



EXPLORE BRITAIN BY RAIL



Snowdon Mountain Railway, Snowdonia, North Wales

HELLO WELCOME

Editor's Summary

There is something undeniably romantic about travelling by rail around Britain. Perhaps it is the grand architecture of our historic railway stations, the beautiful scenes of rolling countryside or the quaint villages passing by the window.

Whatever the reason, journeying by train adds a real sense of adventure to any trip and is the most picturesque and relaxing way to discover the real Britain (see Highlights of England on page 10).

A fast rail network and frequent services allow you to book a short trip from London, and be in Scotland within 4hrs 30mins, so you can take in the varied history and culture across Britain (see one-day trips on page 24).

Save money by purchasing a BritRail Pass offering unlimited journeys for a more affordable way of travelling by train in Britain (see page 8).

Charlie Wilde

Rail Project Manager, VisitBritain

CONTENTS

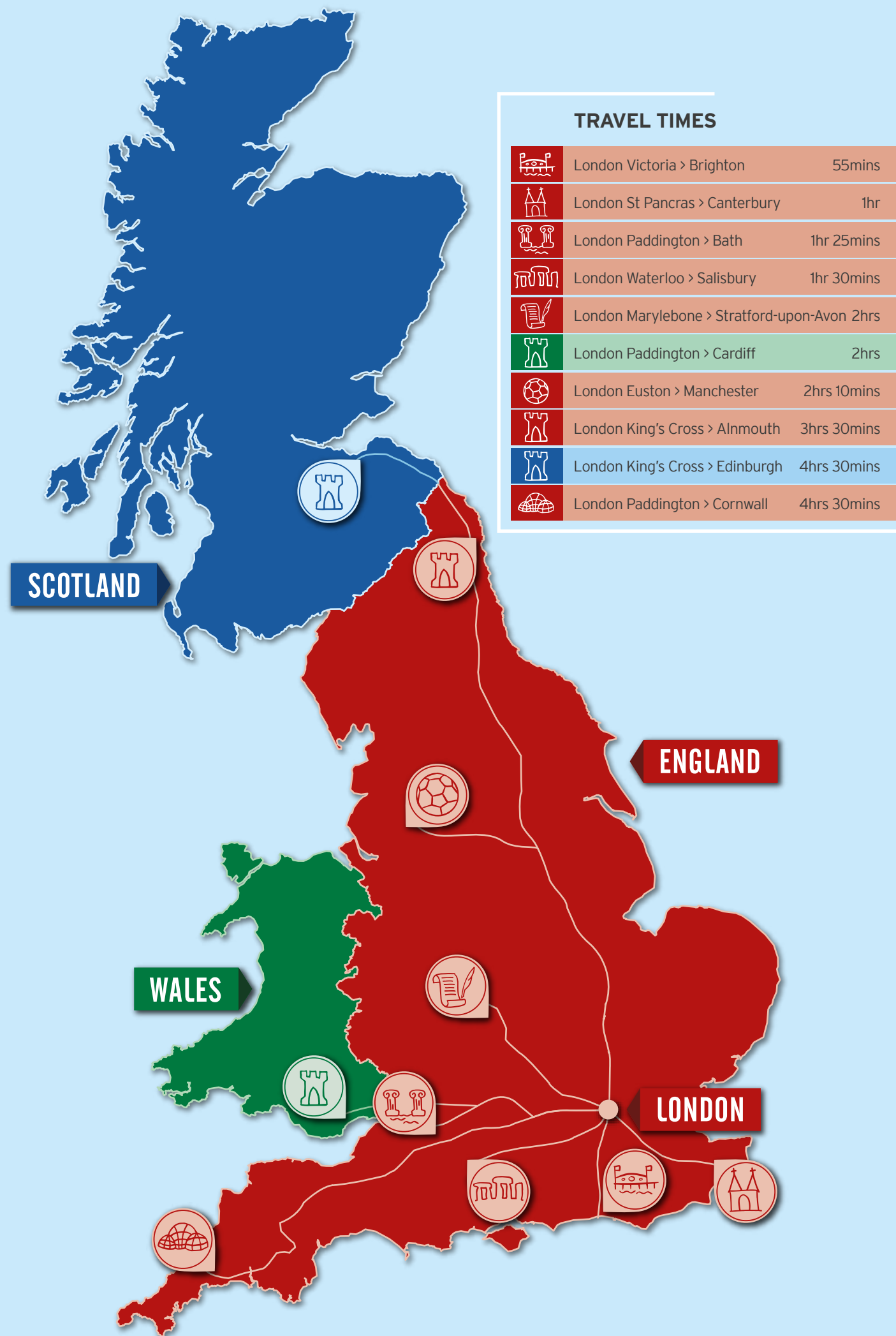
●	Why travel by rail?	6
●	How to book your BritRail Pass	8
●	Highlights of England	10
●	Highlights of Scotland	16
●	Highlights of Wales	20
●	One-day trips by rail	
●	- London	24
●	- Edinburgh	25
●	- Manchester	26
●	- Birmingham	27
●	Film & TV locations from Oxford by rail	28
●	Bucket-list rail journeys	29
●	Luxury rail journeys	30

TOP 10

OUTSIDE LONDON

ACCESSIBLE BY RAIL IN A DAY

VISITING TOP ATTRACTIONS OUTSIDE LONDON BY RAIL HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER. OVER HALF OF THE ATTRACTIONS CAN BE REACHED WITHIN TWO HOURS



5 REASONS

TO TRAVEL BY RAIL



1

DESTINATIONS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

Birmingham > Stratford-upon-Avon	45mins
Edinburgh > Glasgow	55mins
Birmingham > London	1hr 25mins
Manchester > Windermere	1hr 40mins
London > Cardiff	2hrs 5mins
London > Manchester	2hrs 10mins
Edinburgh > Windermere	2hrs 30mins
Manchester > Edinburgh	3hrs 25mins
London > Edinburgh	4hrs 30mins



2

CONNECTIVITY

Britain has over 2,500 train stations, so you can reach all parts of Britain easily by rail. This will give you more time to enjoy your chosen destinations.



3

GREAT VALUE FOR MONEY

The BritRail Pass offers incredible savings on rail travel in Britain.

