

Epsom

Location, Parking and Access

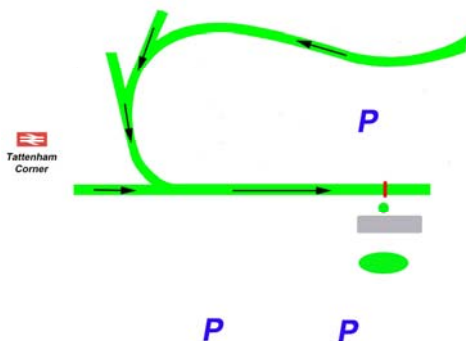


Located 16 miles southwest of London, access is from either J8 or J9 of the M25 or via the A24 from central London. Local signs will direct you to the course. For Oaks and Derby days it is important to follow the recommended routes.

Charges and arrangements for parking vary depending on the meeting but a general rule of thumb is expect to pay on Oaks and Derby days.

There are three stations in Epsom. The one providing the quickest journey from London is Epsom Town, 2 miles away, with bus transfers available. Both Epsom Downs and Tattenham Corner stations involve longer train journeys, however both are in walking distance (1 mile and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile respectively) of the course.

Course Layout



Epsom is a horseshoe shaped course, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and it is left handed (anti-clockwise). From the $1\frac{1}{2}$ start there is a very steep climb for the first 6 furlongs after which the course is downhill around Tattenham Corner and into the home straight, only rising again in the last 100 yards. 6 and 7 furlong races start from spurs off the bend whilst an extension to the home straight allows for 5 furlong

races. 5 furlong races are downhill for the first $4\frac{1}{2}$ furlongs before flattening out in the final half furlong meaning it is the fastest sprint course in the world.

There is a very pronounced camber towards the far rail in the home straight (the ground on the stands rail is 5' higher than at the far rail)

Being a well balanced horse is very important, especially in the closing stages.

Draw Advantage: Variable but nothing significant

Admission

Prices for "standard" meetings in 2009 are £20, for concerts admission is £35.

On Oaks Day the Queen's Stand is £70, Grandstand £45 and the Tattenham and Longsdale enclosures £15.

On Derby Day the Queen's Stand is £95, (a two day package costing £150 is available), the Grandstand is £55, and the Tattenham and Longsdale enclosures £20.

Grandstand admission with reserved seating is available, (£60 on Friday and £105 on Saturday)

Annual membership: £225 (includes Derby meeting)

Overview

The word idiosyncratic can be applied to a large number of UK racecourses, none more so than Epsom. Home of "The Derby" if somebody today said "I want to stage the most prestigious horse race in the world on a horseshoe shaped course, starting with a steep climb, then, as the horses race downhill at full speed, throw in a sharp left handed turn and then make the final half furlong uphill with a really nasty adverse camber to throw the horses off balance," they would be laughed out of court. Yet that is exactly the sort of course The Derby is run over and there are very few trainers around who would want to change it.

When I was a very small child we lived about five miles from Epsom and I remember standing in the front garden watching the crowds flocking to the races on Derby day, nowadays the crowds are not as large but it is still a great day out.

Admission to the enclosures is expensive, however admission to the hill is free for people on foot, although there is a £30 charge for cars. The atmosphere on the hill is brilliant with picnics and barbeques and a funfair. Big screens mean the racing can be viewed. Another advantage of being on the hill is you can go to the Derby start where the tension is palpable as the best of the seasons horseflesh is primed to race and even the jockeys tend to cease their usual banter.

The Queens Stand is the premier enclosure, an airy building that doesn't have the feel of a racing grandstand. There is tiered viewing in the front of the stand, although most of it is not under cover. On the day of the inspection the Derby Suite on the third floor was available for Queens Stand badge holders. This has viewing balconies both to the front and to the rear for viewing the parade ring. (NB this enclosure is reserved for Annual Members on Derby Day). The remainder of the stand is assigned to boxes and the Blue Riband Restaurant.

