

The *Endpaper* Society

THE FULL ITINERARY

A Literary Escape to *Yorkshire*

Eight women. Five months of reading. One week at the Boar's Head on the Ripley Castle estate.

DATES

30 Sept – 10 Oct 2027

GROUP

Eight women

BASE

Ripley, North Yorkshire

The week *at a glance*

A base in Ripley, one thing worth the journey most days, and enough unhurried time to get properly into a book before dinner.

DATE	THE DAY	LUNCH	DINNER
Thu 30 Sep	We fly	—	On the plane
Fri 1 Oct	King's Cross to Harrogate on the 12:40	On the train	Boar's Head
Sat 2 Oct	Ripley Castle, at an easy pace	Ripley	Boar's Head
Sun 3 Oct	Menwith Hill and Brimham Rocks	Nidderdale	Boar's Head
Mon 4 Oct	A full day in York	York	York
Tue 5 Oct	Harrogate, Bettys and the Turkish Baths	Afternoon tea at Bettys	Late supper, Boar's Head
Wed 6 Oct	Sutton Bank, Rievaulx Abbey, stargazing	On the moors	Helmsley
Thu 7 Oct	Fountains Abbey in daylight	Fountains Abbey	Ripon
Fri 8 Oct	Free day, then Fountains by Floodlight	Your choice	Boar's Head
Sat 9 Oct	Back to London and the British Library	On the train	London
Sun 10 Oct	We fly home	—	—

Train times are from the current timetable and will be confirmed closer to travel.

Day *by day*

THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER · THE NIGHT BEFORE

We fly

The overnight flight to London. If you're on the East Coast, your journey starts in the late afternoon and we land in the morning. If you're further west, your journey may start earlier in the day.

Wear something comfortable, keep the book club's current read in your carry-on, and sleep if you can. Tomorrow is a travel day, and nobody is expected to be charming.

Dinner: On the plane

DAY 1 · FRIDAY 1 OCTOBER

The train from King's Cross

We land in London in the morning and make our way to King's Cross, with time for a coffee. Then **the 12:40 direct LNER train to Harrogate**, arriving at 15:29 — no change at Leeds. From Harrogate station it's a short taxi through the lanes to Ripley, three miles north.

The journey is part of the trip. Somewhere around Doncaster the light changes and the trees are starting to turn. We'll coordinate arrivals so that as many of us as possible are on the same train, in the same carriage. The book for the journey is Patrick Leigh Fermor's *A Time to Keep Silence*, 128 pages about the stillness he found staying in monasteries — including La Grande Trappe, a Cistercian house, which is the order Fountains Abbey belonged to. **Stacy will bring copies of this book for everyone. Don't worry — it's small & lightweight.** Read it or sleep through it: Harrogate is the end of the line, so nobody can miss the stop.

Check in, unpack, find the bar. **First dinner together at the Boar's Head**, and nobody does anything else on the first evening.

Lunch: On the train **Dinner:** At the Boar's Head

DAY 2 · SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER

Ripley Castle, at an easy pace



A slow morning. Then across the square to Ripley Castle, home to the Ingilby family since 1309 — the walled garden, the hothouses and the deer park, and a tour of the house for anyone who wants one.

The afternoon is yours. Everyone is jet-lagged on day two, and this is the day to give in to it: nap, read, find a chair by the fire.

Lunch: In Ripley **Dinner:** At the Boar's Head

DAY 3 • SUNDAY 3 OCTOBER

Brimham Rocks, by way of Menwith Hill



A late start. Then up into Nidderdale, where the fields give way to open moorland scattered with enormous rocks — stacked, balanced and worn into shapes that look deliberate and aren't. They were laid down by a river some 320 million years ago and carved since by ice, rain and wind. If we're lucky, there's still some color in the heather around them.

There are short, easy loops and longer walks for anyone who wants them, and some steep, uneven ground between the rocks. **And there's a second-hand bookshop in the National Trust visitor center**, which on this trip counts as an attraction in its own right.



On the way: RAF Menwith Hill



We take the long way round, along the A59, because of this. You'll see them before you understand what you're looking at: dozens of white domes rising out of the fields like enormous golf balls, behind the fence, with no signage that explains anything. **It has been listening since 1956, and it has been the NSA's since 1966** — often described as its largest spying base outside the United States. In the mid-nineties there was a women's peace camp outside the fence, and it lasted for years.

Stacy's then-husband was stationed there, which is why she lived in Killinghall, a mile from the Boar's Head — and she worked on the base herself, in the post office and the library. She drove past the protesters. She was inside the fence.

The sheep don't care. We slow down, look, and keep driving.

Evening: our first conversation about the last book, after dinner.

