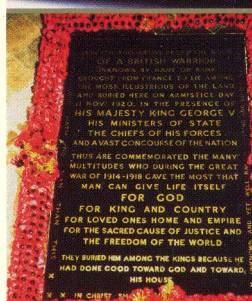
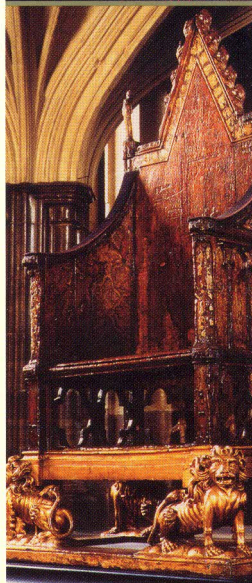


A Brief History

- c 960** : First Benedictine monks settle at Westminster
- 1065** : December 28th.
Abbey dedicated
- 1066** : Christmas Day. First Coronation in the Abbey of William the Conqueror
- 1245** : Henry III begins building the present church
- 1301** : Coronation Chair made.
The Chair has been used at every Coronation since 1308.
- 1400** : Geoffrey Chaucer buried in South Transept
- 1503** : Lady Chapel begun
- 1540** : Dissolution of the monastery by Henry VIII
- 1560** : Elizabeth I establishes the Abbey as a collegiate church
- 1745** : West Towers completed
- 1920** : Unknown Warrior buried in the Nave
- 1953** : Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II



- 1997** : Funeral of Diana Princess of Wales
- 2002** : Funeral of Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother



English



WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Welcome to

HOUSE OF GOD ~ HOUSE OF KINGS

Experience a thousand years of history

Welcome to Westminster Abbey

Since the crowning of William the Conqueror here in 1066, the Abbey has been the nation's "Coronation church". It is also the burial and memorial place of numerous famous figures from the last one thousand years.

A tradition of prayer

Above all, the Abbey is a living church - a place for Christian worship. Each hour, for a minute or so, we pause to pray. You are invited to join in - or you might prefer to simply pause for some moments of quiet reflection.

You are also welcome to come to our regular services at the Abbey and a priest or chaplain is always available for private consultation.

Ask for more details at an Information Point.

A tradition of welcome

The Abbey was founded in 960 AD as a Benedictine monastery. Then and now, our focus is on worship and on welcoming visitors. We hope you enjoy sharing the sights, sounds and special atmosphere of this extraordinary church.

A tradition of giving

Westminster Abbey is entirely self-funding. It receives no financial support from the State, the Crown or the Church. Hence, we rely heavily on visitors' entry fees and donations to pay for the Abbey's daily running and conservation.

By supporting us today, you have joined millions of others who have made a difference to the Abbey's safe-keeping.

Getting around

This leaflet can be read alongside the audio guide, available from an Information Point. Numbers here correspond both with signs around the Abbey and numbering on the audio guide.

Regular guided tours are also available, led by a verger - ask at an Information Point

You are in the North Transept, often known as the Statesmen's Aisle because many prime ministers are memorialised here.

You are now ready to enter the North Ambulatory through the gilded gates on your left....

1-7 North Ambulatory, Tombs and Chapels

Look out for the tombs of Edward I and Henry III - and get your first glimpse of the Shrine of Edward the Confessor.

8 Tomb of Elizabeth I and Mary I

Elizabeth I (1533-1603) and her half-sister Mary Tudor (1516-58) are both buried in this tomb. It bears only the effigy of Elizabeth, with her face modelled on her death mask.

9-11 Chapel of Henry VII (The Lady Chapel)

Chapel of the Order of the Bath. Notice especially the fan-vaulted ceiling, the tomb of Henry and his wife Elizabeth of York and the Royal Air Force chapel with the Battle of Britain window.

12 Mary, Queen of Scots

Mary (1542-87) was arch-rival to Elizabeth I who imprisoned and eventually executed Mary. Mary's son, who became James I of England, had this tomb built.

13 Coronation Chair

This oak chair, made on the orders of Edward I in 1301, has been used at every coronation since. There's another glimpse of the Shrine of Edward the Confessor behind the chair (although this delicate area is not open to the public).

