Manchester’s country

Manchester itself is a huge city with a multitude of attractions, places of interest and much more. However, for those desiring a brief getaway from the bustling city, here are some lovely day trips for you to escape and unwind. Ranging from nature resorts to ancient woods, be sure to enrich yourself with fresh air and greenery on a day off.

As the name puts it, the Southport-Manchester train line makes Southport highly accessible from Manchester, being only an hour away. Train rides are equally affordable, making this day trip highly feasible for families to solo travelers. A large seaside town in Merseyside, Southport has been the beach getaway since Victorian times. We can clearly see why, given the geographical beauty of the town. Extensive sand dunes stretch for several miles wiithin town. These Ainsdale sand dunes have been designated as a national nature reserve and a Ramsar site.

Local fauna include the exotic Natterjack toad and the Sand lizard that are sure to catch your eye. Here’s another interesting rumour about Southport (spread cheekily by the locals)–this humble English town inspired the tree-lined boulevards of Paris. When Louis Napoleon, the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, visited Southport in the 1840s, he supposedly constructed Paris after its image. Forget the faraway Paris, Southport is just at the doorstep of Manchester! Local shows such as the Southport Flower Show enables one to admire the beautiful flora that blooms annually in Southport. The scenery of fresh wild flowers and blue skies by the sea would indeed be an awesome view for you to take home.

A few hours ago I came to Tatton Park. Tatton Park was owned by the Egerton family for almost 400 years until the 1950s, where it was taken over by the National Trust and opened to the public for viewing. Its possesses highly unique programs, most notably the RHS Flower Show known as the North’s greatest gardening event. Now isn’t that an alluring idea for those with a green thumb? Nonetheless, throughout the rest of the year, there’s plenty to see and do. The 19th-century mansion sits within a 1,000 acre (405 hectare) deer park and is also home to 50 acres (20 ha) of landscaped gardens. Feel free to stroll through the beautifully manicured gardens and gush at the adorable deers up close.

Indeed while Manchester can be overwhelming at times as a busy city, there are still great day trips for all of us to soak up some much needed sun and enjoy the windy breeze.

Trip

Summer may be drawing inexorably to a close, with the August bank holidays now gone. There's a definite sense of the long hours of daylight beginning to get shorter and many of us are already digging around in the loft for those long-forgotten extra layers. However, there's no need for doom and gloom as, with an Indian summer forecast for many, some of the best cycling is yet to come! Here's your comprehensive guide to making the most of the new season with Cycling UK.

For much of the UK, 2019 has been another dry, sunny and warm year, especially in the south and east of England, where there hasn't been a lot of rain for most of the year. As we move into more seasonal climes, many people might start to think of putting their bikes back in the shed and mothballing them for the winter. But, despite the fresher feel in the air, there's a lot to enjoy as autumn kicks in. Rides can be punctuated by the chance to stop and pick blackberries - or collect bags of apple and plum windfalls left out for passersby at the roadside. Soon, there will also be chestnuts and beech nuts. Roadside larders such as the one below are abundant with produce in return for a contribution to the honesty box. One of the many joys of being on a bike is being able to spot and stop spontaneously for such delights, as long as you are forearmed with something to carry them home in without their being squashed!

Sights, smells and sounds of the changing seasons

In some areas, the leaves are starting to change colour, heralding the spectacular displays of foliage we'll be admiring in the days ahead. Familiar scenery is transformed by autumn tints, while areas that are normally too boggy and damp for riding off-road might still be dry. Harvests are already being gathered in, gigantic machines suddenly roaring into life above the hedgerows, leaving massive hay bales in their wake and easy pickings for the soon-to-be-departing flocks of birds. A sense of things coming to a close pervades the atmosphere and the smell of woodsmoke enhances the feeling that the Northern Hemisphere is beginning to tilt into the shadow of the sun again. For cyclists and mountain bikers, who are closely attuned to the seasons and the changing landscapes, autumn is a truly special time of year: sights, sounds and smells are intensified against the backdrop of darkening skies.

Can there be a better feeling than crunching your tyres through piles of golden leaves or a better sight and sound than a skein of geese honking overhead in Red Arrow formation? In my opinion, even food tastes better as your need for a 'winter fat store' means your appetite for cake increases - well at least that's what I tell myself!

