

# Episode 96 - UK Travel Planning Podcast - Transcript

Intro [00:00:03]:

Welcome to the UK travel planning podcast. Your host is the founder of the UK travel planning website, Tracey Collins. In this podcast, Tracey shares destination guides, travel tips, and itinerary ideas, as well as interviews with a variety of guests who share their knowledge and experience of UK travel to help you plan your perfect UK vacation. Join us as we explore the UK from cosmopolitan cities to quaint villages, from historic castles to beautiful islands, and from the picturesque countryside to seaside towns.

Tracy Collins [00:00:41]:

Hello, and welcome to this week's episode of the UK Travel Planning Podcast. And this week, I'm joined by Doug Hello. Who, is here to talk about all things trains. Now we have decided after talking extensively about this episode that we've decided to divide it into 2 parts. So, basically, the premise of this episode and next week's episode, so episodes 96, which you're listening to now, and 97, which will be out next week, is to chat about the easiest and best, probably easiest, I guess, is what we're kinda focusing on, day trips from London by train. We know that a lot of you love to base yourselves in London. And if you wanna take a day trip out, you have got so many choices, seriously, so many, that I think that this probably will be a 2 part podcast that we will probably extend later on in the year and probably do at least another episode to include other places. Basically, how we have chosen the destinations for this episode and next week's episode is to choose easy train destinations.

Tracy Collins [00:01:49]:

So basically, easy destinations for you to get to from London that are also interesting, and places that you'll probably want to visit. So not to overwhelm you, in this episode, we're gonna do 5, and next week, we'll do another 5. And we will talk about basically how to get to each of these destinations, how long it will take you to get there, which London train station to leave from. And we also have a guide on the UK travel planning website to all the main London train stations. So I would suggest that you do take a look at that as well, and I will link to that in the show notes. Notes. At the end of the episode as well, we we're gonna have to share some train tips because I know it can be quite daunting, the thought of taking a train from London or anywhere around the UK if you haven't done it before. But, should we should we make a start? Yep.

Tracy Collins [00:02:41]:

So we're gonna start with the first five, and we are gonna start basically north of London at 12 o'clock, and we're gonna work around clockwise.

Doug Collins [00:02:49]:

Okay.

Tracy Collins [00:02:50]:

So the first destination that we chose is York. So, Doug, if somebody decides to wanna go to York, and why wouldn't you? Because it's absolutely beautiful. Which train stations or train station in London would you head to? How long would the journey take?

Doug Collins [00:03:05]:

Okay. So York is on the East Coast main line, and you travel there from London King's Cross railway station. And it takes 2 hours, and it's a direct service.

Tracy Collins [00:03:16]:

And that, train station is a few minutes walk outside the center of York, not very far. So it's easy sort of 5, 10 minute walk to get inside. So inside the walls around York because the train station is actually located outside the Roman walls, which surround the city. So York, I mean, it's just such a fantastic city to visit. So if you have an interest in history, Viking history, Roman history, it's a beautiful, beautiful destination to visit. So so what are your favorite things to do in York, Doug?

Doug Collins [00:03:47]:

Well, my anybody knows me will not be surprised to hear that the National Rail Museum in York is my favorite place, and it is free entry. And I lost count the number of times I've been there. It dozens. Absolutely dozens over the many, many years. But you're right. You know, you're the sum of absolutely everybody there, isn't there?

Tracy Collins [00:04:07]:

There is. And I have to say, I've been at York, railway museum numerous times with you, actually. Every time we go, you always head there. I don't always go there. I will say that. But if you enjoy trains, it's a perfect destination. Other obvious destinations to visit in York are York Minster, The Shambles. Just enjoy walking around and absorbing the history of the city.

Tracy Collins [00:04:31]:

The Jorvik Museum, which we went to last summer and absolutely thoroughly enjoyed that, didn't we?

Doug Collins [00:04:37]:

It was. It was incredible.