See BritRail on pages 8-9



4

BEAUTIFUL SCENIC JOURNEYS

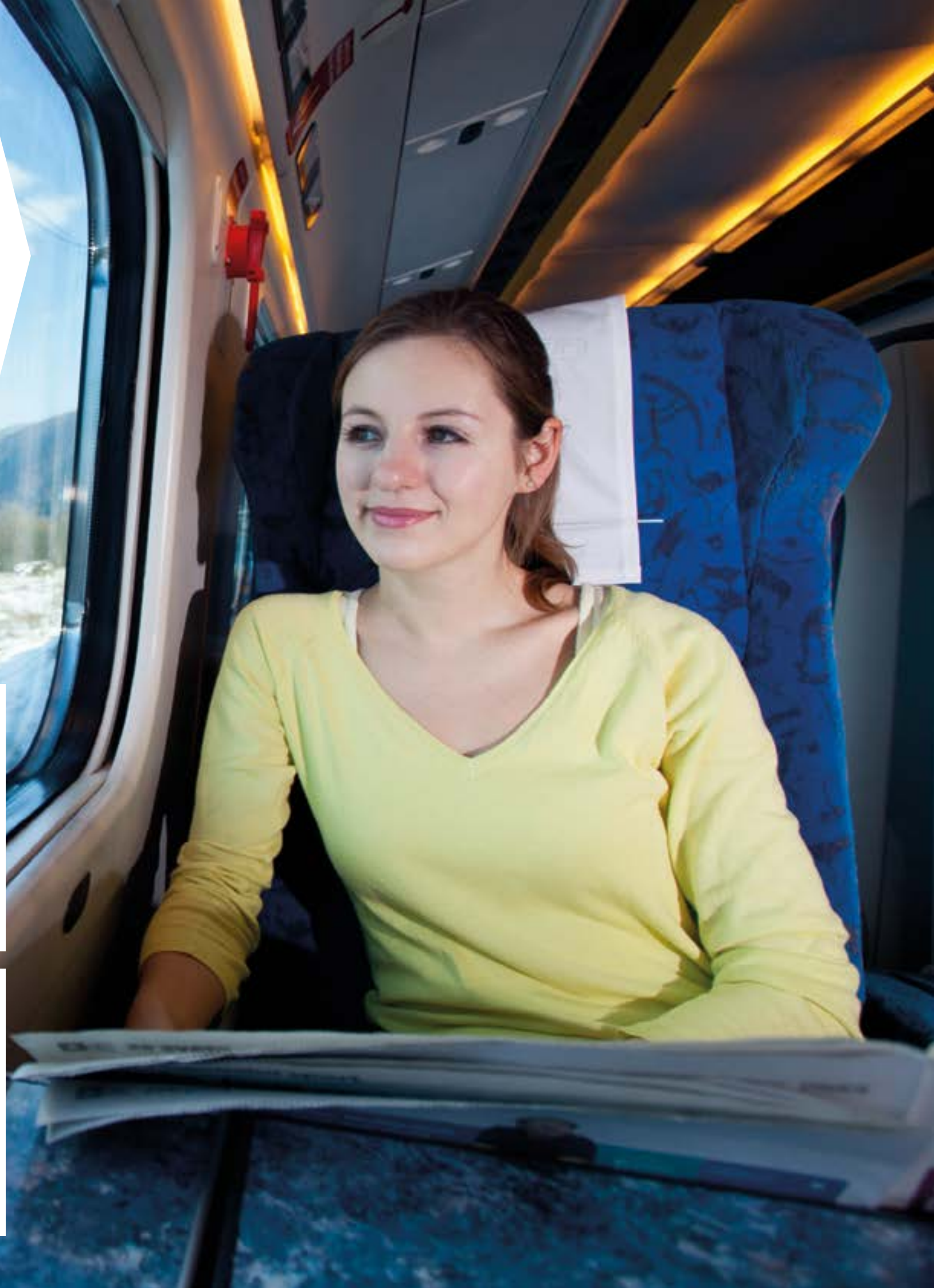
Enjoyable and relaxing way to travel. Experience the villages, towns and countrysides from the comfort of your seat.



5

ONBOARD EXPERIENCE

Wi-Fi, power sockets, toilets, refreshments (food and drinks), First Class options, quiet coaches, luggage conveyance and assistance for disabled/passengers with reduced mobility.



How to travel around Britain by rail

Loch Awe, Scotland

SAVE
WITH THE
BritRail Pass

PASSES
FROM JUST
£13
PER DAY

2 For 1 on Attractions

Many attractions in Britain offer 2 for 1 entry offers with a valid BritRail Pass.

WHAT PASSES ARE ON OFFER?

- ▶ **BritRail Pass**
 - unlimited rail travel throughout England, Scotland and Wales
- ▶ **BritRail England Pass**
 - travel within England
- ▶ **BritRail London Plus Pass**
 - great-value pass for day trips out of London

A **BRITRAIL PASS** GIVES YOU THE ABILITY TO TRAVEL ACROSS THE ENTIRE NATIONAL RAIL NETWORK OF **GREAT BRITAIN** AND OFFERS FANTASTIC VALUE FOR MONEY

The BritRail Pass allows you to travel on all mainline trains to visit ancient castles in rugged countrysides, villages by the sea, or cosmopolitan cities.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Please visit www.visitbritainshop.com/world and click on your country flag in the top right-hand corner. Follow these simple steps, or visit your local tour operator for more information.

STEP 1	Choose date of arrival
STEP 2	Choose Consecutive days or Flexi days
STEP 3	Choose duration of 3, 4, 8, 15, 22 days or 1 month
STEP 4	Choose class - Standard or First Class
STEP 5	Choose age - Adult, Child (5-15), Youth (16-25), Senior (60+), Free child (one free child per paying adult)

STANDARD CLASS

Standard Class carriages in Britain offers you a good quality comfortable seat and the chance to reserve your seat, especially for the longer journeys.

FIRST CLASS

First Class carriages are often quieter, offer wider seats and more legroom than Standard Class. First Class often has a buffet car or trolley with refreshments on longer journeys. In some cases First Class services include snacks and drinks at your seat with free Wi-Fi.

First Class carriages are nearly all equipped with power sockets, and often offer complimentary newspapers and ticket upgrades.

