



'Dark Gate'



The ballroom also known as the banqueting hall

In 1785, the military turned Kronborg Castle into a barracks, and several rooms were converted. When the military left the Castle in 1923, it was restored and rebuilt to its state in the days of Frederik II and Christian IV.

The castle is laid out as a four-winged structure surrounding an inner courtyard. It is accessed from the north, across the moat, through the bastion to the regal main portal in the façade. Through the gatehouse you enter the courtyard which gives the impression of a richly varied, yet balanced architecture. A special feature is the stair turrets which, with their spiral staircases in accordance with the architectural style of the time, appear almost as independent parts of the structure.

There is some uncertainty to the details of the interior division and functions of the structure at the time of Frederik II. The Monarch's large chamber was situated above the gate so that he could keep an eye on traffic in and out of the castle. The Queen's chamber was at the eastern end, a gallery leading to the large rooms in the South Wing, the chapel and the great ballroom. The latter is one of the most outstanding halls in the architectural heritage of Denmark. Simple, yet beautifully proportioned and with glorious daylight streaming in from three sides.

In Denmark, the Heritage Agency of Denmark is responsible for submitting new proposals for inclusion on the World Heritage List. A special committee under UNESCO decides whether to include the proposed candidates on the list. Being nominated for inclusion on the World Heritage List does not in itself imply any new form of protection, but it does provide additional recognition and status.

A worldwide presentation of the cultural and natural heritage of mankind is given on UNESCO's website at www.unesco.org. The world heritage of Greenland is presented on the website of Greenland Home Rule at www.nanoq.gl.

The Danish sites included on the World Heritage List can be found on the website of the Heritage Agency of Denmark at www.kulturarv.dk



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Kronborg Castle World Heritage in Denmark and Greenland





Kronborg Castle



Ilulissat Icefjord



Roskilde Cathedral



The Jelling Monuments



Decorations in the chapel



Kronborg Castle with fortifications seen from south east

UNESCO

UNESCO stands for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The objective of UNESCO is to contribute to international peace and universal respect by promoting collaboration among nations. The organisation was founded in 1945, and Denmark and Greenland have been members since 1946.

Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

UNESCO adopted the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1972 in light of the increasing threat of destruction to archaeological monuments and natural areas by war, natural disasters, pollution, tourism or simply decay.

The Convention calls on all nations to promote the protection of the cultural and natural heritage of local or national importance. The objective is to identify and seek to assure the conservation of the cultural and natural heritage that is important to all the peoples of the world. The cultural and natural heritage of mankind.

Cultural and natural heritage may include monuments, groups of separate or connected buildings, cultural landscapes or natural areas. It may be works of nature, works of man or the combined works of nature and man. It may be a structure that represents an important stage of development from the point of view of history or a natural phenomenon of outstanding value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view.

The international cultural heritage and natural heritage make up UNESCO's World Heritage List. The purpose of the list is to arouse global awareness of our common heritage, thus facilitating its protection and conservation. Furthermore, its purpose is also to strengthen international solidarity in this area with a view to increasing cross-frontier scientific and economic cooperation.

Denmark and Greenland ratified the 'World Heritage Convention' in 1979, and in 1994 the Jelling Mounds, Runic Stones and Church were added to the World Heritage List. The year after, Roskilde Cathedral was included. In 2000, Kronborg Castle was added to the list, and most recently, Ilulissat Icefjord was included in 2004.

Kronborg Castle

The inclusion of Kronborg Castle on the World Heritage List emphasises the outstanding value of the castle for the entire Baltic region. From this location at the narrowest stretch of the Sound, maritime traffic to and from the Baltic Sea was controlled for centuries. Tolls from the passing ships, made a significant contribution to the Danish exchequer. Hence, it was important to emphasise the power of the king by a grand castle framed by impregnable fortifications. The location was optimal in terms of defence as well as visibility.

The Kronborg Castle was built by King Frederik II between 1574 and 1585, but it contains remains from Erik of Pomerania's late medieval fortress named 'Krogen' (the Hook) from the early 15th century. (The castle burnt down in 1629, and Christian IV, son of Frederik II, rebuilt it in his father's style.) Originally, Frederik II had in mind a red-brick castle with sandstone ornaments and a tiled roof like that of Frederiksborg Castle, for instance. However, after three years of building he changed his mind and had the almost completed façades covered with sandstone, while the roofs were covered with copper.

The magnificent architecture of the castle was inspired by Dutch renaissance with horizontal divisions of the façade and a strong cornice. In contrast to this, the towers and spires rise powerfully above the roofs to create a balanced whole. On the exterior of the building, the east side has a particularly richly ornamented façade with a magnificently crafted gable breaking the cornice line. It marks the location of two of the important rooms of the castle: the chapel and the great ballroom.

The main objective was to impress the passing vessels, for the renaissance castle was in no way fit for defence in warlike situations. That role was intended for the surrounding fortifications of earthworks covered by walls of sandstone behind moats filled with water. In addition, the land side of the fortress was further reinforced in the 17th century by a 'crown work', thus named because of its resemblance to a royal crown. At a later time, yet another line of fortification, 'the outwork', was added.