Lunch: Sunday lunch in Nidderdale **Dinner:** At the Boar's Head

DAY 4 • MONDAY 4 OCTOBER

A full day in York



The train from Harrogate to York takes about 35 minutes. We start at **York Minster**, on a weekday morning when it's quiet. Then **Minster Gate Bookshop** — seven rooms of books over four floors — where you lose an hour and don't mind. The Shambles.

York has been accumulating writers for a long time. On Stonegate there's a plaque at No. 35, where *Tristram Shandy* first went on sale in 1759. W.H. Auden was born at 54 Bootham. And Elizabeth Montagu — who founded the Bluestockings, the original women's literary circle — spent her earliest years at Treasurer's House, a few steps from the Minster.

The afternoon is loose. We meet again for dinner before the train back.

Lunch: In York **Dinner:** In York, then the train back

DAY 5 • TUESDAY 5 OCTOBER

A day in Harrogate: bookshops, Bettys and the Turkish Baths

Harrogate is small enough to do on foot, and today we do all of it, with Stacy leading — she lived a mile up the road, and this is her town.

The morning is books. Imagined Things for new ones, Books For All for secondhand. Then **the Old Swan Hotel**, where Agatha Christie was found in December 1926, eleven days after she disappeared, checked in under another woman's name. Nobody has ever fully explained it.



Afternoon tea at Bettys, which has been in Harrogate since 1919. The full production in the Imperial Room, with the tiered stand and a pianist playing. It's included, and it is non-negotiable.

Walk it off through the Valley Gardens, and then the part everyone talks about afterwards: **the Harrogate Turkish Baths**, open since 1897. A Victorian Moorish interior, a sequence of hot rooms, a eucalyptus steam room and a cold plunge pool. **Tuesday evening is the women-only session**, which is why we're here on a Tuesday. Bring a swimsuit; towels are provided.

Lunch: Afternoon tea at Bettys, which is a meal in itself

Dinner: Late supper at the Boar's Head, after the baths

DAY 6 · WEDNESDAY 6 OCTOBER

A day on the North York Moors, and a sky full of stars

A slow start after the baths, then up onto the moors for the whole day and night.

Sutton Bank first, about 35 minutes from Ripley: the escarpment James Herriot called the finest view in England, looking out over the Vale of York. Then **Rievaulx Abbey**, founded in 1132 — the same year as Fountains, and by the same Cistercian order — in a wooded valley so quiet you can hear the river. Two abbeys in one week, and they make a good pair.

Late afternoon in **Helmsley**, a stone market town at the edge of the moors, and dinner there before we drive back up into the dark.

Evening: stargazing on the North York Moors



The North York Moors has been an International Dark Sky Reserve since 2020. By now the jet lag has worn off, and a late night is a pleasure rather than an ordeal. We go out with **Astro Dog**, a North Yorkshire stargazing company that works inside the reserve — a private session for the eight of us, with telescopes and a guided tour of the night sky.

A week after the new moon there's a half moon in the early evening — which through a telescope is the best view of it you'll ever get, craters sharp along the shadow line. Once it sets, the stars come out properly.

Wrap up warm; October nights on the moors are cold.

Lunch: On the moors **Dinner:** In Helmsley, then stargazing

DAY 7 • THURSDAY 7 OCTOBER

Fountains Abbey, in daylight

Twenty minutes from the Boar's Head, and one of the largest and best-preserved monastic ruins in England. Thirteen monks left St Mary's Abbey in York in 1132 looking for a stricter life, and three years later joined the Cistercians. Henry VIII dissolved it in 1539. In 1718 John Aislabie — later disgraced in the South Sea Bubble — began building the Studley Royal water garden around it, and it is now a World Heritage Site.

You walk through it on an October afternoon and feel the weight of all of it. **Look for the cellarium**, the long vaulted undercroft. You'll be back in it tomorrow night.

Lunch: At Fountains Abbey **Dinner:** In Ripon

DAY 8 • FRIDAY 8 OCTOBER

A quiet day, then Fountains by Floodlight



The day is yours until evening. By now you know your way around. The 36 bus stops in Ripley village and runs into Harrogate every half hour or so, so go back to the bookshop you didn't have time for, or to Bettys for a Fat Rascal. From Harrogate station it's about 35 minutes by train to York, if one day there wasn't enough. Or stay put, walk the castle grounds and read by the fire.

You won't be working it out alone: Stacy hands everyone a list of ideas for the free day, with bus and train times written down.

Then we go back to Fountains after dark. For a handful of October nights the National Trust lights the ruins, and a choir sings in the cellarium. We walk through the floodlit abbey, find a spot, and listen. **The wine is on us.**

If it rains, we go anyway. Yorkshire in October is not guaranteed weather and this evening is still happening.

Afterwards, the last conversation about the last book — five months of reading, and this is where it lands.

