

Regency Bath: Jane Austen Festival [B2]

Migliaia di fan della scrittrice inglese si recano nella città storica di Bath per partecipare a questo evento, che rende omaggio a una delle figure più popolari della letteratura mondiale e ripercorre gli scenari di alcuni dei suoi romanzi.



Thousands of people in [period costume flock](#) to the streets of Bath every September. The historic city in Somerset, England, becomes an immersive Regency experience, thanks to the Jane Austen Festival. Organised by the Jane Austen Centre, the annual event celebrates the well-loved author during ten days of walks, talks, shows and [balls](#). Jane Austen lived in Bath from 1801 to 1806 and the city is featured in her novels *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, both published after her death, in 1817.

A LUSH HISTORY

In the late 18th and early 19th century, Bath was a popular spa resort frequented by fashionable society. They visited the thermal baths that had existed since Roman times, as 'taking the waters' was considered good for health. The Grand [Pump](#) Room, a building adjacent to the baths and so-

named for the spa water pumped into the room from the baths' springs, was the main place for social [gatherings](#).

A LOCATION SETTING

The first half of Northanger Abbey is set in the [stately](#) city, where Georgian architecture built with cream-coloured [limestone](#) is the dominant style. Protagonist Catherine Morland meets her love interest Henry Tilney in the [Pump](#) Room and anxiously tries to find him there on every visit. The historic Assembly Rooms, designed in 1769, also feature in both novels, as well as many other Bath locations. In Persuasion, [snobbish spendthrift](#) Sir Walter Elliot chooses "a very good house in Camden-place, a [lofty](#), dignified situation, such as becomes a man of consequence."

THE LITTLENESS OF BATH

As Persuasion was published a few years after it was written, Austen worried that the Bath scene was no longer [in vogue](#). She added a [disclaimer](#), stating that "places, [manners](#), books and opinions have [undergone](#) considerable changes." She need not have worried. Many of the places described in her novels still exist today. The [layout](#) of Bath has remained relatively unchanged, so visitors can [trace](#) the characters' footsteps in real life. The Jane Austen Centre itself is located on Gay Street. Austen and her sister Cassandra lived on the street for a year after their father's death and it is also mentioned in Persuasion. Despite enjoying earlier visits, it is thought she did not like living there. Her views are likely mirrored in those of protagonist Anne Elliot in Persuasion, who reflects on "the [littlenesses](#) of a town" like Bath.

TIRELESS BEAUTY

Nevertheless, the city provides the perfect setting to transport fans back to Austen's day, taking in [a host of](#) locations mentioned in her books. Now the largest and [longest-running](#) Austen celebration in the world, the Jane

Austen Festival attracts over 3,500 people from around the world. In the words of Catherine Morland: "Oh! Who can ever be tired of Bath?"

REGENCY AND GEORGIAN

The Georgian era was a period in British history between 1714 and 1830. It was named after the kings George I, George II, George III and George IV. The Regency period refers to nine years between 1811 and 1820 when George, Prince of Wales, governed the country as Regent during the madness of his father George III. When his father died in 1820, the Prince ascended the throne as George IV. The truth about George III's [condition](#) has been much debated. Some historians believe he suffered from a [genetic blood disorder](#) called porphyria. Others say he suffered from mental illness.

Glossary

- **undergone** = subire
- **flock** = affluire
- **gatherings** = riunioni, feste
- **snobbish** = snob
- **spendthrift** = scialacquatore
- **layout** = disposizione
- **a host of** = un'infinità
- **genetic blood disorder** = patologia genetica
- **trace** = rintracciare
- **littlenesses** = piccolezze
- **longest-running** = più longeva
- **stately** = elegante, signorile
- **limestone** = pietra calcarea
- **lofty** = maestosa, superba
- **disclaimer** = avviso
- **manners** = modi
- **condition** = malattia
- **period costume** = costume d'epoca
- **balls** = balli
- **Pump** = pompare
- **in vogue** = di moda