For more information on First Class travel, visit www.nationalrail.co.uk

Map of Britain



CHOOSE YOUR
RAIL LINE

BritRail Pass ●●●●●

BritRail England Pass ●●

BritRail London Plus Pass ●

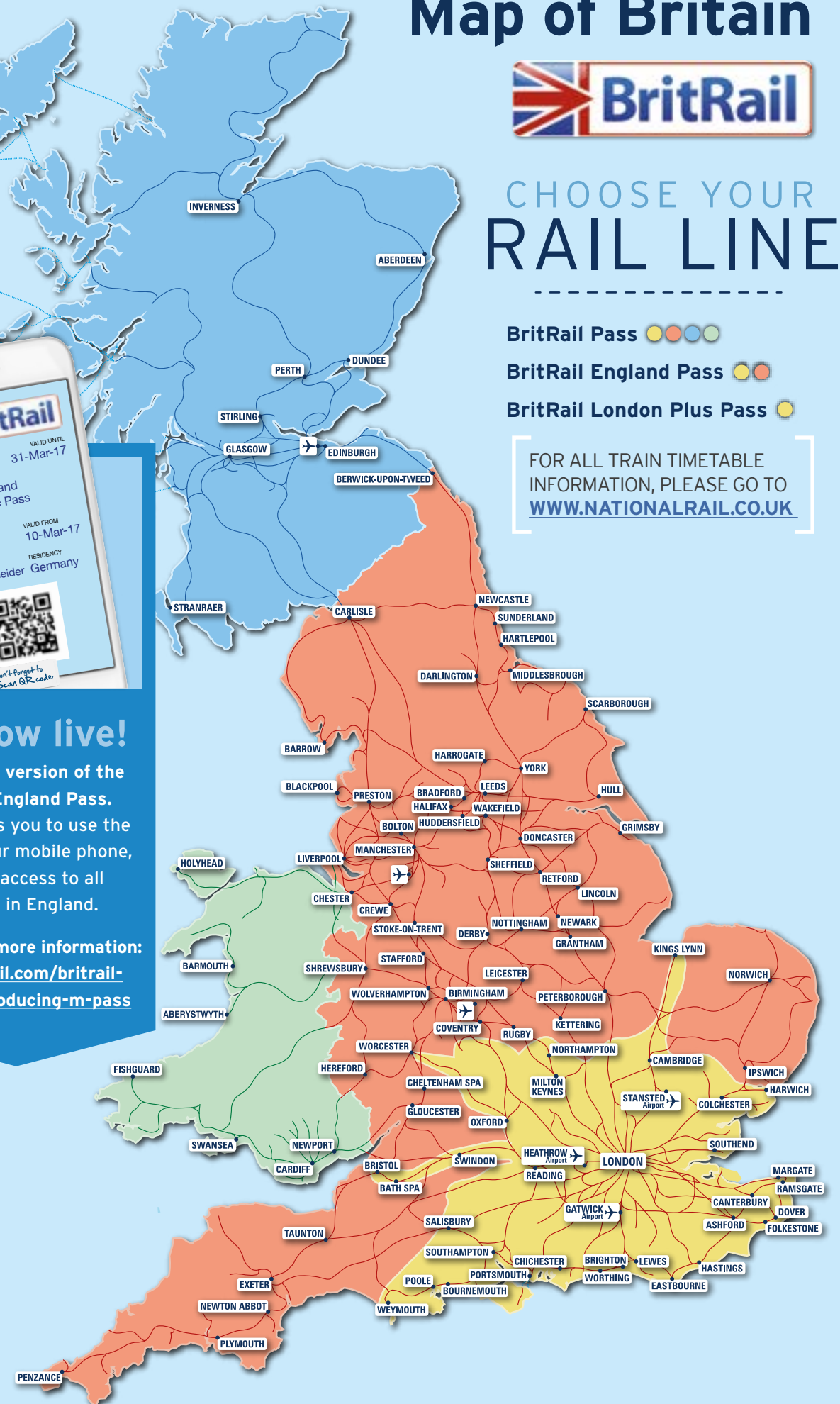
FOR ALL TRAIN TIMETABLE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO
WWW.NATIONALRAIL.CO.UK



It's now live!

An M-Pass version of the BritRail England Pass. This enables you to use the pass via your mobile phone, for easy access to all stations in England.

See here for more information:
www.britrail.com/britrail-passes/introducing-m-pass



Northern England & Countryside

Borrowdale, Lake District



Wastwater, Lake District



Hadrian's Wall, Carlisle

THE **NORTH OF ENGLAND** HAS BEEN CHARMING VISITORS WITH ITS RICH HERITAGE, CAPTIVATING COUNTRYSIDE AND FAMOUSLY FRIENDLY LOCALS FOR CENTURIES



Enjoy an enticing mix on this seven day itinerary, hopping off the train along the way to enjoy the majestic mountains of the Lake District, explore Roman ruins and ancient castles and soak up the culture in two very distinctive cities.

DAY 1-3 | LAKE DISTRICT

Your journey starts in Manchester. Begin by rolling through the Cumbrian countryside that inspired Beatrix Potter and William Wordsworth before arriving in Windermere, a market town set on the shores of England's longest lake and the perfect base for exploring shimmering lakes and rugged hills. Home to England's tallest mountain, Scafell Pike, be sure to pack your walking boots.

DAY 4 | CARLISLE AND HADRIAN'S WALL

Nearby and perched on the border of England and Scotland, the city of Carlisle is one of the gateways to the UNESCO World Heritage site Hadrian's Wall. Stretching 73 miles, it is an unmissable relic from when Romans ruled the land and a walker's paradise.

DAY 5 | NEWCASTLE

Head to the cosmopolitan city of Newcastle for a taste of the famous Geordie spirit (and Newcastle Brown Ale), immortalised by the gigantic Angel of the North sculpture. Sample the city's night-life, restaurants and shopping, and learn about its heritage via local museums and elegant Victorian buildings.

DAY 6-7 | YORK

The last stop is charming York, an hour south of Newcastle by train. A place of extraordinary cultural and historical wealth, this beautifully preserved medieval city is home to delights such as the timber-framed houses of The Shambles and the imposing architecture of York Minster and Castle Howard.

YOUR RAIL JOURNEY
STARTS HERE

6-7 DAY ITINERARY

DID YOU KNOW?

HADRIAN'S WALL AND MOST OF ITS DEFENCES WERE BUILT BETWEEN ABOUT 122 AND 128 AD.

NORTHERN ENGLAND HAS FIVE DESIGNATED NATIONAL PARKS: LAKE DISTRICT, PEAK DISTRICT, YORKSHIRE DALES, NORTHUMBERLAND AND NORTH YORK MOORS.



DAY 1-3 | LAKE DISTRICT

Highlights include:
Wastwater, Derwentwater, Windermere Lake Cruises, near Keswick, Beatrix Potter's house



DAY 4 | CARLISLE

Highlights include:
Hadrian's Wall, Carlisle Castle



DAY 6-7 | YORK

Highlights include:
York Minster, York Dungeon, The Shambles, Castle Howard



DAY 5 | NEWCASTLE

Highlights include:
BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, sampling the famous nightlife, Newcastle Castle

RAIL TRAVEL TIMES

Manchester > Windermere, Lake District	1hr 45mins
Windermere, Lake District > Carlisle	1hr 5mins
Carlisle > Newcastle	1hr 30mins
Newcastle > York	1hr
York > Manchester	1hr 25mins

IF YOU START IN LONDON

London Euston > Windermere, Lake District	3hrs 30mins
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Wastwater, Lake District

Photo credit: Joe Cornish

Scafell Pike, Cumbria



Alnwick Castle, Alnwick



Eden Project, St Austell, Cornwall

SET IN THE RUGGED COUNTRYSIDE OF **NORTHUMBERLAND** IN THE NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND, **ALNWICK CASTLE** IS THE SECOND LARGEST INHABITED CASTLE IN ENGLAND AND HAS BEEN HOME TO THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S FAMILY FOR OVER 700 YEARS

Combining magnificent medieval architecture with its spectacular Italianate State Rooms, the castle is home to one of the finest private art collections in the country. Including extensive works by Titian, Van Dyck, Turner, and Dobson. There is also an impressive display of Chelsea and Paris porcelain in the China Gallery.

