

# Regal Legal London



Lunch at the Elizabethan Hall of Middle Temple

Visit the Royal Courts of Justice  
Lincolns Inn Fields  
Middle and inner Temple Grounds

Arriving for coffee at the Knights Templers Tavern in the City of London before you visit the grounds of Lincolns Inn one of the four Inns of Court

Then you will follow in the tradition of Elizabeth I as you take a grand three course lunch in the splendid Tudor Dining Hall in Middle Temple. After lunch we take a much-needed stroll with your guide in the grounds of Inner and Middle Temple plus viewing Temple Church before visiting the Royal Courts of Justice with its stunning gothic architecture that gives the courts a grand and imposing stature. The court building is frequently seen on the news when famous cases are reviewed here.

**Cost £52.50 Includes**

*All dependent on access on the day*

**The four Inns**, fulfil the same functions but have their own separate traditions. No precise date can be given for the establishment of the Middle Temple, or for that matter of the other three Inns of Court, though it is likely that the four Inns had come into being by the middle of the 14th century. The Temple Inn's name derives from the Knights Templar who were in possession of the site we now call the Temple for some 150 years. The origins of the Inn trace from two roots: the occupation of the Knights and the replacement of priestly lawyers by a lay profession.

**Lincoln's Inn** is the most beautiful and least altered of the Inns. Its buildings date from the late-15th century. Lincoln's Inn's lawns were used for executions during the Reformation. The Gothic chapel dates from the early-17th century. Famous alumni of Lincoln's Inn include Oliver Cromwell, John Donne, the 17th century poet and William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania. The Court of Chancery sat here in Old Hall from 1835 - 58, one of the best-known judges was Sir John Taylor Coleridge. At Lincoln's Inn it is still possible to remember scenes from 'Bleak House', Dickens' savage attack on the legal system, as hardly anything has changed.

**Middle Temple and Inner Temple** is built around a maze of courtyards and passageways. Still lit by gas, they are especially atmospheric after dark. The Middle Temple Hall has an amazing double hammerbeam roof, stained glass windows, portraits and rich carvings. It is thought that Shakespeare took part in a production of 'Twelfth Night' here in 1601. At the other end of the Hall, on the dais, is the High Table, at which the Benchers dine. This is twenty-nine feet long and is made from four planks cut from a single oak tree, felled in Windsor Park and floated down the Thames to the Temple. It was a present from Queen Elizabeth I, a discerning friend of Middle Temple, who enjoyed dining here and joining in the dancing and revels. Her portrait hangs in the southern alcove. Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh dined at this table on 18 February 1976 when the heads of other professions, the principal Judges, other lawyers, and leading persons from the nation's life, were entertained.

**The Templars.** On Christmas Day 1119 and at the instance of King Baldwin II of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and of the Patriarch of Jerusalem nine knights took monastic vows, styling themselves The Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Jesus Christ. They were quartered in the remains of the Temple of Solomon (of which today only the Wailing Wall remains) and hence the other name by which the Order was known: the Knights of the Temple of Solomon. The purpose of the foundation was the protection of pilgrims from Western Europe on their way through the Levant to visit the Holy Places. A considerable increase in the 12th century of the number making that pilgrimage and the developing conflict between Christian and Muslim made that necessary.

Once established, the Order grew quickly in its importance. Houses of the Order were founded in many European countries to recruit members and to act as rear echelons for the knights in the field in the Levant or Outremer, as it was called. The building and maintenance of their many castles there, the payment of their local mercenaries and the attendant costs were considerable. In England the Order's first House was in Holborn where the first Round Church was built, all Templar Churches being circular on the model of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Within a short time the Order was given land South of what is now Fleet Street and moved to the New Temple. The Round of the present Church was built and was consecrated in 1185 in the reign of Henry II by Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem. Part of the land formed a monastery and part remained unconsecrated. The monastic buildings lay around the present Church Court, hence the present-day building called Cloisters, with the refectory on the site of the present Inner Temple Hall. Another hall lay on or somewhat to the East of Middle Temple Lane and housed the lay brethren and other laymen. Laymen of knightly rank could serve with the Order. The New Temple soon developed connections with the King's administration and particularly with the Exchequer. In the height of the Templars' influence the New Temple was a centre of royal, diplomatic and fiscal activity. A secure site held by a religious and military Order could not be bettered for the purposes of a treasury. The Bishopric of Ely and the Exchequer were closely connected. As early as 1257 the incumbent Bishop succeeded in the Courts in a claim that his See enjoyed as of ancient right a lodging "in the houses of the Master" with rights in the Hall and other buildings. The Master was the head of the House in England, though subject to the Grand Master in Outremer. Even today that title and tradition live on. The priest appointed to the Temple Church is called "The Master"