Tracy Collins [00:04:38]:

Very, very good. There's so many things to do in York that we have an entire podcast episode, which is episode 3, where I talk to York resident, Sinead, a New York travel expert, all about York, and she shares lots and lots of information and tips for visiting York.

Doug Collins [00:04:52]:

Okay. And don't forget the the chocolate New Zealand in York as well.

Tracy Collins [00:04:56]:

Oh, yes. We did try that. That was a lot of fun. Absolutely. So our second destination for this episode is the gorgeous university city of Cambridge. And I have to say, this is one of my favorite cities to visit in the UK, and I can go back to Cambridge over and over again. And

every time I go there, I kinda fall slightly more in love with it. It's a very easy day trip from London by train.

Tracy Collins [00:05:20]:

So, Doug, how long does it take to get to Cambridge and where? Which train station?

Doug Collins [00:05:24]:

King's Cross and Pankajas again, and 1 hour 20 minutes this takes you. The railway station in Cambridge is a little outside the city, so you've got a good 15, 20 minutes walk. But outside the train station, there's a buses and taxis.

Tracy Collins [00:05:38]:

Yeah. And we've taken the bus, and we've walked in. It's absolutely fine, but just do factor that in if you you know, by the time you get there, especially and we will talk at the end about thinking about kinda days of the week and seasons and time of the day the time of the year that you're visiting.

Doug Collins [00:05:51]:

And, also, if you're coming for a slight different direction, London, Liverpool Street, you can also take a train from there.

Tracy Collins [00:05:57]:

Okay. So you've got various options to get to Cambridge. Now I would highly recommend when you go to Cambridge that you do book a walking tour. I was very lucky last April, to do I booked on one, and there was only myself and my friend on on the tour. So we ended up having basically a private basically a private tour. But you will learn more about Cambridge if you do that. Also, highly recommend that you include a visit to King's College Chapel in that tour as well. You can include that tickets with some of the tours, and I will put a link to the one that I did last year.

Tracy Collins [00:06:27]:

It's beautiful, absolutely phenomenal place to visit, so definitely include that. And Cambridge really is just it's just gorgeous to walk around, you know, take a punt on the river, Cam, if that's something that you're interested in. It's always interesting to see people having a go. You know, have a stroll around the backs of the of the university colleges are beautiful to see as well. And, we've got a favorite pub as well, haven't you, in Cambridge?

Doug Collins [00:06:50]:

Yeah. The Eagle Pub is, very well worth a visit. It's got great history there, modern history as well.

Tracy Collins [00:06:55]:

Yeah. Absolutely. So we're not gonna kinda share too much about why, but you should check out the show notes, and we have got a guide to Cambridge, exactly why we recommend popping into that pub. It's extremely interesting. So 3rd destination on our list, going clockwise again, 12 o'clock clockwise from, London, is Canterbury. And we are often asked about Canterbury. We know that's another very, very popular destination for you guys to visit from London, central London. And Canterbury, again, is is an easy city to get to.

Tracy Collins [00:07:28]:

So if I was gonna go to Canterbury, which train station would I go to and how long would it take?

Doug Collins [00:07:33]:

Okay. So you do have a few options depending where you're based in London. So you can come out of, St Pancras, London Victoria or Charing Cross. The fastest though is from St Pancras. You come down to Canterbury West train station. There's 2 train stations in Canterbury, and that'll take you about 1 hour.

Tracy Collins [00:07:53]:

Yeah. So that's an easy trip. Very easy. In Canterbury, obviously, the main attraction is the, cathedral.

Doug Collins [00:08:00]:

Yes.

Tracy Collins [00:08:02]:

Do you book when you go there for a tour again when you actually, enter the cathedral, you can, book tickets for a tour? Highly recommend that. It's very, very nice. It's incredibly historic cathedral. Canterbury itself is just actually just a lot another lovely city to walk around, isn't it?