Film and TV buffs will enjoy the 'Alnwick on Location' tour, which takes in the castle's cinematic history with appearances in Downton Abbey and Harry Potter. Alnwick Castle featured as Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the first two Harry Potter films.

Open throughout April - October.

DID YOU KNOW?

THE CASTLE HAS BROOMSTICK TRAINING IN THE COURTYARD, SO YOUR CHILDREN (AND YOU) CAN LEARN HOW TO FLY IN THE SAME LOCATION WHERE MADAM HOOC TAUGHT HARRY POTTER.

HOW TO GET THERE

The London King's Cross - Edinburgh train stops at Alnmouth train station (four miles from Alnwick Castle). This train journey takes approximately 3hrs 30mins.

A taxi or bus (X18) can be taken from Alnmouth train station (a journey of approximately 10mins).

Visit www.alnwickcastle.com for more info.

SURROUNDED BY BEAUTIFUL BEACHES AND PICTURESQUE COASTLINE IN THE SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND, **CORNWALL'S WORLD-FAMOUS EDEN PROJECT** IS AN INTERNATIONAL VISITOR DESTINATION AND LEARNING CENTRE FOR ALL: A SPECTACULAR VENUE FOR A GREAT DAY OUT

HOW TO GET THERE

It's easy to get here by train from London Paddington. The nearest train station is St Austell and takes approximately 4hrs 20mins. From here take the regular number 101 bus that runs direct taking around 20mins.

Find everything you need to plan your trip, including detailed opening times, at www.edenproject.com

Nestled in a huge crater, massive covered Biomes housing the largest rainforest in captivity and the sights, scents and tastes of the Mediterranean serve as a backdrop to the striking contemporary Outdoor Gardens.

Eden is home to stunning plants and crop displays, art installations, exhibitions and stories, summer concerts and exciting year-round family events. There's even an on-site YHA providing overnight accommodation options.

Come face-to-face with the unexpected at the Eden Project.

Open throughout the whole year.

DID YOU KNOW?

22 LITRES OF WATER ARE COLLECTED FROM THE DOMES EVERY SECOND WHICH IS ABOUT 20,000 BATHS EVERY DAY.



Clifton Suspension Bridge, Bristol



Lost Gardens of Heligan, St Austell, Cornwall



St Erth – St Ives Branch Line, Cornwall

Photo credit: Mark Lynam

PRISTINE **BEACHES**, PRETTY **FISHING VILLAGES** AND MORE HOURS OF **SUNSHINE** THAN ANYWHERE ELSE ON THE BRITISH MAINLAND



St Michael's Mount

It's easy to see why the sunny South West is one of England's most popular holiday destinations. An eight-day tour of the region's highlights, from the beautiful UNESCO World Heritage city of Bath to the unmissable Eden Project in Cornwall, via the arty city of Bristol, can only be completed with a traditional fish supper on a St Ives beach. It is easily accessible by train and public transport.

DAY 1-2 | BATH

With its sweep of Georgian buildings and historic Roman Baths, Bath is an ideal first stop for a few days relaxation and pottering around the beautiful city's independent shops. Wallow as the Romans did in the hot, mineral-rich spring waters of the modern Thermae Bath Spa complex and visit the majestic Royal Crescent.

DAY 3 | BRISTOL

Next stop is the laid-back city of Bristol for a glimpse of its graceful architecture and offbeat culture. Famous as the birthplace of Banksy, take a tour of the city's street art, relax in the renovated Victorian spa and indulge in gastronomy of every flavour in trendy revamped warehouses.

DAY 4-5 | ST AUSTELL

Stop off in the market town of St Austell for a night or two to visit the nearby Eden Project, Lost Gardens of Heligan and St Austell Brewery. Learn all about the China clay industry at Wheal Martyn Museum or take a walk along golden beaches where water-sports enthusiasts can get soaked.

DAY 6-8 | ST IVES

Finish your journey with fish and chips and Cornish ice cream in the beautiful seaside town of St Ives. Home to a thriving artistic community, visit Tate St Ives and take in white-washed cottages, sandy beaches and a harbour that inspired artists J M W Turner and Henry Moore.

YOUR RAIL JOURNEY STARTS HERE

6-8 DAY ITINERARY

DID YOU KNOW?

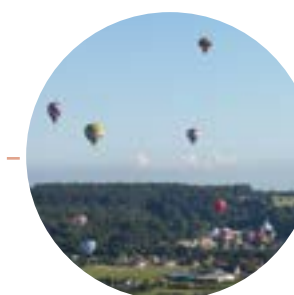
BATHS STREETS WERE GIVEN A STARRING ROLE IN HOLLYWOOD MOVIES SUCH AS THE DUCHESS, LES MISERABLES AND JANE AUSTEN'S PERSUASION.

CORNWALL HAS OVER 300 BEACHES AND HAS THE LONGEST COASTLINE IN BRITAIN AT 697KM.



DAY 1-2 | BATH

Highlights include:
Roman Baths,
Thermae Spa,
Royal Crescent



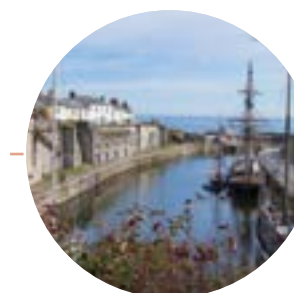
DAY 3 | BRISTOL

Highlights include:
SS Great Britain,
street art tours



DAY 6-8 | ST IVES

Highlights include:
St Ives beaches, Tate Gallery,
surfing and stand up paddleboard
lessons, St Michael's Mount,
Minack Theatre



DAY 4-5 | ST AUSTELL

Highlights include:
Eden Project,
Lost Gardens of Heligan,
St Austell Brewery

RAIL TRAVEL TIMES

London Paddington > Bath	1hr 25mins
Bath > Bristol	15mins
Bristol > St Austell	3hrs
St Austell > St Ives	1hr 10mins
St Ives > London	5hrs 50mins



St Ives, Cornwall



Scotland & Highlands adventure

Sprinter train passes Beinn Dorain



Perth, Scotland



Salisbury Crags, Edinburgh

A CITY-HOPPING JOURNEY FROM THE LUSH HILLS OF THE **LOWLANDS**, THROUGH TO THE SNOW-CAPPED MOUNTAIN RANGES OF THE **HIGHLANDS**



Inverness Castle, Inverness

Expect vistas of dramatic scenery through your train window on this six-day itinerary. Starting in the capital of Edinburgh to soak up some culture, hop off the train at any of Scotland's six other cities, each with their own distinct personality and history, to discover more of Scotland.

Whichever route you choose, you'll discover a land of fascinating history, natural beauty, wildlife and heritage, all aching to be explored.

