

CONFERENCE EXETER TOOLKIT

Information and resources to help you plan your next meeting or event in Exeter

Fresh air, fresh thinking...



conference
exeter

www.conferenceexeter.com

Why Exeter?

Exeter is a historically fascinating city. Close to the World Heritage Jurassic Coast and surrounded by green space - Dartmoor National Park is on the horizon – it offers a refreshing alternative for your business event.

It is also easily accessible from the rest of the UK. Just 2 hours from London by rail, Exeter is a well-connected city that is forward-thinking and ambitious. It is home to the Met Office and one of the top universities in the world.

The Exeter Vision 2040 is to be recognised as a leading sustainable city and global leader in addressing the social, economic and

environmental challenges of climate change and urbanisation. The city is committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

Major investment in recent years has seen the city centre regenerated, with modern developments such as the Princesshay shopping quarter and Queen St Dining providing a wonderful contrast with the city's 2,000 years of history, which is in evidence around every corner.

There is a wide range of conference venues here, from large purpose-built centres to more unusual, character venues – why not give your business event some flair by holding it in a castle, cathedral or museum?

If you haven't yet considered Exeter for your business event, now is the time!



Getting here

Exeter is situated in Devon, in the south west of England, one of the UK's most beautiful and popular holiday destinations. Dartmoor National Park lies to the west and the World Heritage Jurassic Coast and two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty stretch to the east, making this the ultimate natural playground for outdoor activities and team-building.

By rail

GWR operate regular high speed rail connections between London and Exeter, as well as over 270 other destinations by train. Travel First Class to take advantage of enhanced Wi-Fi, and complimentary refreshments, allowing you to make the most of your travel time.

If you are a conference organiser or attendee, you can get discounted rail tickets through GWR, with special conference fares available from most stations on the network.

See www.gwr.com/conferences for more information and to book.

Cross Country and South Western Railway also connect Exeter with the rest of the UK.

By road

Exeter is within easy reach of the rest of the UK. Take the M4/M5 from London and the South East, or the more scenic A303/A30, which can be just as quick with stunning views of World Heritage Site Stonehenge along the way!

Coach parking and drop offs

Coach parking is available in a variety of convenient locations, with drop-off points within the city centre on South Street and outside the Custom House on the historic Quayside.

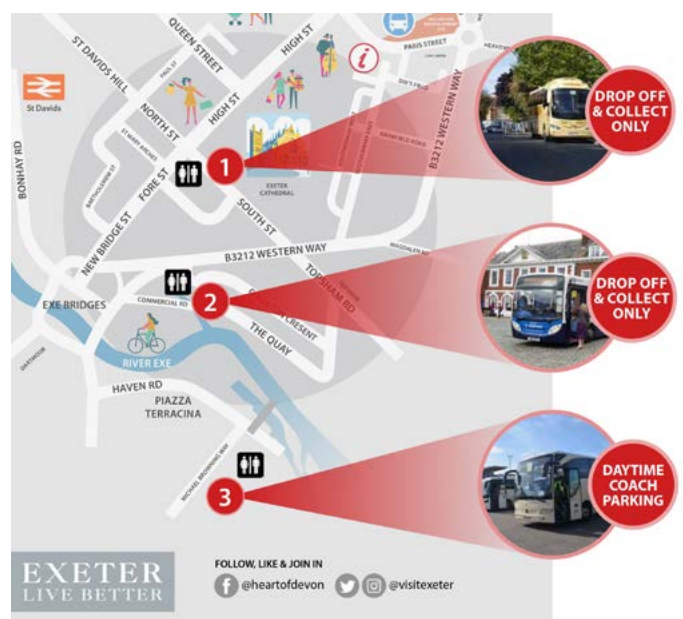
A little further from the city centre, Topsham has two coach set down points, on the Quayside and Holman Way car park.

