

Europe's royal superfans flock to London for King Charles's coronation

 COMMENTS



Royal fans set up camp in The Mall, London, ahead of King Charles's coronation, May 2023 - Copyright Estelle Nilsson-Julien

By **Estelle Nilsson-Julien** • Updated: 04/05/2023 - 16:34

Some of the most ardent royal supporters have set up camp days in advance, while others are flying in the night before to enjoy a weekend of celebrations in the British capital.

Sara Martello, a tourist from Sicily, is peering through the gates of Buckingham Palace.

“I changed my flights and extended my trip by three days, because I wanted to be a part of this unique event”, she says whilst scanning the Palace forecourt.

With thousands of tourists set to flock to London for the coronation, Sara is well aware that she won't be able to get up close to the action on Saturday. “I will wake up as early as I can and come straight to The Mall. My goal is to try and find a spot from which I can see something, anything - but I don't know if that will be possible!”

On Saturday morning, King Charles will travel from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey in a golden carriage – for a ceremony which only a select 2,000 people are invited to. For the rest of the tourists and Brits heading to

Central London for the day, a major scramble to get a glimpse of the new King will be underway.

But why is Sara – like many other Europeans - so fascinated by the British royals? As a former English teacher, Sara explains that her interest is inextricably tied to her passion for Britain. She believes that the coronation has come at a pivotal time.

“I have been following the royals even more closely recently, amidst ongoing divisions. Given the issues between King Charles and Prince Harry, I want to see whether this quarrel can end and whether the family will unite.”



Italian tourist and royal fan Sara Martello outside Buckingham Palace, May 2023 Estelle Nilsson-Julien / Euronews

The regular royal fans

Paris-based Emilie Perrot is a regular at royal events. She booked her tickets to London within an hour of King Charles' coronation announcement last October.

In 2016, Emilie founded **a travel blog** dedicated to the capital. Ahead of the big weekend, she's been communicating with readers of her blog via WhatsApp. Sharing updates and tips, the group plans to meet up.

"After the Queen's funeral we all went for drinks at a London pub. It was an opportunity to come to terms with the moment and talk through our thoughts together".

For Emilie, so much of Saturday will be about soaking in the atmosphere. "I don't have a strict schedule for the day. I want to walk around, meet Brits and talk to them to get a sense of what the day means to them." She plans to roam the streets wearing her 'London Lover' T-shirt, a piece from her **collection** of London-inspired clothing.

Emilie's former career in the French marines influenced her interest for the royals. "I am fascinated by the protocol and ceremony which surrounds the British Monarchy. It's a moment in history, which transcends being pro or anti-monarchy."

Despite her enthusiasm, Emilie insists "I don't want to be labelled a royal 'fan'. I certainly won't be putting up my tent at 2am Saturday morning!"

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The committed campers

For the most committed of the royal fans making their way to the British capital from around the world, putting up a tent in the early hours of Saturday morning would be far too late.

Dana Werner, from Connecticut in the USA, travelled to London especially for the coronation. She set up camp on The Mall - the road that connects Buckingham Palace to Trafalgar Square – on Tuesday.

“I’ve got a mattress, sleeping bag, winter clothes, hats, everything”, she says pointing to her tent. Dana is surrounded by other campers, many of whom have become her friends over the years.

“The first royal event I came over for was Fergie and Andrew’s wedding in 1986. I then got hooked.”

“I love England and the royal family comes with it. I don’t follow other European royal families. I must admit I read the Unofficial Royal News every day and skip right through to the British family.”



American tourist and royal fan Dana Werner set up her tent in The Mall, London, May 2023 Estelle Nilsson-Julien / Euronews

Fans about to set off for London

Irene Sondergaard, who lives in the outskirts of Copenhagen will leave her husband and children behind on Friday night to catch her flight to London. “My husband was like ‘you go’ and offered to look after our children for the weekend!”

“My sisters and I are very interested in the royal houses of Europe. Sadly, they couldn’t come along but I knew I had to, it’s a once in a lifetime opportunity”, she exclaims.

Though her sisters can’t join her, Irene hopes to bring some souvenirs home. “I have seen that Fortnum and Mason’s have a coronation memorabilia collection which I will be checking out if I have time!”

According to Visit Britain, the coronation weekend will rake in an estimated £1.2 billion to the UK’s economy.

However, a contrasting survey by UK inbound, the UK’s incoming tourism trade body concludes that only 16% of contacted business had charted an uptick in business from the King’s Coronation and the Eurovision Contest (which takes place next week).

- [Celebrating King Charles III's new reign with a... coronation quiche?](#)
- [King's Coronation travel guide: Everything you need to know from airport strikes to how to watch](#)

For Irene, the finer details of royal ceremonies are captivating “I want to see Charles’ golden carriage the most, but I also love the magic surrounding the outfits, the jewels, the setting.”

This will be Irene’s first British Royal event, but her soft spot for the British royal family comes from the British and Danish royal family’s connection, as both branches descend from Queen Victoria II and King Christian IX.

Though Irene does not label herself a staunch royalist, she sees the royals as important role models “they don’t hold any power today but I like that they are figures of the state that you can look up to. I also know that they are by no means perfect, they have their scandals and divorces too.”