A brand new stand, The Duchess's Stand was opened in April 2009. Replacing the frankly bleak and uninviting 1920's stand the new stand is a delight. With tiered viewing to the front, plus some rows of seating it offers excellent viewing. The first floor houses three restaurants offering panoramic views, whilst the top floor houses boxes.

For those who remember the inside of the old grandstand the new stand is a revelation. Open and spacious it houses bars and various eateries.



The course Executive should be applauded for their development of the new Grandstand.

A visit to Epsom on Derby Day is something every racing fan should try at least once.

Catering

The main Blue Riband restaurant is in the Queens Stand. In addition there are numerous hospitality options available at the Derby meeting with prices ranging from £150 through to £650 a head (plus VAT) depending on the day and location.

In the Queens Stand there is a Loch Fyne outlet with prices ranging from £9 - £20. The only other option in the stand was a coffee shop and some bars selling sandwiches, priced from £2.60 to £3.80 each.

There is plenty of choice in the Duchess's Stand, although it has to be said prices are not cheap. Sample prices include pie and mash £7.50, salt beef

bloomer £6.50, fish and chips £7.50, burger meal £8.00, sausage and chips £6.50

Of course there are also the ubiquitous mobile units. Burger meals available with prices ranging from £5.80 through to £7.50. Fish and chips £6.80, noodle meals £6.50 and pasties £4.50

In the bars bitter was £4.00 a pint, lager £4.10 but there was a real ale bar charging £3.40 a pint.

Ancillaries

Bookmakers

At the Derby meeting bookmakers abound, although there was a scandal a few years ago with some dodgy unauthorised bookmakers doing a runner on the hill, however the betting on the hill is nor more strictly controlled. At the spring meeting there were about two dozen layers in the main ring and two in the course enclosure. However it should be noted the two layers in the course enclosure were offering significantly worse odds than their main ring counterparts.

Racecard

Costing £3.00 the racecard for the regular meetings are a cut above average including information above the basic requirements. At the Spring 2007 meeting there was a very informative four page section explaining all the development work. For the Derby meeting, as would be expected, the racecard is even more informative with plenty of editorial and information on the major races.

A souvenir racecard was produced for the opening of the new stand.

Toilets

At the regular meeting more than adequate. At the Derby meeting they are supplemented by plenty of temporary facilities – obviously on the hill the facilities are wholly temporary. There are the inevitable queues but there are plenty worse.

Parade Ring



For a course that stages, arguably, the most famous race in the world the parade ring is actually quite disappointing. First of all it doubles up as the pre-parade ring, secondly it is surprisingly small and compact. Having said that the fields at Epsom are never that large. It does get crowded round the ring so get a pitch early if you want a good view of the horses.

There is some button seating around the ring with some tiered viewing at one end. There is viewing of the parade ring from a balcony in the Queens Stand.

The winners enclosure is located in front of the Queens Stand and the term winners enclosure is apt, as the winner is the only horse in the ring, the placed horses unsaddle on the track in front of the stands.

Non Racing Attractions

Epsom itself is a typical suburban town with no great attractions. With its close proximity to London though there is plenty to amuse the non-racing other half. Both Kew Gardens and Hampton Court Palace are nearby.

Contact Details

	www.epsomderby.co.uk
	01372 726311
	Epsom Downs Racecourse Epsom Downs Surrey KT18 5LQ Tel: 01372 726311

Ownership	Jockey Club
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Fixtures 2012

April 25th
June 1st & 2nd (Derby meeting)
July 5th (eve) , 12th (eve) , 19th (eve) & 26th (eve)
August 2nd (eve) , 27th & 28th
September 13th & 30th

Inspection Dates

Date	Weather	Type
25/04/07	Overcast, some light showers, sunny later	6 flat midweek
07/06/08	Sunny	7 flat Derby day
22/04/09	Sunny	6 flat midweek
29/07/10	Broken cloud and warm	6 flat midweek
20/04/11	Sunny and very hot	6 flat midweek