

The Stones of Cambridge: An Introduction to Architectural History

A visit to Cambridge provides us a rich opportunity to become acquainted with architectural history. The city is home to buildings designed over the past one thousand years that were built using a diverse range of materials and construction techniques. The wealth and significance of Cambridge and the university has endowed the city with architecture that demonstrates the historical development of building types and changes in architectural styles. There can be few better places in Britain to encounter some of the most characteristic examples of European architecture from the eleventh century to the present day.

This course will provide an introduction to the history of architecture by exploring the development of buildings in Cambridge. Through lectures and site visits, we will pay close attention to the use of construction materials and techniques that have shaped the architecture of Cambridge. Examining secular and religious buildings in the city, and especially the colleges of the University of Cambridge, we will chart the evolution of architectural forms and styles, including Romanesque, Gothic and Classical, from the twelfth to eighteenth centuries. We will also discover how architects in the nineteenth centuries rediscovered these historical styles to create new architecture. Finally, the course will explore some of the most significant modern buildings in Cambridge, and consider what the future might hold for architecture and the development of the city.

Course structure:

Day 1: Romanesque, Gothic, and Gothic Revival

AM: Lecture

PM: Visit 1, Church of the Holy Sepulchre; Jesus College; All Saint's Church

PM: Visit 2, King's College: Chapel and Front Court

Day 2: Classical, Classical Revival, and Modern

AM: Lecture

PM: Visit 1, The Gate of Honour, Gonville & Caius College; The Wren Library, Trinity College

PM: Visit 2, University Library; Sidgwick Site

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