Doug Collins [00:08:20]:

Yeah. Incredibly historic. There's surrounding areas also.

Tracy Collins [00:08:24]:

Yep. So the buildings as well. There's a lot of buildings, cobblestone streets. The city was bombed in World War 2, so half of the city was actually destroyed and the other half wasn't. So you can see the the difference, when you're walking down the kind of medieval streets. The cathedral as well was hit, but luckily not destroyed. So it was they they did have a bit of bomb damage there. But Canterbury, again, is we highly recommend staying in Canterbury, actually, if if you can because it is such a lovely city.

Tracy Collins [00:08:54]:

There's some lovely places to to eat, there as well. Some really nice cafes.

Doug Collins [00:08:58]:

That's right. And if you're in the summer, the gardens are lovely too.

Tracy Collins [00:09:01]:

Yeah. Definitely. So then our 4th destination for easy day trip from London, and again, another popular destination to go down to is Dover. So Dover, you went to I don't think it was last year. It was the year before on a beautiful June day.

Doug Collins [00:09:19]:

I did, and I was very, very lucky with the weather. But, you have choices to, from London train stations to get to Dover. You can go from St Pancras, Victoria, Charing Cross, or Waterloo East. The journey takes between 1 and 2 hours. Yep. But it's yeah. I had a great time in Dover so much to do that. I called a taxi and went to the furthest point, went down to the lighthouse.

Tracy Collins [00:09:42]:

Yeah. And you needed cash, didn't you, for that taxi?

Doug Collins [00:09:44]:

I did need cash for that one. Yes. Yeah. The, the taxis did not take cards.

Tracy Collins [00:09:48]:

Yeah. So that's worth planning for if you decide to take the train down rather than a tour down to Dover that do take some cash just in case the taxis are still wanting to have cash to take you. Where did you get the taxi from? Outside the train station to?

Doug Collins [00:10:03]:

The lighthouse or not far from the lighthouse. The the driver dropped me across the other side of a field, but there's a public footpath to the lighthouse, and I had some tea and cake there. And then I had a most lovely walk across the grass banks and observing the White Cliffs of Dover.

Tracy Collins [00:10:20]:

Yeah. I mean, you've got some lovely photographs

Doug Collins [00:10:21]:

on your day as well.

Tracy Collins [00:10:23]:

And we have got an article, which tells you all about how to get to Dover from London. So do take a look at that, and we will link to that in the show notes. So then our next destination is another favorite of mine, is Brighton, which is on the South Coast. Now Brighton, I mean, it's just a lovely destination, especially on a sunny day. On a sunny, warm summer's day, Brighton is it's just fantastic, isn't it?

Doug Collins [00:10:51]:

It is. It is. Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:10:53]:

So if I want to go down to Brighton, Doug, how would I get down to Brighton from London?

Doug Collins [00:10:57]:

Yeah. Well, basically, 2 train stations. You've got the London Bridge, train station, or Victoria, and the journey takes about 1 hour.

Tracy Collins [00:11:04]:

So, again, not very long. So is it very far from the train station to actually get into Brighton itself?

Doug Collins [00:11:09]:  
No. Not very far at all. No.

Tracy Collins [00:11:11]:  
Okay. So it's just a short walk. And then what what attractions I'm gonna say straight away because before I actually ask Douglas, I'm gonna answer this question myself. It's like, why would I go to Brighton to to see the Brighton Pavilion? Every time I would go to see the Brighton Pavilion because it is fantastic. Absolutely fantastic. If you haven't heard of the Brighton Pavilion or don't know what it is, I'm gonna put a link in the show notes so you can find a little bit more out about it. But believe me, it is worth a visit.

Doug Collins [00:11:39]:  
Yeah. That's right. I know you enjoy it. But there's plenty of different shops and quirky shops in Brighton as well. People do their antiques and

Tracy Collins [00:11:46]:  
Yes. There's The Rose, so you can go and do a lot of shopping there. It's a very arty city. There's also the pier. So so what's the beach like in Brighton, Doug?

