



AllWays

Middlethorpe Hall, York, England, UK

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Enjoy an 18th Century lifestyle for a while

Middlethorpe Hall is a 'William and Mary' country house some two miles from the centre of the historic city of York.

It was built between 1699 and 1701 for Thomas Barlow, a prosperous master cutler who bought the Middlethorpe estate to establish himself as a country gentleman.

Guests staying today at the 29 bedroom hotel get a genuine feel of the grand style of living enjoyed by the wealthy in the 18th Century.

The house has been carefully restored to reflect its status in the 1700s and is furnished throughout with antiques and fine paintings.

It sits in 20 acres of walled gardens, landscaped sweeping lawns and parkland with a small lake.

Middlethorpe Hall offers a peaceful retreat on the edge of Yorkshire's county town and within easy reach of its surrounding areas of outstanding natural beauty.

Middlethorpe Hall is one of three grand properties been owned and managed by Historic House Hotels.

www.middlethorpe.com

Ashley Gibbins
Commissioning Editor
AllWays traveller





A grand retreat edging Yorkshire's county town

By Ashley Gibbins

When he sanctioned the building of Middlethorpe Hall, Thomas Barlow was, no doubt, keen to create a grand town house for all to admire and be impressed by.

Because it would mean, by implication, that all would admire and be impressed by Thomas himself.

And admire Middlethorpe Hall one undoubtedly does.

Wren's influence

Like all Queen Ann houses, the design of Middlethorpe, with its mellow red brick facade with limestone dressings, was influenced by the architecture of Sir Christopher Wren, especially his Hampton Court.

But credit for what we guests now enjoy must also go to Historic House Hotels and the National Trust.

As a private residence, and long after Barlow had passed on, Middlethorpe Hall with its collection of stables and outbuildings had suffered the vagaries of time and neglect.

By the late 1970s the Hall was derelict and facing what seemed like inevitable demolition.

But then the Historic House Hotels group stepped in and undertook a carefully considered and historically driven restoration, before opening Middlethorpe Hall as a luxury country house hotel with restaurant and spa.

Then, in 2008, the Hall and the other two properties in the Historic House Hotels portfolio were handed over to the National Trust.

From this time all of the profits are used to support the upkeep of the House.

An 18th Century experience

Entering Middlethorpe Hall one finds it decorated in 18th Century style and furnished with antiques and fine paintings to create the feel of private manor house.

The stone-flagged entrance hall has a welcoming open fire with seating surround, which was most welcome during our bracing early spring stay, and an impressive carved oak staircase leading to the guest rooms.

The public rooms include an elegant drawing room and library leading to the ballroom, added in about 1750

The dining room, which dates from the original period of the house, has fine panelling, which 'incorporates round head panels flanked by Ionic pilasters'.

The gardens

Surrounding Middlethorpe House, and offering fine views from its rooms, are 20 acres of manicured gardens and gentle parkland that include a rose and a walled garden and a meadow, which leads to a small lake.

It was delightful being well wrapped up and walking the grounds on a glorious, early spring morning, with carpets of daffodils, bluebells and buttercup layering the grounds.

Come the warmer weather it would be delightful strolling the grounds or sitting in peaceful relaxation.

Middlethorpe Hall has achieved a graceful transition from country house to first-class hotel without losing its character.

Gloriously grand and steeped in history

By Ann Mealor

Middlethorpe Hall beautifully captures the feel of the William & Mary era.

Staying in the elegant Duke of York Suite, in the main townhouse, was like being catapulted back to a time of elegant Edwardian soirees and weekend country pursuits.

Named after His Royal Highness Prince Andrew, our room was Middlethorpe's flagship suite.

Situated on the first floor at the top of a carved staircase, it had far-reaching views over the beech avenue.

This very special apartment was decorated with antiques and fine paintings consistent with the William & Mary period.

Comfort and elegance

The panelled living room was fitted with a dusky pink, comfortable sofa and armchair, a large traditional writing desk and coffee table, while the spacious bedroom contained a 'coronet' king-size bed, a dressing table and chest of drawers.

Freshly baked biscuits and mineral water were provided each day, and an English morning tea tray with a silver teapot, leaf tea and china cups and saucers, were delivered to the room on request.

The 29 bedrooms in at Middlethorpe have been decorated in a historically accurate manner, giving the Hall a truly authentic feel. However, all modern luxuries are provided: dressing gowns, slippers, Crabtree & Evelyn toiletries, flat screen digital TV and wifi.

Dining at Middlethorpe Hall

Dining in the candlelit, oak panelled surroundings at Middlethorpe is a tasteful experience in every sense of the word.

