



VISIT **LEEDS**

# MEDIA PACK

Ed.4 2025/26

Victoria Quarter c Hannah Webster for Visit Leeds



# MEDIA INFORMATION

## WINTER 2025/26

# LEEDS

WHERE NORTH,  
SOUTH, EAST  
AND WEST  
MEET,  
CREATING  
A DIVERSE  
DESTINATION  
LIKE NO OTHER,  
JUST WAITING  
TO SURPRISE  
YOU

LEEDS: 200 MILES SOUTH OF EDINBURGH, 200 MILES NORTH OF LONDON, WITH HULL AND MANCHESTER JUST UNDER 50 MILES TO THE EAST AND WEST RESPECTIVELY, LEEDS IS ARGUABLY *THE* CENTRAL POINT IN THE UK. A DESTINATION IN ITS OWN RIGHT, LEEDS IS ALSO THE GATEWAY TO THE SURROUNDING YORKSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE AND BEYOND.

Athena Rising c Carl Milner



# ALWAYS LEADING THE WAY

For generations the city has cultivated the culture and creativity that can be felt today – through our food, film, music, art, sport and way of life. Leeds is where the first ever film was created – by Frenchman Louis Le-Prince in 1888; it's where immigrant Michael Marks opened a stall at Leeds Kirkgate Market, joining forces with Tom Spencer to spark the creation of Marks & Spencer, and where the UK's longest running West Indian carnival parade first took place in 1967.

Surrounded by Yorkshire's bountiful dales and moors, Leeds has a compact, walkable city centre packed with cultural gems, equally home to world famous museums, galleries and cultural institutions including the Henry Moore Institute, Opera North, Northern Ballet, Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds Art Gallery, Thackray Museum of Medicine and Leeds Playhouse - as it is to independent artists and venues: it's not just the best of both worlds, it's the best of ALL worlds.

Leeds is a city made by its people and with a cultural pedigree that includes Barbara Hepworth who studied at Leeds School of Art (now the Leeds Arts University), Henry Moore, Damien Hirst; Spice Girl Mel B, the Kaiser Chiefs and Mercury Music Prize winners English Teacher (2024), plus nominees Corinne Bailey-Rae (2024) and Yard Act (2022). The city is always evolving and delivering its own brand of creativity.



Pennistone Hill c Karol Wyszynski



Kirkgate Market



Leeds City Skyline c LCC



# WHERE URBAN AND RURAL SEAMLESSLY MEET

This creative heritage can be seen across the city, with cultural experiences found around every corner: Leeds is a destination for foodies and football fans, walkers and writers, shoppers and sculpture specialists. With more than 4,000 hectares of green space, including Roundhay and Golden Acre parks, Leeds is one of the greenest cities in Europe and it's about to become even *more* green with the addition of Aire Park development - the UK's largest new city centre green space - and that's before you reach the countryside that is as much part of the whole city landscape as the buildings.

THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF REASONS TO VISIT LEEDS. WE HAVE ALL YOU'D EXPECT TO FIND IN THE UK'S THIRD LARGEST CITY OUTSIDE LONDON BUT THERE'S SO MUCH MORE. READ ON FOR JUST SOME OF THE THINGS YOU'LL FIND ONLY IN LEEDS, OR THAT WE DID HERE FIRST!



# INDEPENDENT MUSIC SCENE

Kirkstall Abbey c XXXXXX



Leeds boasts a rich independent music scene; it is a city jam-packed with unique, independent venues and phenomenal talent. Music flows through the veins of the city, with some of the UK's most highly regarded and exceptional independent venues (Brudenell Social Club – regularly cited as a favourite by performers, Belgrave Music Hall, Domino Club, and Project House to name a few) supporting, nurturing and promoting artists from all over the world.

2026 is set to be a huge year for live music events in Leeds. Alongside the likes of Leeds Festival, Millennium Square Summer Series, Slam Dunk, Mint Festival and Live at Leeds,

Roundhay Festival is set to host a series of epic concerts next summer. The stunning park, which has previously seen the likes of Bruce Springsteen, The Rolling Stones and Madonna, will see performances from Lewis Capaldi and Pitbull with Kesha next July. In the same month, The Streets and Sunshine Underground will perform amongst the striking ruins of Kirkstall Abbey.

