

# *Discover* TEESDALE



## **‘Dales on Rails’ Itinerary**

Itinerary: 4 Trains and Castles

## Our 'Dales on Rails' itineraries include;

### Itinerary 1 Dales on Rails

Take this route to combine visits to Locomotion, Cockfield Fell, the Weardale Railway. There's an opportunity for a spot of shopping and refreshments at the Durham Dales Centre in Stanhope and you will also see the Stanhope and Tyne Railway and the Waskerley Way.

### Itinerary 2 Railways Great and Small

Start with morning coffee near Bowes and explore railways in and around Barnard Castle. ride on the miniature railway at Whorlton Lido and finish the day at Locomotion.

### Itinerary 3 Scenery and Steam

Combine sightseeing and fine food with a spot of history and a ride on a steam train. This route takes in Teesdale and Weardale.

### Itinerary 4 Trains and Castles

Start by riding the Wensleydale railway then tour Castle Bolton, Richmond Castle, Barnard Castle ending at Darlington Railway Centre and Museum to see the engine that opened the world's first passenger railway in 1825: Locomotion no. 1.

Tour itineraries are prepared for Teesdale Marketing by Jan Williams, Northumbria Blue Badge Guide. The information is correct at the time of writing. Group organisers are advised to confirm opening times and arrangements for groups with individual attractions/organisations. A free guiding service is also available (availability is limited, please check with Jan).Contact: Jan Williams Tel 0191 383 0988 [Janwildurh@aol.com](mailto:Janwildurh@aol.com)

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**Itinerary No 4**

**Route Plan**

Leeming Bar (for Wensleydale Railway) – Leyburn –B6108 - Richmond – B6108 - Scotch Corner –A66 west – Barnard Castle – exit town via County Bridge onto B6277 - Cotherstone – Romalldkirk – Middleton in Teesdale – B6282 - Eggleston – B6278 towards Barnard Castle -A67 – Darlington – A1 north/south or A66 east/west

**Coach Timings**

Leeming Bar – Leyburn (via Wensleydale Railway)	=	40 minutes
Leyburn – Richmond	=	25 minutes
Richmond – Barnard Castle	=	40 minutes
Barnard Castle – Darlington (via Middleton in Teesdale route)	=	1 hour 15 minutes

**Commentary**

*What a way to begin this **Dales on Rails** day!*

The newly restored **Wensleydale Railway** – the “people’s railway” - is where the romance of steam meets the modern ambitions of dales folk determined to provide themselves and their visitors with an alternative way of enjoying the scenery of this lovely Yorkshire dale. This is a real taste of the past combined with a promise for Wensleydale’s economic future.

*Go on! Try it.*

*Don’t miss the first train of the day from Leeming Bar.....*

It took almost 30 years to complete the original line which linked Northallerton on the east coast main line to Garsdale in the west. From 1848 steam trains were pulling trucks loads of freight and passengers but by the 1950s only limestone was being carried to the industries of Teesside. The line finally closed in 1992. But once again the villages of Leeming Bar, Bedale, Leyburn and Redmire are linked by the 17 mile length of track and trains run 7 days a week.

The Yorkshire dales are usually named after the rivers flowing through them. So it must be the River Wensley which flows through Wensleydale – correct?

*No – not quite...*

Yoredale is the ancient name for Wensleydale and the pretty River Ure flows through gentle, wooded scenery on its way to join the River Ouse.

And who can go through this dale without thinking of cheese? Originally made from ewes milk the earliest cheese making industry was a summer occupation for the

wives and daughters of the farmers of the dales.

*And who can go through Wensleydale without thinking of castles?*

The Wensleydale Railway is open all the way up to **Redmire** which gives the perfect opportunity to visit the spectacular remains of **Castle Bolton**. Mary Queen of Scots began her long wait in captivity here at Castle Bolton and the Lord Scrope of the day gave her all the comforts due her rank. Friends and servants shared her captivity and the queen was even allowed time out to go on hunting excursions into the hills nearby.

**Leyburn** is the perfect small dales town. J M W Turner, that great master of landscape art and watercolour, passed this way in 1796 and produced many paintings and drawings of Wensleydale and the neighbouring Yorkshire valleys. And it’s worth just taking a moment to enjoy the local architecture. Some buildings show all the characteristics of the Georgian period when Leyburn was a prosperous market town. High, square buildings with a central doorway to create a balanced feel to the architecture. Sash windows and lovely decorations in the form of window mouldings. Delicious!

The road linking Wensleydale to Swaledale is a delight and very soon **Richmond** and all its tempting shops and places of refreshment comes into view. There has been a military presence in this town for almost 1,000 years and today the modern British army is based at nearby Catterick Garrison. The horse-shoe shaped market place is one of the largest in England and narrow wynds or alleyways radiate off in all directions just waiting to be explored. **Richmond Castle** was virtually impregnable because of its position guarding the river crossing. Its Norman builder, Alan Rufus, was ferocious

and brutal even by the standards of his day but he made sure his masons built something which was to last long enough to be used even into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Lord Baden Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, lived in the castle in 1908.

