

THORNBURY



CASTLE









# CONTENTS

---

---

INTRODUCTION	06
MAP	08
OUR HISTORY	10
TIMELINE	16
THE GROUNDS & GARDENS	24
CASTLE ROOMS	32
CASTLE DINING	44
AFTERNOON TEA	48
CASTLE TREATMENT ROOM	53
WEDDINGS AND CELEBRATIONS	56
MEETING ROOMS AND EVENTS	62

---



## WHERE WITHIN THESE STORIED STONE WALLS

It's a question that we, the custodians of this magnificent Tudor Castle, strive to answer in every imaginable way. It's a quality we want our guests to really feel, from the moment they first pass through the main gateway of the castle.

Once the country retreat of none other than *King Henry VIII*, our castle boasts a history that few other English hotels can match. It is a history that serves as the foundation for experiences that are truly transportive; that we hope will whisk our guests away into another time, a more regal period, a more memorable mode of luxury. But it is also a history that provides us with a vision for what that archaic form of majesty – the comforts and the calm, the decadence and the desires – might look and feel like today.

Thornbury Castle is 1530s grandeur and 2020s splendour all at once, outside of time. It is a place we hope you find yourself when you need to untangle yourself from the everyday and to immerse yourself in untold luxuries. *King or Queen for a day?* At Thornbury Castle, we aim to create that feeling for the very entirety of our guests' stay.



## IS THERE MAJESTY TO BE FOUND?



## ● KEY

Reception	1
Car Park	2
The Tudor Hall	3
North Field	4
North Range	5
West Field	6
West Range	7
Privy Gardens	8
St Mary's Church	9
Gatehouse	10
The Goodly Garden	11
The Kitchen Garden	12
Activity area	13

## ◆ POINTS OF INTEREST

### 1 Main Gateway and Barracks

The unfinished gateway contains grooves for a portcullis. The gate was to have been manned and the portcullis let down at the first sign of any threat. The barracks, also never completed, were intended to house between 200 and 300 soldiers and staff.

### 2 Inner Gateway

The inner gateway, dated 1511, is adorned with Stafford Knots and with symbols of the Duke's royal ancestry. It displays the Latin version of his motto, meaning 'Henceforth'.

### 3 Tower

The upper floors of the tower contained the Duke's bedchamber and two Muniment Rooms where important documents were kept.

### 4 Windows in the Privy Garden

The fine oriel windows of the Duke's chambers on the first floor are taller and more elaborate than those of his wife's rooms on the ground floor, reflecting his higher status. These are considered to be some of the best examples of domestic Tudor architecture in England.

### 5 Gallery

The timbered gallery was the very latest in Tudor palace fashion, allowing the Duke to entertain guests and admire his knot garden. The gallery extended beyond the boundary walls into the church. From his private pew above the chancel, the Duke could hear divine services without mingling with the lower orders.

### 6 Chimney

The expensive, ornate red brick chimney is dated 1514. This makes it one of the oldest Tudor chimneys in the country, predating those at Hampton Court.