For more information visit <https://www.visitexeter.com/things-to-do/group-visits/coach-parking>

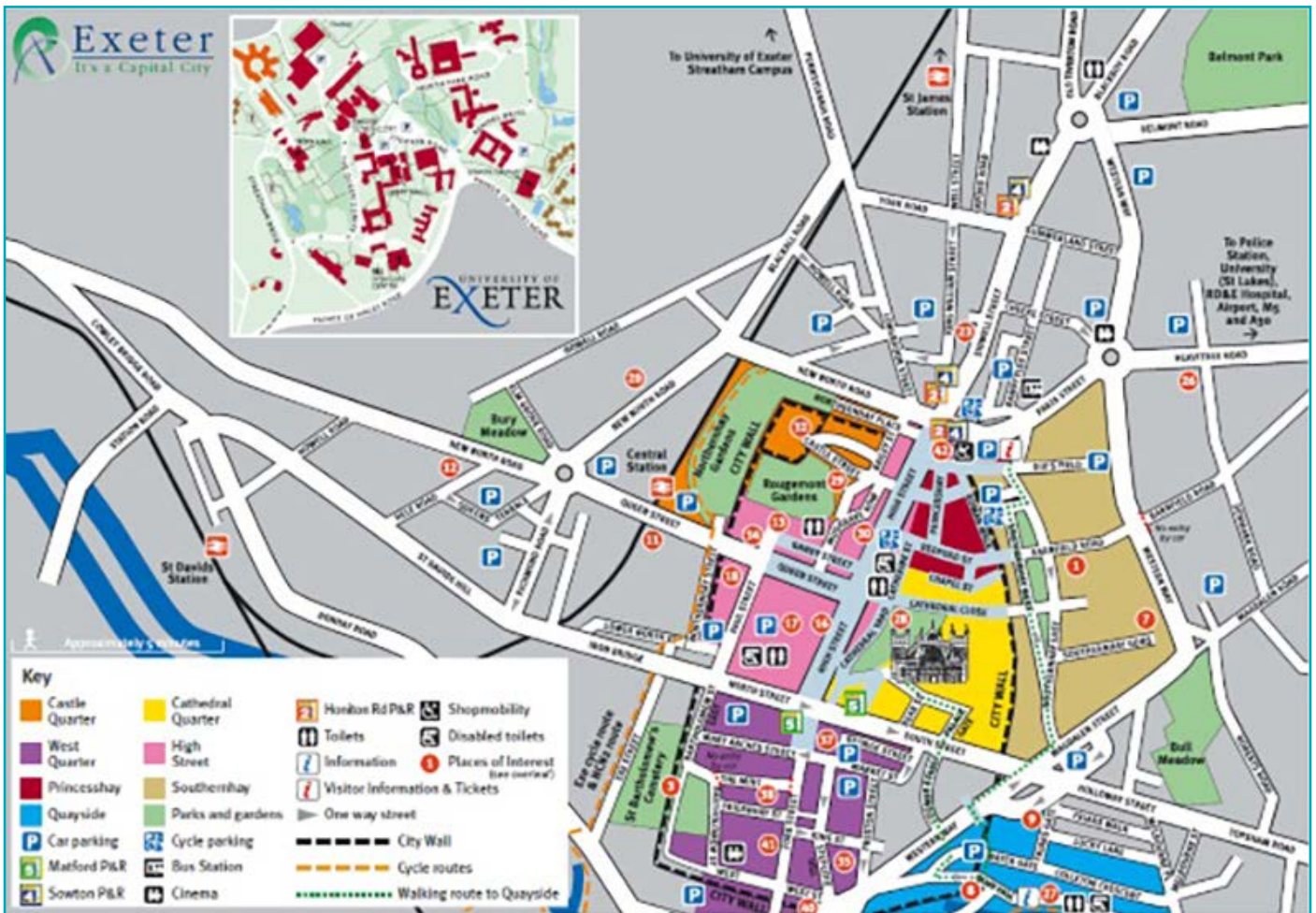


By air

Cut your journey time right down by flying directly into Exeter from a number of other city airports around the UK and Europe. Business visitors benefit from fast track security and entry into the airport lounge at Exeter Airport, to make the journey as fast and relaxed as possible.