October is a fabulous time for a late-season walk.. The trail will be almost empty, and all of the pub accommodation along the way is fantastic. Even when the weather is less than hospitable the trail is beautiful, with stretches by the Tweed, along a Roman road and over rolling hills.

What I take

## Clothing

In autumn, while the weather is also still relatively clement, it's a good idea to carry an extra layer just in case. Daytime temperatures might still be quite high, but early mornings and evenings can be suddenly chilly. A gilet or lightweight jacket might be all you need until winter really kicks in or, if you can be bothered with the faff, arm and leg warmers are lightweight enough to slip into a deep pocket. You could also treat yourself to [a Cycling UK wool top or neck tube](https://shop.cyclinguk.org/cycling-uk-kit) for a cosy feel without too many layers.

## Packing Your Panniers

When touring with panniers, try to keep your total load between 15 and 45 pounds. Your bike will be most stable if you put more weight in your front panniers — roughly 60 percent of weight in front and 40 percent in back. Experiment with weight distribution to find the best handling results for your particular bike.

Items like tools, spare bike parts, cooking equipment, fuel bottles, food, and on-the-bike clothing usually go in the front panniers and light, bulky items like clothes in the rear panniers. Your sleeping bag, sleeping pad, and tent are usually strapped to the rear rack and add to the weight on the rear wheel.

Before packing, line your panniers and sleeping bag stuff sack with heavy-duty plastic garbage bags. Despite sometimes being labeled "waterproof," some panniers can still leak, especially in hard rains. Roll your clothing and pack them vertically (ziplock bags work well for keeping things organized and dry). This way, you can see the end of each roll for easy identification and avoid wrinkling.

## Accessories

It's time to dust off your lights as well, with 'mists' alongside the 'mellow fruitfulness' a distinct autumnal possibility. And, of course, a quick pub stop on the way home from work or an early start in the morning could mean it's a lot darker than you've been used to, especially if the skies are a bit overcast. Mudguards are also very useful if you want to avoid a muddy back or bottom.

And the last piece of advice. Take a smile to your jorney

FASHION

Propelled by the advancing popularity of transit and [urban riding](https://www.bicycling.com/urban-cycling/), along with an ever-broadening definition of how bicycles fit into our daily lives, clothing makers are throwing the boundaries of cycling’s sartorial territory wide open—a tailored pencil skirt unzips to reveal a gusset for easy pedaling, a rear zip pocket finds common ground with a shirt collar and covered button placket. With so many options, everybody wins in the race for personal self-expression.

**MINIMALISM**  
The most refined designs are less about what is added than about how much has been subtracted. For decades, bold graphics and bright colors defined the image of road cycling, but the new minimalist aesthetic whittles away everything but the essentials of performance and comfort. In the pursuit of design purity, fine knits, muted solids, and subtle touches, such as hidden vents at the collarbones or stylish quilt stitching at the shoulder, speak louder than logos—and permit a discreet and seamless transition from the road to daily modern living.

**ENTERPRISING WOMEN**  
Ruled in recent years by the impulse to “pink it and shrink it,” women’s riding apparel is reclaiming the innovative spirit that fueled a fashion revolution during the first golden age of bicycling more than a century ago. (Women seeking an alternative to skirts drove the popularity of bloomers, as the pants were called.) Young, often-urban entrepreneurs who are largely independent of the mainstream cycling industry are creating stylish and practical solutions to challenges they themselves encounter, from achieving flattering, day-into-night versatility to maintaining safety and visibility in traffic. For many, growing a business also means building a movement to attract more women to cycling's freedom, fitness, and fun.

**CLASSICS REDEFINED**  
In the days before technical fibers and sophisticated garment-manufacturing methods, cycling apparel meant jerseys of scratchy wool for racers, and dungarees and a cotton shirt for those who pedaled around town on upright bikes. Such bygone images have always conjured appealing simplicity and authenticity, and even romance. Now those memories also inspire thoroughly up-to-date apparel: clothing with ease of movement, moisture wicking, and protection from the elements for daily traveling to work, running errands around town, and recreational riding. Reinterpretations of old-school jerseys, as well as wardrobe mainstays like Harrington jackets, tailored blazers, and polo shirts demonstrate the staying power of the classics.