DAY 1-2 | EDINBURGH

Begin your journey in Scotland's capital, Edinburgh - a city bound to leave a lasting impression with its fairytale architecture, sophisticated cultural life and enviable eateries. After a day or two of museum-hopping and people-watching, from here it's a quick 1hr 15min train journey to Perth.

DAY 3 | PERTH

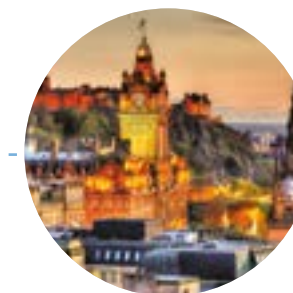
Once the capital of Scotland, today Perth is known for its fantastic food scene, offering everything from pop-up experiences to fine dining feasts. Positioned in the heart of the country and sitting on the banks of the River Tay, it's also an ideal place from which to experience the surrounding countryside.

DAY 4-5 | INVERNESS

Get an early start for a 2hr 15min journey to Inverness. From pink Inverness Castle to the legendary waters of Loch Ness (see page 19 for travel info), this small city is a great base for adventure lovers, with plenty of opportunities for hiking, climbing and water sports in the mountains and lochs around.

YOUR RAIL JOURNEY STARTS HERE

4-5 DAY ITINERARY



DAY 1-2 | EDINBURGH

Highlights include:
Edinburgh Castle,
Harry Potter Walking Tour,
Royal Yacht Britannia



DAY 3 | PERTH

Highlights include:
Scone Palace,
Perth Museum and Art Gallery

DID YOU KNOW?



Loch Ness, Scotland

IMAGINE OUR WORLD POPULATION.

MULTIPLY IT BY 10.

THAT IS THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE THAT CAN BE SUBMERGED BY THE WATER CONTAINED IN LOCH NESS.



DAY 4-5 | INVERNESS

Highlights include:
Loch Ness cruise,
Whisky distillery tour,
Urquhart Castle

RAIL TRAVEL TIMES

London King's Cross > Edinburgh	4hrs 20mins
Edinburgh > Perth	1hr 20mins
Perth > Inverness	2hrs 15mins
Inverness > Edinburgh	3hrs 30mins



Urquhart Castle, Loch Ness



Scotland attractions

Loch Ness, Scotland

Isle of Bute, Scotland

SCOTLAND IS HOME TO A HUGE DIVERSITY OF ATTRACTIONS – ANCIENT, TOWERING CASTLES, MYSTERIOUS LOCHS, HISTORIC HOUSES, INSPIRATIONAL GARDENS AND THE DISTILLERIES WHERE THE ELIXIR OF SCOTLAND – **MALT WHISKY** – IS PRODUCED. DISCOVER IT ALL ON THE JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME

MOUNT STUART, ISLE OF BUTE

Set amidst 300 acres of gloriously landscaped gardens on the Isle of Bute, the house itself is arguably the finest piece of domestic architecture to emerge from Britain's Gothic Revival in the 19th century. The mansion boasts a majestic marble hall, white marble chapel, rich reception rooms and grounds to explore.

HOW TO GET THERE

From Edinburgh it's a 2hr 20min train to Wemyss Bay, where you can get the ferry, or from Glasgow it's a 50min train to Wemyss Bay. The ferry crossing over to Rothesay, Isle of Bute, takes 35mins and with sailings approximately every 45mins at peak times. No booking is required. **Open throughout April – October.**

Visit www.mountstuart.com/visiting for more info.

STIRLING CASTLE

Sitting proudly atop a volcanic rock and historically known as the brooch that held Scotland together is Stirling Castle, where you can come face-to-face with characters from the past. Revel in its Renaissance magnificence and views of the surrounding Scottish countryside from the castle's ramparts.

HOW TO GET THERE

From Edinburgh it's a 50min direct train journey to Stirling and a 10-15min stroll to the castle. **Open throughout the whole year.**

Visit www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk for more info.

DALWHINNIE

Through steep ravines, gushing burns and tree-clad hilltops up to the mountains, past vast lochs and red deer, the first sign of life in this old landscape is Dalwhinnie Distillery: the highest and coldest Scotch whisky distillery in the world, where some of the finest spirits on the planet are made.

HOW TO GET THERE

From Edinburgh it's a 2hr 20min direct train journey to Dalwhinnie. **Open throughout the whole year.**

Visit www.discovering-distilleries.com/dalwhinnie for more info.

LOCH NESS

Catch the train from Edinburgh, London or Manchester to one of Scotland's most famous locations: the mysterious Loch Ness. At its deepest point it's 232m deep – so you could stack two Big Bens on top of each other and they wouldn't touch the surface. It's rumoured to be home to the elusive Loch Ness Monster, and in the Loch Ness Centre & Exhibition you can see the many misty photographs and accounts of possible monster sightings recorded over the years. But even if

you don't spot it you can still have an incredible time on a boat trip across this huge loch, taking in the local wildlife – from osprey to golden eagles and red deer – and the spectacular Highland scenery. This is also an ideal location for walkers and mountain bikers. Make sure you pay a visit to the atmospheric ruins of 13th century Urquhart Castle while you're here, once a focal point for fierce inter-klan battles. Climb up The Grant Tower for beautiful views over the loch and see if you can spot anything unusual in the waters.

HOW TO GET THERE

From Edinburgh it's a 3hr 30min train journey direct to Inverness, which is the nearest station to Loch Ness (approx. 13 miles north). Buses leave from Inverness three times daily Monday through Friday, and twice per day on Saturdays. These buses will take you to Foyers, a town on the east side of the loch, where you'll find trails to explore and accommodations if you'd like to stay the night. **Open throughout the whole year.**

Visit www.visitinvernesslochness.com for more info.



Conwy Castle, North Wales



Zipworld, North Wales



Lledr valley, near Betws-y-Coed

NORTH WALES IS A PLAYGROUND FOR THRILL SEEKERS, A HIDEOUT FOR STARGAZERS AND A GOLD MINE FOR HERITAGE EXPLORERS



Alongside UNESCO World Heritage sites such as Conwy, Beaumaris, Harlech and Caernarfon Castles, North Wales is home to seaside towns, romantic gardens and some of the best walking and cycling in Britain. And if that's not enough, it's all set against the jaw-dropping backdrop of the Snowdonia mountains.

North Wales has reinvented itself to create a series of truly world-class attractions, from high-speed zip lining and inland surfing to underground trampolining in a 176-year-old disused slate mine.

DAY 1 | LLANDUDNO

Wales' biggest beach resort, visitors have been flocking to beautiful Llandudno since Victorian times. With two sandy beaches, a pier, promenade and even Punch and Judy shows, it's the quintessential British seaside experience.

DAY 2 | CONWY

Conwy's mighty castle and town walls make it one of the best preserved medieval towns in Britain. The views from battlements stretching across Snowdonia's mountains and coast are stunning.

