



# Press Information

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## **A World Heritage Site**

Since 1978, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) has been putting the greatest manmade and natural sites onto the World Heritage Site list.

The list currently has 890 entries including the Great Barrier Reef, The Taj Mahal, the Acropolis at Athens and the Great Wall of China. Studley Royal, including the ruins of Fountains Abbey, was added to this prestigious list of World Heritage Sites in 1986 for its international, historic and aesthetic importance.

Fountains Abbey & Studley Royal estate was granted World Heritage Site status due to its outstanding collection of architecture and landscape which illustrates numerous significant stages in human history.

The estate is unique for its stunning 18<sup>th</sup> century landscape, designed by John and William Aislabie along the Skell valley. Its key feature is a formal water garden of ponds, hedges, statues, temples and contrived vistas, culminating in a spectacular view of the ruins of Fountains Abbey. The extensive remains of the Cistercian abbey include one of the finest monastic mills in Europe. The estate also includes a deer park landscaped with long vistas and avenues; Fountains Hall, an elegant mansion of Elizabethan style; and St Mary's Church, a Gothic masterpiece by the famous architect William Burges. The combination of so many historic features, so well integrated into the landscape, is exceptional.

The World Heritage Site status means they must be preserved and looked after so future generations can enjoy them as we do today.