

# The Red Carpet: A Short History [A2]

Per secoli il tappeto rosso, espressione di glamour e opulenza, è stato srotolato per mostrare il potere delle élite e ricevere l'adulazione delle masse. Dall'antica Grecia a Hollywood, ha una storia millenaria.

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Nothing says 'opulence' like a long red carpet. Traditionally, the red carpet welcomed royalty, and nowadays it is film royalty who [walk](#) on it. But what's the story behind it? Let's look back 2,500 years.

## THE GREEK ANCESTOR

The most [widespread](#) story of the origins of the red carpet is found in Ancient Greece. In the Aeschylus play Agamemnon, the king's wife, Clytemnestra, is preparing her palace to welcome back her husband after the Trojan War. The queen mentions "a floor of [crimson broideries to spread](#) for the King's [path](#)". This could be interpreted as an early mention of the red carpet, although some historians disagree. In any case, the "[crimson path](#)" [rolled out](#) in Aeschylus's play was a sign of the [near-godly](#) status of Agamemnon.

## PURPLE REIGN

Purple was the colour of royalty in the Middle Ages. The pigment used to make purple [dye](#) was very rare and expensive, so not everyone could [afford](#) to wear it. Scarlet [dyes](#) were also very [pricey](#). In the Elizabethan era in England, a series of laws that regulated which colours, [fabrics](#) and clothes each social class was [allowed](#) to wear [ensured](#) purple was only ever for royalty. [Over time](#), new [dyes](#) and fashion [trends](#) made red more popular than purple among royals, and by the 19th century red was seen as a symbol of distinction, also in interior decor.

## FASHION SHOW

The association between the film industry and the red carpet comes from 1922, when theatre magnate Sid Grauman first used the red carpet in Hollywood for the [premiere](#) of Robin Hood. At a time when cinema didn't enjoy the artistic status it has today, Grauman's idea [sought](#) to dignify the image of Hollywood by making it look more sophisticated and respectable. At the 1964 Oscars, the red carpet was [placed](#) for the first time outside the venue, and movie stars were filmed arriving in their limousines and [stepping out](#) onto it. It wasn't until the 1990s, however, that haute couture fashion became a crucial element of the ceremonial [walk](#). In 1997, Nicole Kidman [walked](#) up the red carpet in a stunning Chartreuse Dior dress by John Galliano. Glamour had arrived, and it was here to stay.

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# Glossary

- **broideries** = ricami (forma arcaica di embroideries)
- **afford** = permettersi
- **fabrics** = tessuti
- **ensured** = assicurare
- **trends** = tendenze
- **placed** = collocare
- **widespread** = diffusa
- **near-godly** = quasi divino
- **pricey** = costoso
- **premiere** = prima, premiere
- **stepping out** = uscire, calpestare
- **walk** = passeggiata
- **path** = cammino
- **dye** = tintura
- **allowed** = lasciare
- **walked up** = sfilare, camminare
- **crimson** = cremisi
- **to spread** = stendere
- **rolled out** = srotolare
- **Over time** = nel corso del tempo
- **sought** = cercare