Montacute House, Somerset

Montacute House is an Elizabethan country house in Somerset that offers an authentic setting in which to see important Tudor and Jacobean portraits from the National Portrait Gallery. The magnificent Long Gallery and five side rooms on the top floor provide a home for over fifty major works from the national collection. Displayed chronologically, these include portraits of monarchs such as Henry VIII and Elizabeth I alongside portraits of courtiers, explorers, and politicians such as Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and Sir Walter Ralegh.

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The Long Gallery

At 172 ft, the gallery at Montacute is the longest surviving in England. Long galleries originated as covered walkways, or corridor galleries, and by the end of the sixteenth century were a spectacular feature of many country houses. Used principally for exercise and display, they were sometimes hung with paintings, including portraits. These might depict monarchs and other important figures alongside family members, documenting the owners' social networks, ties of loyalty or political allegiances.

Partnership with the National Portrait Gallery

The long-term partnership between the National Portrait Gallery and the National Trust at Montacute was first established in 1975. In addition to the works on show in the Long Gallery, a key element of the partnership is a series of temporary displays. From March 2016 this will focus on portraits after Holbein from both collections. The displays are supplemented by a joint programme of educational events that take place throughout the season.

Montacute House

On display at Montacute House

Left to right

King Henry VIII

By an unknown artist,
mid-to late sixteenth century

NPG 496

Queen Elizabeth I

By an unknown artist, *c.*1585–1590

NPG 2471

Mary, Lady Scudamore

By Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, 1615

NPG 64

Sir Walter Ralegh

By an unknown artist, 1602

NPG 3914

Visitor Information

Montacute House is open daily, 11.00 – 16.30, from March until October.

During the winter the house is only open on weekends, 12.00 – 15.00.

The garden is open all year round.

Please visit the National Trust website for detailed opening times and ticket prices **nationaltrust.org.uk**.

Location and Transport

Montacute House is 4 miles west of Yeovil, on the south side of A3088. The house is most easily visited by car. The nearest train station is Yeovil Junction, just over 5 miles from the house. Taxis can be used to reach the house.

Facilities

A cafe, restaurant and shop are available.