### 7 The Goodly Garden

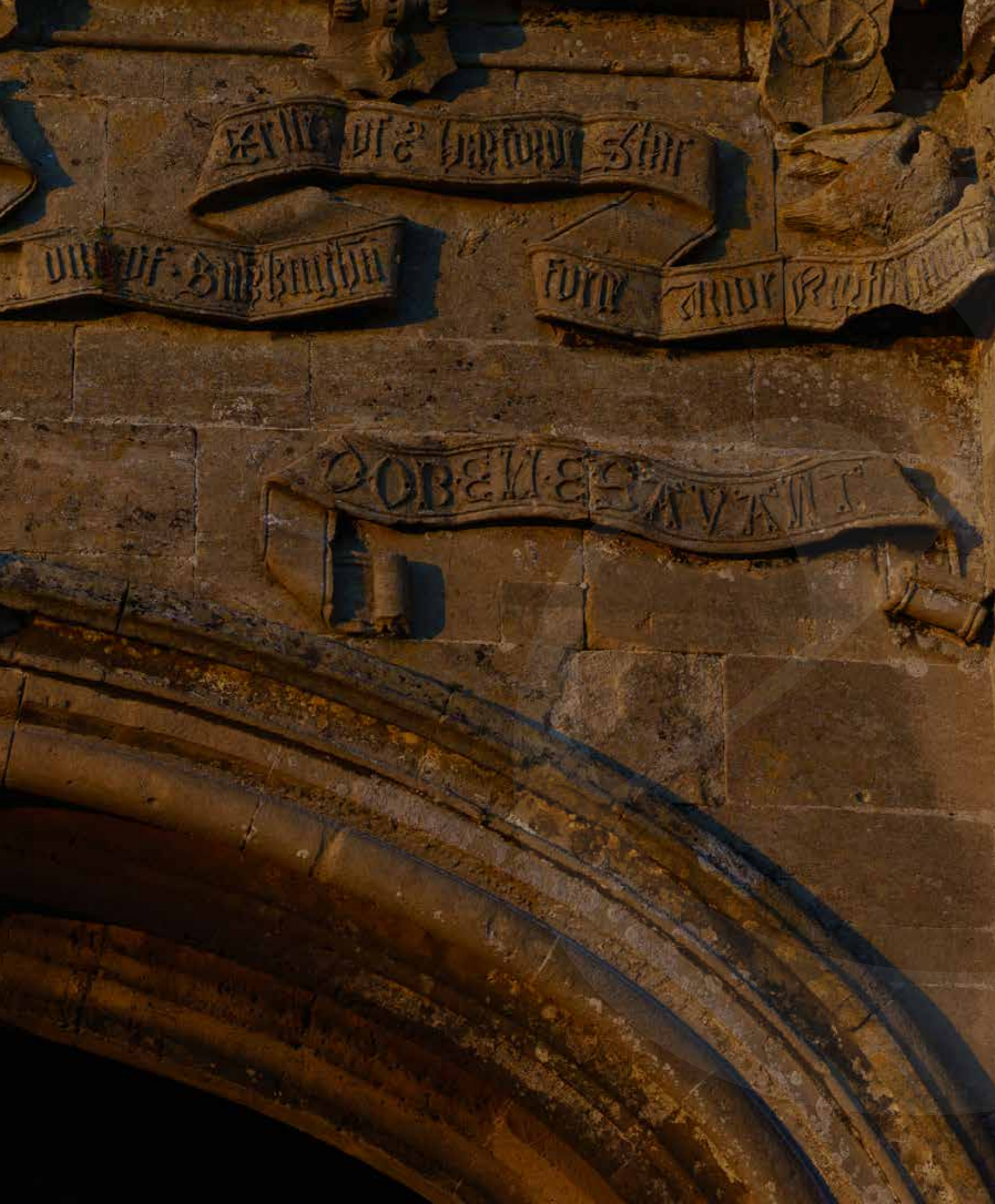
The Goodly Garden was filled with the scent of flowers and herbs. It was a place where ladies would go to gossip. The bee boles gave shelter to skeps (straw beehives).

### 8 Mounting Block

The mounting block was an aid for getting on a horse. It is decorated with a Stafford Knot and may well have been used by Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn when they visited the castle in 1535.







