

Holidays with a religious connection

The Diocese of Salisbury, (including Dorset and Wiltshire). Day 3: Salisbury Cathedral



The 1981 'Walking Madonna' sculpture by Dame Elisabeth Frink (1930-1993), in the grounds of Salisbury Cathedral. One of the themes in her work was portraying the divine in human form.

On New Year's Day, Sunday January 1st 2017 we visited **Salisbury Cathedral**, with its **Magna Carta** exhibition, (and the village of **Martin** in Hampshire!).



In the cloisters there is a light projection depicting important Christian values that are contained within the Magna Carta.

The main body of the cathedral was completed in only 38 years, from 1220 to 1258. The cathedral has the tallest church spire in the United Kingdom (123m/404 ft). It is built in **Early English Gothic** style.



Have you ever wondered how our cathedrals were built? Salisbury Cathedral has display cases containing some very beautifully detailed and instructive models of the cathedral being built in the 13th century and the structures and machinery that were used to build it.



Died before he was born? The cathedral floor bears a tombstone to an infant, Thomas Lambert, who apparently, according to the dates, died before he was born. This is due to the use in England at that time of the Julian calendar, whose year ran March 25th - March 24th as opposed to the Gregorian system (January 1st - December 31st). May was within the second month in the old Julian calendar, which began in March; but by the new Gregorian system that month was in fact deemed to be February, as that calendar began on January 1st. Err...no? Me neither! [See here for an explanation.](#)



The cathedral contains some spectacularly ornate tombs bearing effigies of the rich and powerful of the day, as well as past bishops. This is Sir Richard Mompesson (d.1627) and Dame Katherine his wife.



A beautifully ornate and detailed map of Salisbury Diocese created in 1958 to commemorate the 700th anniversary of the consecration of Salisbury Cathedral.



A 13th century cope storage chest at Salisbury Cathedral. A cope is a long ecclesiastical mantle or cloak, open in front and fastened at the chest with a band or clasp.

An interesting fact is that Sir **Christopher Wren**, one of the country's most famous architects, best known as architect of St Paul's Cathedral, London, was requested by the Bishop of Salisbury, Seth Ward, to advise on the repair and refurbishment of the Cathedral in the second half of the 17th century following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660.



Magda with the cathedral's spectacular font, designed by the renowned British water sculptor [William Pye](#) and installed to mark the Cathedral's 750th anniversary in 2008. It's said to be large enough to allow a full adult immersion! The cathedral's Christmas decorations were still up - it was New Year's Day when we visited.



The vaulted Early English Gothic ceiling and arches of the nave at Salisbury Cathedral.

The **Chapter House** displays the best-preserved of the four surviving original copies of Magna Carta. This copy came to Salisbury because **Elias of Dereham**, who was present at Runnymede in 1215, was given the task of distributing some of the original copies. Elias later became a canon of Salisbury and supervised the construction of the cathedral.



The Magna Carta display in the Chapter House at Salisbury Cathedral.



We finished off our visit with a cream tea in the excellent cathedral Refectory. It's set within the Cathedral with stunning views of the spire through its glass roof.



My reputation precedes me! On our way back from Salisbury we noticed locals had erected warning signs in their village.

Martin and Magda Jones

First created: January 2017

Sources:

[Salisbury Cathedral website](#)