Getting around



Once here, you'll find it easy to get around Exeter. The city centre is compact and walkable, and good local bus services and cycle networks mean travelling further is no sweat. Co-bikes offer a network of electric bikes across the city, available to hire by the half-hour.

If your event is held at one of the outlying larger venues, such as Westpoint, Sandy Park or Exeter Racecourse, it is possible to leave your car there overnight and travel into the city centre by bus, rail or bike.

Places to stay

If your conference or business event is just for the day, you'll definitely want to extend your stay, as there is so much to see and do here. Exeter has a fantastic choice of accommodation. Many venues, such as the University and the city's hotels have high quality on-site accommodation, or enjoy a touch of luxury at one of the Exeter's boutique hotels such as Southernhay House, the Hotel Du Vin or City Gate, to make your visit really special.

Visit www.visitexeter.com/places-to-stay to search and book accommodation in Exeter.



Food and Drink

Exeter has undergone a dining revolution in recent years, and now has a tremendously diverse foodie offering. There are many big name restaurants here such as Franco Manca, Wagamama, and Turtle Bay, but also an excellent choice of independent restaurants, featuring locally produced food and drink highly on the menus, giving you the chance to taste some of the best Devon meats, fresh fish and wines from local vineyards.

Private dining

If you're looking for somewhere special to entertain your clients or delegates, Exeter has a great choice of private dining rooms.

Choose from intimate but lavish spaces such as the golden, Raj-inspired private dining room at Southernhay House Hotel, or a choice of exceptional private dining rooms at Reed Hall, an Italianate mansion nestled in 300 acres of landscaped gardens at the University of Exeter.

For larger groups, choose the spectacular setting of Exeter Cathedral Nave, which can host a dinner for up to 450 guests beneath the longest uninterrupted gothic vaulting in the world!

See below for private dining capacities at a glance.

Exeter's location in the heart of Devon, surrounded by fertile farmland and close to miles and miles of coastline makes it easy to shrink your food footprint here. As well as an extensive choice of places to eat and drink, there are some fantastic foodie experiences to be had here. Become an expert on cheese at Quicke's Academy of Cheese, or take a vineyard tour and tasting at Pebblebed.



Venue	Private dining capacity
Deer Park Country House	30 – 180 Alfresco dining options for up to 80 also available
Event Exeter	Reed Hall 30 - 140, Great Hall 580, Holland Hall 350
Exeter Cathedral	Nave 450, Crossing 100, Chapter House 70, Bishop's Garden Marquee 150
Gipsy Hill Hotel	4 rooms ranging from 30 - 160
Mercure Rougemont Hotel	6 room sizes catering for 12 -250 seated
Mercure Southgate Hotel	8 room sizes catering for 10 -120 seated
Sandy Park	Estuary Suite 340, County Suite 240, Chiefs Suite 220, Exeter Suite 600
Southernhay House	16-30 for seated functions
The Cosy Club	14 people in The Snug
Woodbury Park	12 – 500

Venues

Exeter has a great variety of venues, and there are plenty of options to suit your event, from country houses and historic venues, to unique sporting venues and conference facilities.

See below for Exeter's venues at a glance.

Venue	Bedrooms	Capacity (Theatre)	Boardroom	Capacity (Cabaret)	Meeting Rooms
City Gate Hotel		60	20	100	
Clubhouse at Crealy Great Adventure Park		250		250	1
Deer Park Country House	31	220	50	90	4
Escot House		80	30		3
Event Exeter at The University of Exeter	1,200	1,400	60	348	113
Exeter Brewery		55	40	55	1
Exeter Cathedral		80		40	5
Exeter City Football Club		200	14	140	9
Exeter Corn Exchange		500	18	280	2
Exeter Golf and Country Club		200	50	180	6
Exeter Historic Guildhall		75	40	72	2
Exeter Library		90	35	45	2
Exeter Phoenix		270		120	10
Exeter Racecourse		300	30	150	12
Express by Holiday Inn	140	30			2
Fresha Conferencing		40	22	25	0
Gipsy Hill Hotel	37	200	50	80	5
Hotel Du Vin	59		16	50	4
Innovation Centre			30		
Jurys Inn Exeter	170	70	34	35	7

Venues (cont.)

