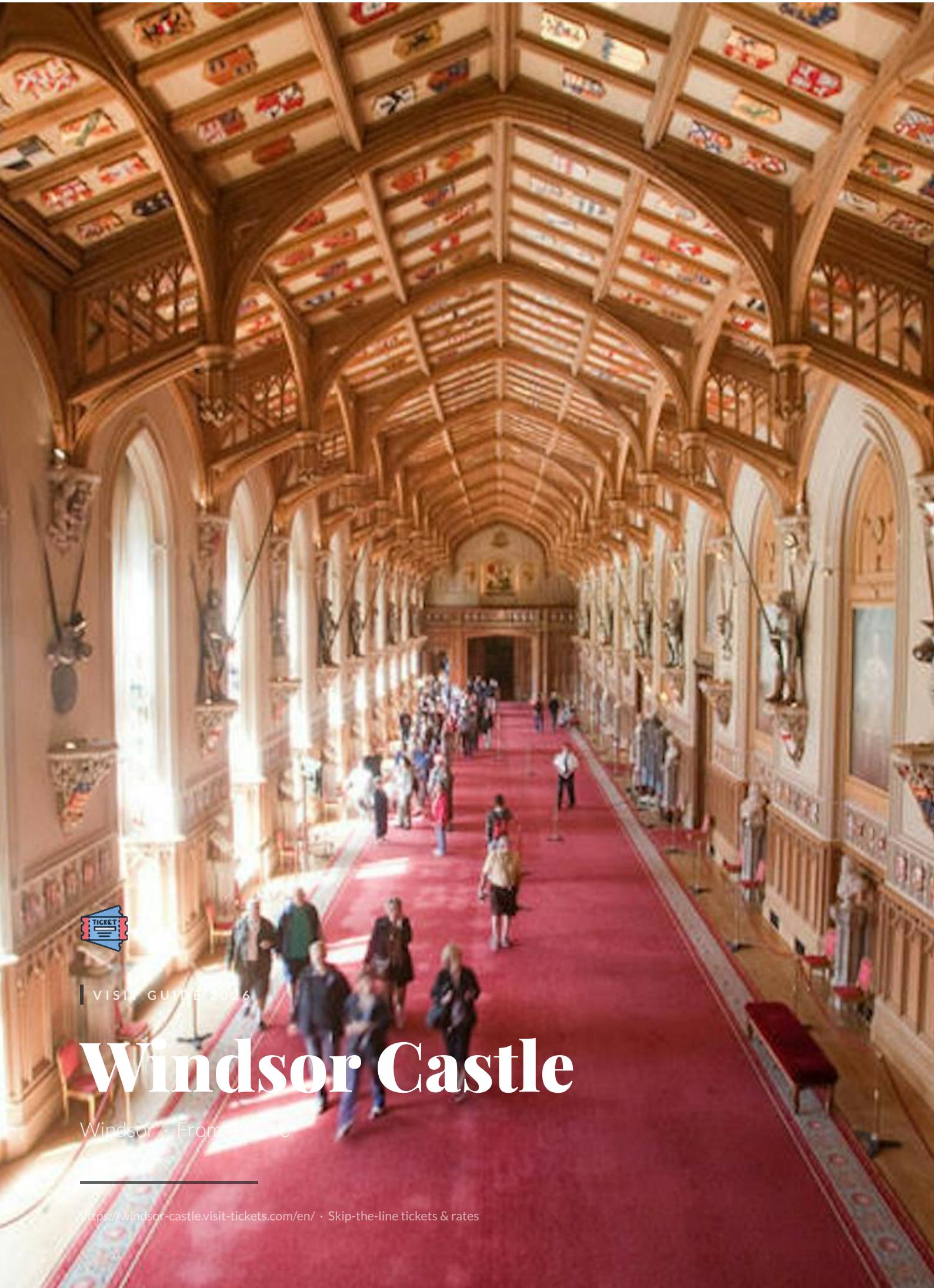


VISIT GUIDE 2026

Windsor Castle

Windsor · From [illegible]

https://windsor-castle.visit-tickets.com/en/ · Skip-the-line tickets & rates



History & experience

ORIGIN & HISTORY

A Thousand Years of Sovereignty

GOOGLE 4.7 ★★★★★ 64 801 reviews

TIQETS 4.7 ★★★★★ 2 225 reviews

In 1066, shortly after the conquest of England, **William the Conqueror** ordered the construction of a fortress on this strategic site to control the Thames. What began as a simple Norman camp with a chalk motte quickly became a major military bastion. The initial palisades were reinforced by massive stone walls, laying the foundations for what would become Europe's oldest continuously inhabited palace.

