



Welcome to Ufton Court

Welcome to Ufton Court, a historic Elizabethan Manor house where every stone, creaky floorboard and hidden corner tells a story. A remarkable house which has stood for centuries preserving secrets from a time very different to our own.



A Brief Self-Led Tour of Ufton Court



Religious Turmoil

Ufton Court and Religious Persecution

After England's religious upheaval in the 1500s, led by Henry VIII, strict laws were introduced to weaken the Catholic faith. Many were forced to attend Protestant services or face heavy fines, while others risked execution for refusing to follow the state religion.

Ufton Court's Secret Hiding Places

Ufton Court is home to the second highest number of Priest holes in a historic house in England. These are hidden spaces. As you explore the manor, you'll have the chance to discover some of these cleverly disguised hideaways for yourself!





The Raids of Ufton Court

Ufton was raided twice, once in 1586 and once in 1599, while the Perkins family were living in the house. Although there is much to say about both raids which took place.

In 1586 the soldiers found nothing and had to leave disappointed but in 1599 there were many more rumours and when they stormed the house they found £340,000 in today's money hidden right here.





The Great Hall



Minstrels Gallery

Look up behind the door to see our minstrel's gallery, you might imagine musicians playing whilst Lords and Ladies dance at a ball, but this is a fake and was added by Mary Sharp our Victorian owner.

The Ceiling

The ceiling is Elizabethan; imagine it painted dark blue with gold stars, the Tudor roses would have been red, white and green, and the sides of the ceiling would have had images of hunting and country life.

Activity

Can you imagine Lords and Ladies dancing in this room, what might they be talking about?

What decorations might you add to your own ceiling if you were a wealthy Tudor?



The Green Room

The Green Room is named because of its colour!
This room is all about food and was the
family's dining room!

The Wooden Beams & Eaves Droppers

The beams in the ceiling are believed to have come from another building. It's possible the family had moved house and taken these beams with them!

The faces are called eaves droppers, and they are designed to remind guests that someone is always listening, so be careful what you say!



Activity

How many faces can you find
hidden in the room?
In this room is our oldest piece
of furniture, can you find it?



The Long Room



This room was once two rooms, which has since been converted into one. The two rooms were likely to have been withdrawing rooms, to go to after dinner.

Lords and Ladies

There is a big difference between how both rooms are decorated. It is thought that the men and the women of the house would have their own rooms to go to. There have been many discussions at Ufton about which side of these two rooms would be for the men and which side would be for the women.



The Long Gallery

Welcome to the very top of the house. Houses of the wealthy during Tudor times would have had a long gallery.

Why is there a Long Gallery?

These rooms would be used for exercise during bad weather. Whether you just fancy walking up and down or if you decide to play sports up here!

Some examples in other homes have evidence of Tennis being played in them. However, ours, being smaller was likely used just for walking up and down.



It is now where we store our costumes as you can see.

Activity

What games would you play in here? Cricket?
Which is your favourite costume you can see, what colours would you wear as a Tudor?



Priest Holes

Ladder Priest Hole & the Raids of Ufton

This is one of our most impressive priest holes. You can see within it there is a ladder made from one piece of wood which has been split in half. This ladder is one of only three in the country of this type that has survived!

Nicholas Owens and Priest Holes

We believe a man known as Nicholas Owens (Now the patron saint of illusion and escapology) created these priest holes, however he never signed his work for fear of being executed!

Do you think you would have found these hiding spots?





The Panelled Room

This room is believed to have been a bed chamber and is still used today as one by our visiting teachers. If you look behind the much later Georgian panels you will see behind them the original Tudor panels with the lettering IHS and MR. The panelling continues the whole way around the room, the examples you can see here are faded from the sun, but they would be incredibly bright in colour when they were originally painted!

IHS

Believed to be from the Latin meaning Iesus (Jesus) Hominum Salvator, meaning Jesus Saviour of Mankind.

MR

This refers to Mary Queen of Heaven – Mary Mother of Jesus. In ancient Catholic teachings, she was given this title. This is another example in the house of its Catholic origins.





Father Madhew's & The Oratory

Welcome to the Father Madhew's. In the 17th century religious laws had been relaxed and Catholics where able to be more open in their practice. This room is named after Father Edward Madhew who lived in this house! He would even hold services on the very top floor in a specially built chapel!



The small cupboard you find next to the fireplace is a place where he would have kept his offerings as well as recipes and cures for different illness. One of his strangest potions he made was 'To cure ye bite of a mad dog'.

Next Door

This is his small prayer room known as an Oratory. It is believed he did all the paintings, including those on the spiral staircase leading downstairs, himself.





The People of Ufton

You've seen the rooms, now its time for a quick look at the people! There have been people living on this site as far back as the Domesday book in 1086.

However let's have a look at Ufton's most important figures, starting in the 15th century.

Francis Lovell (1480s Approx)

A close advisor and friend of Richard III. Despised and referred to as 'the kings spaniel'. Lovell used to be a neighbour of Ufton, he managed to survive the Battle of Bosworth but his property was confiscated by Henry VII. Lovell went into hiding, famously asking a servant to lock him in his cellar. That servant never let him out.





Robert Weston (1500s)

One of Henry VIII's squires, who must have been popular as Henry gifted him Ufton Court! Imagine having that as your Christmas Bonus!

Lady Elizabeth Marvyn (1500s)

A resident of the house, she once got lost in the woods, however she was rescued by some of the local villagers, she set up the Ufton Dole as thanks. Giving bread and cloth to the poor.

Sir Francis Walsingham (Spymaster) (1580s)

A neighbour of Ufton.
Incredibly close to Queen Elizabeth I. Partly responsible for the execution of Mary Queen of Scots. Allegedly wrote a letter to Francis Perkins in 1586 warning him that his house was soon to be searched for Catholic evidence. No evidence was found. Perhaps he saved Perkins' life?





Arabella Fermour (1700s)

A socialite from London, allegedly regarded as a very beautiful lady, escaped the hustle and bustle of London to live a rural life. Marring Francis Perkins V. She once had a lock of hair cut off by one of her admirers, and Alexander Pope, a regular visitor to Ufton, wrote a poem about her.



Mary Sharp (1800s)

The reason we know so much! One of our primary sources of all we know is by this amazing woman. She lived here in an apartment and did huge amount of research into the history of the house. She wrote the book *A History of Ufton Court and the Perkins Family* published in 1892.