OUR

---

A one-of-a-kind destination,  
built on regal decadence  
and courtly intrigue

---

HISTORY



# BUILT TO IMPRESS, FIVE CENTURIES LATER, IT STILL DOES

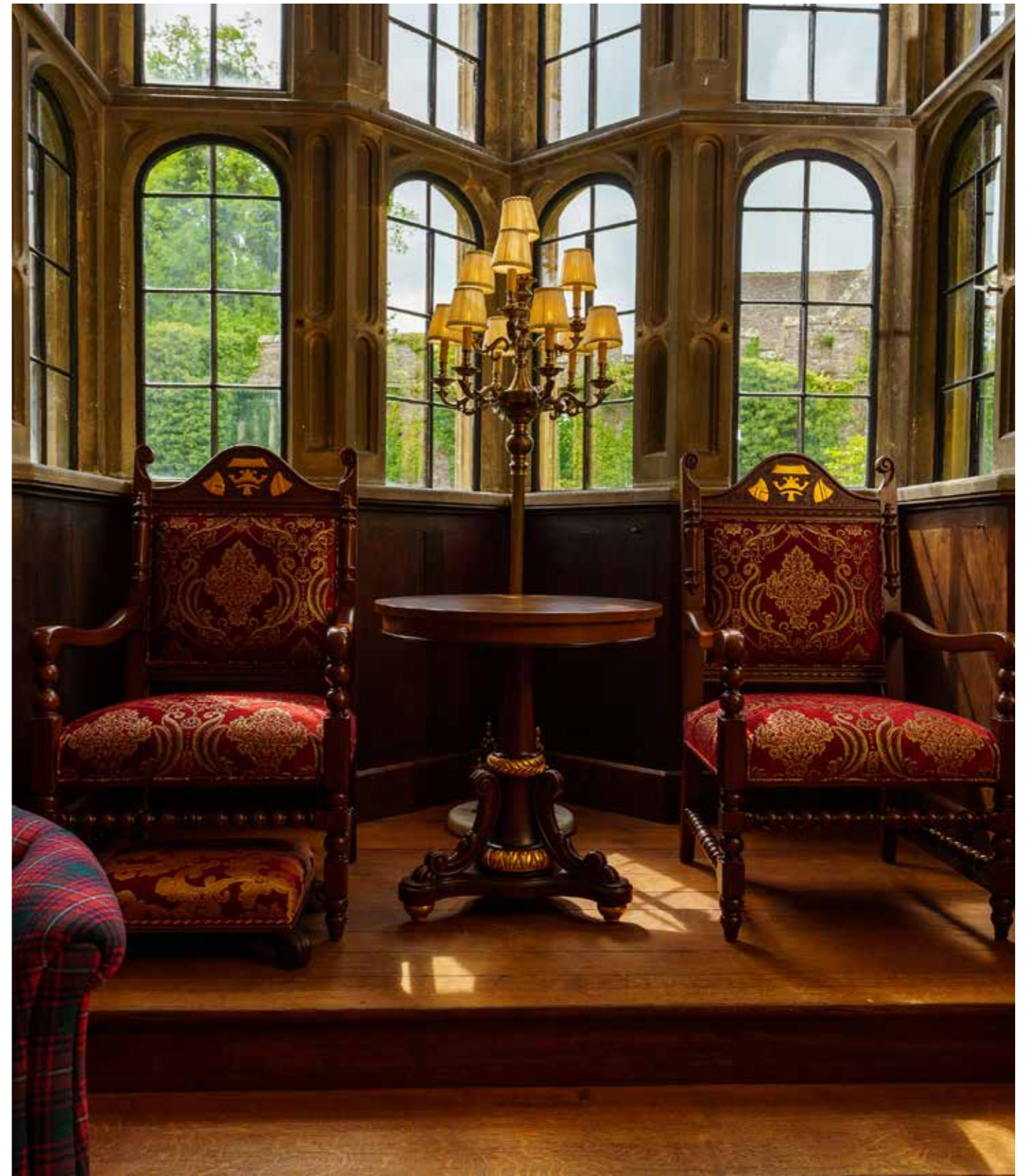
While King Henry VIII would not take ownership of Thornbury Castle until some years after it was built, his influence loomed large from the moment Edward Stafford first conceived of a magnificent new castle on the edge of the Cotswolds. Edward Stafford, the then Duke of Buckingham, was the second wealthiest man in the country and wanted a home to rival that of the richest... a certain King Henry VIII. In 1510, he was granted permission to transform his former manor house into the magnificent fortified country home that still stands today. It stands as a grand monument to Stafford's personality: battle-ready medieval ruggedness in harmony with the most palatial Tudor fineries of the day.

Edward Stafford, however, was never able to fully revel in the fruits of the years-long construction; in its exquisite oriel windows, its stunning red brick chimneys, its beautiful gardens. As the final elements were being put in place, in 1521, the Duke was summoned to London to stand trial. As a descendant of King Edward III, he was perceived as a threat to the Tudor dynasty. After making several provocative actions and statements against the crown, King Henry VIII acted in the way he is perhaps best remembered... Stafford was beheaded on Tower Hill after being found guilty of treason.



From that moment on, Stafford's impressive portfolio of properties was Henry's, and though he would sell most of it, he retained one particular property that he recognised as truly fit for a king – Thornbury Castle. On royal progress in 1535, he stayed there with his second queen, Anne Boleyn. A plague in Bristol extended their stay, establishing the castle as a luxurious retreat from the travails of the outside world that still rings true today. Alas, the castle offered no such respite for Anne from the path that Henry set himself down. Ten months after their stay at the castle, she was beheaded.

The castle remained a crown property until 1554, when Queen Mary I returned it to the Stafford family. Mary, who had stayed at Thornbury Castle numerous times as a child, did so as a show of gratitude for the support that the castle's original custodians had shown her mother, Catherine of Aragon. From that point on the fortunes of the castle would wax and wane, in line with the fortunes of the aristocracy responsible for it. But those ineffable qualities that made it such a striking symbol of Tudor opulence transcended its moment of ruins; its rebirth. Its standing today is as the finest castle of its kind in the country.









