



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

UNLIMITED ADVENTURES AWAIT

50
THINGS TO DO
AS A HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES MEMBER

PRINT
ME OFF!

SPACE TO STIR AND BE STIRRED

TOWER OF LONDON • HAMPTON COURT PALACE • BANQUETING HOUSE
KENSINGTON PALACE • KEW PALACE • HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE AND GARDENS

INSPIRATION ON EVERY VISIT, HOW MANY CAN YOU TICK OFF?

1 FOLLOW THE FOOTSTEPS OF HISTORY

Chosen by: Tracy, Curator

Walk along the corridors that lead from the Tudor Kitchens at Hampton Court Palace up to the Great Hall. For me, it's the most atmospheric part of the whole palace and if you close your eyes, you can just imagine the sights (and smells) of Henry VIII's kitchen staff rushing to and fro, laden with delicious delicacies for the royal palate.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

2 LIGHT A CANDLE IN ONE OF THE CHAPELS ROYAL

Visit the Chapels Royal for a moment of quiet reflection, or light a candle for someone you want to remember.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace and the Tower of London

3 COUNT COAT-OF-ARMS

Head to the Great Hall to see how many coat-of-arms you can find in the colourful stained-glass windows.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace



4 WITNESS THE CEREMONY OF THE KEYS

Chosen by: Amie, member aged 13

'Me and my two aunties went up there at night and absolutely loved it!'

📍 See at the Tower of London



5 EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF THE LOST GARDEN

Chosen by: Michele, Retail Admissions Team

Visit the Lost Garden at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens. As the little stream flows into the estate under the castle walls, pause at the willow-lined viewing point before you walk over water and step on the raised wooden walkway surrounded by floating water lilies. Watch the meandering babbling brook as it weaves its way along. Take a seat on the little stone bridge and look up to the dense canopy above. If you're lucky, you might spot a crimson-breasted bullfinch or a small flock of jays. To me, this is my magical place to get lost in, to breathe deeply and ignore the world outside as I relax with amazing beauty around me. A slice of heaven.

📍 See at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

6 SAMPLE FRESH PRODUCE

Chosen by: the gardens team

Take home your pick of the fresh produce from our historic gardens, harvested by our Gardens teams and volunteers.

📍 See at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens and Hampton Court Palace

7 WATCH A GUN SALUTE

See Royal salutes fired from Tower Wharf first-hand.

📍 See at the Tower of London

8 EXPLORE THE SUNKEN GARDEN

Take a moment to visit the statue of Princess Diana which was designed by sculptor Ian Rank-Broadley, who also designed Queen Elizabeth's profile on the United Kingdom's official coinage.

📍 See at Kensington Palace

9 CLIMB THE GREAT PAGODA

Admire the wooden dragons that adorn the Great Pagoda and climb up to the top to take in the panoramic views of London. Enjoy 10% off tickets to Kew Gardens as a member and show your membership card for free entry to the Great Pagoda.

📍 See at Kew Gardens

10 FIND PEACE IN LADY ALICE'S TEMPLE

Chosen by: Nigel, Palace Host Team

Take time out from the hustle and bustle of your busy life and sit and experience the tranquility of Lady Alice's Temple at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens. Let your eyes be drawn up Yew Tree Walk towards the Castle and let your spirits be stirred by the sounds of nature all around.

📍 See at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens



11 HIDE IN WOLSEY'S CLOSET

Chosen by: Charlotte, Web Digital Producer

Take a seat in Wolsey's Closet at Hampton Court Palace and just relax for a few minutes. Every so often, there will be a gap in the crowds going in and out of the Cumberland Art Gallery next door. You'll be completely alone and quiet in the closet, surrounded by the Tudor architecture in this tiny room, with just the domineering portrait of Henry VIII for company. It's one of the most private parts of the palace, as it was in the 16th century, and also one of the quietest. If I need a few moments away from my desk, this is where I'll always end up on a walk around the palace.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

12 TAKE A GUIDED TOUR

Chosen by: Christine, member

Hampton Court Palace is the perfect place to share childhood memories with my grandchildren. They all love the self-guided audio tour – a perfect way to slow down after time in the Magic Garden or losing themselves in the Maze. Hampton Court Palace is our number one family destination.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace



13 WALK THE WALLS

Stomp along the huge stone battlements forming the Tower's walls and enjoy incredible views of the river Thames.

