

The Iron Lady Walk: The Life of Margaret Thatcher

You may have loved her or hated her, but you can't ignore the Iron Lady. The 2011 film starring Meryl Streep is evidence of how much Margaret Thatcher continues to play a big role in our imaginations. The unending interest in Britain's first and only female Prime Minister is further fueled by the Silver Cane-organized "Iron Lady Walk". The tour takes us from Covent Garden to Westminster, through the sites where Maggie Thatcher has left her mark in the public imagination even after her death on 8 April 2013.



Points of Interest

The "Iron Lady Walk" begins at Covent Garden, where Maggie Thatcher once attended a production of Othello starring Spanish tenor Placido Domingo. It takes us through the Thatcher House in Finchley, the Wisley Chapel where she was married, and the Goring Hotel near Westminster, where she enjoyed many lunches with friends.

Margaret Thatcher House

The first stop is the Margaret Thatcher House – not her former Belgravia home that is expected to go up in the market for a whopping £35 million – but the current Headquarters of the Conservative Party in Finchley. This is where Thatcher began her political profession in 1958, and became an MP for Finchley the following year in a career that would become one of the most storied since Winston Churchill retired in 1955.

The Thatcher House used to be the offices of the Finchley Conservatives, which Thatcher represented between 1959 and up to her retirement from the House of Commons in 1992. The meeting room in the offices still fondly commemorates the Iron Lady with a huge portrait that hangs in the room.



The Iron Lady's Ride

Participants will be driven to the next location in a 1983 Police Rover SD1 car made as a replica of Lady Thatcher's own armored Rover P6 car. The original police car that Ms. Thatcher rode, remarkably at a time when most MPs were riding in Daimlers and Jaguars, is still in service as a part of a historic fleet in the Finchley Police department.

Wisley Chapel

The next stop on the itinerary is the Wisley Chapel, where the Iron Lady was married and where she also had her children baptized. Margaret Hilda Roberts, chemist and parliamentary candidate, married Denis Thatcher, who later became a baronet, in 1951 and the marriage register is still displayed for visitors to see. The couple had twin children, Mark and Carol, who were born in 1953. An interesting fact that the register reveals is that Sir Denis was previously married to a Margaret Kempson, implying that there have been two Margaret Thatchers in history!



The Goring Hotel

The tour continues past the House of Commons and 10 Downing Street, through London that has changed much since Ms. Thatcher was Prime Minister, between 4 May 1979 and 28 November 1990. We follow the route that she and her friends took often to lunch at the Goring Hotel in Belgravia. While there, we tuck into her favorites on the menu – Beed Wellington and Lobster Omelet – and even enjoy a three-course meal for £37.

Driving around Finchley, walking around Westminster to the locations that hold memories of the Iron Lady, and digging into her favorite foods is a wonderful way to commemorate this feisty lady. While we do so, we can reminisce about the days of “Red” Ken, the 1990 Poll Tax riot and the miner's strike that polarized the nation.

Date: 2014-10-27

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-discovering-the-life-and-politics-of-margaret-thatcher-article2499>