

Discover TEESDALE



Themed Itinerary

Famous Families

Our Pick 'n' Mix themed itineraries give you the flexibility to choose which attractions to visit and which themes to follow to suit your schedule and your group's interests. Don't hesitate to contact us if you need a tailor-made itinerary.

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Our itineraries include;

Famous Families

More than half of the land in Teesdale is privately owned. This tour reveals secret corners and explores Teesdale's links with the Baliol, Barnard, Bowes, Morritt, Neville, Strathmore, Vane families.

Gardens & Geology

Ideal for horticultural societies, garden enthusiasts and nature lovers this tour takes in both wild and cultivated landscapes - and there is an opportunity to buy plants in the old walled gardens and nurseries at Eggleston Hall.

Land of the Three Rivers

The Tees, Tyne and Wear shape the landscape in the North of England. This tour takes in beautiful upper reaches of all three rivers calling in some of the areas' prettiest villages.

Roman Route

Teesdale was a key point on the Roman route across the Pennines south of Hadrian's Wall. The A66 follows the original Roman Road. This tour takes in the fort and river crossing at Piercebridge and can be extended to link up with Hadrian's Wall for history and archaeology enthusiasts - or combined with retail and refreshment opportunities in villages and towns along the way.

Writers and Artists

Famous visitors to Teesdale include Charles Dickens, Sir Walter Scott and artists Cotman and Turner. This tour explores their favourite corners, the places they stayed and the views that inspired them.

Tour itineraries are prepared for Teesdale Marketing by Jan Williams, Registered Tourist 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.

Famous Families

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Route Plan

Barnard Castle and Bowes Museum – exit town via County Bridge onto B6277 - Cotherstone – Romaldkirk – Middleton-in-Teesdale - B6282 – B6279 – Staindrop - Raby Castle

Coach Timings

Barnard Castle/Bowes Museum – Middleton-in-Teesdale 30 mins
Middleton-in-Teesdale – Raby Castle 30 mins

Attractions

Barnard Castle	Full day recommended for fascinating market town and Castle managed by English Heritage Group bookings: 01833 638212 (site custodian) or 0191 2691200 (regional head office)
The Bowes Museum	Designated European fine art collection, Grade 1 listed building and park. 2-3 hours, Group bookings: 01833 694605 Email: www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk
Rokeby Hall	Stately home on the banks of the River Tees. 1 hour, Group bookings: 01833 637334
High Force	England's highest waterfall managed by Raby Estates. 45 minutes (to include walk to/from falls). Group bookings: 01833 640209 Email: teesdaleestate@rabycastle.com www.rabycastle.com/high_force.htm
Middleton-in-Teesdale	Former lead mining company town with new visitor attraction "Meet the Middletons". 1.5-2 hours. Group bookings: 01833 641000
Raby Castle	Home of Lord Barnard, castle, coach house, gardens and tearooms. 3 hours. Group bookings: 01833 660202 Email: admin@rabycastle.com www.rabycastle.com/visit_info/tours_groups.htm

Refreshments

Barnard Castle	Variety of tearooms/pubs
The Bowes Museum	Group bookings: 01833 694605
Middleton-in-Teesdale	Village bakers/tearoom
Teesdale Hotel	Group bookings: 01833 640264 Email: enquiries@teesdalehotel.com www.teesdalehotel.com
Raby Castle	Group bookings: 01833 660202

Commentary

Teesdale is rich in associations with historic figures. Even today land management in the dale is influenced by two leading aristocratic families: the Scottish Earl of Strathmore and Lord Barnard of Raby Castle near Staindrop.

The town of **Barnard Castle** owes its existence to the building of a fortification intended to defend the river crossing below. The first timber structure was built in the 11th century by Guy de Balliol to be followed some years later by a stone building begun by Guy's nephew, Bernard. From "Bernard's castle" came the modern place name we use today. All the local residents, however, call the town affectionately "Barney".

By the time it was completed this castle was one of the largest in the north of England and the ruins today are really quite extensive. Well worth a visit inside (guidebooks available).

John Balliol succeeded Bernard. John lost an argument with the mighty Prince Bishop of Durham and to make amends he chose to finance the establishment of a new college at Oxford University which still bears the family name today.

The influence of the Balliol family extended into Scotland too. When John Balliol died his devoted wife founded Sweetheart Abbey in Dumfries and Galloway where eventually her husband's heart was to lie at rest.

In 1292 their son became King of Scotland and was forced to forfeit his land in Teesdale when he renounced homage to the English monarch Edward I.

Another family name beginning with "B" influenced the town in the 16th century. During the **Rising of the North** in 1569 the Catholic northern Earls of Westmorland and Northumberland attempted to overthrow the Protestant Elizabeth I and replace her with the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots. Sir George Bowes defended the castle here in Barnard Castle valiantly for 11 days on behalf of Elizabeth but eventually was forced to surrender. His brave deeds had bought valuable time for the Queen's forces, however, and the Rebellion was quickly quashed.

.....*From "B" to "V"*

60 years later the new owners of Raby Castle – the Vane family – dismantled part of the castle and reused the material at Raby.

And it was to be a descendent of Sir George Bowes who was to make a very significant impact on the town much later during the 19th century.

Bowes Museum is an extraordinary and magnificent building on the edge of Barnard Castle. Purpose built as a museum and opened in 1892 it was the brainchild of John and Josephine Bowes. And theirs is a wonderful human story of a happy marriage which resulted in an enduring legacy. John was the illegitimate son of the Scottish 10th Earl of Strathmore and a commoner called Mary Millner. Although his parents did finally marry just a few hours before the Earl's death the young John Bowes was not able to inherit his father's title. He was, however, given a family estate called Streatlam just a few miles from Barnard Castle and with the income from this estate and from his coalmining interests he was able to indulge his love of art and all things French. His character and reputation as a shrewd businessman was tempered by his love of paintings, fine furniture and ceramics.