DAY 3-5 | BETWS-Y-COED & SNOWDONIA

Under 30mins by train from Llandudno Junction is the lovely stone village of Betws-y-Coed, the perfect base for exploring Snowdonia National Park. Breathe in the fresh air on a wander through Gwydyr Forest before tucking into some locally sourced food.

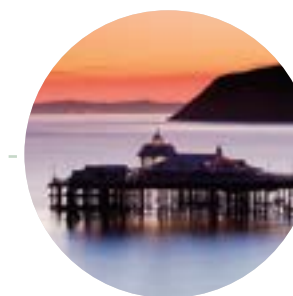
Hop on the train to Blaenau Ffestiniog, home to pulse-raising activities from zip wires to mountain biking. For a gentler way to admire the vast mountains, lakes and forests of Snowdonia, take the Ffestiniog Railway to Porthmadog.



Snowdon summit from Llyn Llydaw

YOUR RAIL JOURNEY STARTS HERE

4-5 DAY ITINERARY



DAY 1 | LLANDUDNO

Highlights include:
Great Orme,
beaches



DAY 2 | CONWY

Highlights include:
Conwy Castle,
Bodnant Gardens,
Welsh Food Centre

DID YOU KNOW?



Smallest house in Wales, Conwy

THE SMALLEST HOUSE
IN BRITAIN IS IN CONWY.

THE RED-PAINTED QUAYSIDE
PROPERTY IS JUST 10 FEET
DEEP, SIX FEET WIDE,
10 FEET TWO INCHES HIGH.
THE TINY HOME IN WALES
WAS ONCE HOME TO A
6FT 3IN TALL FISHERMAN!



DAY 3-5 | BETWS-Y-COED SNOWDONIA

Highlights include:
Snowdon Mountain Railway,
Zipworld Bounce Below,
Surf Snowdonia

RAIL TRAVEL TIMES

London, Euston > Llandudno Junction	3hrs
Llandudno Junction > Betws-y-Coed	30mins
Betws-y-Coed > Llandudno Junction	30mins
Llandudno Junction > London	3hrs



Surf Snowdonia



Snowdon Mountain Railway, North Wales



Ogwen Valley, Snowdonia, North Wales

North Wales attractions

IT'S OFFICIAL: **NORTH WALES** IS ONE OF BEST REGIONS TO VISIT IN THE WORLD ACCORDING TO **TRAVEL EXPERTS LONELY PLANET** WHO SAID, "WE INCLUDED NORTH WALES IN THE 2017 LIST OF TOP 10 REGIONS BECAUSE IT DESERVES TO BE RECOGNISED ON THE GLOBAL STAGE"

North Wales is a gem and should be on every traveller's radar. It is the only place in Britain to make it onto the Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2017, and it's not hard to see why...

ZIPWORLD

Choose from three different locations and 10 incredible adventures at the zip line capital of the world! Soar 500ft in the air at 100miles per hour at Zipworld Velocity, play on trampolines at a subterranean playground in a former slate cavern at Bounce Below or see the countryside in a completely different way by flying up to 60m above the forest floor at Betws-y-Coed's Zipworld forest.

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

The trail of Edward I's magnificent castles and town walls of Beaumaris, Conwy, Caernarfon and Harlech are some of the finest examples of military architecture in Europe. Eight centuries later conservation and events programmes have helped to make them irresistible attractions to visitors. Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is North Wales' second World Heritage Site. It's the highest aqueduct in Britain - walk across it or take a leisurely boat ride.

DID YOU KNOW?

ZIPWORLD WON INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM WHEN IT OPENED IN MARCH 2013.

IT INCLUDES A PAIR OF ZIP LINES EACH A MILE LONG, WHERE RIDERS CAN EXCEED 100MPH, 500FT HIGH AND EXPERIENCE THE NEAREST THING TO FLYING.

NICKNAMED '**THE BACKBONE OF WALES**' AND SHAPED BY THE ICE AGE, WHERE REMAINS FROM THE STONE, BRONZE AND IRON AGES AND RELICS FROM THE **ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL TIMES** CAN BE FOUND, THIS AREA IS FILLED WITH SPECTACULAR VIEWS AND STEEPED IN COLOURFUL HERITAGE

HOW TO GET THERE

North Wales is easily reached by train from most major cities.

Direct services run to Llandudno Junction from London Euston (3hrs), Cardiff (4hrs), Manchester (2hrs) and Liverpool (2hrs).

Visit www.visitwales.com/explore/national-parks/snowdonia for more info.

BODNANT GARDEN & BODNANT WELSH FOOD CENTRE

Spend a morning in the heart of the Conwy Valley, exploring Bodnant Garden's impressive formal lawns, lily ponds and herbaceous plants before heading to nearby Bodnant Welsh Food Centre to sample Welsh artisan produce. The centre, with its own restaurant and tearoom, also hosts a range of activities from bee-keeping demonstrations to cookery classes.

PORTMEIRION

Easy to reach from Porthmadog, the unique Italianate village of Portmeirion is not to be missed. According to Trip Advisor, this is one of the UK's most colourful places. Stay overnight in the hotel, or just visit for the day to marvel at the architecture and take in the views stretching for miles over the estuary.

DID YOU KNOW?

SNOWDONIA'S COASTLINE STRETCHES FOR 200 MILES, AND MOST OF THIS IS DESIGNATED NATIONAL PARK OR AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY.



Brighton Pavilion, Brighton



Blenheim Palace, Oxford



Royal Crescent, Bath



North Queensferry, Scotland



The Kelpies, Falkirk, Scotland



North Berwick, Scotland

Day trips from London by rail

BRIGHTON

An eccentric seaside town that inspired Graham Greene's novels, Brighton is only an hour from London by train and is a very cosmopolitan city with many bars and clubs. The Royal Pavilion, a 19th-century party palace built by the Prince Regent, is a must-visit and sets the scene for Brighton's bohemian hedonism.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ i360
- ▶ Royal Pavilion
- ▶ SEA LIFE Centre
- ▶ Coast
- ▶ Shopping & nightlife

Rail Travel Time:
London Victoria > Brighton

1hr



OXFORD

Home to the oldest university in the English-speaking world, The Grand Hall of Oxford's mighty Christ Church College, Bodleian Library and New College will be recognisable to Harry Potter film fans. Admire the famous 'Dreaming Spires' of medieval churches while enjoying strawberries and Champagne as you take a leisurely punt down the river.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Blenheim Palace
- ▶ City sightseeing
- ▶ Bus tour
- ▶ Architecture
- ▶ Museums & history

Rail Travel Time:
London Marylebone > Oxford

1hr



BATH

Founded on top of natural hot springs and home to one of the world's best-preserved Roman bathhouses, this sophisticated city is where grand Georgian architecture and buildings such as The Royal Crescent and the Assembly Rooms evoke the romance of Jane Austen's novels, where the author spent five years of her life.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Roman Baths
- ▶ Thermae Spa
- ▶ Royal Crescent
- ▶ Architecture & history
- ▶ Shopping