Lunch: On your own, wherever the day takes you

Dinner: Early dinner at the Boar's Head, before Floodlight

DAY 9 · SATURDAY 9 OCTOBER

Back to London, and the British Library

No early start. Breakfast, goodbyes to Ripley that take longer than planned, and we leave the Boar's Head around 10. Our driver takes us to Leeds, so nobody is hauling a suitcase between trains, and we catch **the 11:10 LNER to King's Cross**, arriving at 13:23. The group chat is usually busier on the way south than it was on the way up.

We drop our bags at our hotel near King's Cross and walk to **the British Library**, right beside the station. Its Treasures gallery is free and open until 5 on Saturdays: Magna Carta, a Gutenberg Bible, and centuries of literary manuscripts. It's the right last stop for a book club.

Then one last dinner together. Nobody is racing from a Yorkshire breakfast to a transatlantic check-in desk.

Lunch: On the train

Dinner: A last dinner together in London

SUNDAY 10 OCTOBER

We fly home

The airport and the flight home, landing the same day. You'll have read a whole book club's worth of Yorkshire, and you'll still be finishing the conversations on the plane.

Breakfast: In London, before the airport

Where you sleep



The Boar's Head is a 23-room coaching inn on the Ripley Castle estate, built in the early 1800s. The castle has been in the Ingilby family since 1309. There's a walled garden, a serious kitchen, and a bar that opens early enough.

Three ways to stay: a room of your own, \$7,450 · a castle-view room, \$8,150 · or sharing a twin with a friend, \$5,950 each. Every room has its own bathroom, and nobody is paired with a stranger.

What's included

Almost everything. Once you step on the train at King's Cross, you shouldn't need your wallet much until you're back in London.

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- **Eight nights** at The Boar's Head on the Ripley Castle estate, and **our last night in London**.
 - **Every breakfast and every dinner**, and lunch on every day we go out together.
 - **Your train** from King's Cross to Harrogate and back, and the train to York.
 - **All the getting around** — every transfer and day trip, so nobody is driving on the left. (Your own wanderings on the free day are the exception.)
 - **Every ticket** — Ripley Castle, York Minster, Fountains Abbey, Fountains by Floodlight, Rievaulx Abbey, Brimham Rocks.
 - **A private stargazing evening** on the North York Moors with Astro Dog.
 - **Afternoon tea at Bettys and the women-only evening at the Harrogate Turkish Baths**.
 - **Drinks at Fountains by Floodlight**, and a copy of *A Time to Keep Silence* for the train.
 - **The book club arc** — five months of reading together, May to October 2027. Two calls a month: one public and free, one private for the cohort. Reading list curated for this trip.
 - **The private group channel**, open from the start of the arc.
 - **Your host all week** — Stacy, who lived a mile up the road and knows it well.
 - **Eight women, maximum**. That number does not expand.

What isn't — budget for these on top

- **Getting to London**. Flights and any nights either side are yours.
- **Travel insurance**. Required, not optional.
- **Your bar tab** at the Boar's Head, and drinks beyond the ones we're buying.
- **Lunch on the train** each way.
- **Friday's free day** — the bus into Harrogate and whatever you find there.

- **Books.** There are four bookshops on this itinerary. Bring an empty suitcase.

All in from the US east coast: roughly \$9,000

A room of your own, plus a return flight to London. Almost everything else is already paid for.

The dates that actually matter

The book club arc starts in **May 2027** — that's when the cohort locks. Five books, five months, two calls a month, finishing in Yorkshire in October.

To get the whole thing, you need to be in by April 2027. You can still join the trip after that, but you'll arrive without five months of shared reading behind you — and the entire design of this trip is that you already know these women when you step off the train.

Things people ask

I'm coming on my own. Will that be strange?

No, and it's the reason the arc exists. You'll have been reading and talking with these seven women since May. **By October there's no icebreaker needed; the ice is long gone.**

How much walking?

York is a walking day on flat medieval streets, some of them cobbled — bring shoes with a good grip. Fountains Abbey is a large site with paths and slopes. Brimham Rocks has short, easy loops, with steep, uneven ground between the rocks if you want to climb about. Harrogate is small and easy. **Nothing is strenuous, but several days involve being on your feet for a few hours.**

Is this a Brontë trip?

No. We're not going to Haworth and we're not doing the pilgrimage. This is Yorkshire as a place, not Yorkshire as a literary theme park.

Do I have to finish the books?

Nobody checks. But the trip is the end of a five-month conversation, and it's better if you've been in it.

The *Endpaper* Society

Read. Travel. Belong.

Eight spots. Wine in the ruins.

Questions? Write to stacy@endpapersociety.com — I answer every one myself.

CHOOSE YOUR ROOM

A real trip by The Endpaper Society, published as a sample by The Hosting Guild. Prices and terms are sample figures.