

For immediate release: Wednesday, 3 April 2024

The newly reserviced East Wing of Buckingham Palace to open for public tours for the first time

The East Wing of Buckingham Palace will be open to visitors for the first time this summer, when special guided tours of the Principal Floor will be available to visitors in July and August.

The East Wing encompasses the front façade of the historic building and features the famous central balcony, where the Monarch and members of the Royal Family have gathered for public appearances during special occasions or historic moments since 1851.

Access this year has been made possible due to the conclusion of more than five years of improvement works to the East Wing. The essential works are part of the Buckingham Palace Reservicing Programme to upgrade the historic building's infrastructure, improve access and preserve it for future generations.

Led by expert guides, small groups of visitors will be able to visit spectacular rooms on the Principal Floor, furnished with highlights from the Royal Collection. Visitors will discover the history of the Wing, first occupied by Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their children and still used by the Royal Family today for official meetings and events.

At the request of Queen Victoria, the architect Edward Blore was commissioned to draw up plans for alterations to Buckingham Palace, in order to increase the accommodation for her growing family. Between 1847 and 1849, the East Wing was added, enclosing what had previously been an open, horseshoe-shaped courtyard, following George IV's conversion of Buckingham House into a Palace to the designs of John Nash.

The build of the East Wing was financed through the sale of George IV's seaside retreat in Brighton, the Royal Pavilion, in 1850. The style of the architecture and interiors of the Pavilion reflected the King's love of Asian art and design and upon the sale of the building, its contents, including some of the finest ceramics and furniture in the Royal Collection, were transferred to the Wing and inspired the Chinese-themed décor of its principal rooms.

Tours will take visitors through rooms and spaces including the Principal Corridor, which runs the length of the Wing, where paintings by artists such as Thomas Gainsborough, Sir Thomas Lawrence and Franz Xaver Winterhalter are on display. In the Yellow Drawing Room, decorated with recently restored Chinese hand-painted wallpaper from the 18th century, visitors will see two hexagonal, nine-tiered Chinese porcelain pagodas and the Kylin Clock, which incorporates two turquoise Chinese lions. Tours will conclude in the Centre Room, which leads on to the balcony, where highlights include a newly restored glass chandelier,

shaped to resemble a lotus flower, and two Chinese 18th-century Imperial Silk wall hangings, presented to Queen Victoria by Guangxu, Emperor of China on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee in 1897.

A limited number of East Wing Highlights Tours will run daily in July and August, from Monday, 15 July. Tours must be booked in addition to the standard admission ticket to the State Rooms at Buckingham Palace. The Palace will be open for seven days a week during July and August for the first time since 2019, returning to five days a week during September.

Ends

The Summer Opening of the State Rooms at Buckingham Palace is from Thursday, 11 July to Sunday, 29 September 2024. The Palace will be open for seven days a week during July and August and five days a week (Thursday to Monday) during September.

East Wing Highlights Tours will go on sale on Tuesday, 9 April. Priority access will be given to Royal Collection Trust email subscribers for 24 hours, before remaining tickets go on general sale to the public on Wednesday, 10 April.

East Wing Highlights Tours must be purchased with a ticket to visit to the State Rooms. The combined ticket price is £75 for Adults. Tours start from Monday, 15 July.

Admission to the State Rooms only is £32 (in advance) and £35 on the day.

Visitor information and tickets: www.rct.uk, +44 (0)303 123 7300.

Images are available to download via [Dropbox](#). For further information, please contact the Royal Collection Trust Press Office, +44 (0)20 7839 1377, press@rct.uk.

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Notes to Editors

Royal Collection Trust, a department of the Royal Household, is responsible for the care of the Royal Collection and manages the public opening of the official residences of The King. Income generated from admissions and from associated commercial activities contributes directly to The Royal Collection Trust, a registered charity. The aims of The Trust are the care and conservation of the Royal Collection, and the promotion of access and enjoyment through exhibitions, publications, loans and educational programmes.

The Royal Collection is among the largest and most important art collections in the world, and one of the last great European royal collections to remain intact. It comprises almost all aspects of the fine and decorative arts, and is spread among some 15 royal residences and former residences across the UK, most of which are regularly open to the public. The Royal Collection is held in trust by the Sovereign for His successors and the nation, and is not owned by The King as a private individual.

The **Buckingham Palace Reservicing Programme** will replace core services, such as electrical cabling, plumbing and heating systems, which have not been updated since the 1950s. The ten-year programme will protect one of the world's most iconic historic buildings from

the risk of fire or flood, ensure the Palace is fit for purpose and preserve it for future generations. See [Reservicing Buckingham Palace | The Royal Family](#).

Admission to Buckingham Palace is managed by The Royal Collection Trust, a registered charity in England and Wales (1016972) and in Scotland (SCO39772).