



Blenheim Palace delighted to welcome Great West Way visitors for the new season

Blenheim Palace is set to open its doors to visitors again from **Monday 17th May** with three new exhibitions.

Located just eight miles north-west of Oxford, on the A44 Evesham Road, Blenheim Palace is a fascinating, must-visit location and only a short detour from England's Great West Way.

Curious visitors exploring the 500 miles of navigable routes between London and Bristol, will follow themed itineraries including heritage, food and drink, countryside, film tourism and gardens, and Blenheim Palace is therefore an obvious choice for a day visit.

Birthplace of Winston Churchill and ancestral home of the Dukes of Marlborough, 'Britain's Greatest Palace' offers a mix of stunning architecture, fascinating history and beautiful 'Capability' Brown landscaped parkland and gardens.

Widely regarded as a masterpiece of 18th century Baroque architecture, the Palace houses one of the most important and extensive collections in Europe, which includes portraits, furniture, sculpture and tapestries.

To mark its re-opening, the Oxfordshire UNESCO World Heritage Site is unveiling two major new exhibitions as part of a £1.9m investment programme, as well as a new photography exhibition showcasing iconic images by renowned photographer Cecil Beaton.

The first new exhibition examines the key role Blenheim played in the life of Winston Churchill, who was born at the Palace.

Churchill returned to Blenheim often throughout his long life; attending parties, painting and spending time with his cousin and close friend 'Sunny', 9th Duke of Marlborough.

As well as being his birthplace, and one of his favourite places to relax, Blenheim's rich military history provided huge inspiration for Churchill's own career and it was where he proposed to his beloved wife Clementine.

Utilising a mix of historic artefacts and new technology, the interactive exhibition follows the 'greatest Briton' from his childhood, through his military service, political career and wartime role into his later life.

In addition to the Churchill exhibition, the Palace's historic stable block has been transformed into an immersive experience showcasing the importance of horses at Blenheim down through the centuries.

Features of the Stables exhibition include a recreation of the tack room, the stable office and an area where live horse displays can take place, as well as the chance for visitors to dress up and attempt to ride side-saddle.

The display area also highlights the key role the wider estate – including its ancient woodland, royal hunting lodge and ‘Capability’ Brown landscaped parkland – has played in its continued success.

A new art-themed restaurant and café has been built as part of the new attractions, featuring a touchless ordering app.

Alongside the new exhibitions, Blenheim Palace will be hosting a range of iconic photographs by British fashion and portrait photographer Cecil Beaton.

The ‘Cecil Beaton: Celebrating Celebrity’ exhibition will open on 17th May and run until 1st August, with the photography located throughout the Palace.

Beaton, best known for his elegant photographs of high society, was a familiar guest the Palace, attending parties and weekend breaks alongside a host of aristocrats, artists and writers.

The images feature famous 20th century figures, from Picasso and Salvador Dali to Marilyn Monroe, Mick Jagger and members of the Royal Family.

Daily visitor numbers are limited and admission is only via online pre-booking.

- To book and reserve time slots to visit go www.blenheimpalace.com/tickets.

About Blenheim Palace

Home to the Dukes of Marlborough since 1705, Blenheim Palace was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987.

Set in over 2,000 acres of ‘Capability’ Brown landscaped parkland and designed by Vanbrugh in the Baroque style, it was financed by Queen Anne, on behalf of a grateful nation, following the first Duke of Marlborough’s triumph over the French in the War of the Spanish Succession.