During the reign of **Henry III** in the thirteenth century, the fortress gradually transformed into a sumptuous residence. The king commissioned the construction of a luxurious palace within the enclosure, marking the beginning of the transition from a fortified stronghold to a royal dwelling. Edward III continued this work, transforming the site into what is considered the most expensive secular building project of medieval England, already blending defense and prestige.

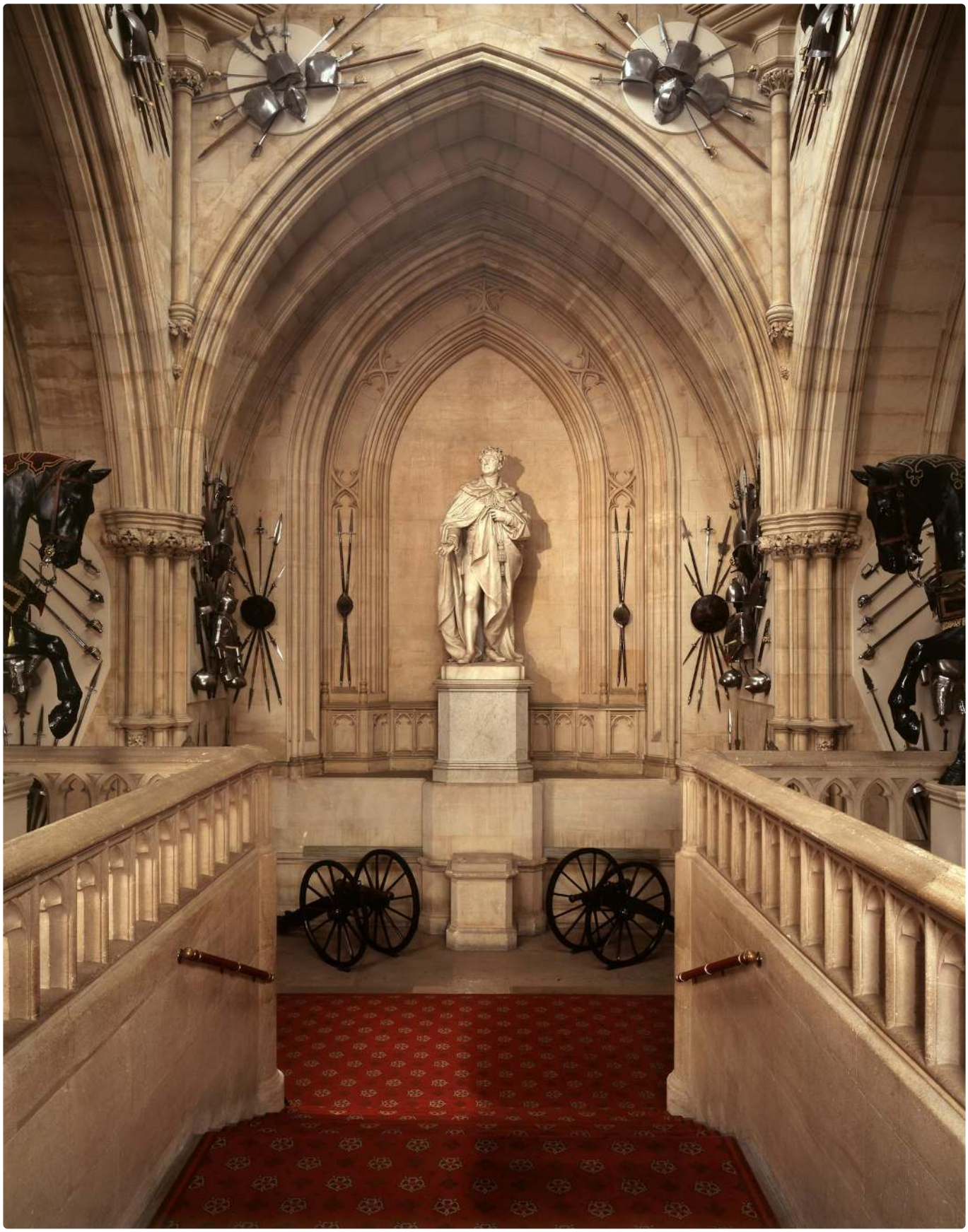
The history of the castle is inseparable from royal dramas. During the English Revolution, it served as headquarters for the parliamentary armies and even housed **Charles I** as a prisoner before his execution. Later, under Charles II, the architect Hugh May rebuilt much of the structure, creating extravagant Baroque interiors that reflect the taste of the Restoration.

