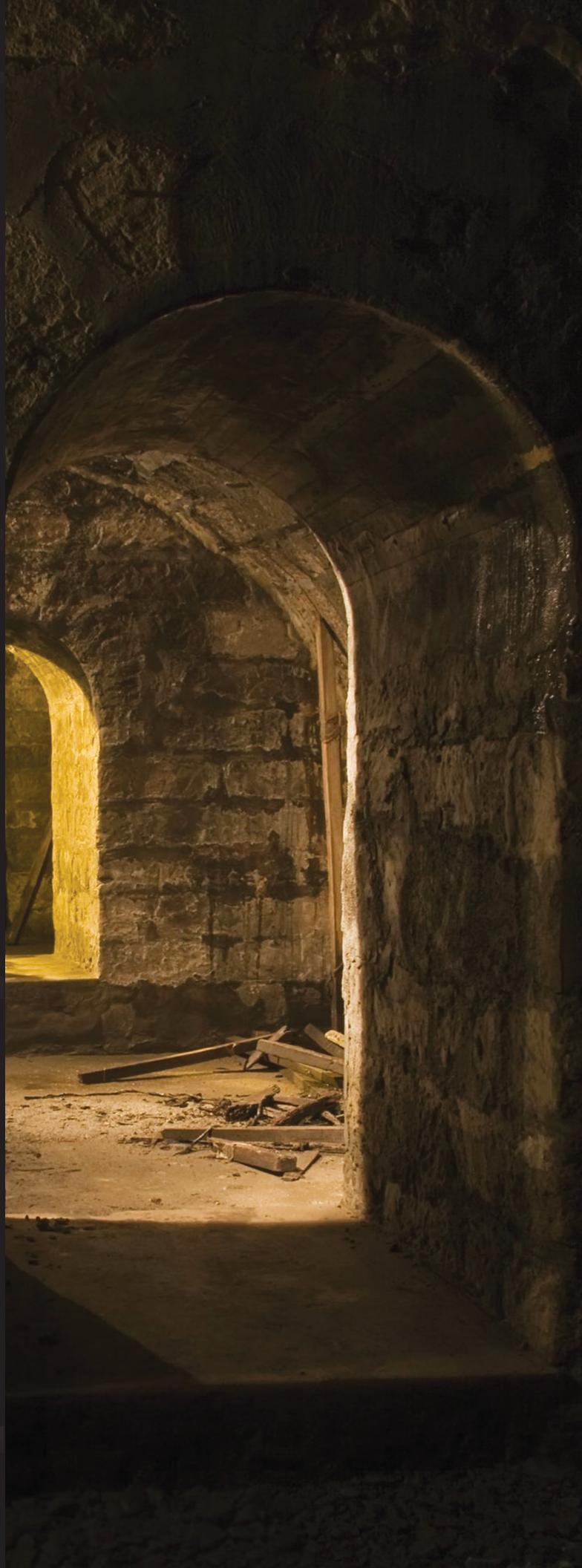


# Europe's DEADLY Dungeons

By Genevieve Northup

A few hundred years ago, people hoped never to see the village dungeon. Stories of torture, starvation and death frightened most people into behaving. Today, tourists brave lines and pay up to relive the dark, creepy past of cities in Germany, the U.K. and the Netherlands.

The Dungeons are attractions owned by Merlin Entertainments, the same company that oversees LEGOLAND and Madame Tussauds. Every location combines elements of theme park rides and live theater, relying on cheap scares, melodramatic storytelling and elaborate sets to ensure audiences laugh, scream and learn a little history. Each has a different cast of creepy characters and a slew of adventures.



Visit [www.thedungeons.com](http://www.thedungeons.com)  
for tickets, opening hours  
and more.

**Where:** Berlin, Germany

**When:** 60-min. English tours daily at 11:30 a.m.,  
2:30 p.m., 4:45 p.m.

**Watch for:** Prussian soldiers and murderers

Join the Raft Rat for a cruise through medieval sewers and glimpse the femme fatale who haunts the cathedral's crypt. Build a barricade against an enemy army, though your gun-wielding, loony comrade is probably more dangerous. Duck, cover and run right into serial killer Carl "The Butcher" Grossman's apartment.

**Where:** Hamburg, Germany

**When:** 90-min. English tours Fri-Sun at 10 a.m.  
**Watch for:** Rough seas and house fires

Listen to ghost stories while braving the rocky ocean below the decks of a pirate ship. Guard your belongings from looters during the Great Fire of 1842. Beware the lunatics and sadistic guards of the Mad House. For a frightening finale, plummet in total darkness on the free-fall ride (optional).

**Where:** Amsterdam, Netherlands

**When:** 80-min. English tours every 15 minutes  
**Watch for:** Witch hunters and nutty professors

Facing death by fire, a witch claims audience members hexed her — someone else will burn now. After the first session of Dr. Deyman's university anatomy course, you'll want to change majors because you remember how Dr.

Frankenstein's experiments went awry. And the torturer can make anybody talk, so confess before losing a few fingers.

**Where:** Edinburgh, Scotland

**When:** 80-min. tours every 10 minutes

**Watch for:** Cannibals and body snatchers

Revenge-seeking spirits lurk in every corner of the dungeons in this famously haunted city, but they are not your biggest problem. One wrong turn and bad luck leads you to a cannibalistic clan's cave. Alas, the Bean family didn't have dinner plans until you arrived. If you depart in one piece, you'll encounter Burke and Hare, two guys who earn a not-so-honest living by killing people and selling the cadavers to Edinburgh's medical school.

**Where:** London, England

**When:** 90-min. tours every 15 minutes

**Watch for:** Crazy kings and killers

During Henry VIII's reign, it is estimated that more than 50,000 people were executed. On the Tyrant Boat Ride, travel down the Thames River to the Tower of London's guillotine. You may keep your head, but luck will run out when Jack the Ripper finds you in the Whitechapel Maze. If you are still unscathed, decline Sweeney Todd's close shave ... or else.

**Where:** York, England

**When:** 75-min. tours every 15 minutes

**Watch for:** Vikings and wannabe assassins

Brace for brutes — the reality of Viking invasions

**Where:** Blackpool Tower, England

**When:** 60-min. tours every 20-40 minutes

**Watch for:** Traitors and witches

Keep a lookout for nosy passersby as black-market traders load their treasures. Pledge your loyalty to the right household during the Wars of the Roses, and avoid the Pendle Witches in the woods because things do not end well for them. When you make it out alive, have a celebratory beer with the judge, smugglers and feuding houses at Hangman's Tavern. ■

## Have little ones?

The 14th century dungeon at Warwick Castle is an optional add-on to a kid-friendly weekend adventure in Warwick, England. Stay in a knight's cabin on the castle grounds, escape the Horrible Histories maze (no age restriction), and survive the seven-room torture chambers. Fifty-minute tours of the dungeon depart every 15 minutes and are suitable for children ages 10 and up.