Doug Collins [00:11:58]:  
It is a pebble beach, and there's no sand there, but it's pebble. And you got the the the the pier as well, which is very famous.

Tracy Collins [00:12:06]:  
Yes. And so it yeah. It's a lovely day out. Honestly, Brighton is very popular. And, actually, I have got a whole episode coming out about Brighton next month with, Kate, who actually lived in Brighton for a few months. So she's gonna share some of her tips about things to do and see in Brighton. So now we've gone through 5. So that's York, Cambridge, Canterbury, Dover, and Brighton.

Tracy Collins [00:12:28]:  
We've talked about all the different train stations you can leave from. The reason we're saying that these are easy train journeys from London is that there are no changes of train. Is that correct?

Doug Collins [00:12:37]:  
That's right. And we went for about 2 hours, train duration as well. Just one thing to factor in is I mentioned train stations to depart from, but factor in your time to get to the train stations as well.

Tracy Collins [00:12:51]:  
Yeah. Absolutely. So if you're a little bit nervous about train travel in the UK, Doug has written an ebook which he shares lots and lots of tips. So I know if you've already got the ebook, you'll you'll know the sort of information that he shares in there, which will help you on the day of travel, help you to prepare for taking trains. Just basically, just make it less

stressful and easier for you because you'll know kind of all that kind of vital information to know about travel by train.

Doug Collins [00:13:17]:

I see. And because they are such such short train journeys, you can factor in just wait till after early morning. Well, the main rush hour's gone so you can travel a bit more leisurely without the rush to get to the, to the starting station.

Tracy Collins [00:13:32]:

Yeah. Absolutely. So what tips would you share for anybody who's planning any of these day trips from London by train dog?

Doug Collins [00:13:40]:

Okay. So if you've already got a train ticket, check that it's valid for using at the time that you're looking to travel. If you have a Britvial or UEL pass, they've activated them on that travel day. And if it's a spontaneous thing and you have no tickets, you can still buy at the station, but allow yourself plenty of time to buy that.

Tracy Collins [00:14:01]:

And the same with the rail card. If they have a rail card, they can just show the rail card at the train station when they purchase or if they purchase something.

Doug Collins [00:14:07]:

If they've already got a a national rail card, well, 2 together, all friends and family, for example, you can show that when you buy the ticket at the the station or online, you can do it, and you can just, tick on that you've got t, Vail Pass before you purchase the tickets.

Tracy Collins [00:14:22]:

Perfect. And all that sort of information is included in the, UK train ebook as well in a lot more detail about the different types of tickets and that sort of information. So what about days that I choose to travel, seasons? What what sort of factors would you think are important to consider?

Doug Collins [00:14:39]:

Well, considering the number of people, I mean, during school holidays and summer months, there's, you know, there's gonna be more people traveling and at weekends. On Sundays, I've I've mentioned many times about engineering works, etcetera, maybe not the best day, but, you know, it's a short train journey, so you could probably get away with it on those occasions. But also the time of year, the time that you spent in the destinations with light evenings in the summer, you can spend that much longer there. Definitely.

Tracy Collins [00:15:04]:

And just do a little bit of research before you go to each of the destinations. And we have got travel guides for each of the places that we've just talked about in this episode. So as I said, this is episode 96 of the UK travel planning podcast. You will find links to everything we talked about, all the destinations, Doug's ebook, and some train travel tips that we also share on the website, which you can find in the show notes for this episode at [ukatravelfinance.comforward/episoed96](http://ukatravelfinance.comforward/episoed96). But that just leaves us until next week where we're

gonna do part 2 of this episode, and we're gonna talk about another 5 destinations with also a bonus destination included in that next week. So that just leaves us until next week to say happy UK travel planning.