In the eighteenth century, following a period of relative neglect, **George III** and George IV renovated the palace at great expense. They gave it its current Rococo and Gothic appearance, making Windsor the most elegant expression of Georgian art. Today, more than 500 people still live and work within these walls, perpetuating a tradition that spans millennia.

THE EXPERIENCE

The moment you step through the doors of Windsor, the atmosphere changes dramatically. You are no longer simply in a museum, but at the heart of a **living residence**. Natural light filters through ancient stained glass windows, illuminating tapestries that have witnessed four centuries of history. Each step on the old cobblestones resonates like an echo of the monarchs who came before you.

The visit often begins with a sense of wonder at the scale of the place. The architecture harmoniously blends Gothic, Baroque, and modern styles, creating a unique aesthetic. One immediately feels the weight of history, as well as the warmth of a place where royal life continues today. It is a total immersion into British luxury, where every detail, from the smallest chandelier to the largest painting, tells a story of power and culture.



PREPARE YOUR VISIT

Practical information

ADDRESS
Windsor, Berkshire · Train: Waterloo or Paddington (direct lines), then a 5-minute walk.

OPENING HOURS
Closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Hours vary by season; please check before your visit.

FARES
From €38.34. Free for children depending on age (check variants). {promo}.

VISIT DURATION
Allow 2.5 to 3 hours on site to comfortably explore the apartments, chapel, and gardens. Don't forget your entry tickets.

PHOTOS
Photos are not allowed in the State Apartments and St George's Chapel. Permitted elsewhere according to rules. Check before taking out your device.

AUDIENCE
Ideal for families and couples. The cobbled path has moderate elevation changes, suitable for walking children. Wear comfortable shoes for the visit.

HOW TO GET THERE

Access & transport

Metro
: Riverside Rail Station (Stop RR) — 3 min à pied
London Heathrow Airport (31 min) · London Gatwick Airport (119 min)

Bus
: Riverside Rail Station (Stop RR) — 3 min à pied
London Heathrow Airport (50 min) · London Gatwick Airport (196 min)

Car

London Heathrow Airport (38 min) · London Gatwick Airport (160 min)

Bike

London Heathrow Airport (50 min) · London Gatwick Airport (219 min)