📍 See at the Tower of London

14 TAKE IN THE VIEW

Admire the spectacular view on one of our annual, exclusive member rooftop tours.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

15 EXPLORE THE CUMBERLAND ART GALLERY

See paintings by Rembrandt, Caravaggio and Van Dyck.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

16 WALK AROUND THE TWO CHAPELS ROYAL

Chosen by: Alfred, Assistant Curator

The Chapel of Saint John the Evangelist (in the White Tower) and the Chapel of Saint Peter ad Vincula (on Tower Green) are some of the most beautiful spaces in the fortress from an architectural point of view but also hold a very human element of the Tower within their walls – they aren't just ossuaries for executed individuals!

📍 See at the Tower of London



17 MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

Pack a picnic and sit under one of the ancient mushroom yew trees in the East Front Gardens, or in the tranquil orchard on the south side of the palace gardens.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

18 BE DAZZLED

Chosen by: Lydia, member aged 7

I love to go and see the Crown Jewels and imagine that I am a queen!

📍 See at the Tower of London



19 GET A FRESH PERSPECTIVE OF THE MOAT

Walk through a beautiful biodiverse landscape in the moat of the Tower as it blooms into life each summer.

📍 See at the Tower of London

20 DON'T BE SHY

Chosen by: Ciara, Membership Manager

Seek out our fantastic staff members and volunteers who have lots of top tips!



21 JOIN A YEOMAN WARDER TOUR

Learn about the Tower's iconic history as a fortress, palace and prison.

📍 See at the Tower of London

22 DISCOVER A SECRET FOUNTAIN

Chosen by: Graham, Head Gardener

Find the entwined stone dolphins set against the low stone wall in the Lower Orangery Garden at Hampton Court Palace, from c 1690. If only those dolphins could talk...

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace



23 FIND HIDDEN FACES

Chosen by: Cameron, Visitor Services Team

Try to spot all of the medusa heads or green man faces in the architecture at Kensington Palace – there are more than you'd think!

📍 See at Kensington Palace

24 WATCH SOLDIERS ON THE MARCH

Chosen by: Ben, member aged 10

I like watching the Changing of the Guard because I get to see soldiers in real life and watch them march around.

📍 See at the Tower of London

25 SEE SPARKLING JEWELS

Chosen by: Laura, member

See dazzling examples of gems commissioned for Queen Victoria. Who doesn't love a tiara?

📍 See at Kensington Palace



26 EXPLORE THE EXOTIC

Spot life-size animal sculptures of the exotic animals once kept at the Tower and discover their surprising tales. Have you heard of the polar bear who fished in the Thames for his lunch?

📍 See at the Tower of London

27 FEAST LIKE A TUDOR

Devour a Tudor pie from the Privy Kitchen and imagine what it would have been like to feast in Tudor times.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace



28 DISCOVER WILDLIFE

Chosen by: Aisha, member

We love exploring the Imaginary Menagerie trail in the gardens at Hillsborough Castle and finding different animals.

📍 See at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

29 STOP, LOOK, & LISTEN

Chosen by: John, Chief Executive

I try to step aside from everyone else, stop, look, listen and take time to breathe in the atmosphere so that I can imagine the centuries of lives witnessed by the palaces. It grounds me.

30 GET LOST IN THE MAZE

Chosen by: Angie, Head of Marketing and Membership

I love reading Paddington and the Marmalade Maze to my 7-year-old son and then getting lost in the twists and turns of the maze together.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

31 TIME FOR TEA

Enjoy a luxurious afternoon tea in the grounds of a royal palace at the Orangery restaurant with your 10% member discount.