A  
THOUSAND  
YEARS OF  
UNWAVERING  
MAJESTY







---

## *1019*

Britic, the Saxon Lord of Thornbury Manor is serving as ambassador to the Court of Baldwin, Count of Flanders. During Britic's ambassadorship, Baldwin's daughter, Matilda, proposes marriage to him. Britic declines and she instead marries William, Duke of Normandy.

## *1066*

The Duke of Normandy invades England and is, thereafter, known as William the Conqueror. William claims ownership of all of England's land and gives Thornbury Manor to his wife Matilda. Thus, the woman Britic once scorned has now taken ownership of his manor.

## *1314*

Gilbert de Clare, Lord of the Manor of Thornbury, is killed at the battle of Bannockburn, won by Robert the Bruce of Scotland. Gilbert has no heirs and over 70 years of de Clare ownership comes to an end.

## *1347*

Ralph Stafford becomes Lord of the Manor following the death of his father-in-law, Hugh, Lord Audley. The Staffords own the manor, some minor interruptions notwithstanding, for approximately 300 years.



## 1460

Humphrey Stafford, first Duke of Buckingham, is killed at the battle of Northampton, during the War of the Roses.

## 1483

Henry Stafford, second Duke of Buckingham, is beheaded in the market square of Salisbury for plotting against Richard III. Some of that plotting took place in the manor house itself, at Thornbury.

## 1498

Edward Stafford, third Duke of Buckingham, takes control of all the Stafford estates. For the first time, it becomes the main residence for a Lord of the Manor of Thornbury.

## 1510

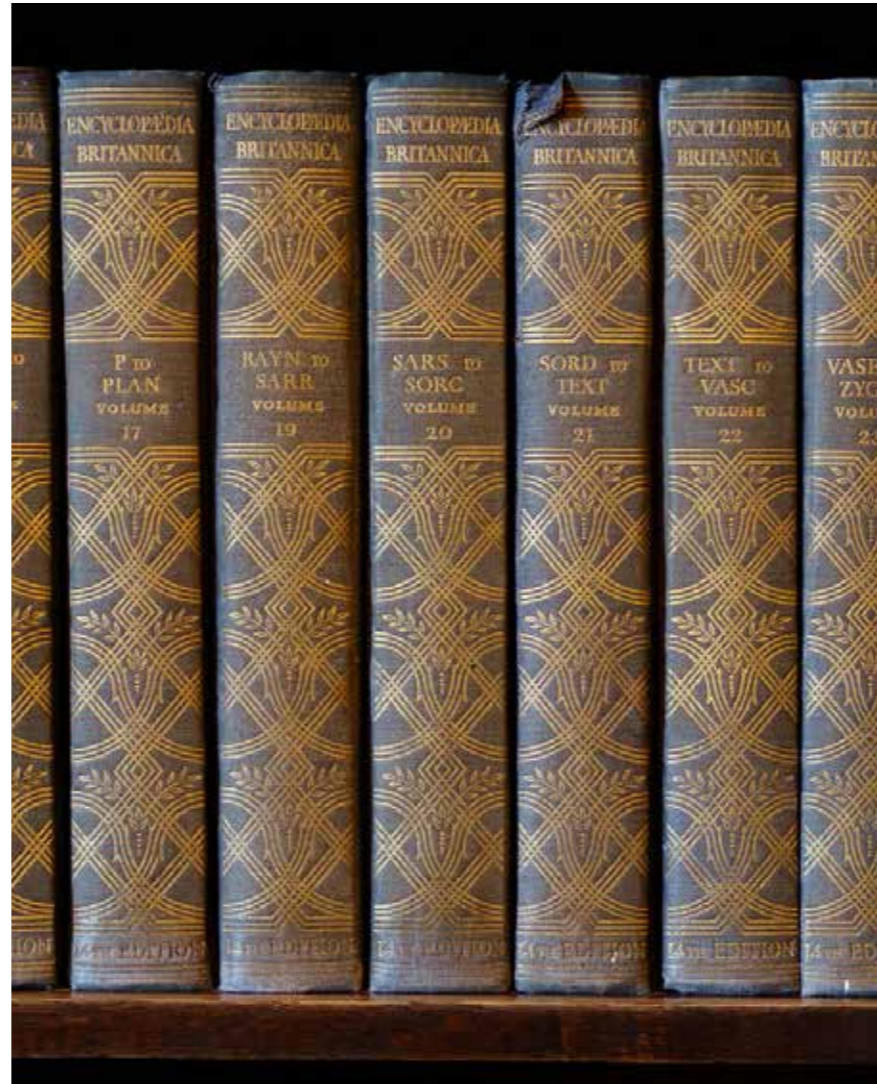
The third Duke of Buckingham receives a licence from Henry VIII to build a fortified castle at Thornbury.

