7. Becket’s Well
Legend has it that Thomas a Becket drank from the spring on fleeing his trial at Northampton Castle in 1164.

8. 78 Derngate
A 19th century town house remodelled by artist and architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh in 1917. The Art Deco style predates the movement’s development and is the architect’s only major work outside Scotland. Now an award winning visitor attraction.

9. Guildhall
Victorian gothic architecture at its best. The interior decoration is stunning and well worth a visit.

10. Royal Theatre
The ornate building was designed by theatre architect Charles J Phipps and opened in 1884.

11. Northampton Museum & Art Gallery
Houses the town’s famous collection of boots and shoes, the largest in the world. Other collections chart the history of the town from Stone Age to present day. There are also static collections of paintings and ceramics and changing exhibitions.

12. Sessions House
With adjacent judges’ lodgings, this was Northampton’s courthouse from the 17th to 20th century.

13. Northampton’s Town & County War Memorial and Garden of Remembrance
Designed by Lutyens and located to the east of All Saints’ Church.

14. All Saints’ Church
Mentioned in the Domesday Book and rebuilt after The Great Fire of Northampton to a design by architect Henry Bell. A statue of Charles II stands above the portico, as thanks for his help in restoring the town after the Great Fire.

15. St John’s Hospital & Church
Founded in 1138. Former chapel of the medieval Hospital of Saint John. Now a restaurant.

16. Beckett & Sergeant’s School for Girls
Founded by two women, Dorothy Beckett and Ann Sergeant, and endowed in 1738. Now base of youth charity The Lowdown.

17. Grand Hotel
The hotel was designed by architect Charles Dorman and dates from 1892. It is still a hotel today.

18. Hazelrigg House
A substantial Elizabethan town house c1580. The building survived the Great Fire and was owned by the Hazelrigg family from 1680 until 1831.

19. St Peter’s Church
Dating from 12th century and one of the finest examples of Norman church architecture in the region. Its unusual design suggests it had a special connection with the nearby castle. The interior is rich in carving and decoration.

20. Castle Mound
All that remains of the famous Norman castle built by Simon de Senlis, Earl of Northampton. The trial of Thomas a Becket took place here in 1164. In 1660 King Charles II had the castle destroyed as punishment for the town’s disloyalty during the English Civil War.

21. Castle Hill United Reformed Church
Built in 1695 and later enlarged. 18th century non-conformist Philip Doddridge preached here for 22 years (his academy for dissenters is in Sheep Street).

22. The Drapery
The centre for drapery in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Further afield

Delapre Abbey & Park
The abbey was founded in 1145 and is one of only three Cluniac monasteries built for women in England. The Battle of Northampton was fought in the grounds in 1460. The abbey was remodelled by the Tate family who bought it in the 16th century and then sold to the Bouverie family in 1749. The 500 acres of open parkland is a favourite with walkers and nature lovers, and includes a water garden, walled garden, woods and lakes. At the edge of the park is an Eleanor Cross – one of only three remaining crosses raised in memorial to Queen Eleanor, beloved wife of King Edward I.

Abington Park
A scene of beautiful parkland passed to the borough in 1892. Loved for its ornamental gardens, tree-lined pathways, aviary, historic follies, museum and play areas. Abington Abbey, now home to Abington Park Museum, was once home to William Shakespeare’s granddaughter Elizabeth Bernard who is buried in the nearby church.

Becket’s Park and Marina, Racecourse & Hunsbury Hill Iron Age hill fort are three other attractions well worth visiting.
Northampton Heritage Trail

The Northampton Heritage Trail – approximately three miles – begins at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the oldest building in town, and finishes at the top end of The Drapery.

Many of the streets along the trail highlight the architectural and industrial heritage of the town.

The Great Fire of Northampton in 1675 destroyed nearly half of the town. Charles II helped with the restoration and many of the impressive buildings that you see today were built.

The three medieval churches of St Peter’s, St Giles and Holy Sepulchre stand proudly alongside the classical All Saints’ which is in the heart of the town centre.

The trail highlights some of Northampton’s most notable buildings and heritage sites and provides a flavour of what makes the town special.

The fine Victorian buildings are thanks to the wealth of the shoe industry at that time.

Remember to look up above the shop fronts as you walk the trail so as not to miss the fascinating variety of architecture and history around the town.

1. Church of the Holy Sepulchre
Dating from 1103, this is the oldest building in Northampton and the largest and best preserved medieval round church in the country.

2. Market Square
Dating from 1235, the Market Square is one of the oldest and largest in England. After the Great Fire, the town was built around the square and there is a wealth of historic buildings surrounding it.

3. Cobbler’s Last
Sculpture by Graham Ibeson commissioned in 1986 to represent the town’s shoe and boot industrial heritage.

4. Discovery
Public sculpture by Lucy Glendinning erected in 2005 to commemorate the life of Northampton born scientist Francis Crick who, with James D Watson, discovered the structure of DNA.

5. Northampton War Memorial & Garden of Remembrance
The memorial at Abington Square was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens who also designed The Cenotaph in Whitehall.

6. St Giles Church
The 12th century church was rebuilt after the tower collapsed in 1616. It has a stunning Victorian stained glass window and the west door is a cunning Victorian reconstruction of Norman work.