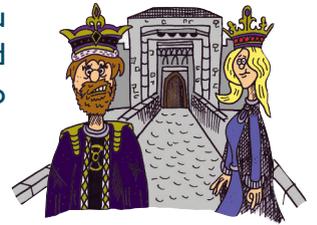


Leeds Castle Young Persons' Guide

Welcome to Leeds Castle. We hope you enjoy looking around. This guide will tell you more about the different rooms in the castle and who lived here. If a room is closed today then it's probably being used for a meeting, but your ticket is valid for a year, so come back again!



A brief history of Leeds Castle

When the Storming Normans invaded England in 1066, William the Conqueror and his Knights built many castles. Some were built in stone and others, like Leeds, were built of wood or 'wattle and daub'. The first stone buildings at Leeds were built in 1119 by a Knight called Robert de Crevecoeur. The moat that runs around the castle was made in the 13th century and is fed by the River Len. In 1278 Queen Eleanor of Castile became the owner and it stayed a royal castle until 1552. Its most famous owner was Henry VIII who stayed here on his way to meet King Francois I at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520. In 1926 a rich American-English woman called Lady Baillie bought it to create a fabulous country house. She spent over £20 million in today's money restoring it. She had French artists and craftsmen rebuild the inside to make it look like it did in medieval times – and then filled the place with rich and famous guests, playing croquet and golf, swimming in the pool, and enjoying the grounds, which had zebras and llamas grazing.

The Heraldry room

Along the walls of this room, you will find a timeline of the history of Leeds Castle and the people who owned it. See if you recognise any of them.

The Queen's Room

This room is set up as it would have looked in 1422 when Henry V's widow, Catherine de Valois owned the castle. It is actually a day room where the Queen would sit and receive guests. The big bed is meant to impress her visitors.



The Queen's Bathroom

What's weird about this bath? Well for starters, it's round but it's also made from wood. The cloth covers would stop the Queen from getting splinters.

The Queen's Gallery

The Marble statues of Henry VIII and his three children were made when Elizabeth I was alive. The long table is thought to be 15th century and came from a French monastery. The blue and white vases were for tulips, which at the time cost more than gold.



Henry VIII Banqueting Hall

This room is the largest space in the castle and was designed to look like a room from the Tudor period. Henry VIII would have held huge parties in rooms like this and ate banquets of exotic food like roast peacocks and swan! His face appears in a few paintings here but can you spot him in paintings with other Kings and Queens?

The Chapel

King Edward I built a chapel at Leeds Castle to remember his queen Eleanor of Castile when she died. This chapel was opened in 1978 and re-consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Boardroom

If this room is open, have a quick look in. Many important meetings, including some between world leaders, have taken in place in this room.



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The Yellow Bedroom

Look at the picture of the little girl and boy. They're both wearing dresses! That's because boys used to wear dresses until they were 7 years old. They were then allowed to wear breeches (trousers).

The Seminar Room

This room used to be Lady Baillie's private sitting room, but was turned into a meeting room in 1978. Many important meetings have taken place in this room too. Lady Baillie was a keen collector of art. The portraits of children in this room are of Lady Baillie and her sister, Dorothy.



The Dressing Room

As you pass through this room, look at the luxurious bathroom on your right. Every bath in the castle has a bell next to it, to ring for a servant to help you get dressed!

Lady Baillie's Bedroom

This room follows the French regency style of the 18th century, but like much of the castle interior – it is made to look older than it really is. The Louis Vuitton trunk was just as fashionable then as it is today.

Catherine of Aragon Bedroom

Henry VIII had the entire first floor of the Gloriette rebuilt for Queen Catherine of Aragon between 1517 and 1520. Lady Baillie used this room as her Boudoir after she got bored with her first one which was the Seminar Room. The dressing table is covered in sharkskin!

Main staircase

Upstairs, where you can't go today, are 17 bedrooms that are used by people who visit the castle for meetings, weddings and parties. Downstairs are portraits of Lady Baillie's parents.

Yellow Drawing Room

Look closely at the walls in this room. They are covered in silk, not wallpaper. What would a room like this look like in your home?

Thorpe Hall Drawing room

The wooden panelling on the walls comes from Thorpe Hall in Cambridgeshire. The panels were taken out of the house in 1928 and sold. So the walls are 200 years older than the room!

The Library

This room was once the schoolroom for Lady Baillie's two daughters. When they grew up it was turned into a library – there are now 3,000 books in this room. If it took you a week to read each one it would take 57 years to read them all!

The Dining Room

If this room is open you will see a large dining table that can seat up to 30 people. This room is used for weddings and evening dinners.

Sometimes pictures or furniture in this trail are temporarily removed for conservation.

**We hope you enjoyed the castle trail – please leave this sheet at the exit.
Thank you.**

