

## Windsor Castle – 4 July 2022 – England, United Kingdom

I am a fan of Rick Steves but I believe he misled me. His book on Great Britain notes Windsor Castle as being in the surrounding area of Cambridge. I booked two on-line tickets and then Google mapped our route only to discover it was a two-hour one-way trip. Not exactly what I envisioned or had in mind for an *in the neighborhood drive*.



The walkway after passing through security.

We presented our tickets and were passed through to security. I had forgotten that in England and most likely all the United Kingdom (and of course any airport) a pocketknife is treated as a weapon of mass destruction. It was bagged, tagged and I was told I could pick it up after we left the Castle. All this for a pocketknife: have to wonder what would happen if a concealed gun packing American tourist showed up.



Gate of St. George.

At the top of the rise in the first photograph is a gated entrance into a portion of the castle grounds. The gate is locked, no entry. From here you complete what is a walking U-turn and continue walking the broad pathway with very little to look at.



The other side of the Gate of St. George. The gate is locked and all you can do is look in.

Eventually you reach a point requiring a decision. Continue walking towards the State Apartments or St. George Chapel. The exit to the castle is across from the chapel so the obvious choice is walk toward the entrance to the State Apartments.

The State Apartments are a set of ceremonial rooms and/or historical rooms. The rooms include furniture, hanging artwork, at least one ceiling fresco and more. The art includes paintings by Van Dyke, Rubens, Rembrandt and others. Unfortunately, the castle isn't an art museum and the paintings are difficult to view mostly because of the height they are hung. Neither Nancy or I were awed by the rooms – I am sure they are magnificent especially from a historic point of view or interior decorated viewpoint but admittedly this isn't anything that particularly interest us.

On to St. George Chapel.



More of Windsor Castle without being able to get up next to the castle. Photograph taken through a metal fence with locked gate.



The round structure is the historical center of the castle and the mound and a previous wooden stockade were built by William the Conqueror in 1080 – 1080 is a year not part of a street address.

As far as I am concerned, again it is unfortunate that the public can't walk this area.

Windsor Castle is the largest and oldest continued occupied castle in the world. But almost all of it off limits to the public.



St. George's Chapel. The tourist entrance is the arched opening with a woman in red standing to the left of the opening.

This is a large chapel with a unique ceiling and lots of royal tombs. I enjoyed viewing the slender stone pillars with a fanning out of the roof structure from the pillar tops. As a retired construction guy, the engineering and construction of this building – long before a slide rule much less a computer had been invented – is another fascinating building to view.

However, the chapel's starkness – very few paintings or artistic touches, mostly stone tombs of horizontal laying royalty, a minimum of wood carving, and few side chapels – pales in comparison to the French and especially the Italian churches and cathedrals.



St. George Chapel



Maybe today we were jet lagged, maybe we have seen too many other state apartments (or rooms), maybe 500-year-old furniture isn't our thing but I do look forward to exploring other English castles.

Back to Cambridge for another day of walking and looking.