## 1521

The third Duke of Buckingham is beheaded by Henry VIII and ownership passes to the king.

## 1525

Nine-year-old Princess Mary visits the castle and stays 18 days. She visits again in the two subsequent years.



## 1535

Henry VIII stays at Thornbury Castle with his second wife, Queen Anne Boleyn. Due to an outbreak of plague in Bristol they stay 10 days.

## 1547

Edward VI inherits the castle following the death of his father. He spends considerable sums of money on repairs to the castle but is not known to have visited it.

## 1554

Queen Mary I returns the Manor of Thornbury, and its castle, to the third Duke's son, Henry Stafford, and his wife Ursula Pole. The Staffords and the Poles had opposed the divorce of Mary's mother, Catherine of Aragon, from Henry VIII and were supporters of the Roman Catholic church. The Staffords do not live at the castle and it gradually sinks into ruin.

## 1640

The last of the Staffords, Mary, marries William Howard and the ownership of the castle and manor rests with the Howards. The Howards own the castle for just over 300 years.

## 1800

Lord Henry Thomas Howard starts using the castle as a residence. In 1801 he gives Thornbury Castle as his address when he gets married. Under his ownership, renovations to the tower are carried out.



---

## *1850s*

Lord Howard's son, Henry Howard, has a full restoration of the castle carried out by the renowned Victorian architect, Anthony Salvin. Henry lives there for part of the year, although his main residence remains Greystoke Castle in Cumbria.

## *1875*

Edward Stafford Howard inherits the castle and establishes it as his main residence.

## *1960*

Sir Algar Howard, son of Edward Stafford Howard, sells the castle and ends the 300-plus years of Howard ownership.

