

Bamburgh Castle Screen Appeal

Dominating the coastline on the ruggedly beautiful Northumberland coastline is Bamburgh Castle. Standing guard from its rocky outcrop above miles of empty, breaker-blasted beaches it is easy to see why this majestic building has such an impressive movie pedigree.

An iconic landmark in the UK and on a global platform, the castle has welcomed some of the greatest actors during the course of movie history and has set the scene for countless epics.

Richard Burton came to Bamburgh to shoot scenes for "**Becket**" with Peter O'Toole in 1964 bringing screen idol Elizabeth Taylor on location with him.



Once the capital of ancient Northumbria, Bamburgh has a rich and turbulent history. The castle was originally built by King Ida in the 5th century and the settlement named Bebbanburgh, after Bebba, the wife of Ida's grandson.

Like the priory on nearby Lindisfarne, the castle was raided by the Vikings and rebuilt in the 11th century. There's a story behind every corner about ancient monarchs, bloody battles and early Christianity. Its harsh beauty and history has captivated directors like Roman Polanski who filmed a violent interpretation of William Shakespeare's "**Macbeth**" in 1971. In the same year acclaimed director Ken Russell chose Bamburgh as the backdrop for cult film, "**The Devils**" starring Oliver Reed and Vanessa Redgrave.

A spellbinding attraction, Bamburgh Castle enjoys more than its fair share of legends and myths. The medieval fortress is thought by many to be the original site of Sir Lancelot's castle, Joyous

Garde. In 2004 Bamburgh Castle featured in the £80 million "**King Arthur**" movie starring Clive Owen and Keira Knightley.

Over the years the castle has starred in a momentous number of historical epics including the 1952 adaptation "**Ivanhoe**" starring Elizabeth Taylor, "**El Cid**" with Charlton Heston and Sophia Loren in 1961, the 1972 film "**Mary Queen of Scots**" with Glenda Jackson and more recently "**Elizabeth**" with Cate Blanchett and Joseph Fiennes in 1998.



Ranked as one of the top seven sites in the world for archaeology importance, archaeologists from across the globe come to Bamburgh Castle each year to unearth the secrets of the past under the guidance of the Bamburgh Research Project.

Recent top finds include an Anglo Saxon royal sword, horse bones and skulls and the discovery of the castle's original guard house through which Saint Bede and the Kings Athelfrith and Oswald would have entered the castle by.

The castle's archaeological discoveries have featured on Sky's Discovery channel and the BBC series of Coast, Meet the Ancestors and Time Team.

In recent months Bamburgh Castle has been the face of an international advertising campaign designed to inspire and promote North East England as a must-see visitor destination.



Bamburgh Castle administrator Chris Calvert said: “Bamburgh Castle is a breathtaking building steeped in history. Its prime position high above the village and massive expanse of empty sand beaches offers directors a wealth of atmospheric shots which you will no doubt recognise from its many big screen appearances. From historic greats to folklore legends, Bamburgh has been the star in some of the greatest films ever made. You can only imagine what this mighty fortress’s role will be next.”

Follow in the footsteps of the movie greats and visit Bamburgh Castle.

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