

York: The Rebel of the North [C1]

La città di York è come un museo all'aperto: Frankie Thomson vi spiega il perché.



York is a historic city in the northeast of England. The Romans, the Anglo Saxons and the Vikings all left their mark here. To find out more, Speak Up contacted Frankie Thomson, who was born in Yorkshire county and now works for York [tourist board](#). As she explained, with its medieval walls and magnificent cathedral, the city is just like an open air museum. To learn about its Roman history, she recommends heading to Yorkshire Museum. But to get a real sense of Viking life, there's no better place than Jorvik Viking Centre. **Frankie Thomson (English accent): **A group of archaeologists in the '80s found a Viking [settlement](#). They found hundreds of Viking skeletons and it really gave a huge [insight](#) into how they lived. So once they'd [unearthed](#) all the important [stuff](#) they decided to make it into an attraction. So they recreated the Viking village: you sit in a little [truck](#) and you go through the Viking village and you smell everyday Viking life! It's incredibly popular.

THE ROSE WINDOW

The medieval cathedral York Minster contains the largest [expanse](#) of [stained glass](#) in Britain. Two of its 15th-century windows are particularly [stunning](#): the Great East Window and the Rose Window. The Rose Window was nearly lost after [lightning struck](#) the Minster in the 1980s, causing a fire. Fires are a real hazard, says Thomson. **Frankie Thomson:** York Minster is the second largest gothic cathedral in Europe, it's eight hundred years old, it started out made of wood... it's [burned down](#) several times. It's got a very famous collection of [stained glass](#): the windows, and the [undercroft](#), the [nave](#) of the Minster is very beautiful. You can [climb all the way up](#) to the top of the tower (275 steps – ed.), and then you can see right out to the moors and all across the city.

CITY WALLS

The City Walls encircle the historic centre of York, [comprising](#) 3.4km of surviving [masonry](#). On the route, Clifford's Tower is a 13th-century stone tower, which was part of York Castle. Originally built in the 11th century, Clifford's Tower has a [grim](#) history: it was here that in 1190, in an atmosphere of nationwide intolerance, some 150 members of the Jewish community of York were [besieged](#) by a mob and committed mass suicide. Today, York's medieval walls offer an [insight](#) into the city's turbulent past, as Thomson explains. **Frankie Thomson:** Throughout all of the walls you'll see [narrow gaps](#) in the [stonework](#) and that's where soldiers would have their arrows ready to shoot out at anyone. Clifford's Tower was part of the castle defence area, and that still stands today, and that's got quite a horrible history. There was a big massacre of the Jewish community in there. And then in the days when people were hung [hanged], drawn and quartered, they would [behead](#) the person and put their head on a [spike](#), and that would all go on at Clifford's Tower.

YORKSHIRE LANDSCAPE

Be it the North York Moors, the coast or the Dales, the wider landscape of Yorkshire has inspired many writers, most famously Bram Stoker and the Brontës. **Frankie Thomson:** There's two national parks. There's the Yorkshire Moors, which includes the east coast. Whitby is an amazing gothic town famous for Dracula. And then to the west there's the Dales, so that's more rugged landscape. Haworth, in the southwest... we talk about 'Brontë country', people go to visit the parsonage there, where they grew up.

ICE AND FIRE

Many events take place in York. There is the Roman festival in the summer, and the chocolate festival in spring, which pays homage to what was once a big industry in York. February, however, is a particularly lively month, says Thomson. **Frankie Thomson:** In February we will have the Ice Trail: lots of different ice sculptures around the city. We've got the Viking Festival, which is huge. They set up their village in the York Museum gardens, and there's battle re-enactments and even cookery demonstrations. www.visityork.org
www.jorvikvikingfestival.co.uk

Glossary

- **truck** = camion
- **climb all the way up** = salire fino in cima
- **besieged** = assediare
- **settlement** = insediamento
- **unearthed** = dissotterrare
- **narrow gaps** = buchi stretti
- **stonework** = costruzione in pietra
- **lively** = allegro, energico
- **stained glass** = vetrate
- **grim** = cupo
- **masonry** = opere murarie
- **burned down** = bruciare completamente
- **nave** = nave
- **comprising** = consistere in
- **pays homage** = rendere omaggio
- **cookery** = cucina
- **lightning** = fulmine
- **undercroft** = volta
- **re-enactments** = ricostruzione
- **insight** = percezione
- **rugged** = accidentato
- **struck** = colpire
- **behead** = decapitare
- **parsonage** = canonica
- **Trail** = strada
- **expanse** = estensione
- **stunning** = abbagliante, imponente
- **stuff** = cose
- **Be it the North York Moors, the coast or the Dales** = sia...sia...
- **tourist board** = ufficio turistico
- **spike** = arpione