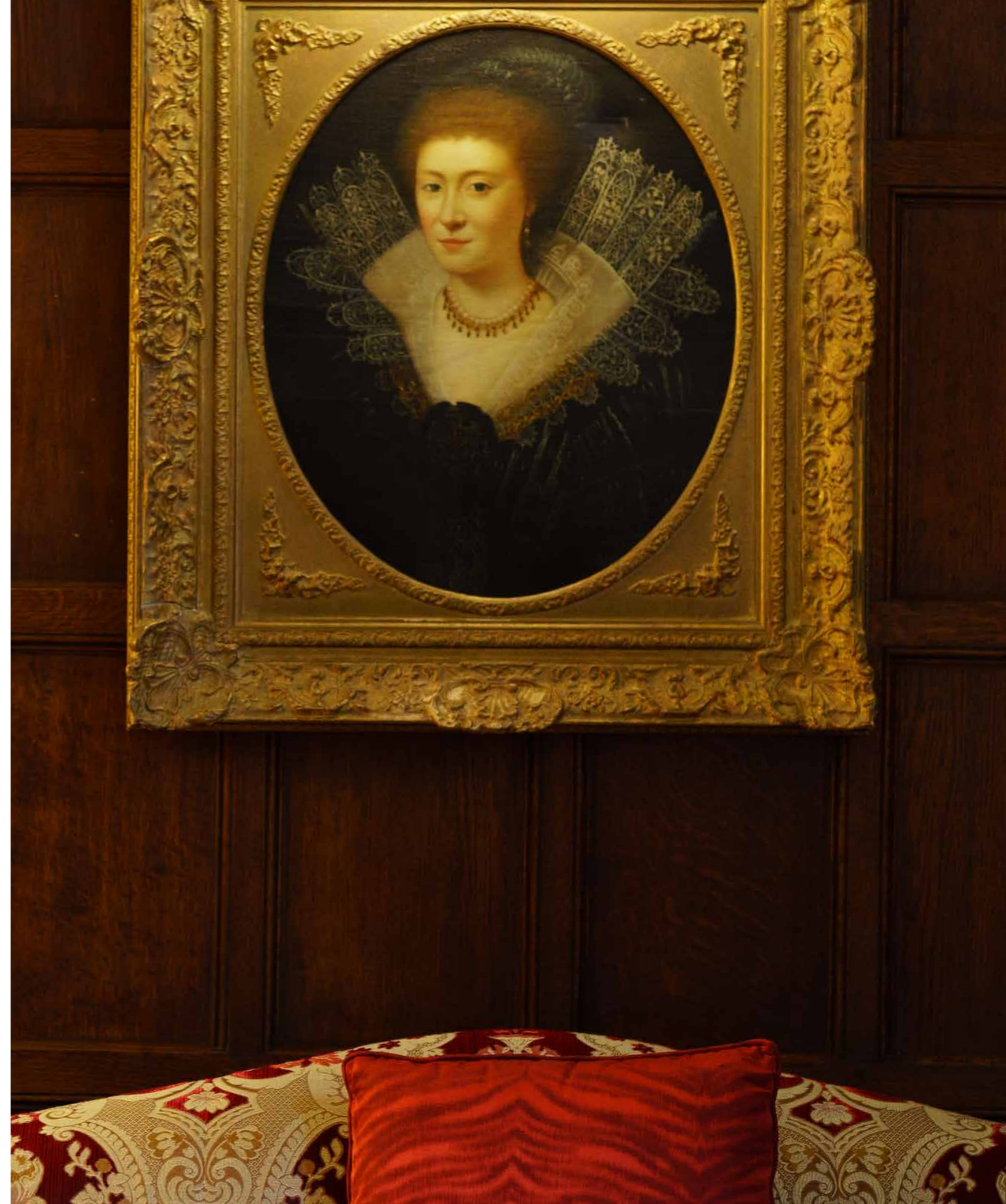
## *1966*

Renowned chef Kenneth Bell buys the castle. He establishes a high-class restaurant. Later, he opens up a select number of bedrooms in the castle and it becomes primarily a restaurant/hotel for the first time.

## *2019*

After passing through the ownership of several hoteliers, the castle is sold to a new owner. Plans quickly formulate to upgrade the castle and develop its status as a unique luxury hotel, one that maintains the richness of its Tudor heritage.

---







# THE GROUNDS & THE GARDENS

---

Look beyond the stone walls of the castle itself and you'll find a more verdant evocation of Tudor England unfurling itself towards the horizon.

---



## A CONTINUAL

Our grounds, gardens and the land that lies beyond combine as one varied, inviting landscape: the stunning views of the rolling countryside in the distance; the fineries of our meticulously manicured lawns; the numerous gardens that bring so much verve and vitality to a stay at Thornbury Castle.



## SOURCE

OF



## INSPIRATION

Of those gardens, the recently relocated and revitalised *Rose Garden* perhaps takes centre stage. Located in the space that once housed a 1920s summerhouse, the varieties of stems – chosen for their historical roots or connotations – provide the focal point for a spectacularly scented and beautiful stroll. If not quite so visually arresting, our *Kitchen Garden* is a continually inspiring source of inspiration (and indeed produce) for the chefs in our restaurant.

Similarly, the *Herb Garden* where more than 20 herbs & vegetables from The Tudor period are being produced, offers a certain textural beauty not only to gentle walks around the Castle, but to so many of the dishes we create in our kitchens, including our impressive selection of beverages.











## LABYRINTH

Meanwhile: The *Privy Garden* and Labyrinth each offer two refined takes on classic Tudor garden experiences: the first, a stone wall-encased explosion of white-flowering foliage around which to relax and enjoy refreshment; the second, a winding journey through wildflowers and long grass, which features a magnificent array of tulips from April through to June.

Other invigorating activities abound elsewhere on the grounds. Croquet on the lawn offers gently stimulating sporting activity (or, if you lean more to King Henry VIII's disposition, perhaps fiercely fought competition). Our *archery sessions* are a chance to test your marksmanship against rather more accommodating targets than an invading army, while our *falconry* demonstrations, are entertaining, awe-inspiring and educational all at once. (A charge may apply for our activities and pre-booking is required).

## FALCONRY

## ARCHERY



## WILDFLOWERS







# CASTLE

---

If the striking stone walls and expansive halls and dining rooms of Thornbury Castle showcase Tudor opulence at its most grandiose, then it is the bed chambers in which guests are able to experience more peaceful, but no less transportive historical delights.

