



HAMPTON COURT

Hampton Court Palace is a royal palace in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Greater London, in the historic county of Middlesex, and within the postal town East Molesey, Surrey. It has not been inhabited by the British Royal Family since the 18th century. The palace is 11.7 miles south west of Charing Cross and upstream of central London on the River Thames. Redevelopment began to be carried out in 1515 for Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, a favorite of King Henry VIII. In 1529, as Wolsey fell from favour, the King seized the palace for himself and later enlarged it. Along with St. James's Palace, it is one of only two surviving palaces out of the many owned by King Henry VIII.

In the following century, King William III's massive rebuilding and expansion project, which destroyed much of the Tudor palace, was intended to rival Versailles.^[1] Work ceased in 1694, leaving the palace in two distinct contrasting architectural styles, domestic Tudor and Baroque. While the palace's styles are an accident of fate, a unity exists due to the use of pink bricks and a symmetrical, if vague, balancing of successive low wings. King George II was the last monarch to reside in the palace.

Today, the palace is open to the public and is a major tourist attraction, easily reached by train, or bus. The structure and grounds are cared for by an independent charity, Historic Royal Palaces, which receives no funding from the Government or the Crown.

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