Venue	Bedrooms	Capacity (Theatre)	Boardroom	Capacity (Cabaret)	Meeting Rooms
Land Rover Experience Westcountry	2	30	20		1
Langstone Cliff Hotel			80		
Mercure Rougemont	98	250	85		9
Mercure Southgate Hotel	154	150	60	100	7
Nancy Potter House		60	40		7
Ocean Exmouth		300	20		2
Pebblebed Winery			30		
Powderham Castle	9	140	25	70	4
RILD Conference Centre		130			
Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM)		140	16	80	3
Sandy Park Conference & Events Centre		800	120	500	18
Southernhay House			14		
St Martin's Church				60	
St Nicholas Priory		45	12		1
Stuart Line Cruises		100		100	2
The Devon Hotel	60	160		70	4
The Donkey Sanctuary		100		100	1
The Exeter Business Hub		30	12		2
The Matford Centre		50	24	30	3
The X Centre		60	24		2
Venaspace		45	30		3
Westpoint Arena		5000	50	2000	2
Woodbury Park Hotel & Golf Club	56 rooms, 5 lodges	250	40	130	6
Jurys Inn Exeter	170	70	34	35	7

Things to do

Exeter's 2,000 year-long history means there is plenty to explore here. Take a rooftop tour of Exeter Cathedral for a birds eye view across the city and out to the surrounding countryside. If you want to discover more about Exeter's fascinating past, join one of the free guided walking tours of the city which run daily throughout the year, or head to the award winning Royal Albert Memorial Museum.

In Devon we love the great outdoors – perhaps because there is so much wide open space here. Exeter's location on the River Exe lends itself perfectly to water-based activities such as canoeing,

kayaking and paddle-boarding, or travel just 10 miles from the city and you'll find yourself at the World Heritage Jurassic Coast.

Rugby fans will not want to miss the chance to see Premiership champions the Exeter Chiefs in action on their home ground at Sandy Park, and purpose-built conference facilities at the grounds offer the perfect opportunity to mix business with some sporting action! Exeter Racecourse also has event space with stunning views over England's highest horse-racing track.



Paddle-boarding on the River Exe



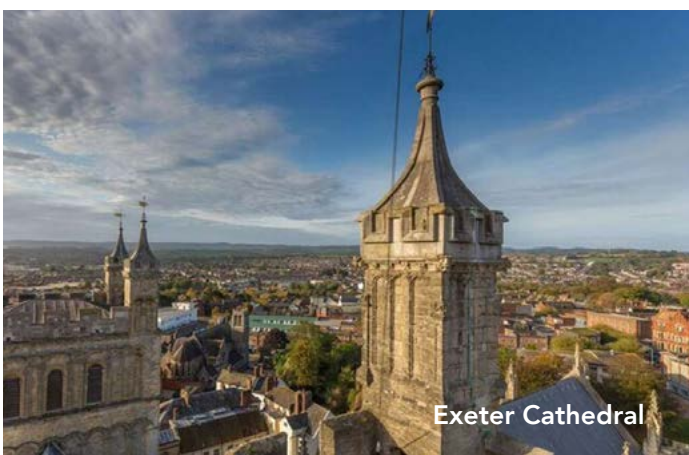
Princesshay Shopping Centre



Exeter's Underground Passages



Exeter Chiefs Rugby



Exeter Cathedral



Exeter Red Coat Guides

Team building inspiration

A unique team building activity will give your delegates something to remember, here are some ideas to inspire...

