

# 48hrs in Newcastle & Gateshead

Tue, 14/06/2016 - 09:00



Located on the northern shore of the River Tyne, the city of Newcastle is closely intertwined with the town of Gateshead on the rivers' south bank. The two are linked by numerous bridges, including the imposing Tyne Bridge and the contemporary Gateshead Millennium Bridge - the world's only tilting bridge.

Once a coal trade stronghold, which brought considerable wealth to the city, Newcastle is now vibrant and modern - but retains much of its historical integrity and character. A former industrial area integral to the coal trade, the Quayside has been redeveloped: with cafés, restaurants, bars and hotels on the Newcastle side, while the Gateshead side flourishes with cultural landmarks such as the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art and the Sage Gateshead performing arts centre. Gateshead is also home to the intu Metrocentre, Europe's largest shopping and leisure centre.

NewcastleGateshead even has its own guardian angel: watching over the city, The Angel of the North is an iconic work of public art by Antony Gormley - with a wingspan of 54 metres, it dominates the skyline.

[www.newcastlegateshead.com](http://www.newcastlegateshead.com)

## TIME TO CHECK IN:

Stylish budget hotel chain Motel One opened a 222-room property in Newcastle in December 2015, its décor inspired by the industrial heritage of the local area.

The latest big hotel brand to debut in the city, Hampton by Hilton, is a 160-room property, open since March 2015 opposite Newcastle's redeveloped Central Station. Amenities include a fitness centre, restaurant and bar.

The new Vermont Aparthotel comprises 11 individually decorated luxury apartments, including the decadent Dom Perignon penthouse suite. As well as butler service and a chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce, guests may enjoy the benefits of the adjacent Vermont Hotel.

## DAY ONE:

### 10:00 Visit Newcastle's old castle

Following a comprehensive re-imaging, two of Newcastle's most historic landmarks, the Castle Keep and Black Gate have been united as a single attraction, open since March 2015 as Newcastle Castle. One of Britain's finest medieval stone castle donjons still open to the public, the Castle Keep sits upon the site of the original timber castle from which the city takes its name. The castle rooftop is a great vantage point from which to enjoy far-reaching views, while the castle's newest exhibition offers a glimpse into the past, telling of the vagrants, vagabonds and villains who once dwelled within these walls.

### 12:30 Have an enlightened moment where light bulbs were first demonstrated

Britain's largest independent library outside London, the Literary and Philosophical Society (known as the Lit & Phil) was founded in 1793 as a 'conversation club'. Its first female member joined in 1801, making this one of the first English societies to open its doors to women. The grand building that currently houses its collection of more than 160,000 books was opened in 1825, and its magnificent reading rooms remain largely unchanged. This was the world's first public place to be lit by electric light - Joseph Swan first demonstrated his invention the light bulb during a lecture here in 1879, returning in 1881 for the world's first public exhibition of lighting. The Society continues to host events, ranging from book launches to lunchtime jazz concerts.

### 13:30 Eat your way around Newcastle's historic indoor market

When Grainger Market first opened it was Europe's largest indoor market. This historic Grade I-listed building has more than 100 retailers ranging from independent traders to big-name shops - including the unique Marks & Spencer Original Penny Bazaar, the world's smallest Marks & Spencer store. For a global lunch, why not eat your way around the market? Choices include award-winning barista coffee from Pumphreys, handmade Italian pizza from Slice, New York street food from Sloppy Joe's, a taste of Turkey from Fez, seafood noodles, deep fried whitebait and Lindisfarne oysters from Lindsay's To Go, and authentic French crêpes from Le Petite Crêperie - go savoury with ham and Emmental cheese, or sweet with homemade salted caramel butter. Be sure to save some space for cupcakes and brownies from Pet Lamb Patisserie.

### 14:30 Marvel at a monument to Earl Grey

With its grand buildings designed by architect Richard Grainger in the 1830s, Grainger Town is Newcastle's historic heart - only London and Bath have more listed classical buildings. A significant landmark, Grey's Monument was erected in 1838 in honour of British Prime Minister Charles Grey, 2nd Earl Grey, who championed the Reform Act of 1832 and who is famously associated with Earl Grey tea. Lined with upmarket shops and restaurants, Grey Street is considered one of England's finest. Other notable buildings include the imposing Theatre Royal.

### 15:00 Cross over to the other side

Take a stroll along Newcastle's redeveloped Quayside, sweeping across the Gateshead Millennium Bridge to Gateshead on the south shore of the River Tyne. Here stands the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, a major centre for contemporary visual arts, open since 2002 in a renovated flour mill. With no permanent collection, there's always something new and compelling to see. Admission is free. Open since 2004, Sage Gateshead is another cultural landmark. Home to the Northern Sinfonia orchestra, this glass-sheathed concert venue also hosts everything from jazz festivals to pop concerts.

### 19:00 Enjoy classic bistro food, then a classic movie

Local entrepreneur Dixon Scott (great uncle of film directors Ridley Scott and Tony Scott) opened the Tyneside Cinema in the 1930s. This art deco venue is recognised as one of Britain's best independent cinemas. A new addition is the Tyneside Bar Café, serving pre-film drinks and bar snacks as well as bistro food such as fish tacos, goats curd and basil frittata, and the signature Tyneside Cinema Hot Dog, cooked in pale ale and served in a brioche bun. It even has its own coffee blend called 'Lumiere', developed with local artisan roastery Lonton Coffee. This cabaret-style space also has DJs, live music, quiz nights, and free screenings of cult films.