Leeds is also home to many vinyl and record shops worth checking out. Flick through vinyl at Crash Records and Jumbo Records, or even grab a new potted plant with your music at the cleverly-coined Plant and Deck.





As featured in the first ever film, Leeds is a movie-star in itself. Back in 1888, Frenchman Louis Le-Prince - inventor of the first early motion-picture camera - created the first moving picture on paper film featuring Leeds Bridge.

Modern filmmakers follow in Le-Prince's footsteps as Leeds continues to appear in feature films and TV series today and film-buffs can enjoy walking the streets on the lookout for these landmark locations themselves.

Roundhay Park, the city centre and suburb of Chapel Allerton can all be spotted in the backdrop to 2019 film 'Official Secrets' starring Keira Knightley, while Netflix productions 'Bank of Dave' (2023) and 'Bank of Dave 2' (2025) saw scenes filmed in local squares and streets as well as various pubs and cafes. VERSA studios has welcomed productions such as 'Secret Invasion' by Marvel Studios (2023), while Prime Studios in Kirkstall hosted John Malkovich and Rupert Grint in the remake of Agatha Christie's

'The ABC Murders' (BBC – 2018). Our stunning heritage spots such as Harewood House, City Varieties Music Hall and Temple Newsam pop up regularly in BBC and ITV drama series' including 'Peaky Blinders' (2013) Happy Valley (2023), 'Victoria' (2016) and 'Gentleman Jack' (2022).

Founded in 1987 and now one of the UK's leading annual film events, the Academy Award, BAFTA and BIFA-qualifying Leeds International Film Festival (LIFF) is a must for aspiring film-makers and indie film enthusiasts, which takes place every year in November for two weeks.

Leeds is also home to one of the UK's oldest cinemas, [Hyde Park Picture House – built over a century ago](#) – thought to be the last remaining gaslit building in the country. Having recently undergone a multi-million pound refurbishment it now offers a locally focused community cinema, proudly providing audiences 'with an inclusive space to explore and discover'.

# WHERE SPORTING LEGENDS ARE MADE

FROM ROB BURROW TO NICOLA ADAMS, LIZZIE DEIGNAN TO OLYMPIAN TOM PIDCOCK



Leeds is a city with a fervent passion for sports, deeply embedded in the city's culture and identity, generating a palpable sense of community.

The city's rich sporting history is anchored by three major professional clubs for rugby, football and cricket, with equally impressive facilities. Leeds United, who have now triumphantly returned to the Premier League, play at Elland Road where you can watch them take on the best of the best at home from this August to April 2026. (Their first match of the season at home is on 18 August 2025). Leeds Rhinos (Rugby League) and Yorkshire County Cricket club are based at the world-renowned Headingley Stadium, which hosts international cricket matches and next summer (2026) will host six international test matches for the Women's Cricket World Cup.

Ice Hockey fans have plenty to enjoy in the city, with Leeds Knights being one of the top teams in the UK. Their league season begins in September 2025 and runs through until April 2026, where you can support them at home matches played at Planet Ice.

Leeds is the birthplace for many successful athletes, boxing champions Nicola Adams and Josh Warrington, Paralympic gold medallist Kadeena Cox, triathlete brothers Jonny and Alistair Brownlee, British cyclists Lizzie Deignan and Tom Pidcock and rower Georgie Brayshaw, further highlighting the city's sporting excellence and inspiring future generations to achieve the heights that these local heroes have reached.

Leeds also has a notable history in golf. The Leeds Cup, a prestigious golf tournament, has been played annually in northern England since 1902, organised by the north region of the Professional Golfers' Association. Remarkably, it is the oldest trophy in professional golf that is still contested. The first Ryder Cup held in the UK in 1929 took place in Leeds at Moortown Golf Club. This second-ever Ryder Cup match took place under challenging conditions, with players enduring hail and heavy snow on the greens...



# FOOD & DRINK



There's a reason Leeds is known as the [foodie capital of the North](#), it's a city full of passionate people known for their craft drawing on Yorkshire's bounty of fresh ingredients. The independent food and drink scene is thriving and renowned for its diversity, energy and innovation.

