CARLISLE • *Lancaster to Carlisle 1hr by rail direct*

After a short hop northwards by rail, you will arrive at the *Great Border City* of Carlisle. In the days when it was a garrison on Hadrian's Wall, defending the northern limits of the Roman Empire, it was known as *Luguvalium*. After the Romans departed, Carlisle lay on the edge of a lawless border region between Scotland and England, regularly changing hands between the rival kingdoms. The Scots besieged Carlisle and its Castle in 1173, 1174, 1216, 1296, 1297, 1315 and 1461 - Carlisle Castle remains the most besieged place in Britain to this day! Though Carlisle is now firmly established as an English city, the folk memory of invasions from the north lingers. The clock tower above Carlisle's Old Town Hall has clock faces on three sides only - none was ever added on the north-facing side as (it is said) the people of Carlisle 'wouldn't give the time of day' to the Scots!

Are you an Armstrong, a Nixon, a Robson, or a Graham? If so, you may be descended from one of the 'Reiver' families who wreaked havoc across the border region for hundreds of years from the 13th century. The border region's status as a debatable war zone bred fierce 'Reiver' clans, for whom national identity meant little and family meant everything. Cross-border family alliances and blood feuds lasting generations developed. Reiver families ran protection rackets, raided each others' farms, seizing cattle and possessions, and kidnapped and killed each others' family members. Only a crackdown by James I of Scotland (who also became James VI of England in 1603) ended the Reivers' reign of terror.

Leave your luggage at the 3-Star Crown & Mitre Hotel and head to Tullie House Museum to find out more about the Border Reivers and Carlisle's Roman History. Next, visit Carlisle Castle, where Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned for a time before her execution. Your 'Wall to Wall' tour just would not be complete without a visit to Hadrian's Wall. Stay the night at The Crown & Mitre Hotel, and arrange a private tour, including transportation, to Hadrian's Wall for the following day. The trip will start at your hotel, and last five hours, introducing you to the Wall (including one or more Roman Forts) and showing you all the best viewpoints and photo opportunities. Your guide will then return you to Carlisle station to catch your train back to London.

Price Includes:

- 3 nights in mentioned hotels, or similar, on B&B rate
- 2 Hour Chester Orientation Cycle Tour
- Chester Cathedral Tower Tour
- Half-Hour Cruise on River Dee
- Shared Tour of Lancaster Castle
- Private Tour to Hadrian's Wall
- Admission to Carlisle Castle
- Admission to Tullie House Museum, Carlisle
- Admission to Birdoswald Roman Fort

Price does not include:

- Lunches or dinners
- Room Upgrades, Extras and Room Service
- Personal Travel Insurance
- Transport unless otherwise stated

*Terms and Conditions:

Rates based on 2 adults sharing 1 standard room; Rates are subject to availability, should suggested hotel not be available one of a similar category will be offered; Rates are valid until 31.12.2020 and subject to availability; not valid on bank holidays and during special events; All services are on request. Please note the above itinerary can be amended and tailored to client's needs.



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