Or... enjoy upscale bistro dining at award-winning 21. Open since 1988 on Newcastle Quayside, this local favourite has recently been revamped. Chef-restaurateur Terry Laybourne has also opened three eateries in the newly refurbished foodhall of Newcastle's Fenwick department store: casual diner Café 21, seafood and oyster bar Saltwater Fish Company, and unique modern butcher shop and restaurant Porterhouse Butcher and Grill.

### 22:00 Whisky, ale or gin?

In a city renowned for its nightlife, notable new venues include Glass House, a decadent 1920s-style bar and whiskey lounge located in a magnificent listed building; and Tiger Hornsby, a luxe dance bar in a Quayside warehouse. The Bridge Tavern is a new real ale pub set underneath the iconic Tyne Bridge, built on the site of an historic ale house that was demolished in 1925 to make way for the bridge. Or sip Newcastle Gin at Bealim House, a rustic gastro pub and gin distillery in a former print works.

## DAY TWO:

### 10:00 After a big night out, why not enjoy pizza for breakfast?

Newcastle's newest pizza kitchen, The Herb Garden is no ordinary pizzeria. Its décor incorporates space-age orbs of home-grown herbs used by the kitchen, and its Sunday brunch menu includes special breakfast pizzas. The Twisted English pizza has sausage, egg, mushrooms and tomatoes, the Shakshuka is topped with spicy tomato, herbs and sardines, while Breakfast in Bed keeps it sweet with chocolate, hazelnut, banana, honey and vanilla ice cream.

### 11:00 Take a stroll to the city's reborn cultural quarter

To the east of the city centre lies the Ouseburn Valley neighbourhood, set alongside narrow Ouseburn River. Once home to heavy industry, by the mid-20th-century its old Victorian warehouses were disused and derelict. Artists and musicians began utilising these spaces in the 1970s, kick-starting a major regeneration project. It is now a vibrant cultural quarter. From the city centre, take the QuayLink bus or a short stroll along the Quayside to Lime Street where cultural attractions include Seven Stories, Britain's National Centre for Children's Books, it's packed with interactive exhibitions celebrating literary icons including Noddy, the Famous Five, Angelina Ballerina and Harry Potter. The nearby Biscuit Factory showcases contemporary art, sculpture, jewellery and design-led homewares, as well as hosting a major art exhibition each season. Proving that the area is equally vibrant at night, The Cluny is a regarded live music venue, pub and café in a former mill.

### 12:30 Taste fresh flavours prepared by a well-known food blogger

A new culinary space opened by chef Anna Hedworth, who is well known for her food blog The Grazer (the-grazer.blogspot.co.uk), The Cook House is a place to eat, rest and hang out. Housed in a shipping container in the Ouseburn Valley cultural quarter, this casual kitchen serves breakfast and lunch, with everything you taste (from chutneys to terrines to cordials) made onsite - and sometimes grown onsite too! There's also a food school and regular supperclubs.

### 14:00 Embark on an anatomical safari

Get into science at Newcastle's award-winning Life Science Centre, where hands-on displays, interactive games and demonstrations encourage curiosity about science and its part in the world around us. Running until April 2018, the centre's new flagship exhibition Dino Jaws from the Natural History Museum, features life-size animatronic dinosaur heads - including the terrifying T. rex!

### Or... Escape to the seaside

Sitting on the mouth of the River Tyne, jutting out into the North Sea, Tynemouth has great albeit wind-lashed sandy beaches, making this one of Britain's finest surf spots. With frequent Metro Network trains from Newcastle city centre reaching the town in just 30 minutes, a quick surf sojourn isn't out of the question! Foodies and vintage lovers don't even need to leave the town's grand Victorian station: every Saturday and Sunday till 4pm, Tynemouth Station Market welcomes the best vintage traders, artisan crafts, and local produce from across the region. Afterwards enjoy fresh sea air, fresh seafood, and breathtaking sea views at Riley's Fish Shack. First open in late summer 2015, this rustic fish bar and grill set in an old shipping container has fast become a local favourite.

### 19:30 Dine and dance till late in an historic locomotive works

The Boiler Shop in Newcastle's up-and-coming Stephenson's Quarter is famously where Robert Stephenson's revolutionary Rocket was built in 1829. Now a vibrant venue with an eclectic programme, the Boiler Shop hosts regular live music events with top DJs and bands as well as retro rollerdiscos, pop-up food events and much more. Visitors to Newcastle during the Great Exhibition of the North in 2018 will be able to see Rocket at nearby Discovery Museum.

## HOW TO GET HERE:

NewcastleGateshead is in north-east England, three hours by train from London. Close to the city centre, Newcastle International Airport has direct flights to the US, Europe and Dubai.

## Topic tags

Culture  
Food and Drink

## Location tags

Newcastle Gateshead

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The Castle Keep of Newcastle upon Tyne



Looking towards the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art on Gateshead Quays through the Millennium Bridge over the River Tyne



View from Newcastle quayside at dusk through the Millennium bridge



The Baltic Newcastle Gateshead