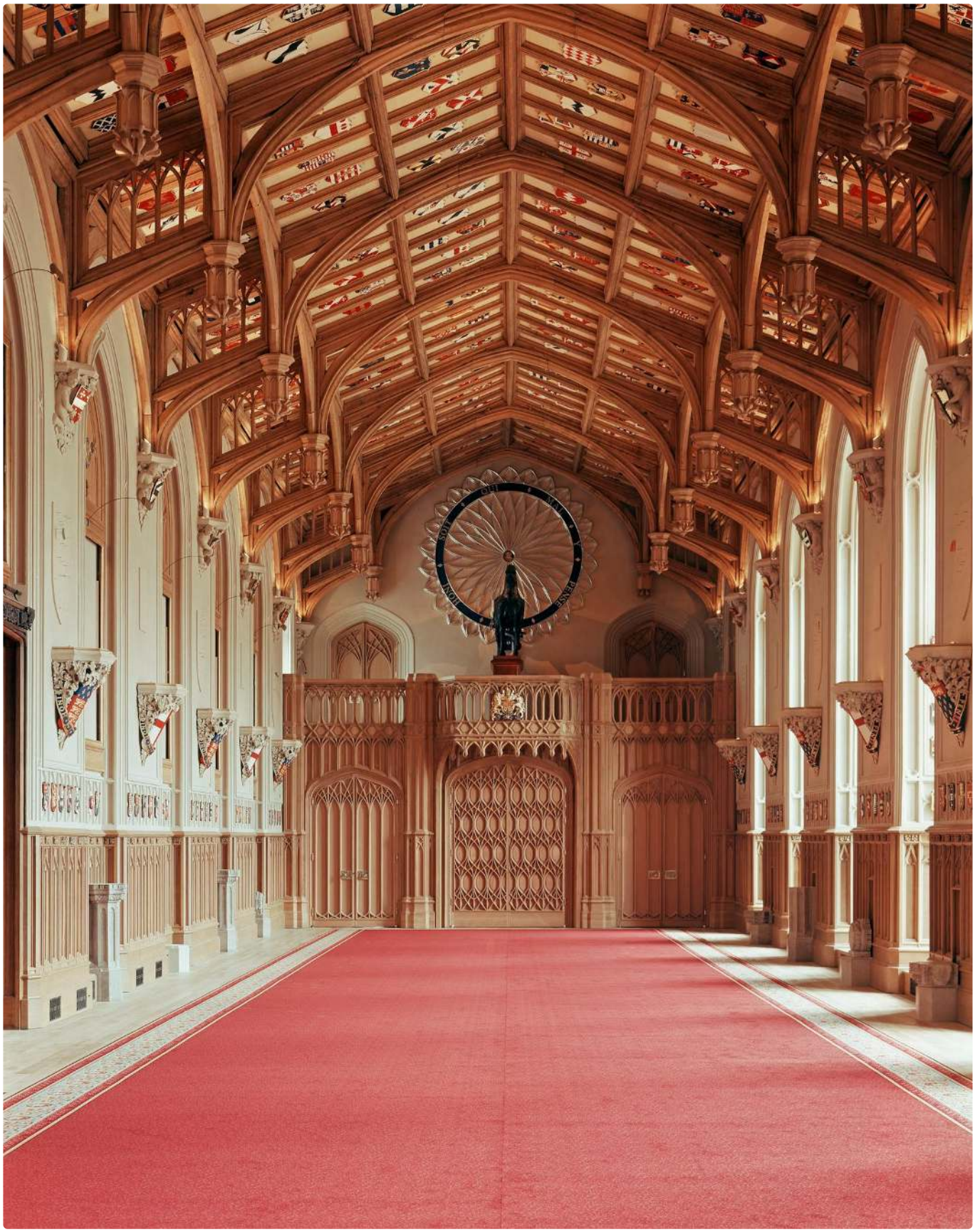
LOCALISATION

Où se trouve Windsor Castle ?



📍 Windsor — SL4 1NJ Windsor

🌐 51°29.034′ N, 0°36.264′ O



ORGANIZATION

Understanding the Estate Layout

Level 0 (Ground Floor): The State Apartments

This is where the heart of the public tour lies. The State Apartments, renovated under George III and IV, display a sumptuous rococo and baroque style. You will admire major works from the royal collection, including portraits by Van Dyck and Rubens. The decoration is of unparalleled richness, featuring painted ceilings and period draperies.

Level 1: The Semi-State Rooms and the Queen's Dolls' House

This level offers a more intimate glimpse into royal life. The Semi-State Rooms are used for official audiences and diplomatic dinners. It is also here that you will find the famous Queen Mary's Dolls' House, an architectural miniature of stunning precision that delights both children and adults. The details are incredibly fine, faithfully reproducing the castle's rooms in miniature.