---

# ROOMS







# PROUDLY FORGED FROM

There is a soft, tactile joy to be found beyond the heavy wooden doors of each room: the sumptuously heavy, regal fabrics draped over each bed and upholstered on each piece of furniture; the lovingly preserved, scene-setting tapestries that adorn the rugged curves of the stone walls; the evocative, atmospheric light emitted by carefully placed and period-sensitive fixtures... Every individual room in the castle is as unique as the history it is built on, as contemporaneously luxurious as a modern-day retreat should be. Our standard Deluxe rooms (indeed, all of our rooms) boast iconic period details alongside lavishly realised bathrooms and furnishings. Our more singular suites – from that once stayed in by Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, to the Catherine of Aragon Tower Suite that can only be reached by a spiralling stone staircase – ensure a stay that will live long in the memory. These are rooms that could only exist at Thornbury Castle. Proudly forged from times gone by, recast for revelry of the most intimate and reflective kind.



# TIMES GONE BY,



# RECAST FOR REVELRY







## ICONIC PERIOD DETAILS

LOVINGLY PRESERVED



SCENE-SETTING TAPESTRIES









ATMOSPHERIC  
LIGHT



LAVISHLY REALISED

FURNISHINGS



---

Join us for dinner in one of our four dining rooms,  
including our atmospheric dungeon which is  
available for private dining for up to eight people.

---

# CASTLE DINING







It's a heritage that can be directly traced back hundreds of years, but Thornbury Castle enjoyed a particular heyday much more recently than that... Indeed, in the 1970s, these stone walls played host to the likes of Sophia Loren and Laurence Olivier, who would come to wine and dine in decadent, salubrious style. The glamorous partying (and fittingly Shakespearian levels of thespian entertaining) that such guests brought to the table was matched only by the attention-grabbing food and drink that came forth from then patron chef Kenneth Bell – the first chef in the UK outside of London to earn a Michelin Star.

Today, the entirety of that heritage is imbued in the Thornbury dining experience: from the

artfully-prepared dishes that arrive with each course, through to the lovingly tended produce that we continue to source from the same kitchen garden that was first cultivated here centuries ago. Our Head Gardener ensures that our chefs are able to work with the finest and freshest ingredients imaginable; our chefs ensure that those ingredients are transformed into British-inspired cuisine both comforting and unexpected, considered and extravagant, reverential and contemporary. Our world-class sommeliers provide the final, unforgettable element of the evening, with a selection of exclusive vintages from the far reaches of our cellar and a lovingly, expertly chosen selection of 200 wines from England, Europe and the New World.





---

In 1840, some 300 years after Henry VIII's reign came to an end, the then Duchess of Bedford, Anna Russell, requested "some tea, bread, butter and cake," well in advance of the expected evening mealtime.

---

# AFTERNOON TEA





From this humble request was born '*Afternoon Tea*': an activity that has since entranced generations of the aristocratic and aristocratically-inclined. Long after Henry VIII's time it may have come but, as a leisurely, luxurious way to spend an afternoon, it embodies the opulent approach to drinking and dining that the Tudor king was known for.

The Thornbury Castle take on Afternoon Tea aims to channel all this and more, offering *Full Afternoon Tea* and – for those most special of occasions - *Champagne Afternoon Tea*. Against the stately backdrop of our grand dining rooms, lose yourself in a swirl of meticulously composed finger sandwiches and miniature cakes; freshly baked scones with jam and clotted cream; artfully chosen tea, coffee and champagne.





# CASTLE

---

Our expert team aims to ensure you not only live like royalty while staying with us at the Thornbury Castle, but are pampered to similarly exalted levels.

---

# TREATMENT ROOM





## CONTEMPORARY TREATMENTS

Perhaps in keeping with the sensibilities of our most famous patron, King Henry VIII, who banned the use of spas during his reign for fear of the gossiping that might go on there, Thornbury Castle instead focuses its most soothing energies on the Castle Treatment Room. Located on the second floor of the South Wing, with a bucolic view of St. Mary's Church and beyond, it brings the most finely-honed contemporary treatments, equipment and massage techniques to an out-of-time setting.

For those looking for a transportive mental release and restorative physical one, our highly-trained masseurs and masseuses offer a wide range of services: from head, back and shoulder massages, to deep tissue massages, to special relaxation and aroma therapy massages.

Our beauty treatments, meanwhile, encompass manicures, pedicures, waxing and more. With every soft touch, every delicate interaction, every meticulous application, our expert team aims to ensure you not only live like royalty while staying with us at Thornbury Castle, but are pampered to similarly exalted levels.