This year (2025) has seen an abundance of new food and drink options in the city including Uyare, a rooftop restaurant and bar from the team behind the famous Leeds' favourite Tharavadu. Chef Vivek Singh has opened his first high end street food restaurant outside of London in Leeds at the Queens Hotel and the team behind The Empire Cafe's new venture The Highland Laddie, a traditional pub with dining rooms, [recently won top place](#) in The Good Food Guide's Best 100 Pubs in the UK.

Passionate people, known for their craft, drawing on Yorkshire's bounty of fresh ingredients and serving up plates to be proud of. Some of our most striking heritage buildings have been given a new life as restaurants – whether former waterfront warehouses or Victorian auction houses, each delivering on their own distinctive atmosphere.

You'll find it in the street food stalls of [Leeds Kirkgate Market](#) and the abundance of independent restaurants and cafés across the city centre: places like Manjits Kitchen,

Mans Market and newcomer White Cloth Hall, Fint and Eat Your Greens, plus coffee spots popular with the locals like Laynes, Bottega Milanese and North Star.

We've got fine dining nailed too with celebrated chefs and award winning restaurants like Chef Jono at V&V, The Swine That Dines, The Owl and Shears Yard all taking our tremendous Yorkshire produce to new levels.

Restaurants like Bundobust, House of Fu and Fazenda all started in Leeds before spreading their wings across the Pennines and beyond, while we have some of the most successful independent breweries in the UK right here including Northern Monk, North Brewing and Kirkstall Brewery.

These 'new' brewing kids on the block are building on the legacy of brewing and traditional pubs which have quenched the thirst of Leeds' drinkers for hundreds of years; many of which – including Leeds' oldest, Whitelocks Ale House (est. 1715), The Adelphi, Lamb and Flag, Cross Keys, Midnight Bell and Duck and Drake have all been modernised to cater to the needs of new generations of hopheads and libationists.

Those with a sweeter tooth have dozens of dessert cafes to cater to their cravings thanks to a boom in businesses set up to offer a sugary snack just when you need it.



# MADE FOR WALKING



Leeds' compact centre means that a walking tour is the perfect way to experience the city's culture and history whilst exploring.

Joe Williams' 'Heritage Corner' is a family-friendly, 2-hour guided walking route that highlights the city's hidden Black narratives. Starting at the steps of University of Leeds' iconic Parkinson Building, the walk shines a light on the achievements of ancient African civilisations connected to Leeds and Yorkshire as well as those who made the city what it is today – like the pioneering Leeds West Indian Carnival.

Other [Leeds City Walking Tours](#) take place across the city, celebrating our engineering and architectural history, getting up close and personal to the city's waterways and bridges, Victorian architecture and the city's impressive history of textiles, clothing and fashion. Did you know Montague Burton – 'The Tailor of Taste' – set up his eponymous brand of men's clothing in Leeds? By 1925 Leeds was home to the largest clothing factory in the world.

Self-guided tours include the Leeds Owl Trail, a map of 25 locations for urban 'birdspotters',



each featuring an owl – a symbol of Leeds, and the [Street Art](#) Trail which showcases inspirational murals and public artworks: 'Athena Rising' by Nomad Clan, is an awe-inspiring welcome to Leeds for train travellers; 'You & Me & Me & You' by Anthony Burrill is a backdrop to thousands of Instagram stories, and 'Echoes' by Add Fuel celebrates the area's important ceramics heritage.

Striking sculpture 'Hibiscus Rising' – the first permanent public commission in the North of England by international artist Yinka Shonibare CBE RA, is a symbol of unity and hope commissioned to honour the life of David Oluwale, a British Nigerian Leeds resident who was hounded to his death in 1969, drowning in the River Aire as a result of systematic police harassment and violence. Take it in as part of the wider Aire Park development which also includes the new David Oluwale Bridge and iconic Tetley building, the former HQ for the brewery.

Other popular walks include the Armley to Kirkstall Bridge Walk, which follows a section of the 127-mile-long Leeds-Liverpool canal through the city.