📍 See at Kensington Palace

32 TAKE A SELFIE

...with a Yeoman Warder at the Tower of London and admire their new uniforms, which now feature the royal cypher of King Charles III.

📍 See at the Tower of London

33 CHEER ON YOUR FAVOURITE KNIGHT

Witness Tudor entertainment brought to life and see a real life Joust event!

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

34 IMMERSE YOURSELF IN SPRING TIME BLOOMS

Find swathes of golden daffodils and blossoming cherry trees each spring in the Wilderness garden and be completely immersed in nature.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

35 FIND MINIATURE MONARCHS

Chosen by: Kerry, Palace Team Leader

My favourite thing in the whole of the Castle is the Bone Miniatures around the walls of the Red Room. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert used to place these 40 miniature portraits of English sovereigns on the floor to test each other's knowledge of the family tree.

📍 See at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

36 TAKE A ROYAL WALK

Chosen by: Emma, Visitor Services Team Leader

Walk from Queen Charlotte's Cottage towards the woodland; there's a muntjac deer that lives there and quite often makes an appearance! The space is just very special and you get an idea of why they built the cottage there, in such peaceful, well built-up surroundings.

📍 See at Kew Gardens

37 FIND FRANK!

Chosen by: the Gardens Team

Walk around the lake to look for kingfishers – we have named the kingfisher often seen in the Lost Garden Frank!

📍 See at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens



38 MAKE A BEELINE FOR THE GREAT VINE

Explore the Great Vine, planted in 1768 by renowned landscape gardener, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, one of the palace's most famous features.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

39 GO GHOST HUNTING

Walk Henry VIII's route from his private apartments to the Chapel and see the Haunted Gallery.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace

40 GAZE OUT OVER THE LONG WATER

This beautiful stretch of water was completed by King Charles II in 1660.

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace



41 FIND THE GARDENER'S HUT

Spot life-size animal sculptures of the exotic animals once kept at the Tower and discover their surprising tales. Have you heard of the polar bear who fished in the Thames for his lunch?

📍 See at Hampton Court Palace



42 BASK IN THE SUN IN THE ROYAL KITCHEN GARDEN

Chosen by: Cat, Palace Operations Manager

The Royal Kitchen Garden is the perfect little oasis, and a lovely sun trap in the summer – I try to start the day with a coffee out there, just to gather my thoughts and get ready for the day ahead!

See at Kew Palace



43 IMAGINE THE SPLENDOUR

Chosen by: Keith, member

Stand in the Great Hall and imagine all the meals, feasts and parties that once took place in there. I even like to imagine Henry VIII standing before the court and giving speeches.

See at Hampton Court Palace

44 FIND THE OLDEST ARTEFACT

Find the bell above the Astronomical Clock at Hampton Court Palace. It is the oldest existing artefact at the palace and Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII and Elizabeth I would have all heard it chime. Take a minute to imagine yourself in their shoes.

See at Hampton Court Palace

45 SEE HENRY VIII'S KITCHENS IN ACTION

Chosen by: Jon, Member

I especially love to visit in the winter, when there is real meat turning on the spit. The staff members cooking are so knowledgeable and I have learnt so much from them.

See at Hampton Court Palace



46 CLIMB TO THE ATTIC

Visit the atmospheric attics at Kew Palace as part of a Hidden Spaces tour and learn about the lives of the servants who would have worked and lived there and the building that stood on the site before the palace. Keep an eye out for witch marks left behind to protect the building from evil spirits.

See at Kew Palace

47 MAKE MAGIC

Chosen by: Sarah, member aged 6

We love to visit the Magic Garden to see the dragon and slide down the hill!

See at Hampton Court Palace

48 HUNT FOR HISTORICAL GRAFFITI

See graffiti carved in the Beauchamp Tower by prisoners.

See at the Tower of London



49 ENCOUNTER A RAVEN

Say hello to the six ravens who call the Tower of London home, and learn why they are known as the guardians of the Tower.

See at the Tower of London

50 GET THE INSIDE SCOOP

... with your free subscription to Inside Story, Historic Royal Palaces' exclusive member magazine.