- Go paddle-boarding along England's oldest ship canal, with boards available to hire from Haven Banks and AS Watersports. Paddle far enough and you'll reach the Turf – one of the only pubs in the country only accessible on foot, by bike, or by water!
- Head to nearby Haldon Forest Park, situated high above the city of Exeter to brave the high wire course through the trees at Go Ape! Fly down zip-wires, leap off the Tarzan Swing and tackle treetop crossings whilst enjoying some of Britain's most breathtaking scenery.
- Visit Exeter's Quay Climbing Centre, home to the South West's largest indoor climbing wall. As well as improving fitness and agility, this exhilarating sporting experience can help to foster trust between peers, build leadership skills and develop a keen understanding of how to manage and assess risk.
- Exeter is surrounded by miles of rolling countryside. Land Rover Experience allows you to navigate some of the steepest and muddiest off-road landscape in East Devon in one of their top of the range vehicles – an exhilarating experience!
- Take a tour of Pebblebed Vineyard, located just outside Exeter followed by a tasting of some of the wines accompanied by a platter of local cheeses and meats at their Tasting Cellar in nearby Topsham.
- Mix business with the excitement of match day at Exeter Chiefs, with pitch-view hospitality and a pre-match Q&A with the players themselves.
- Enjoy a fantastic raceday at Exeter Racecourse with course facing views within your own private box, able to accommodate between 15 and 100+ guests with local food and drink.



Quay Climbing Centre



Suggested Itineraries

Why not extend your stay to fully immerse yourself in Exeter's history and gastro delights. We have put together some suggested itineraries to help you make the most of your stay.

Two days in Exeter - History and Heritage Itinerary

A 2,000 year long history means Exeter has plenty of historical monuments to show off. Immerse yourself in the city's history with our suggested 2 day history and heritage itinerary.



Day 1

Morning

If you're travelling to Exeter by train, hop off at Exeter Central where you'll be footsteps away from the Royal Albert Memorial Museum. Spend a few hours here and discover history and culture from pre-historic times to the present day. Visit RAMM's café for a quick coffee and don't miss the gift shop, to pick out a unique souvenir to take home with you.

Visit Exeter Cathedral in the heart of the city. Join a guided tour to learn more about the history of the building from the experts. Don't miss the minstrels' gallery, the organ and the astronomical clock, and be sure to look up to see the beautiful stained glass windows and the longest stretch of unbroken Gothic vaulting in the world.

Lunch

Time for a break. There are plenty of restaurants, pubs and cafés which serve light lunches and afternoon teas to re-charge yourself. Visit the Cathedral Refectory, for lunch with a calming atmosphere within the Cathedral grounds.

Afternoon

Join a free guided walking tour with the Red Coat Guides to discover more about Exeter's fascinating, and sometimes turbulent 2,000 year history. Afterwards, pop into the Exeter Guildhall, which has served as the centrepiece of Exeter's civic life for more than 800 years.

Book onto a tour at the fascinating Underground Passages, where you'll discover how medieval Exeter transported its fresh drinking water in the 14th century.

Exeter wealth in the 17th century was due to the woollen cloth trade, and you can find out more at the ancient Tuckers Hall, home to the still in existence Incorporation of Weavers, Fullers and Shearmen, one of the craft guilds of Exeter.

Just a 10 minute walk from the city centre, the Quayside is a must when visiting Exeter. Here you can browse in quirky shops housed in historic cellars and explore the Custom House Visitor Centre, before you finish your day with an evening meal beside the river.

Day 2

Morning

Head east out of Exeter to the beautiful estuary town of Topsham. Walk through the quaint streets to see the Dutch-style merchants houses, which stand as a legacy to Topsham's maritime past when the town exported wool and cotton to Holland. Take some time to relax on Topsham's Quay, where goods were exported from the town in the 17th and 18th century.

Visit Topsham Museum and Merchant's House on The Strand to discover Topsham's maritime history.

Lunch

Topsham is a foodie's heaven. There are numerous independent cafes and restaurants here, some with an emphasis on fresh fish such as the Galley Restaurant.

