

CENTAURI *ARTS*

Creative Writing Retreat to Yorkshire, England

offered in partnership with The Tower Guesthouse, York

Sunday 13 Sept. to Saturday 19 Sept. 2026



Step away from the demands and distractions of the 'real world' as you make time for your writing... and yourself! Take inspiration from history and culture, and from other writers, as you join us for our 13th Creative Writing Retreat... and the second to be held in York, England.

It's possible to write anywhere, of course, but the pleasure of writing on a retreat lies in combining creative pursuits with the discovery of new friends, new places and new experiences. York is a spectacular city in the North East of England founded by the Romans in 71AD. It has a long and fascinating history, and a wealth of intriguing buildings and attractions to explore. Walk the city walls, the oldest and best preserved in England. Wonder at York Minster, the spectacular cathedral built between 1220-1472, or visit Roman remains in the Undercroft. Travel back to Viking times at the interactive Jorvik Museum. Visit 'The Shambles', one of the best preserved medieval streets in Europe, and the inspiration for Diagon Alley in Harry Potter.



York also offers world class shopping, a wealth of atmospheric old pubs, lovely gardens, art galleries, museums, theatres, ghost tours and pleasure cruises down the River Ouse. Oh – and there's a writing festival in York while we're there!

Joining our creative writing retreat in York will give you the opportunity to explore an incredible city, while immersing yourself in your writing, and gaining inspiration from daily writing workshops.

Sightseeing

You may choose to focus on your writing in the afternoon, but we will also be offering two optional half day sightseeing trips. The first will be to Robin Hood's Bay, a beautiful and historic seaside town with lovely craft shops and stunning views. From there, writers will have the option of walking across the cliffs into Whitby, weather permitting. Our second half day trip will be to the spectacular house and gardens of Castle Howard, Located just outside York in the gorgeous Yorkshire countryside.

Since our retreat is not a package tour, writers always have the option either of joining us for these short excursions, or remaining in York to write or explore.

The Tower Guesthouse

Our base for this creative writing retreat is the Tower Guesthouse and as there are just 8 rooms, we will have the entire hotel to ourselves! Bedrooms have either Victorian or classic Chinese décor and all have writing desks and coffee-making facilities. A 'full English' or continental breakfast is included, and the breakfast room will also be the location for our writing workshops each morning. The Tower Guesthouse is an easy 10-minute stroll from the centre of the city, or if you prefer, a bus leaves from directly outside, every 15 minutes.

All rooms have a double or queen-sized bed with en suite facilities (some with showers, some with baths). One room has easy ground floor access for a writer with mobility challenges, and another has two single beds, making it ideal for writers who would like to share, to reduce costs. Just enquire about this option when you book your space.



<https://www.towerhouseyork.co.uk>



How to Find our Retreat

Our retreat in York begins at 5:00 PM on the first day, in the breakfast room at The Tower Guesthouse. Writers should aim to arrive before that time and settle in. After our introductory meeting, we will head into York for our welcome dinner.

York is located on the direct train line from Kings Cross Station in London (2.5 hours) and Manchester International Airport in the north (under 2 hours). The UK rail network is inexpensive, trains are clean and reliable, and tickets can easily be booked before you leave, at www.thetrainline.com

You can easily combine our retreat with an extended stay in England – perhaps to spend a few days in London. We're also happy to connect writers who may wish to travel elsewhere with a friend, after the retreat. From York's famous railway station, a taxi to the door of our guesthouse costs about five pounds.

If there are enough writers arriving into Manchester Airport before 1pm on the first day of our retreat, it may be cost effective to take a taxi, with the cost shared between participants.

Creative Writing Workshops

We will meet for 3 hours each morning (2 hours on the trip days). My workshops will include a wealth of writing techniques, varied prompts and an opportunity to share your work for feedback, should you choose to do so. In addition, we will take inspiration from York's turbulent and exciting past, so there will be a historical fiction aspect to this retreat! Beginning and experienced writers of fiction, poetry and memoir will find something in this week to help develop their skills and inspire further writing. Our content is always new, so this retreat is appropriate for writers who have already participated in our Costa Rica or Mexico writing trips.

Throughout the week, we may choose to write in evocative locations around York, and on the final evening, we'll share our work with one another in a final celebration.



Writing group in York



Your Trip Leader and Creative Writing Instructor

Julie Hartley is the author of five published books, the most recent two being historical novels released this past year by Bookouture, a division of Hachette UK. One of these novels – *The Promise She Made* – is set partly in York. Julie's previous publications include a young adult novel and a poetry collection, each published by independent presses, and a book for teachers on how to make Shakespeare exciting for kids. She has also published widely in literary journals in Canada and the UK.

Julie has an MA in Literature from Warwick University in England and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia, Canada. She has been teaching creative writing on retreats and for her Toronto-based arts company - Centauri Arts – for the past 20 years. Julie runs arts workshops for schools all over Canada, and was previously the owner-director of an overnight arts summer camp. She grew up an hour away from York.