Exteriors: Saint-Georges Chapel and Gardens

The architectural highlight is the Saint-Georges Chapel, a masterpiece of vertical Gothic completed in the 15th century. Its interior is adorned with remarkable sculptures and stained glass windows. Outside, the royal gardens offer magnificent views of the Round Tower and the surrounding park. It is the ideal place to take photos and enjoy nature before leaving the site.



Must-sees

SELECTION

The Absolute Treasures of the Castle

01 Chapel

St George's Chapel

Considered by historian John Martin Robinson as one of the greatest achievements of English Gothic architecture. Completed in the 15th century, it impresses with its height and the brightness of its stained glass windows. It has been the site of the coronation of the Kings of England since 1485. The acoustics are exceptional, conducive to meditation.

> 💡 The chapel contains the tombs of many monarchs, including those of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, as well as that of Queen Victoria.

02 Semi-State Rooms

Queen Mary's Dolls' House

Gifted to Queen Mary by her husband, King George V, in 1924, this dollhouse is a masterpiece of craftsmanship. Built by the finest artisans of the time, it stands nearly 3 meters tall. Each room is furnished with miniature objects of extreme precision, reflecting the aristocratic lifestyle of the 1920s.

> 💡 It took two and a half years to build this house, using noble materials such as rosewood and ivory.

03 State Apartments

State Apartments

These rooms, renovated in the 19th century, are still used today for official ceremonies. They house masterpieces of European painting, including canvases by Rembrandt and Canaletto. The decoration combines Baroque and neo-Gothic elements, creating an atmosphere of royal splendor. It is the main reception venue for the royal family.

> 💡 The Great Hall was restored after the 1992 fire, revealing medieval frescoes hidden beneath several layers of paint.

04 Middle Ward

Round Tower

The ancient Norman keep, located at the top of the motte, is the oldest remnant of the castle. Its imposing silhouette dominates the entire site. In the 19th century, its architecture was modified to give it a more picturesque appearance. It now houses the Royal Archives and offers a panoramic view of the estate.

> 💡 The tower was raised by 9 meters by architect Jeffry Wyattville in the 19th century to improve its visibility from the city.

05 VAN DYCK, RUBENS, REMBRANDT State Apartments

Royal Collection of Paintings

The castle houses a significant part of the Royal Collection, one of the most important in the world. You will see official portraits of the royal family as well as European masters. The quality of the works is comparable to that of London's great museums. Each painting tells a facet of dynastic history.

> 💡 Some paintings survived the 1992 fire thanks to off-site storage, while others were carefully restored.

06 Gardens

Royal Gardens

Stretching their arms around the castle, the gardens offer a lush and peaceful setting. They are maintained with meticulous care by the royal staff. The paved paths allow you to stroll while admiring the exterior architecture. It is the perfect place to escape the crowds and enjoy nature.

> 💡 The gardens include historical sections planted under different reigns, reflecting the evolution of British landscape tastes.

07 Horseshoe Cloister

Horseshoe Cloister

This medieval cloister, dating from the 13th century, frames the inner courtyard with discreet elegance. Its pointed arches invite contemplation. It is a quiet place of passage, far from the bustle of the state rooms. It offers a glimpse into the monastic life associated with the Saint-Georges Chapel.

> 💡 The cloister was used for centuries as a place of meeting and prayer by the monks of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem.

08 Lower Ward

King Henry VIII's Gate

This monumental entrance marks the passage to the lower part of the castle. It testifies to the site's military importance during the Tudor era. The ancient stones bear the traces of past centuries. It is a strong visual landmark when discovering the site.

> 💡 The gate was recently restored to highlight its original sculpted details, often obscured by later additions.

TIPS

Preparing Your Royal Visit

TIMING

Arrive at least 30 minutes before your reserved time slot. Security checks are strict and resemble those at an airport, especially during peak season. Avoid crowded weekends; aim for a weekday like Thursday for a more peaceful experience.

TICKET

Be sure to book online in advance. Check that your ticket includes the St George's Chapel and the gardens, as some basic rates only cover the State Apartments. Tickets are non-refundable but exchangeable under certain conditions.