Dating from the 1700s, the impressive, intimate dining room comes complete with crisp, white linen tablecloths, silver cutlery, gilt framed paintings, a marble fireplace and comfortable chairs – all what you would expect to find in a stately abode.

Middlethorpe Hall's 60 cover restaurant is overseen by Head Chef Ashley Binder and has been awarded two AA Rosettes.

Its traditional British menus using fresh local ingredients as well as produce from the gardens at Middlethorpe Hall.



We started our evening with an Amuse Bouche - compliments of the chef: crab salad served on two silver spoons and crispy boules of goats cheese on cocktail skewers - a delicious surprise!

For our first course we both went for the plaice with purple sprouting broccoli, brown shrimp and lemon butter. The generous portion of fish was sweet and delicate and went well with the rich, but light sauce. The broccoli added colour and flavour to the dish.

We refreshed our palate with a zesty and frothy cucumber and gin and tonic sorbet. An interesting and pleasing combination.

For mains, I chose the pork fillet with red cabbage and squash and Ashley the hake, mushroom, miso and rice.

Succulent

The pork, topped with crispy crackling, was succulent and tender and the hake soft and flakey on a bed of fluffy rice.

Dessert is always a treat and we both chose the mocha mousse with homemade dulce de leche ice-cream – it was a tastebud tingling chocolatey feast.

Opulent yet refined surroundings paired with imaginative, finely prepared cuisine makes for an enticing culinary combination that turns dining here into a special occasion.

Breakfast a genteel affair

Breakfast at Middlethorpe Hall is a civilised and genteel affair with loose leaf tea with silver strainers and fine tableware.

As well as fresh orange juice, fruit, pastries, toast and preserves there is a good selection of freshly cooked fare to set you up for the day including a traditional full English breakfast, haddock and kippers.

I particularly enjoyed the scrambled egg and smoked salmon, which was smooth and creamy – just as I like it.

More information

www.middlethorpe.com
www.historichousehotels.com



The Spa at Middlethorpe in grade II listed cottages

The Spa at Middlethorpe Hall can be found in two very pretty and tastefully developed Grade II listed Edwardian cottages writes Ann Mealor.

It is well equipped with a heated swimming pool, whirlpool bath, steam room, sauna, gymnasium and three beauty salons.

The highly skilled therapists advise clients on treatments that will best suit their skin type.

A fine range of products

Products used include Decleor, Neom Organics, Shellac and Jessica.

I chose the 55 minute *Decleor Power-Packed Vitamin Surge Facial*.

This had a combination of anti-oxidants, a rebalancing Essential Oil elixir and a warm, decongesting mask.

My treatment began with a relaxing back massage to ease any muscular tension.

My therapist, Laura, explained that every Decleor treatment starts this way to assess a client's health and determine the most beneficial oils.

The products used during my facial had wonderful aromas, including lavender and lemon.

I particularly liked the *Aromaplasty Mask*, which was warm and hydrated my skin as it opened pores allowing the essential oils to penetrate.

The mask itself contained wheat germ and, going over the eyes my whole face benefited from the treatment.

Whilst the mask was doing its job, Laura gently massaged my hands and scalp.

Rejuvenated

After the facial, my skin was glowing and felt rejuvenated.

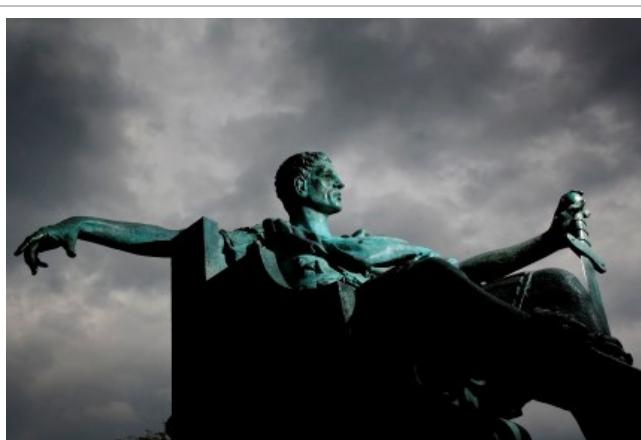
This was a beneficial and very enjoyable treatment.





A day out within York's city walls

Middlethorpe Hall makes for a fine base for visiting York, the county town of Yorkshire, and an historic walled city found where the Ouse and Foss rivers converge.



The colliding of these waterways have for centuries seen York stand proud as a prosperous and highly influential centre of trade and commerce.

Moreover, much of the city's historic pedigree has been preserved, including its medieval city walls and a wealth of historic artefacts in its museums.