## FINELY-HONED

## A TIMELESS SETTING



# WEDDINGS & CELEBRATIONS

---

What sets apart Thornbury Castle as a wedding destination is what sets apart all great love stories: a sense of being stopped-in-one's-tracks; of never wanting certain, special moments to end.

---





Our aim is to make the outside world melt away for every bride, groom and guest that gathers to celebrate. Our dedication is to conjure a singularly unforgettable experience; a sense of romance in every photo taken, every dish served, every dance enjoyed.

A wedding, we feel, is the chance to bring the deeply personal romance between two people to life, in a way that is just as unique as the bond they share and the loved ones they have gathered. Thornbury Castle offers the perfect setting in which to do this. The timeless grandeur of its exteriors and the luxuries that lie within evoke something rooted in history and inspired by a love story all at once. These are stone walls for star-crossed lovers. These are royal occasions for every person that shares their special day with us.

Whether you're looking for a traditional-style showstopper with exclusive use that gives you full reign of the castle and its grounds, or a more intimate but no less memorable celebration, every wedding package that we offer can be tailored to suit your needs and dreams. You and your guests will immerse yourselves in the splendidly refurbished



halls, dining rooms and luxurious bedchambers; throughout the gloriously maintained gardens and grounds. Every aspect combines the highest-quality contemporary comforts and attention to detail with the same magnificent character that once saw King Henry VIII choosing Thornbury Castle as the backdrop for his wooing of Anne Boleyn, all those centuries ago.

The castle also proves a striking location for special occasions beyond weddings, from birthday to retirement parties and any other cause for celebration that might invite a more intimate form of extravagance. We offer a number of rooms of various sizes and for various styles of function. Of particular note is the opportunity we offer for you and your guests to enjoy an exclusive evening together in our dungeon dining room. The 16th century cavern lies beneath the ground floor of the castle and is home not only to our bonded wine cellar but dinner service for up to eight people. Once seated, our world-class sommelier and executive chef will guide you and your guests by candlelight through a bespoke eight course tasting menu – an unforgettable experience both on the palate and in the surroundings.









# MEETING ROOMS & EVENTS

---

Inspiring and invigorating, impressive and intimate: these are the qualities that set our castle apart as a wonderfully impactful setting for meetings, team building and training.

---







Located 30 minutes from Bristol City Centre and Bristol Parkway, our distinct event spaces are able to accommodate up to either 24 or 66 guests. Every booking brings with it the sense of having stepped out of everyday life. Having stepped into a place that is steeped in both the historic grandeur and refined attention-to-detail that we hope will also characterise your own interactions while with us.

Dating back over 500 years, The Baron's Sitting Room offers a more intimate retreat and includes use of the private Chancellor's Lounge. Both spaces offer splendid views of the grounds and evoke a time when even the smallest gatherings of dynamic characters could conjure the most magnificent, trajectory-changing ideas. For larger events, the singular majesty of our grand Tudor Hall ensures that everybody who passes through its entranceway can't help but feel energised. Embrace the inspiration that bounces from the striking stone walls and the original fireplace which dates back to 1511.

## OF EVERYDAY LIFE

## STEPPING OUT



While each event space differs in scale, both options include a wealth of high-quality, complimentary extras, including inclusive 3 Rosette food and beverage packages. Guests often judge a venue by the quality of the nourishment and refreshment it provides. In keeping with the surroundings, we make sure our freshly prepared and locally sourced offerings are fit for a king or queen, but flexible enough to be enjoyed by all.









## LOCALLY SOURCED

Beyond the event spaces themselves, guests are able to enjoy strolls, picnics and drinks receptions amidst the natural beauty of our gardens and grounds, which also provide the perfect backdrop for exciting outdoors team-building and corporate away days. For those who wish to extend the event into the evening and overnight, we also offer a range of luxurious, one-of-a-kind bedchambers, to slumber in the aftermath of a productive, enjoyable day, like the Tudor royalty who once graced these rooms all those years ago.

Exclusive use of the castle, including all event spaces, lounge areas, bedchambers and gardens is perfect for a truly memorable event which is sure to impress all guests.



## OFFERINGS









CASTLE ST, THORNBURY  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE, BS35 1HH

+44 (0) 1454 281 182

—

[WWW.THORNBURycastle.CO.UK](http://WWW.THORNBURycastle.CO.UK)