Perhaps he took time out to visit the wonderful gem which is Richmond's **Georgian Theatre**. One of the oldest theatres in the country still in its original form the theatre played host to all the famous names from 18<sup>th</sup> century theatre land including Stephen Kemble, Sarah Siddons and Edmund Kean.

Castles and a woollen theme link Richmond with the next stop on this "**Dales on Rails**" discovery trail. **Barnard Castle** owes its existence to the castle built by Guy de Balliol in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and his nephew, Bernard, gave the town its modern name of Barnard (or Bernard's) Castle. Take time to explore "Barney's" delights. Want to do some serious shopping? Browse **The Bank** area where the town's growing reputation as an antique centre can best be appreciated. Fine furniture, second-hand books, clocks, silver, jewellery and much more besides. Visiting midweek? Then enjoy the banter of local stallholders in the open air market held every Wednesday morning. And if your visit coincides with the first Saturday of each month the Farmers' market is another must.

Barnard Castle's newly refurbished TIC (2004) has a selection of guidebooks and walks leaflets which will help you discover this lovely market town. Browse at your leisure over a cup of fresh coffee in the TIC's own café. Coaches may park outside the TIC on Wednesdays by arrangement (tel 01833 696356).

And just round the corner from the main street is the awesome and always fascinating **Bowes Museum**. The joint art collection of its founders – John and Josephine Bowes – is housed in an outstanding building which unmistakably has all the style and elegance of a French chateau. Together the founders built a fantastic collection of French and Spanish art and it is all ours to enjoy today. No wonder Bowes Museum is known as the "V&A of the North".

*...and don't forget to check out the timings for the performance of the mechanical Silver Swan.....an absolute must!*

Follow the main street steeply downhill to cross the River Tees on the old County Bridge and follow a lovely route into Teesdale. In places along the dale the modern road comes quite close to the route of the old **Tees**

**Valley Railway**. Steaming into operation in 1868 it brought the villages of **Lartington, Cotherstone, Romaldkirk and Mickleton** into easy reach of the large settlements further east. The beautifully constructed **Lune Viaduct** stands proudly alongside the dale road between **Mickleton and Middleton in Teesdale**. It is more than 40 years since the closure of these local lines and what once carried stone and livestock down the dale now carries the **Tees Railway Walk** (NB: this is a permissive footpath and not a public right of way.)

Despite plans to run the line all the way to Alston it was in fact **Middleton in Teesdale** which became the actual terminus and the old passenger terminus is now disguised as a caravan site (catch a glimpse on the right of the road just before dropping down the hill to cross the River Tees into the town.

Don't just drive through **Middleton-in-Teesdale**. This is a small town well worth exploring. Local shops serve the surrounding agricultural community. The village bakery and tearoom offers bakery items and preserves and an excellent TIC (check opening times) is just the place to buy those all important postcards or guidebooks. An elegant drinking fountain in the main street is a reminder of Middleton's role in the lead-mining heritage of Teesdale. The name etched into the canopy is Robert Bainbridge who was Superintendent for the London Lead Company in the mid-nineteenth century

The scenic route out of Middleton in Teesdale towards Barnard Castle continues high above the valley of the River Tees (look for a fine view of the river down to the right shortly after clearing the town). The dry stone walls of the Pennine landscape gives way to hedgerows on the A67 route through to Darlington. **Piercebridge** is worth a short diversion to discover the remains of the Roman bridge abutment. The Roman legionary soldiers arrived in 79AD marching north from their main garrison at Eboracum – modern day York. En-route there were rivers to cross. And the survival of this abutment - 2,000 years old - is as much a testament to the skill of the Roman builders as the railway lines and viaducts are to the Victorian railway engineers.

The **Darlington Railway Centre and Museum** is the perfect place to end this discovery trail. The station in North Road opened in 1842 and was built as a direct result of increased passenger traffic along the line of the Darlington to Stockton Railway line.

## *Discover Teesdale*

*And the name of the famous engine which provided the power to open that historic line in 1825?*

*Locomotion No. 1.*

See that locomotive and read all about its designer – George Stephenson – in the displays and exhibits in this delightful museum. Walk down the old platforms and

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peer inside the steam locomotives “Derwent” and “Blue Peter” and admire the lovely drawings and paintings of early advertisements tempting people to visit towns and cities around the country. Wander into the old Victorian toilets and discover the watercolour painting hanging on the walls of the museum which shows that historic day on 27 September 1825 when the world of transport changed for ever.....

*.....and began a journey which leads directly to our own story of  
**"Dales on Rails".....***