14-17 Tombs, Chapels and Poets' Corner

The resting places of kings and dignitaries lead the way into Poets' Corner. Geoffrey Chaucer's tomb, under the blue stained glass window, began the tradition of literary commemoration here. Today, around 120 writers, poets, actors, musicians and artists are buried or memorialised here.

Key to the plan

18&19 The Lantern, High Altar and Quire

The black-and-white paved area and the raised space in front of the High Altar are where coronations take place. This area has also been the focus for many important recent royal funerals, such as those of Diana Princess of Wales and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother.

The choir sings daily during term as well as for major State occasions.

20&21 The Cloisters, Chapter House, Pyx Chamber and Museum

As you enter the cloisters you get a sense of how the Abbey must have looked to the monks 500 years ago. Why not explore the Chapter House - and don't miss the treasures in the Museum.

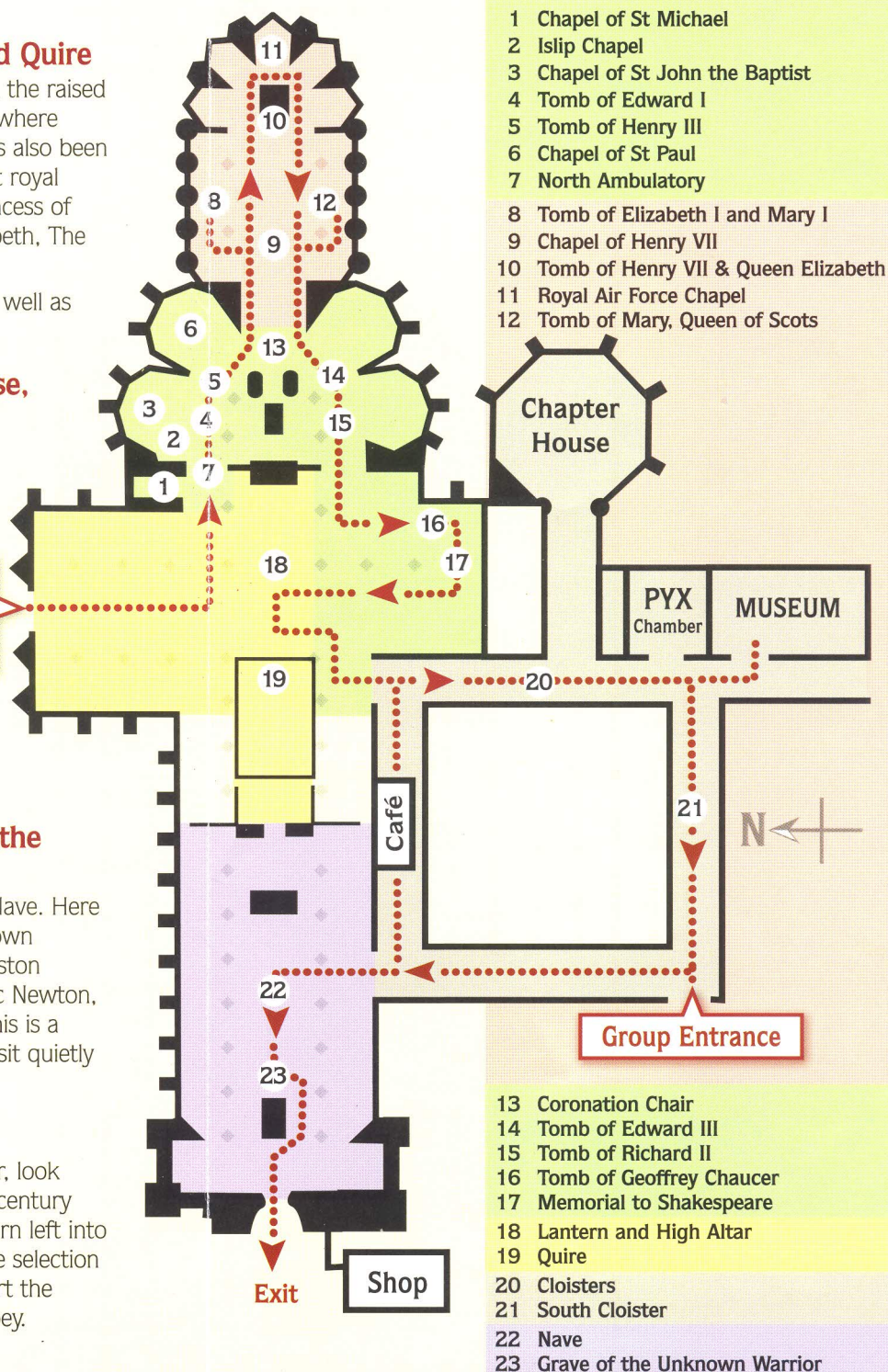
Making your way around to the door back into the Nave, you pass our coffee stand in the North Cloister.