Rail Travel Time:
London Paddington > Bath

1hr 25mins



Day trips from Edinburgh by rail

NORTH QUEENSFERRY

Built between 1882 and 1890, Cross Bridge is the world's second-longest single span cantilever bridge, and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. To get a truly dizzying view of the 110m tall structure pay a visit to Deep Sea World, home to the longest underwater viewing tunnel in Britain. North Queensferry is 20mins by train from Edinburgh.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Forth Bridge
- ▶ Deep Sea World
- ▶ Forth Sea Safaris

Rail Travel Time:
Edinburgh Waverley > North Queensferry

20mins



FALKIRK

30mins by train outside of Edinburgh is Helix Park - home to two monumental steel sculptures depicting the heads of Scotland's mythical water horses - and The Falkirk Wheel, the biggest boat lift of its kind in the UK which lifts and lowers canal boats 24m from the Forth and Clyde Canal to the Union Canal.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ The Kelpies
- ▶ Falkirk Wheel
- ▶ Callendar House

Rail Travel Time:
Edinburgh Waverley > Falkirk

30mins



NORTH BERWICK

Take the 33min train ride to the historic seaside town of North Berwick for beautiful beaches and fresh seafood. Catch a boat out to the Bass Rock, one of the most important seabird breeding sites in Britain, or climb North Berwick Law, a 187m high volcanic plug, for brilliant views.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Tantallon Castle
- ▶ Boat tours
- ▶ National Museum of Flight
- ▶ Beaches

Rail Travel Time:
Edinburgh Waverley > North Berwick

33mins





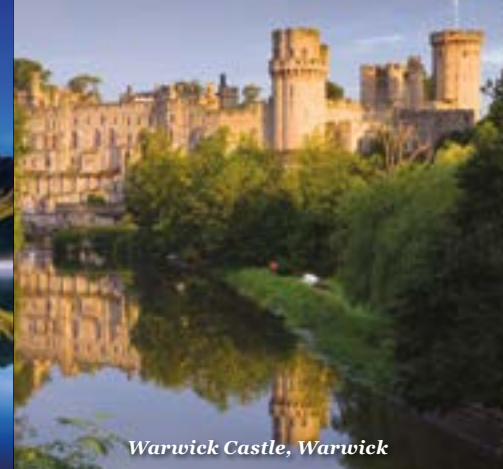
The Three Graces, Liverpool



Chatsworth House, Peak District



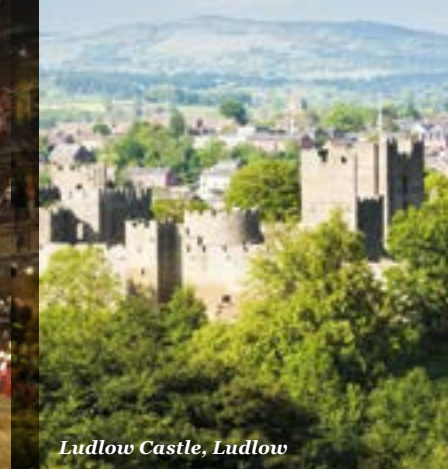
Buttermere, Lake District



Warwick Castle, Warwick



Royal Shakespeare Co, Stratford-upon-Avon



Ludlow Castle, Ludlow

Day trips from Manchester by rail

LIVERPOOL

Nicknamed The Capital of Pop, ask one of Liverpool's famously charming locals for directions to The Beatles Museum. The sport-mad city is home to two Premier League football teams, while an impressive collection of museums and a thriving arts scene, including Tate Liverpool, make it a hit with culture vultures.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Beatles Experience
- ▶ Anfield Stadium tour
- ▶ Architecture
- ▶ Museums
- ▶ History

Rail Travel Time:
Manchester Piccadilly > Liverpool 50mins



Day trips from Birmingham by rail

WARWICK

Sitting on the banks of the River Avon and home to a selection of fine historical buildings, despite a devastating fire in 1694, Warwick remains a treasure-house of medieval architecture with rich veins of history and charming streets, dominated by the imposing turrets of Warwick Castle.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Warwick Castle
- ▶ The Mill Garden
- ▶ Collegiate Church of St Mary
- ▶ Medieval town
- ▶ History

Rail Travel Time:
Birmingham > Warwick 45mins



PEAK DISTRICT

Green fields, patchwork hills and wild moorlands scattered with stately homes make the Peak District popular with hikers and historians who flock to Chatsworth House to experience the inspiration behind Jane Austen's Pemberley. Buxton, with its architecture and farmers' markets, and beautiful Bakewell (home of the famous Bakewell Pudding) are towns worth visiting.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Chatsworth House
- ▶ Buxton
- ▶ Harrogate
- ▶ Knaresborough
- ▶ Countryside

Rail Travel Time:
Manchester Piccadilly > Buxton, Peak District 1hr



STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

A picturesque market town full of independent shops, characterful cafés and rowing boats drifting down the River Avon, famously the birthplace of William Shakespeare. Visit The Royal Shakespeare Company and five beautifully preserved Tudor homes and gardens, all directly linked with The Bard for a feeling of days gone by.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Royal Shakespeare Company
- ▶ Shakespeare's Birthplace
- ▶ Anne Hathaway's Cottage & Gardens
- ▶ Architecture, history & culture

Rail Travel Time:
Birmingham > Stratford 1hr



LAKE DISTRICT

Only 1hr 45mins from the bustling city of Manchester are the many outdoor opportunities of the mountains, lakes and secret valleys of the Lake District. Visit for the region's literary connections too: among the many writers who found inspiration here are William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Arthur Ransome and Beatrix Potter.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Windermere Lake Cruises
- ▶ National Trust Pass (for Hill Top - Beatrix Potter)
- ▶ Lakes
- ▶ Countryside

Rail Travel Time:
Manchester Piccadilly > Windermere 45mins



LUDLOW

Nicknamed the gastronomic capital of the Midlands, Ludlow is a medieval market town with a lively community feel thanks to its numerous festivals and quirky independent shops. Home to Ludlow Castle, the historic town centre is perched on a cliff above the River Teme and surrounded by fertile countryside.

THINGS TO DO & SEE

- ▶ Ludlow Castle
- ▶ Medieval market town
- ▶ Countryside
- ▶ History
- ▶ Food & drink hotspot

Rail Travel Time:
Birmingham > Ludlow 1hr 50mins





Film & TV Locations from Oxford by rail

Bodleian Library, Oxford (featured in Harry Potter)

OXFORD IS FULL OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS, MAKING IT AN IDEAL BACKDROP FOR THE FILM INDUSTRY

OXFORD CITY CENTRE

Harry Potter fans should head to **Oxford University's Christ Church, Bodleian Library** and **New College**, which appeared in the films and are located in the city centre. The city is also a key location for the popular TV series **Inspector Morse**.