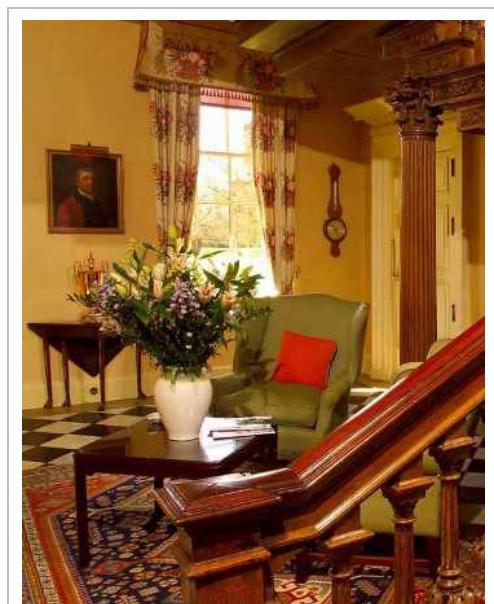
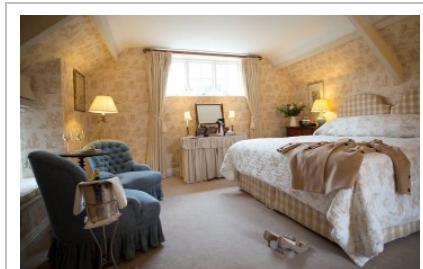
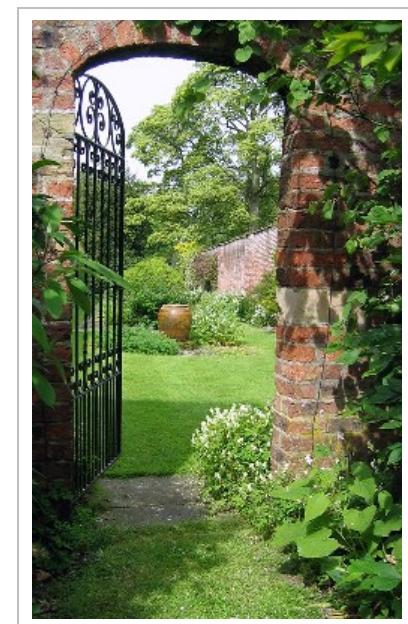
And majestically dominant among its attractions is York Minster, the city's most stunning landmark.

More information

www.visityork.org

<http://allways.williamjack.e-kei.pl/allways-features-home/historic-heydays-to-the-fore-in-york>

A snapshot of Middlethorpe Hall



Historic House Hotels

Historic House Hotels was founded in 1979 to rescue and restore run-down country houses.

Through careful restoration, the houses and gardens have been brought back to life as historically accurate, yet contemporary hotels.

In 2008, the hotels were given to the National Trust to ensure their long-term protection.

Hartwell House



Hartwell House, one of England's finest stately homes, sits in 90 majestic acres of landscaped parkland.

It is located two miles west of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire and about an hours drive from central London.

This truly majestic country house has been welcoming guests for centuries, including Louis XVIII, the exiled King of France who set up his Court here, away from the Napoleonic Wars, between 1809 and 1814.

Today, Hartwell House is a hotel offering guests the same high standard of hospitality in a setting that is a world away from the strains and stresses of modern day living.

Read more :
<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/history-abounds-in-this-very-english-stately-home>



Between 1720's and 1743 an idyllic classical garden was created with, statues, obelisks and canals and this legacy can be enjoyed today.

www.hartwell-house.com

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AllWays traveller is the consumer travel magazine from the International Travel Writers, providing independent travellers with views of the world from Alliance travel journalists.

www.allwaystraveller.com



The International Travel Writers Alliance is the world's largest association of professional travel journalists.

www.itwalliance.com

All hotel profits go back into the National Trust's conservation of special places.

In addition to Middlethorpe Hall, the other two properties in the *Historic House Hotels* portfolio are :

Bodysgallen Hall



The Grade 1 listed Bodysgallen Hall is a country house located near to the North Wales seaside resort of Llandudno.

Dating back to 1620, the tower at Bodysgallen was built as a watchtower for the low-lying Conwy castle

Today, Bodysgallen Hall sits in splendid formal gardens and among some 200 acres of parkland.

It still offers fine views of the Castle and Snowdonia beyond.

The Hall has a 3 AA Rosette restaurant and spa with its 50ft swimming pool, treatment rooms, steam room and sauna.

Read more :
<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/lasting-memories-in-long-cherished-bodysgallen>



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