

WEST NORFOLK ITINERARIES

The links below provide five suggested itineraries for days out in West Norfolk ideal for a day visit or a short break



Castle to Castle

Soak up medieval heritage at West Norfolk's two remaining castles



A Countryside Tour

Take in the rolling countryside and get close to nature



Norfolk Coast Explorer

Relax and enjoy the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Homes & Gardens

Stately visits ideal for plant and garden lovers



A Road to Nelson's Homeland

Visit the birthplace of England's most celebrated sailors

CASTLE TO CASTLE

www.visitwestnorfolk.com

This day's visit takes in West Norfolk's two remaining castles, one with a magnificent priory - a must for heritage lovers.

Castle Rising Castle



Begin at the beautiful village and castle of Castle Rising (visit time 1 to 2 hours), a couple of miles north of King's Lynn. It is one of the finest and most ornate buildings in the country. Explore the keep of the 12th century castle, where Queen Isabella, the 'She wolf of France' was once imprisoned. The walls of the keep still tower to their original height and there are fine views of the surrounding countryside from the ramparts. There's a free taped tour and a few minutes walk away is the village itself where you can stop off at the coffee shop.

Castle Acre Priory



The route continues, for those on foot follow the Nar Valley Way from King's Lynn, or by transport along major roads according to your preference to Castle Acre village. Here the castle's remains lie to the east of the village, but the 11th Century priory (visit time 2 hours) is the main attraction. The remains of the priory span seven centuries and include a fifteenth century gatehouse and prior's lodging still fit to be lived in. A taped tour is available, and there is a gift shop and tea room for refreshments.

A COUNTRYSIDE TOUR

www.visitwestnorfolk.com

In the heat of summer, the golden cornfields are scattered with wild red poppies; in contrast, a sharp frost, sparkling on a crisp, clear morning turns the countryside into a winter wonderland – with the delicate green of spring leaves, and an abundance of blackberries in autumn, West Norfolk's countryside is a land for all seasons.

Pensthorpe



At Pensthorpe (visit time 3 hours) you can enjoy one of the largest waterfowl collections in the world. There are nature trails and feeding stations around the 500 acre site. The estate has several sites of special scientific interest and pastures filled with wild orchids and many other species of wildflowers. In addition to its countryside, Pensthorpe also incorporates 2 world class attractions, its waterbird collection (the largest in Europe) and its 'Millennium Garden', designed by Piet Oudolf are nothing short of exceptional.

Great Bircham Windmill



A pleasant 11 mile journey, brings you to Bircham Windmill (visit time 1 hour), standing in the heart of Norfolk's undulating fields, the windmill now looks as it did over 100 years ago. Take the opportunity of climbing this immaculately restored mill to the fan deck and admire one of the best views of the surrounding countryside. On the ground, view the old mill oven which still bakes bread and cakes daily. Sample the home-made food in the tea shop, or visit the delightful gift shop.

Snettisham Park



Further West, about 6 miles brings you to Snettisham Park. A 320 acre farm full of fun and exciting things to do and see. Enjoy feeding the lambs, calves and piglets and see the sheep centre (visit time 1 to 4 hours). Join one of the famous deer safaris or follow one of the farm or naturalist trails. A day out for all the family. Tea room open daily.

NORFOLK COAST EXPLORER

www.visitwestnorfolk.com

West Norfolk is a great place to enjoy sand and sea. You'll find magnificent stretches of superb sandy beaches, combined with the classic seaside facilities at the resort of Hunstanton.

Hunstanton Beach



For traditional seaside fun visit Hunstanton, renowned for its unique striped cliffs and magnificent sunsets, made special for its unique position as the only west-facing resort on the east coast. Further around the coast you will discover Old Hunstanton, Brancaster or Holkham beach, natural dunes. For a closer view of the birds and seals, take a trip on the Wash Monster at Hunstanton or visit the Sea Life Sanctuary.

Norfolk Coast Path



The Norfolk Coast Path stretches from Hunstanton in the west to Cromer in the east and runs through Norfolk's heritage coast within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The path takes you from views of the Wash and the Lincolnshire Coastline at Hunstanton, and past many internationally recognised wildlife reserves.

Le Strange Old Barns



Visit one of the largest antiques, arts and crafts centres in Norfolk. Situated only 200 yards from the beach at Old Hunstanton (visit time 1 to 2 hours). A stunning collection of Antiques, original paintings, English crafts and craft workshops gathered together under one roof, in one of the most beautiful locations in the country.

RSPB Titchwell Marsh



The RSPB reserve at Titchwell has both fresh and salt water lagoons and extensive reed beds. A spectacular display of avocets and other waders can be spotted among many other species. Look out for special guided walks, talks and workshops.

HOMES & GARDENS

Brim full of history, West Norfolk is a treasure trove of houses, heritage and award winning gardens to discover.

Houghton Hall



Built in the 18th Century by Sir Robert Walpole, Britain's First Prime Minister, is one of the grandest surviving Palladian houses in England. The work of architects James Gibbs and Colen Campbell was complimented by the superb interiors of William Kent and opulently furnished to reflect Walpole's status. The 7th Marquess Cholmondeley has restored Houghton Hall to its former grandeur retaining many of its original furnishings. The restaurant is well equipped to cater for morning coffees, lunches and afternoon tea.

Sandringham House



A short journey brings you to the charming country retreat of her majesty the Queen hidden in the heart of sixty acres of beautiful wooded gardens (visit time 3 to 4 hours). Still maintained in the style of Edward and Alexandra, Prince and Princess of Wales (later King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra), all the main ground floor rooms used by the royal family, full of their treasured ornaments, portraits and furniture, are open to the public. In the late spring, the rhododendrons in the country park are a delight. A free land train (April to October) carries visitors through the grounds of the House and back, minimising walking distances.

Lunch can be taken in the restaurant or tea room followed by a woodland walk in the park.

Norfolk Lavender



A pleasant 7 mile journey through the rolling countryside and pretty villages of Dersingham and Snettisham brings you to the world famous Norfolk Lavender at Heacham (visit time 2 to 3 hours with tour). In the grounds of an old watermill, you can visit England's lavender farm and find out all about it. Walk around the herb garden, rose and riverside gardens and fragrant meadow garden (flagstone paths for disabled visitors). There's a full range of gifts and plants to buy, and an optional tour of the lavender fields and distillery from May to September. Sample the delicious cream teas.

A ROAD TO NELSON'S HOMELAND

www.visitwestnorfolk.com

Burnham Thorpe



Along the coastal road A149, continue through the pretty flint and local carrstone villages of Thornham, Titchwell, and Brancaster to arrive at Burnham Thorpe. Allow time to enjoy the splendid views and wildlife in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Burnham Thorpe is the birthplace of England's most celebrated sailor, Admiral Lord Nelson.

Visit the rest of the Burnhams to enjoy the churches and scenery, particularly the shops at Burnham Market. There is a high concentration of old and established pubs along the coast, where the combination of local produce and some of the best ales in the country is particularly appealing after long day exploring.