Afternoon

Visit Powderham Castle, where you'll find beautiful grounds with stunning views. Take a guided tour of the Castle to discover the fascinating tales of the 600 year-old family home, to discover what more this attraction has to offer.



Two days in Exeter - Luxury VIP Itinerary

If you're hosting important guests, or simply want to treat your delegates to a luxurious extended stay, Exeter can offer some amazing experiences which you won't find anywhere else. Read our suggested luxury VIP itinerary for inspiration.



Day 1

Morning

Start the day at the Wear Park Spa, a multi-award-winning spa and beauty salon located in the Georgian manor house at Exeter Golf and Country Club. Enjoy an ESPA facial, massage or body treatment, with stunning views of the golf course. Afterwards, have a relaxed lunch in the Wear Park Restaurant, either in the elegant restaurant itself, or out on the veranda or terrace.



Afternoon

Make your way to the beautiful estuary town of Topsham, just 4 miles from Exeter. Wander the narrow, picturesque streets to browse the renowned choice of independent shops here. Just a short distance away is Darts Farm, officially one of the best farm shops in the country which offers a unique lifestyle shopping experience.

Just a short drive away (or catch a train from Topsham on one of the England's most beautiful railway lines), is Lymptone Manor, the result of renowned chef Michael Caines' vision of country house hospitality for the 21st century. Situated on the banks of the River Exe Estuary in 28 acres of gardens, grounds and parkland, it is the perfect place to host VIP guests. Book the Michael Caines Gourmet Experience for a unique experience of a wine tasting tutorial with one of the experienced and passionate Sommeliers in the wine room, then have dinner in the Michelin-starred restaurant or a private dining room.

Day 2

Morning

Take an early morning hot air balloon flight with Aerosaurus Balloons to view the beautiful Devon rolling countryside from above. Then head over to the Deer Park for lunch in the 2AA Rosette restaurant. If the weather is good, follow the winding woodland paths to discover secluded secret sensory gardens, and enchanted woodland private dining.

Afternoon

Head back into Exeter city centre, for a tour of Exeter Cathedral roof, a truly spectacular experience. Discover the inside of the roof space high above the Nave, into the south tower, through the spaces in the north tower and onto the roof to enjoy panoramic views of Exeter and beyond.

Enjoy a champagne or G&T afternoon tea at the Hotel Du Vin's secluded walled garden, then book in for an overnight stay, or head to nearby Southernhay House, a boutique hotel with a touch of retro-style.



Getting here & around

Travelling to Exeter and getting around is easy. Exeter Airport offers a dedicated corporate jet centre, with its own VIP lounge and crew facilities. They can also organise private helicopter charters.

For a quintessential British driving experience, hire a Morgan sports car from Berrybrook Motors for your visit.

Two days in Exeter - Gastro Delights Hinerary

Exeter has been undergoing a food revolution. Some years ago the city was voted one of the top places to eat out in the UK by Which Good Food Guide, and has since continued to grow into the renowned gastro destination that it is today. The region is rich in high-quality artisan foods, and many of the city's cafes and restaurants proudly feature local produce on their menus. Experience some of the city's gastronomic highlights with our suggested foodie itinerary.

Day 1

Morning

The best way to start the day is with a good breakfast, and this is easily found in Exeter. Try the national award-winning Darts Farm to try their excellent all-day breakfast, featuring locally reared meat. Afterwards browse the farm shop, an explosion of colour with mouth-watering produce on display in every corner.

Walk off your breakfast by following the signposts through the peaceful Clyst Valley to Topsham, approximately 20 minutes away, looking out for rare birds along the way. Once in Topsham, wander the quaint, narrow streets to discover a wealth of independents. Topsham is locally renowned as the place to go to buy local food and drink from an extraordinary range of independent shops. Stop for a coffee in the secret garden at No 3 Topsham.

Afternoon

There is an increasing number of food producers in the town, one of which is Pebblebed Wines, producing award-winning wines at their vineyard just outside Topsham at Clyst St George.