# THE CITY THAT LOVES TO ENTERTAIN



Find out why Leeds is the place to be all year round. [Play video](#)



Leeds Grand Theatre c Carl Milner

Throughout the year Leeds has a jam-packed programme of events taking place from international sports to award-winning theatre, headline music acts to ground-breaking exhibitions. And that's not to mention the huge number of festivals and celebrations taking place throughout the year, embracing the city's cultural and creative heritage. Including: Leeds West Indian Carnival (August), Leeds Black Music Festival (August), Leeds International Beer Festival (September), Leeds International Festival of Ideas (October), Light Night Leeds (October), Leeds International Film Festival (November) and Live at Leeds (November).

As well as large-scale city-wide events, Leeds is home to three outstanding theatres, all

making a mark on the Leeds events calendar for 2026. Repertory theatre Leeds Playhouse will bring Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to life in a new production with Shakespeare's *Globe* and *Headlong* in February, and in March will premiere two new shows – an adaptation of Andrea Levy's *Small Island* and H. P. Lovecraft's *War of the Worlds*. Highlights at Leeds Grand Theatre include the premiere of Northern Ballet's *Gentleman Jack* in March and Opera North's musical production of *The Sound of Music* in June. And the world's longest-running traditional Music Hall – City Varieties Music Hall – has a packed programme of well-known names from the worlds of comedy, magic, theatre, literature and music.



# RETAIL REDEFINED



Victoria Gate, c Tom Martin

Leeds is a shopper's paradise. A world of retail, all within easy reach and on some of the most handsome, wide Victorian-made streets lined with striking buildings whose upper floors and rooftops mean shoppers should look up when in Leeds. Now pedestrianised, our compact and walkable city centre means you're never far away from the biggest brands. The stunning Victorian arcades, each with its own distinct identity, lead off the main shopping streets, so whether it's the swanky Victoria Quarter – complete with the largest single work of stained glass in Great Britain and the largest stained glass roof in Europe – or the smaller Thorntons, Grand or Queens arcades full of eclectic and independent stores, salons and

cafes, there's lots to explore. The contemporary glass domed roof of Trinity Leeds is home to around 120 more well-known brands.

Leeds' fierce independent spirit is in full view at the beautifully restored Corn Exchange, the iconic domed oval building so Insta-worthy you could almost miss the dozens of outstanding and unconventional traders that fill the spaces. Or there's the unique atmosphere of Grade I listed Kirkgate Market, where Michael Marks of Marks and Spencer began his trade. From textiles and loose-leaf tea, to fresh flowers and street food from around the world, all found across over 400 stalls.



# ON THE WAY TO...



Love Leeds for longer with a day trip from Leeds. [Find out more.](#)



Yorkshire Moors c James Mulkeen

Leeds is one of the most easily accessible cities and is ideally positioned in the centre of the UK with direct rail links from across the country. It's just over two hours by train from London and three hours from Edinburgh. With York only 25 minutes away by train and Manchester less than an hour. Leeds Bradford Airport welcomes visitors from 70 destinations and the port of Hull is around an hour away by car. Once you're in the city, [plan journeys](#) at WYMetro or try Leeds City Bikes a fully electric public bike hire service.

Leeds offers the perfect base from which to explore the Yorkshire Dales, Yorkshire Moors and South Pennines – all areas of outstanding beauty, each with its own unique character, providing a wealth of options for day trips - from walks and outdoor adventures to discovering characterful some of the towns and villages that pepper the landscape.

Take a scenic bus or train (or even a steam train) over rolling hills and heather moorland

to Haworth, home of the Brontës and setting for *Wuthering Heights*, or to Halifax, where Ann Lister lived and worked, the recent subject of popular BBC drama *Gentleman Jack*, which was filmed here and in nearby Hebden Bridge, an art lovers paradise. Further afield you can reach the stunning Yorkshire Moors coastline by car, train or bus to enjoy places like Runswick Bay, Saltburn and Whitby.

Make more of your trip by exploring some of the other fascinating places easily accessible from Leeds by car, train or bus. Check out Harrogate – the spa town famous for its festivals, food and Turkish baths or Knaresborough for rowing boat trips under the iconic viaduct; a trip to Ilkley can include a walk across the legendary moor or maybe a stroll through the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in Wakefield is more your speed.

Explore [itinerary ideas](#) for enjoying city and country here.



