



Wales



Wales is situated in the south-west part of Great Britain. The Welsh call their country Cymru. Wales is the land of magnificent landscapes and majestic castles.

The area of occupied territory is 20,800 km². The population of Wales is about 3 million people. The climate in Wales is generally mild, and the weather is changeable.





The largest cities in Wales are Cardiff and Swansea. Cardiff is the capital of Wales and Swansea is its industrial center.

Wales is often called "a Land of Song".
The Welsh people are fond of folk music and
poetry, singing and playing the harp.
There are a lot of choirs in Wales.
People said that Welsh sang so beautifully that
you can not hold back your tears.



Wales is famous for Eisteddfod. It's a festival of Welsh culture which is held every year. Competitions of bards and singers take place during Eisteddfod.



Three areas of Wales have the official status of "Area of outstanding natural beauty." It is coast of Anglesey island, which is popular among mountaineers and lovers of water sports; Llyn coast, famous place for surfing and windsurfing, and Gower Peninsula, famous for its fantastic beaches.





The national parks take approximately one of the fifth part of Wales. And every has it own peculiarity. For example, the Brecon-Beacons is famous for its cave Dan-ir-Ogof, which is considered to be the kingdom of stalactites and stalagmites.

Snowdonia Park (or Snowdon) attracts lovers of mountains and lakes. Parks of Wales are a special world, where human presence does not play a role.



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There are more than 400 castles in Wales. But the greatest historical value and celebrity have Harlech Castle, Caernarfon Castle, Cardiff Castle and Conwy Castle.

Harlech Castle is located in Harlech. It was built in the period from 1283 to 1290 years on the orders of King Edward the First during the second campaign for the conquest of Wales. The castle survived just fine. It presents a great interest for tourists and lovers of castle architecture.



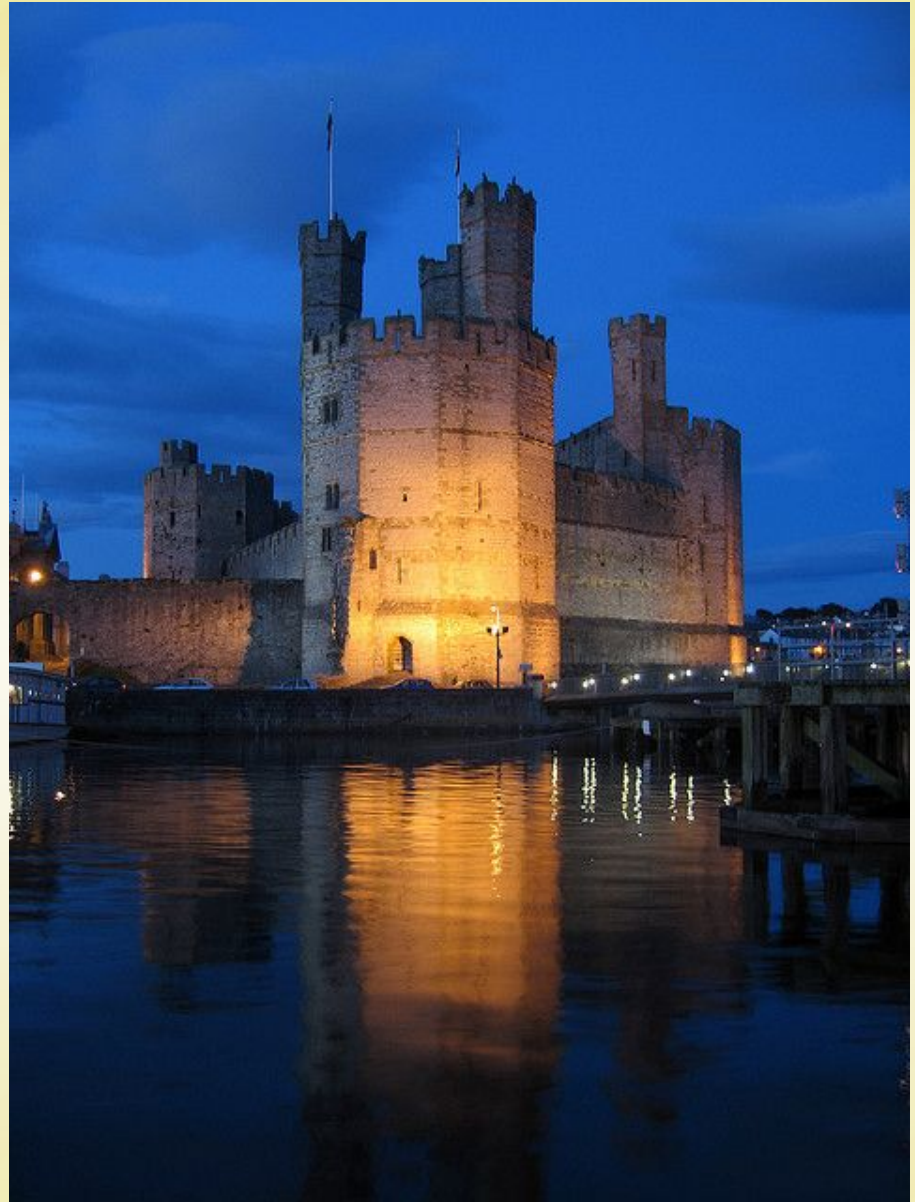
Conwy Castle also was built by Edward I in 1283-1290 years. This is a medieval castle, located in the shire Karnarvoshir. In the 19th century, in connection with the building of the railway, the castle was separated from the river. So the only one way for it - it's quite a massive bridge. The castle is opened for visits and tours to any part of it.



Caernarfon Castle is the most impressive of the greatest fortresses in Europe.

Its walls are reminiscent the era of Constantinople.

The castle is in excellent condition. Here is often hosted various national festivals.



Cardiff Castle is one of the leading architectural monuments of Wales. It is located in the heart of the Welsh capital, in a beautiful park. The walls of the castle, its towers and the surrounding it fairy tales and legends dates back 2000 years of history.





Wales has two national symbols - the daffodil and the leek.

There are two versions of how the leek has won a honor in Wales. Both are associated with St. David, the saint patron of the principality of Wales, who lived in the VI century BC.

In the first version - during one of the battles between Walsh soldiers and Saxons, which took place on a large onion field, Saint David advised the soldiers to adorn their helmets stalks of leeks, so during of the battle to distinguish enemy from brother-soldier.



In the second version - the saint patron, who for some time been forced to eat only bread and leek, found it very useful and bequeathed the plant its "wards".

Modern citizens of Wales are more inclined to the daffodils, than to leek. It is believed that these flowers begin to bloom on the 1st of March - St. David's Day. However, most people in this day still pinned to the clothing branch of leek.





Wales is full of charm and amazing country. It's land of the incredible beauty, attracting a huge number of tourists from all over the world for its stunning scenery, mighty and majestic castles, small towns with narrow streets, low, but very interesting Victorian-style villas and, of course, the national colours of local citizens.