



National  
Trust

# Easy Walk 20

## Mythical Walk - Fountains Abbey & Studley Royal

**Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal has many mythical connections. Come and explore some of them in the Abbey and Garden.** It's up to you how you explore but we suggest you start at the Visitor Centre (toilets, refreshments) and take the right hand path down towards the Abbey.

1. **Fountains Hall** - Walk up the steps and look up. Above the door you will see two figures which represent classical Gods; Mars and Saturn. Can you work out which is which? Mars is the God of War and Saturn is the God of Time. In Greek mythology Saturn married his sister Rhea and ate their children!
2. **The Abbey** - Enter the enormous ruins. Step into the tower and look up. How high do you think it is? At the far end of the Nave turn left and walk out onto the grass. Walk around the edge of the Abbey to the East Green. Can you find our Green Man? If you've never heard of a Green Man before it's a sculpture or drawing of a face surrounded by or made from leaves. It's a symbol of rebirth and can be found in ancient cultures all over the world.
3. **Route to Water Garden** - As you walk through the shady cover of the trees look out for the creatures that hide in the shadows. See the knotted tree roots of the ancient woodland that come alive if you look closely.
4. **The Banqueting House** - Take a closer look at the three heads carved into the building. The ugly figures represent Malice, Hatred and Envy. Which is which? Visitors were meant to leave these qualities behind when they entered.
5. Cross the wooden bridge across the **canal** if you dare and look out for the majestic swans which live here. In classical literature there was the belief that upon death the otherwise silent Mute Swan would sing beautifully - which is where the phrase 'swan song' comes from. Why not try walking in silence to enjoy the Water Garden's tranquillity?
6. If you feel like being more adventurous, walk up the high ride (may be difficult for little legs and buggies). Go through the **Serpentine Tunnel** - watch out in there, it's very dark! Once you've seen the light at the end of the tunnel carry along this winding path through the woodland and back down to rejoin the main route. You'll be rewarded with a special view of the Abbey before you descend.



7. **Water Garden ponds** - If the grass is dry, why not veer off the path for a closer look at the classical statues? Neptune is the Roman God of the Sea and Bacchus is the God of Wine. Can you spot them?
8. Continue past the Temple of Piety to the **Hermit's Grotto**. Feel the rough stone around the outside and see how tiny it is inside. We don't think anybody lived here - could you live in this little grotto?
9. Pass the rushing cascade of the river and keep an eye out on the left for the famous outlaw **Robin Hood's Well** tucked into the bank. Make a wish before you leave!



We hope you enjoy this Easy Walk. There are more in the series at other National Trust sites in Yorkshire and the North East. Go to our website to find out more: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/yorksandne](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/yorksandne)