TOUR

Start with the State Apartments, then finish at St. George's Chapel. This sequence allows you to end on a majestic and spiritual note. The reverse order is less effective because the chapel is the architectural highlight of the visit.

PHOTO

Set your phone to airplane mode or keep it in a waterproof bag. Photos are strictly prohibited in the State Apartments and St George's Chapel. Take advantage of this to photograph the gardens and the exterior façade, where the rules are more relaxed.

BREAK

Plan a coffee break in the cafés located near the main entrance or in Windsor village. Avoid eating in the castle rooms if possible, as the spaces are often crowded. The Queen's Head pub is an excellent option for an authentic English meal.

CHILDREN

The Queen Mary's Dolls' House is a must-see for children. Wear comfortable shoes as the route includes old cobblestones and a slight elevation change. The castle is family-friendly, but be aware of queues for school groups.

AUDIOGUIDE

The audioguide is strongly recommended to understand the complex history of the castle. It provides precise context on the artworks and historical events. We recommend listening in the State Apartments so you don't miss any anecdotes about the monarchs.

COMFORT

Bring a lightweight waterproof jacket, as the English weather is unpredictable. Even on cloudy days, a stroll through the gardens offers magnificent views. Suitable shoes are essential for the 2.5 to 3 hours of actual walking on site.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ

What days is Windsor Castle open?

The castle is open every day except Tuesdays and Wednesdays. St George's Chapel is closed to tourists on Sundays. Check specific opening times on the official website before planning your trip from London.

Should I book my tickets in advance?

Yes, it is highly recommended to book online to avoid queues, especially during peak season. Strict airport-style security checks can take time. Buy your tickets through a reliable platform to guarantee your slot.

Where can I buy tickets for Windsor Castle?

You can purchase via the official website or reliable affiliate platforms. The standard price starts at €38.34. Make sure your ticket includes St George's Chapel and the gardens if you want to see everything.

Are there discounts for groups?

Special rates often exist for groups of more than 10 people. Contact the ticketing service directly or check options when booking online. This helps reduce the cost per person for organized excursions.

Can I take photos inside the castle?

No, photos and videos are strictly prohibited in the State Apartments and St George's Chapel. They are allowed in the gardens and some outdoor areas. Remember to put your phone on airplane mode so you don't forget to put

DID YOU KNOW?

Anecdotes & curiosities

A dramatic fire

In 1992, a severe fire damaged a large part of the castle. The major reconstruction that followed was completed in the 1990s. This event marked the building's history and allowed for the modernization of certain facilities while respecting its historical authenticity.

Active residence

More than 500 people still live and work in the castle today. Between members of the royal family, service staff, and administrative employees, Windsor remains a place of intense daily life. This explains why certain areas are closed to the public depending on the season and royal events.

War Refuge

During World War II, the castle served as a refuge for the royal family during the bombing of London. Its strategic location and robust underground tunnels made it a safe shelter. This period strengthened the bond between the monarchy and the British people.

Fictitious architecture

Architect William Whitfield describes the castle's architecture as having a "certain fictitious aesthetic." The picturesque and Gothic forms generate the feeling that a theatrical performance is being staged there. Despite this, the castle holds a place among the greatest European palaces thanks to its historical richness.

AROUND THE MUSEUM

After your visit to the castle, extend your day in the charming village of Windsor. Directly across, on the riverbank, lies **Eton College**, one of the world's most prestigious schools, whose gardens offer a breathtaking view of the castle. For an authentic culinary break, head to the historic pub **The Queen's Head**, where you can enjoy traditional English cuisine in a warm atmosphere. If you still have energy to spare, wander through the tranquil paths of **Windsor Great Park**, a vast green space perfect for a leisurely stroll along the Thames before catching the train back to London.



Leaving Windsor means carrying away a piece of the British soul. It is not merely a tourist visit, but a **temporal experience** where past and present merge. Whether you are passionate about history or simply curious, this castle offers rare depth. Leave with the certainty of having touched something truly royal, an emotion that will remain etched long after your return to modern reality.