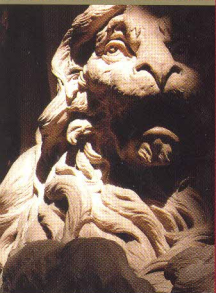
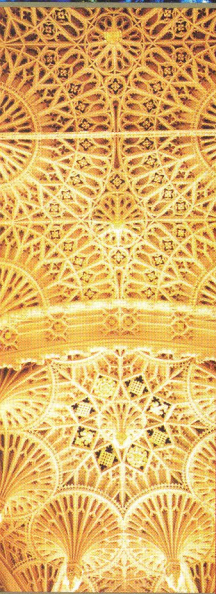
22&23 The Nave and the Grave of the Unknown Warrior

Now go through the door into the Nave. Here you will find the Grave of the Unknown Warrior as well as memorials to Winston Churchill, Franklin D Roosevelt, Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin and many others. This is a good place to pause for a moment, sit quietly and perhaps light a candle.

On your way out...

As you leave by the Great West Door, look back to see the statues of the 20th century martyrs above the door. You then turn left into the Abbey Shop which stocks a wide selection of gifts and books, all sold to support the upkeep and conservation of the Abbey.





Service Times

Sundays

- 0800 Holy Communion
- 1000 Matins
- 1100 Sung Eucharist
(in St Margaret's Church)
- 1115 Sung Eucharist
- 1500 Evensong
- 1830 Evening Service

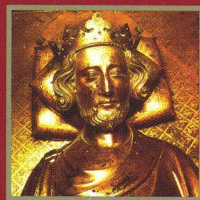
Weekdays

- 0730 Matins (0900 on
Bank Holidays)
- 0800 Holy Communion
- 1230 Holy Communion
- 1700 Evensong (said service on
Wednesdays)

Saturdays

- 0800 Holy Communion
- 0900 Matins
- 1500 Evensong

Visitors are always welcome at all our services. The above times are a guide only and may alter due to other events taking place in the Abbey. Telephone for the latest information.



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WESTMINSTER ABBEY



...is a living Church. The building almost seems to speak of what it stands for, if you will let it.

Its soaring vaults proclaim the unimaginable greatness of God. Christians believe that He is a personal being both within and beyond our everyday world. Like many other great churches, the Abbey is designed in the shape of a cross, recalling the death of Jesus Christ, the source of new life for all who acknowledge Him.



East of the screen is the Quire. Daily services have been for centuries (and still are) sung here to the praise and the glory of God. At the altars the central act of Christian worship, known as the Eucharist, Holy Communion or Mass, is celebrated. Through this service of thanksgiving, which recalls Jesus' death and resurrection, worshippers join themselves with Him by sharing the sacrament of bread and wine.

The tombs and monuments speak both of human dignity and achievement and of the Christian confidence in life after death.

Westminster Abbey was founded in the 10th century. Then, most Christians in Europe accepted the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope. In the 16th century the Reformation brought many changes to the organisation and worship of churches throughout Europe. The Church of England became independent of Rome. But it kept much of its tradition, while developing its own distinctive forms of worship, conducting its services in English instead of Latin and taking scripture and tradition as its authorities.