



Castle Hunters

Description

“How strange and beautiful it looked in the late afternoon light! I can still recapture that first glimpse – see the sheer grey stone walls and towers against the pale yellow sky, the reflected castle stretching towards us on the brimming moat, the floating patches of emerald-green water-weed.”

Dodie smith on Castles

Check out where our castle hunts have taken us

[Our Master Castle List](#)

How We Became Castle Hunters

Our fascination and love of castles, in effect, started on our very first day in Ireland. It was the inspiration that led us to coin ourselves Castle Hunters. Simply put, it was love at first sight. We have never wavered since on that energy and passion we found at our first castle, Trim Castle in Ireland.

The privilege of exploring these magnificent architectural wonders is truly a gift. They capture your imagination in ways it is difficult to put into words. Fairy tales are based on these whimsical structures for that reason. The mighty walls of these majestic fortifications have stood proudly for centuries.

These epic structures transport you back to when life was simple yet harsh. Life was cold, dark, and austere, even in the most elaborate medieval structures. These were the fortified residences of royalty and nobility. Existence was difficult for these castle residents. Nonetheless, there is something so romantic and charming about them and their inhabitants.

Castle designs were about protecting their owners and kingdoms from their enemies. As a result, the Medieval castle was the core of military defense for a thousand years. They were fortresses that took horrific beatings; however, they remain standing today in all their glory.

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Ryan was living the Castle Hunter dream at Lowther Castle, United Kingdom.

So you ask, are they not all the same?

To our surprise, the answer is no. These massive structures did not have modern machinery or highly educated engineers with computer models. Yet they remain standing, always captivating. They are iconic, a testament to time—many in extraordinary settings.

They are high atop mountains, deep in a forest, on beaches, or in the middle of a river. In the heart of a city or on treacherous precipices. Even a tiny backpack can prevent you from visiting some locations as the passages are extremely narrow. Despite this, our ancestors somehow built these structures without cranes, vehicles, or modern technology to carry the stones.

Each castle holds a unique character, style, stone, architecture, and magic. You sense its soul, its heartbeat, and you feel the life in it while you begin hearing the voices that once echoed through these huge stone chambers. Your imagination will transport you if you let it tell its story.

Even the simplest of ruins still capture our hearts. All of a sudden, in our minds, we can see it in all its glory.

Make no mistake about it. We love everything, castle. Without a doubt, it is a bit of an obsession.

Ed Sheeran's song Castle on the Hill speaks to their presence to this day. There is nothing like spying on that castle on the Hill to make the heart happy.

To conclude, we hope our fascination with castles is contagious, and you find the magic “within their walls” as well. Once in a while, give them a try. They will steal your heart and imagination in time, and you can become part of the Castle Hunters tribe. Join us on the hunt!



Our Running Castle Hunters Count

432

Check out our master castle list [HERE](#)

Medieval castles

The Normans constructed the earliest Medieval Castles. These castles were built between the 5th and 15th centuries. Though records are poor, it is estimated that 75,000 to 100,00 Medieval castles in Western Europe were built during this period. There were three distinct styles.

1. Concentric Castle

A concentric castle has two or more concentric curtain walls, where the outer wall is lower than the inner and can be defended from it. These castles resemble one enclosure within another, generally without a central free-standing keep. There is often a strong tower projecting from within the inner Castle.

An example of a Concentric Castle is Harlech Castle in Wales, 1292.

2. Motte and Bailey Castle

A motte-and-bailey castle is a fortification with a wooden or stone keep situated on a raised area called a motte. A walled courtyard, or bailey, is surrounded by a protective ditch and a protective fence. It was the most common castle built in the 11th century.

An example of a Mote and Bailey Castle is Gravensteen Castle in Ghent, Belgium, 1180.

3. Stone Keep Castle

A stone keep was the central feature of this castle, with thick walls and few windows. The entrance to the keep was stone steps leading to the first floor. Keeps were foremost for the castle's defense, and a fortified tower was built within the castle. It was the last refuge if the castle fell to an enemy.

An example of a Stone Keep Castle is Trim Castle in Ireland, our very first castle!



Gravensteen Castle, Ghent, Belgium

Let's test your knowledge

What is the largest castle in England?

Dover Castle. Known for its war times tunnels, well over three miles worth, they wind deep into the cliff.

Why do medieval castle stairwells run clockwise?

In general, right-handed invaders had their sword hands against the walls' interior curves, which heeded their swing. In contrast, the defender had their sword toward the outside wall, which gave them a greater swing toward their attackers.

What was the primary purpose of a Castle's moat?

To prevent attackers from tunneling under the walls.

What would have been the average amount years needed to build a castle?

Ten years considering the lack of modern tools or equipment is remarkable.

Medieval castles had rooms called Garderobes. What else shared the space with their clothes?

Along with their clothes and personal belongings, this exterior wall room had a toilet hole in the stone, which residents released waste into the shoot that dropped directly out of the castle. It was believed at the time the odor would act as a deterrent to insects. The shoot fell into the moat of the Castle or the ground below if there was no moat. This waste was known to cling to the sides of the structure. Castles back in the day were not quite as pristine as they are now.

What are those holes above the archway in the castle's gatehouse?

They are called Murder holes. Defenders would pour boiling water or hot sand through them as attackers went under the archway.

Where is the Blarney Stone of Irish legend located?

Blarney Castle in southern Ireland.

Which castle is the oldest inhabited castle in Europe?

[Windsor Castle](#) in England. Built by William the First, the Queen's home has been inhabited for 900 years and was built in the 11th century.

What castle is the oldest standing castle in the world?

The oldest standing castle is Château de Doué-la-Fontaine in France, built in 950 AD.

Where does the word castle come from?

The word castle comes from the Latin word “castellum,” meaning fortified place.

What were some of the uses of the Great Halls in castles?

The Great Halls were used to entertain and eat and as sleeping quarters for the household.

What castle is the largest in the world?

Poland’s Malbork Castle, built in 1274 by Teutonic Knights, is the largest castle in the world (by land area) at 52 acres. With its rust-red roofs and red brick exterior, it is a popular tourist destination.

Castello di San Michele in Spain served as a luxury castle; what else was it used for?

It was also used as a hospital for plague victims during the Plague of Saint Efasio (1652-1656). It is now used as a Center of Art and Culture.

What fairytale castle doesn’t have a fairy tale story to go along with it?

Neuschwanstein Castle was the inspiration for Disney’s Sleeping Beauty and arguably is one of the most beautiful castles ever built, but it is not the medieval fairytale it appears. The castle construction started in 1868 and cost 6.2 million German marks. Ludwig II spent so much on Neuschwanstein Castle that he was declared insane. His dead body was found days later, and it was ruled a suicide by drowning. An autopsy later revealed that no water was found in his lungs, and two bullet holes were found in his jacket.

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Date Created
May 5, 2020
Author

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