Whilst on one of his frequent visits to France he met and fell in love with Josephine, an amateur actress and talented sculptor and painter. Together they built the fantastic collection of French and Spanish art we all enjoy today. Look for Josephine's own paintings hanging on the gallery walls and don't forget to check out the timings for the performance of the mechanical Silver Swan – an absolute must!

Just a 10 minute drive from the Bowes Museum across Abbey Bridge is **Rokeby Hall**. A very lovely Palladian style country house with a unique collection of 18th century needlework pictures and period furniture and home for 100 years, until 1905, of a painting by Velasquez called the "Rokeby Venus".

In June 1809 the Scottish writer and poet Sir Walter Scott stayed at the hall at the invitation of the then owner **John Bacon Morritt**. The family were patrons of the arts and hosted not only Sir Walter but also the poet Robert Southey in 1812, Charles Dickens some years later and the art and social critic John Ruskin in 1876. John Morritt and Sir Walter had met in Edinburgh where a friendship had been forged. Scott was bathed in glory from the success of his recent works "Marmion" and "Lady of the Lake" and Morritt, a classics and history scholar himself, was keen to encourage him to write another epic poem this time featuring Teesdale which would, so Morritt hoped, help bring new fame to the dale.

It being the month of June when Sir Walter stayed at Rokeby Hall he was able to experience Teesdale in all its summer glory. He roamed the nearby woods and riverbanks and gradually a storyline he had been thinking of for some time began to take on a life of its own. "**Rokeby**" tells the story of events during five days following the Battle of Marston Moor during the English Civil War of the 1640s.

On his second visit in 1812 Sir Walter used a small cave overlooking the nearby River Greta to find peace and quiet to concentrate on the completion of his work.

And the result of all this tranquillity and inspiration? 30,000 words! And whilst it's not Scott's best known poem it does make reference to many local places....

"...Staindrop, who from her sylvan bowers, Salutes proud Raby's battled towers....."

From Barnard Castle it is a short drive to the delightfully picturesque and well kept village of **Romaldkirk**. The wide village green (look for the village stocks!) is dominated on one side by the church often described as the "cathedral of the dales". One of the rectors in the early 19th century was Reginald Bligh (d.1821) who was cousin to the more famous William Bligh of Mutiny on the Bounty Fame (1789).

The two main private landowners in Teesdale are the Earl of Strathmore and Lord Barnard of Raby Castle. Both landowners influence life in the dale today.

The **Strathmore Estate** is owned by the Bowes-Lyon family. In the 18th century Mary Eleanor Bowes was the daughter of a Durham coal owner and one of the richest heiresses in Europe. She married the 9th Earl of Strathmore and the Earl agreed to exchange his surname for hers. Later, the 11th Earl made the name Bowes-Lyon. The present Earl's Durham estate extends along the south bank of the River Tees.

Middleton-in-Teesdale makes a convenient turning point and is well worth stopping in to explore the local shops.

But make sure to leave enough time to enjoy the delights of one of the best castles in the north of England.....

Follow the B6279 route towards Staindrop keeping an eye open for the familiar whitewashed farm buildings which are so typical of the Raby estate.

Staindrop has long been regarded as the estate village for Raby Castle and is one of County Durham's "green villages". Although it is close to the edge of what was the Durham coalfield the effects of industry have not been felt in this graceful village. Georgian houses with distinctive pantile roofs face each other across a wide village green and at the top of the street St Mary's church is all one could wish for in a typical English village.

And Raby Castle is all one could wish for from a medieval castle.

This is one of the best preserved castles in the country. As you approach look carefully across the Parkland for red and fallow deer grazing peacefully in the meadows.

Two families have moulded the history of Raby down the centuries....

The appearance of the castle today is largely the result of work undertaken between 1360-90 by **Ralph Neville**, 2nd Baron Neville and his son, **John**, the 3rd Baron. Both developed Raby extensively. Ralph was the victor at the Battle of Neville's Cross (near Durham) in 1346 where he took prisoner King David II of Scotland. Ralph is buried alongside his son in the nave of Durham Cathedral. Theirs were the first lay burials to be allowed inside the Cathedral by the Benedictine community.

Another Ralph Neville became the first **Earl of Westmoreland** in 1397 and from that time onwards the family became big players in local and national warfare all through the medieval period. This Ralph married Joan Beaufort the daughter of John of Gaunt (Shakespeare's "time honoured Lancaster.....") and the marriage produced 14 children. **Cicely Nevill** was their youngest child and because of her great beauty became known as the "Rose of Raby". Her marriage to Richard Plantaganet, Duke of York, produced two future kings of England – Edward IV and Richard III.

And Raby's connections with famous families do not end there.....

The Neville's forfeited their estate after the disastrous Rising of the North 1569 and the Vane family came into ownership in 1626. **Sir Henry Vane the Younger** was elected Governor of Massachusetts in 1636 and so began the families rise through the aristocratic ranks: an Earldom (Darlington) in 1754 and a Dukedom (Cleveland) in 1833. The Dukedom became extinct in 1891 and today only the Barony of Barnard survives.

More can be learnt on a visit inside the Castle where the atmosphere of a much loved family home is very much in evidence and is certainly part of the unique atmosphere which is Raby's. Elegant saloons, fine furniture and the chance to see how the servants lived make Raby Castle a great experience. Don't miss the walled garden and the Stables Tearoom.