Photo by Victoria Grazioli



Prices

Fee 1 - Deposit Payable on Registration

This fee is payable to Centauri Arts in Canadian funds at the time of booking. The fee secures your space on the trip, and covers the writing workshops and group services provided by us

Deposit per writer, per week \$750CDN (approx. \$525 US)

This fee includes: 5 writing workshops (approximate contact time - 15 hours), a manual of writing prompts and techniques, writing-related activities, group leader services, and a trip manual.

Non-writer, same room: \$150CDN (approx. \$100US)

(Includes group leader support only/social activities only)

Fee 2 – Lodge Fee, Payable 90 days Before Our Trip

This fee is payable directly to our hotel in York.

Cost per room (single occupancy), 6 nights, 660 GBP

(exchange rates fluctuate, go to <https://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/> to check conversion rates.)

All rooms have en suite facilities and Wifi. One room offers 2 single beds, allowing 2 writers to share. Other rooms have double/queen beds and writers may choose to bring a spouse. This retreat is not suitable for children.

The fee quoted also includes a full English (or continental) breakfast daily per room. Where there are 2 occupants to a room, a small additional fee may apply.

Additional Services & Fees

This is not a package tour and Centauri Arts is selling the creative writing portion of the trip only. Writers are responsible for all additional costs on arrival, including transfers to the hotel, meals and sightseeing.

Lunches, dinners and beverages can be purchased from numerous pubs, restaurants, bakeries and cafes in York; allow about 25-30 pounds per day.

Our fees do not include your flight to Manchester or London, nor medical insurance.

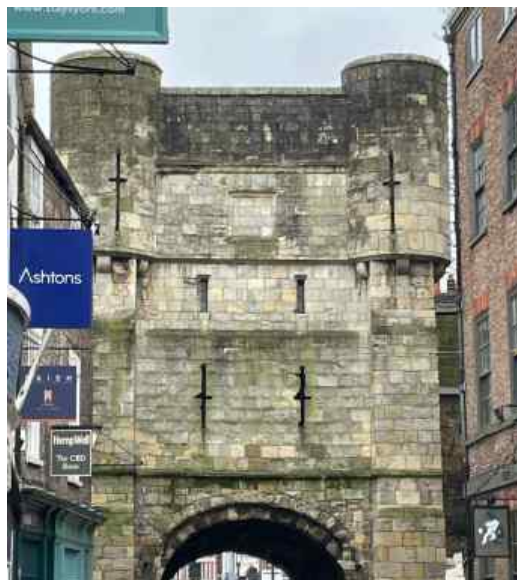
How to Reserve Your Space

Complete the application form here: <https://form.jotform.com/centauriarts/writing-retreat-application>

Questions? Call Julie at +1 416 766 7124 or email julie@centauriarts.com

Limited space is available!

We can accept only 7-8 writers on this trip due to the size of the guest house.



How to find out more:

Call us at **416-766-7124** or
email julie@centauriarts.com
We would be happy to answer
all of your questions

Booking Terms & Conditions (The Small Print!)

Your electronic signature on the Application Form designates you accept and are willing to be bound by the following terms and conditions for the York Retreat offered by Centauri Summer Camp Inc. (hereafter referred to as "Centauri")



Payment

A deposit is required at the time of booking, payable to Centauri and covering the writing services we offer. If you must cancel your trip up to 12 weeks before your retreat, we will refund your deposit/writing retreat fee, minus a \$350CDN cancellation fee. If you cancel within 12 weeks of your trip, no refund can be offered.

Your accommodation fee is payable directly to The Tower Guesthouse, Yorks 90 days before your retreat begins. For full details of what is included in your hotel booking, and for the hotel's cancellation policies, go to:

<https://www.towerhouseyork.co.uk/>

Flights

The flight is not included; this is not a package tour and participants join us from all over the world. York is located on the direct train line from Kings Cross Station in London (2.5 hours) and Manchester International Airport in the north (under 2 hours). The UK rail network is inexpensive, trains are clean and reliable, and tickets can easily be booked before you leave, at www.thetrainline.com

Writers are asked to notify us of their arrival and departure information 14 days prior to the retreat so we can connect writers arriving/departing at the same time.

In the event of delayed or cancelled flights, neither Centauri nor The Tower House can accept responsibility for financial losses incurred, and refunds cannot be offered for our writing workshops, nor their accommodation.

A minimum of four writers is required to run each retreat. While we have always had more than 4 writers on all previous retreats, please ensure you check with us about the status of the retreat before booking your flights! In the event the retreat cannot operate, all monies paid to us will be refunded in full, but our liability shall then cease.