The beautiful surrounding countryside has lent a scenic backdrop to hit series **Downton Abbey**, filmed at **Highclere Castle**. From Oxford it's a 1hr train journey to Newbury and then a 15min taxi ride.

Visit www.highclerecastle.co.uk for more info.

Wallingford became the fictional village of Causton in **Midsummer Murders**. From Oxford it's a 35min train journey to Cholsey, which is only two miles from Wallingford village.

Visit www.wallingford.co.uk for more info.

Historical **Blenheim Palace** has starred in **James Bond** and **Mission Impossible**. From Oxford you can get a direct bus from the train station that takes 30mins.

Visit www.blenheimpalace.com for more info.

Broughton Castle is recognised from **Shakespeare in Love**. From Oxford it's a 20min train journey to Banbury and the castle is 2.5 miles from Banbury centre.

Visit www.broughtoncastle.com for more info.

Didcot Railway Centre featured in **Anna Karenina** and **Sherlock Holmes**. From Oxford it's a 15min train journey to Didcot Parkway and right next to the train station.

Visit www.didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk for more info.

... AND DONT MISS

Bletchley Park can be seen in **Imitation Game**.

From London Euston it's a 50min train journey to Bletchley train station and **Bletchley Park** is approximately 100 yards up the road.

Visit www.bletchleypark.org.uk for more info.

Enter the incredible world of **Harry Potter** at the Warner Bros Studio Tour. From London Euston it's a 20min train journey to Watford Junction and a regular direct shuttle bus leaves Watford Junction and arrives 15 mins later.

Visit www.visitbritainshop.com/world/harry-potter-studio-tour/ for more info.

Bucket-list rail journeys



Ribblehead Viaduct

Photo credit: Colin Barker

ENGLAND | SETTLE > CARLISLE

Ride the train north from the bustling market town of Settle to the historic city of Carlisle through the woodlands, rivers and open heather moors of the Yorkshire Dales and North Pennines. Full of great valleys and waterfalls, this trip is ideal for hiking or biking. Look out for the magnificent Ribblehead Viaduct, that this railway line passes over and which you might recognise as the Hogwarts Express route from the Harry Potter films.

From Manchester the train journey to Settle is 2hrs 15mins and then the train from Settle to Carlisle is approximately 2hrs 30mins with stops en route for food and activities. Visit www.settle-carlisle.co.uk for more info.



Fort William to Mallaig route

SCOTLAND | FORT WILLIAM > MALLAIG

The Fort William to Mallaig line crosses the Western Highlands of Scotland and is considered to be one of the world's greatest railway lines. From the great peak of Ben Nevis to the vast expanses of Loch Morar and Loch Nevis, on all sides you are surrounded by some of Scotland's most famous natural landmarks.

Take the sleeper overnight train from London to Fort William and enjoy a hearty breakfast as you cross Rannoch Moor. Then from Fort William, take the Mallaig train, which carries you over the Glenfinnan Viaduct and on to Morar where Local Hero and Highlander were filmed.

Visit www.westcoastrailways.co.uk/jacobite/jacobite-steam-train-details.cfm for more info.



Blaenau Ffestiniog to Porthmadog

WALES | BLAENAU FFESTINIOG > PORTHMADOG

Traverse the mountainous countryside of the Snowdonia National Park on a steam railway journey to remember. The Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways will carry you in comfort and style through ancient woodlands. Porthmadog is the ideal place to begin exploring one of Wales' most magnificent National Parks. Catch the train from here up into the mountains to the centre of Snowdonia.

Here you can go hiking, fishing, kayaking or trampolining in a cave at Bounce Below. You can also visit the fastest zipline in the world, Zipworld.

Visit www.festrail.co.uk/timetable-fr.htm for more info.

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with Belmond Trains

LUXURY TRAIN TRAVEL IN BRITAIN

Experience the golden age of travel aboard a Belmond luxury train. Luxuriously adorned carriages, gastronomic gems, fun excursions and a welcoming ambience ensure an unforgettable experience on-board. Offering day journeys and dining experiences that can take you through scenic countryside to historic destinations and cultural, sporting and horticultural events. This is for those who enjoy fine dining, lavish five-course dinners and afternoon teas. For longer trips, Belmond Royal Scotsman is Britain's only fully inclusive, luxury sleeper train. It seems there is no beating the romance of train travel in Britain.



JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF THE HIGHLANDS

Akin to a country house on wheels, journey through Scotland aboard the Belmond Royal Scotsman luxury sleeper train on journeys of one to seven nights including the Grand Tour of Great Britain, Whisky Journey, Golf Tour and Heritage Homes and Garden. The three-night Western Journey explores iconic natural wonders such as Loch Lomond, Ben Nevis, Morar, the Isle of Bute and the Gothic-Revival Mount Stuart House. Departing Edinburgh, pass through Fort William, with wonderful views of Ben Nevis, then onto the charming Isle of Bute. The Observation Car provides a vantage point from which to enjoy the spectacular Highlands scenery. Step out onto the open-air veranda as castles, villages and glens glide past.



BELMOND BRITISH PULLMAN HISTORIC BATH JOURNEY

There is something quintessentially English about stepping aboard the elegant carriages of Belmond British Pullman on a journey to Britain's best-preserved Georgian city, Bath. The view changes as the train winds its way into the West Country before arriving in Bath where the historic Roman Baths and Pump Room, the Abbey, museums, antiques shops and chic boutiques wait to be explored. Back on-board, the menu features the finest seasonal British produce, from guinea fowl and sea bream to smoked salmon and magnificent cheeses. Drinks are similarly delectable: Champagne Laurent-Perrier and sommelier-selected wines finish off a journey fit for royalty.



DISCOVER THE SPIRIT OF TRAVEL WITH BELMOND NORTHERN BELLE

In the golden age of travel, beautifully appointed "Belle" trains traversed the country, offering unrivalled comfort and style. That experience comes to life aboard Belmond Northern Belle. With exquisite carriages each individually decorated, your journey is as exciting as the destination. Departing from a variety of train stations, including Manchester, Birmingham International and Glasgow, the train offers day trips and short breaks to Britain's best-loved destinations. Allow yourself to be whisked back to a more gracious age through some of Britain's most beautiful countryside. Sit back and marvel at the ever-changing views of the glorious British countryside. Soon you'll find yourself smiling in anticipation of the first course of the Chef's exquisite five-course seasonal menu.



Visit www.belmond.com/luxury-trains for more information.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ATTRACTIONS

VISIT www.visitbritainshop.com/world

On the website, please click on your country flag in the top right-hand corner.

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VISIT www.visitbritain.com

One of the six Scenic Rail Journeys that can be enjoyed around Scotland