# WHERE TO LAY YOUR HEAD



Hyatt Place, Leeds

Whatever your trip entails, and whatever your budget, you'll find somewhere to stay that's so much more than a base. From the UK's first 'Art Hostel' to luxury hotels and international brands, buzzing boutiques to exceptional self-catering apartments, or for those who love the outdoors there is a great selection of local camp sites in the neighbouring dales and moors. The choice is yours.



# UPCOMING

## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER '25

### *Festive Highlights*

Sat 8 Nov – Sun 4 Jan

A GLITTERING INVITATION: CHRISTMAS AT HAREWOOD – HAREWOOD HOUSE

Sat 15 Nov – Weds 31 Dec

LEEDS THOR'S TIPI – VICTORIA GARDENS

Thurs 20 Nov – Sat 17 Jan

LEEDS CHRISTMAS MARKETS – CITY SQUARE, BOND COURT, MILLENNIUM SQUARE

Fri 21 Nov – Weds 31 Dec

ICE CUBE ICE-SKATING & CHRISTMAS EXPERIENCE – MILLENNIUM SQUARE

Fri 21 Nov – Weds 31 Dec

NORTHERN LIGHTS – TEMPLE NEWSAM

Fri 21 Nov – Weds 31 Dec

ALADDIN: THE ROCK N ROLL PANTO – CITY VARIETIES MUSIC HALL



For full listings [click here to download](#) the Visit Leeds Headline Events Guide

## 2026 *Spring and Summer Highlights*

Sat 14 Feb – Sat 28 Feb

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM – LEEDS PLAYHOUSE

Sat 7 Mar – Sat 14 Mar

NORTHERN BALLET'S GENTLEMAN JACK – LEEDS GRAND THEATRE

Sat 23 May

LIVE AT LEEDS IN THE PARK – TEMPLE NEWSAM

Sun 24 May

SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL – TEMPLE NEWSAM

Sat 27 June – Sat 11 July (further dates TBA)

MILLENNIUM SQUARE SUMMER SERIES

Weds 17 June – Tues 23 June

ICC WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP – HEADINGLEY STADIUM

July (Date TBA)

20TH LEEDS PRIDE – LEEDS CITY CENTRE

Fri 3 July

PITBULL AT ROUNDHAY FESTIVAL – ROUNDHAY PARK

Sat 4 July

LEWIS CAPALDI AT ROUNDHAY FESTIVAL – ROUNDHAY PARK

Sat 26 July

SUNSHINE UNDERGROUND – KIRKSTALL ABBEY



**BRADFORD 2025**  
UK City of Culture

The UK City of Culture **Bradford 2025** is hosting this year's Turner Prize at Cartwright Hall until 22 February 2026. Which is just on Leeds' doorstep.

We're a city that loves to entertain, with a jam-packed event programme all year round. Please note that the information contained in this document isn't an exhaustive list of the events in the annual Leeds calendar. To find out more about all the events taking place in Leeds this year, please visit: [visitleeds.co.uk/whats-on](https://visitleeds.co.uk/whats-on)

VISITLEEDS



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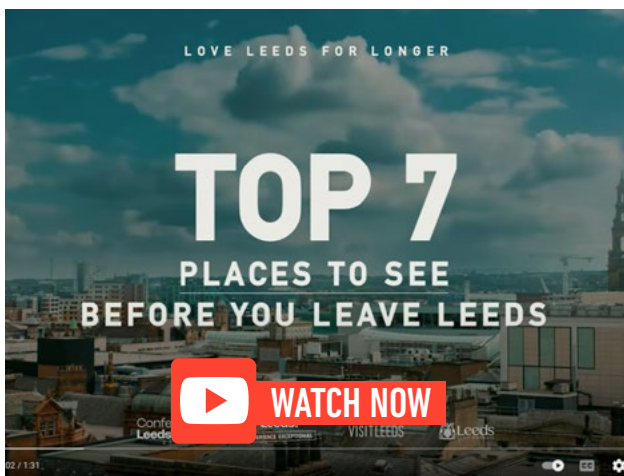
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**To arrange a visit, for individual itineraries and for any enquiries about all that's going on in Leeds, please get in touch with Visit Leeds + 44 (0) 113 378 5765**

**All this and much more can be found on [www.visitleeds.co.uk](http://www.visitleeds.co.uk),  
we look forward to welcoming you to our city!**



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