Cancellation

We cannot reimburse travel costs nor accept financial liability for losses incurred by you in the event of cancellation either by us or you for any reason whatsoever. You are strongly advised to take out insurance to cover potential loss (such as flight costs) arising from cancellation or any other eventuality affecting your booking, including COVID-19. In the unlikely event that we must cancel this trip for any reason - including safety concerns related to COVID 19 – all participants will be offered a full refund of their deposit. Our liability shall then cease. If the trip must be cancelled – or if you must withdraw - after the final fee has been paid to The Tower House, Reimbursement of fees must be negotiated directly with them as Centauri Arts is responsible for the group leader services and writing workshops only. For the hotel cancellation policies, please visit their website at <https://www.towerhouseyork.co.uk/>

Travel Documents/Travel Vaccinations

It is your responsibility to check the validity of your travel documents, and to enquire about visa requirements. Centauri can accept no liability for problems with travel documents (eg., passport) and if you cannot join us for this trip for whatever reason, a refund cannot be offered. Check your passport is in date 6 months beyond your return! In the case of vaccinations, it is your responsibility to ensure that you and travel companions accompanying you have the recommended vaccinations. Please see your doctor or contact us for travel clinic and website suggestions if you need them. If the UK has travel requirements in place related to COVID-19, it is your responsibility to comply, and Centauri can accept no responsibility if a participant is denied entry to the country.

Itinerary

Centauri reserves the right to alter the itinerary in situations beyond our control, or where we feel it is necessary to ensure the quality of the experience we offer or the safety of our clients. We will make every effort to ensure alternatives are comparable. 'Itinerary' includes accommodations, meal arrangements, writing instructor and other inclusions. Should a participant decide not to partake of any portion of this itinerary, no refund may be offered.

Your Children

Partners, family and friends sharing your room are welcome on this retreat, but the retreat is not suitable for children.

Booking Terms & Conditions (Con't...)

Your Health

It is your responsibility to notify us at the time of booking of any medical needs you may have, and of any medical needs of other people in your group or family. If you have life-threatening allergies, please discuss this with us before you register. Centauri cannot accept liability in the case of accident or illness, howsoever caused. **Medical insurance is mandatory for this trip**, as it is for all overseas travel, and you should ensure that you purchase this before travelling. If you have mobility challenges, please call us before booking so we can ensure the hotel is able to meet your needs. Should Centauri or its staff incur any medical expenses on your behalf during this tour, your signature on the application form indicates that you agree to accept full financial responsibility and reimburse Centauri within 7 days of the conclusion of the trip.

Liability Release & Assumption of Risks:

By signing the application form, you acknowledge that you understand accommodation, meals, sightseeing, airport transfers and other travel services will be purchased by you directly. Centauri can assume no responsibility for and cannot be held liable for any negligent or wilful act or failure to act of any company other than its own (Centauri Summer Camp Inc.). You agree not to hold Centauri responsible for the acts, omissions and/or financial default of any other company, including The Tower GuestHouse

Centauri cannot be held responsible for events or occurrences or delays due to any Force Majeure. 'Force Majeure' means any circumstances beyond the control of Centauri including (without limitation) strikes, terrorist activities, floods, tempests, fire, civil disturbance, sickness. In the case of a Force Majeure of any nature occurring prior to our trip, you accept it is in Centauri's sole and absolute discretion whether to proceed with the trip.

You acknowledge that all travel involves an element of risk, and that Centauri cannot be held responsible for any accident or illness that may occur during the trip, nor can Centauri accept responsibility for any dangers to which you may be exposed. Your signature on the application form denotes that you assume all responsibility, financial and otherwise, for your own personal welfare, and for those of minors in your care, during this trip. Your signature also indicates you have discussed these booking conditions with all persons included in this booking, and they agree to be bound by them.

Your signature on the application form indicates that you agree to release, discharge and hold harmless forever Centauri Summer Camp Inc., its owners, employees, shareholders, affiliated entities, employees, agents, representatives, officers, directors, associates, successors and assigns from and against any liability, actions, causes of actions, debts, suits, claims and demands of any and every kind and nature whatsoever which may hereafter arise out of or in connection with this writing retreat or participation in activities arranged by Centauri.

Any claims and/or lawsuits against Centauri, its directors, staff, volunteers, agents or assigns shall take place under the exclusive jurisdiction of the laws and regulations of Ontario, Canada, and the applicable law to be applied to any dispute shall be the laws of Ontario, Canada.

Privacy

By booking, you agree that we may collect and store personal information about you and your interactions with Centauri, including your personal contact details and medical needs. We will use this information to communicate with you occasionally about other courses we offer. We never sell information about our participants with any third party. Your email address may be shared with other retreat participants (for example, to enable the sharing of Google Docs) unless you expressly request otherwise in writing. Your electronic signature on the application form indicates you understand photographs taken on this tour may be used for promotional purposes.

Contact Information:

Tel.: 416 766 7124

email: julie@centauriarts.com

www.centauriarts.com