Visit the Pebblebed Tasting Cellar, located in an old warehouse near Topsham Quay, to taste some of the wines accompanied by a platter of local cheeses and meats, and surrounded by the latest vintages lining the walls.

Evening

Hop on a train to travel a short distance on one of England's most scenic rail routes, to Lymptone Manor, the ultimate foodie destination, and vision of renowned chef Michael Caines. Dine in the Michelin-starred restaurant with stunning views across the River Exe Estuary.



Day 2

Morning

Spend the morning working up an appetite on Exeter Quayside, where outdoor activities abound – take to the water on a kayak or paddle-board, or hire a bike to explore the peaceful riverside paths.

Enjoy lunch al fresco at one of the waterside pubs, cafes and restaurants lining Exeter's quayside, such as the Gold Taste of the West award winning On the Waterfront, Samuel Jones pub, or award winning Rockfish.



Afternoon

Walk up to Exeter's city centre, to discover some of the historic attractions this beautiful, 2,000 year old city has to show off. Join a roof tour of Exeter Cathedral - the climb up the narrow, winding steps to the north tower will help work up your appetite again! From the roof of the city to the depths, visit Exeter's Underground Passages to discover an extraordinary network of subterranean passages, originally built in medieval times to house fresh water pipes.

Evening

Exeter has some fantastic artisan cocktail bars, using high quality spirits and the freshest ingredients to create carefully crafted concoctions. Try Doctor Ink's Curiosities for Victorian-inspired craft cocktails, or the oasis of indulgence that is the Speakeasy cocktail lounge at the Oddfellows.

Exeter has a huge choice of restaurants, with cuisines to suit all palates. Highlights include the rooftop restaurant at The Terrace, and independents Harry's Restaurant, and Rendezvous.



Work spaces

Exeter has some great space in which to work, in locations which will inspire creativity and lateral thinking.



Exeter Science Park

Designed specifically for tech start-ups, entrepreneurs and fast-growth businesses who want to be part of the Science Park community without the commitment of full-time office space. Providing flexible accommodation, with centralised reception and meeting rooms, hot desks, incubation space and support services, offering businesses the space to grow and to realise their business ambitions.

<https://www.exetersciencepark.co.uk/space/>



The Exeter Business Hub

Queensgate House, 48 Queen Street, Exeter, Devon, EX4 3AR

Provides office space for teams of up to 12. Located in the centre of Exeter, opposite Exeter Central train station, the Hub provides members with dedicated office space, conference facilities, business support and monthly networking events.

<http://theexeterbusinesshub.co.uk/>



Exeter City Space

Broadwalk House, Southernhay

Set up by Global City Futures as a vibrant co-working hub for individuals, commercial and social ventures that will deliver a significant positive impact on the city and surrounding region.

<https://www.exetercityspace.com/>



Exeter Library Business Hub

Exeter Library offers free desk space and WiFi, plus bookable meeting rooms. It is also home to the Exeter Business & IP Centre, where you can access support and advice.

<https://www.librariesunlimited.org.uk/>

How we can help

Here at Conference Exeter, we aim to make your conference experience as straightforward as possible. We provide a variety of free services to help you get your event just right.

- We can take you on a walk through history, by booking your team onto tours of Exeter's Underground Passages, Exeter Cathedral, the Red Coat Guided Tours, RAMM and the Custom House Visitor Centre. See more information on group visits at www.visitexeter.com/groups
- Suggest tailor-made group itineraries to suit your clients' specific requirements
- Provide information about suitable group accommodation
- Offer advice on timing your visit and other practical tips
- Advise on coach parking and setting-down points within the city and surrounding area
- Supply images for publicity material - see our editorial [library here](#) or contact us if you require more images

Contact us

Conference Exeter

Civic Centre
Exeter, EX1 1JJ

Tel: 01392 265209

Email: conference.exeter@exeter.gov.uk
www.conferenceexeter.com





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