

Taylor Swift | Songbook Trail itinerary (Nigel's Version)

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The official V&A itinerary can be found here:

<https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/va-trail-taylor-swift-songbook>

Free entry, 27 July - 8 September 2024

For a detailed analysis, read my review:

<https://nigelp.com/2024/07/29/the-big-review-taylor-swift-songbook-trail-victoria-albert-museum/>

Taylor Swift (Stop 7)

Room 40 (Fashion)



Taylor Swift's groundbreaking self-titled debut album was released when she was just 16. The young songwriter fused traditional country with contemporary pop, crafting autobiographical guitar-based songs which detailed the trials and tribulations of adolescence. Its huge crossover appeal spiked interest in country music for a new generation. This stage look is customised with designer cowboy boots.

Dress and customised cowboy boots, worn by Taylor Swift on Tim McGraw and Faith Hill's Soul2Soul II Tour, 2007; also worn at The ACM New Artists Party For A Cause in Las Vegas, 2007

Dress designed by BCBG Max Azria
Silk, polyester tulle, glass beads, sequins

Custom boots by Liberty Boot Co.
2007

Personalised Taylor Presentation Series PS-24ce Grand Auditorium Koa guitar

Fearless and 1989 (Stops 5 & 6)

Room 48a (Raphael Cartoons)



Reflecting Taylor Swift's passion for fairytales and storytelling, this theatrical costume was worn for performances of 'Love Story' on her first headline tour, the *Fearless* Tour. The song reimagines Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* as a story with a happy ending. Swift doodled '13' on her hand each night of the tour, an early taste of the unique ways she communicates with her fanbase. This album won Swift her first 'Album of the Year' Grammy award.

Costume worn by Taylor Swift on the Fearless Tour during *Love Story*

Designed by Aubrey Hyde

Satin, silk, polyester tulle, sequins

2009-10



The release of the *1989* album saw Taylor Swift move away from the world of country music, cementing her place as one of the undisputed Queens of Pop. The synth-pop-inspired album features assertive lyrics which explore her responses to living in the public eye. The album won Swift her second 'Album of the Year' Grammy, a first for a female performer.

Ensemble worn by Taylor Swift on the 1989 World Tour

Designed by Jessica Jones

Polyester, silk, acrylic, crystal, metallic sequins
2015

The 1989 World Tour was the highest-grossing tour of 2015. Around this time, Taylor took on online streaming services, campaigning for fairer compensation for artists, and championing the importance of albums as a creative medium. This look was worn for performances of 'Out of the Woods', part of a new, sleek aesthetic that marked the *1989* era.

Ensemble worn by Taylor Swift on the 1989 World Tour, during *Out Of The Woods*

Catsuit designed by Zuhair Murad

Nylon mesh, sequins, acrylic
2015

Boots designed by Stuart Weitzman

RED (Stop 4)

Room 54a (Britain Galleries)



This fisherman's cap was worn on the cover of Taylor Swift's 2021 album *Red (Taylor's Version)*. The original album marked a shift in approach, incorporating elements of rock and pop music alongside her familiar country sound. The gown on display was worn by Swift in the music video for 'I Bet You Think About Me', a 'From The Vault' track on *Red (Taylor's Version)*.



Fisherman cap worn on the *Red (Taylor's Version)* album cover

Designed by Janessa Leone

Cotton, velvet

2021

Gown worn in the video for *I Bet You Think About Me*, a 'From the Vault' track on *Red (Taylor's Version)*

Designed by Tadashi Shoji

Satin, textured crepe, polyester

2021

Speak Now (Stop 3)

Room 52 (Music Room from Norfolk House, part of Britain Galleries)



Speak Now is the first Taylor Swift album to be completely self-written, featuring songs that with 'brutal honesty, unfiltered diaristic confessions and wild wistfulness' detail her transition to adulthood. As a songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and singer, Taylor Swift is at the helm of her creative output. This ukulele was used on the *Speak Now* World Tour.

Ensemble worn by Taylor Swift on the *Speak Now (Taylor's Version)* back album cover

Dress designed by Reem Acra

Polyester, silk, glass crystals, canvas tape

Capezio ballet shoes

2023

Ukulele played by Taylor Swift on the *Speak Now* Tour

Fearless (not signposted)

Room 113 (Ironwork)



Reflecting Taylor Swift's passion for fairytales and storytelling, this theatrical costume was worn for performances of 'Love Story' on her first headline tour, the *Fearless* Tour. The song reimagines Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* as a story with a happy ending. Swift doodled '13' on her hand each night of the tour, an early taste of the unique ways she communicates with her fanbase. This album won Swift her first 'Album of the Year' Grammy award.

Costume worn by Taylor Swift on the Fearless Tour during *Love Story*

Designed by Aubrey Hyde

Satin, silk, polyester tulle, sequins

2009-10

Lover (Stop 1)

Room 126, above staircase (Britain Galleries)



This look transformed Swift into a 'playboy millionaire' for her *The Man* video. Directed by Swift, the video plays with gender stereotypes. The single is taken from her *Lover* album, which is a playful and celebratory work, in contrast to the darker tone of the preceding album *reputation*.

Ensemble worn by Taylor Swift in *The Man* music video

Shirt designed by Versace
Silk

Trousers designed by Tommy Bahama
Linen, cotton

Shoes designed by Versace
2020

Wig and facial hair worn by Taylor Swift in *The*

Man music video
Synthetic hair
2020

MTV VMA Best Direction Award for *The Man*
music video
Zinc, nickel, silver plate, brass, paint, felt
2020

Taylor Swift's director's chair back from *The Man* music video
Cotton, canvas
2020

reputation (Stop 2)

Room 119 (Britain Galleries)



This striking costume was worn on Taylor Swift's first stadium tour. With darker, more combative music and lyrics, *reputation* explores the impact of fame and the media on the life of the artist. Looking back, Swift described this work as 'a goth-punk moment of female rage at being gaslit by an entire social structure'. The snake motif, as seen on the boots, typifies the *reputation* era aesthetic.

Ensemble worn by Taylor Swift on the reputation Stadium Tour, 2018

Dress designed by Jessica Jones
Polyester, silk, metallic sequins, brass

Boots designed by Christian Louboutin

Microphone with snakes detail used by Taylor Swift on the reputation Stadium Tour
Made by Sennheiser
Metal, acrylic
2018

Boots worn by Taylor Swift on the secret *reputation* listening session in London
Designed by Gucci
2018

evermore (Stop 8)

Room 82 (Paintings)

evermore was released in 2020 as a continuation and creative conclusion of the *folklore* recording sessions. Combined, the sister albums reveal songs that saw Swift move away from her established autobiographical style, instead creating magical, wistful worlds inspired by fantasy, nature, and fiction. *willow* is the third self-directed music video by Swift. The pages from the original storyboard show how the story unfolds.



Costume worn by Taylor Swift in *willow* music video

Designed by Zimmerman

Silk, velvet, linen, polyester

2020

Storyboards for the *willow* music video

Digital reproduction of original drawings

2020

folklore (Stop 9)

Room 87 (Paintings)

folklore was a surprise album, recorded and released by Taylor Swift during the pandemic. Written in isolation, it explores dreamy narratives of introspection, longing, and escapism in intimate songs where 'the lines of fantasy and reality blur'. This cardigan became a favourite among members of the 'Swifties' fandom and sparked a tradition of a new cardigan for every era.



Cardigan worn by Taylor Swift in the *cardigan* music video

Acrylic, polyester

2020

Midnights / Records and Re-records (Stops 10 & 11)

Room 110, Prince Consort Gallery (aka Textile Vault)



This ornate costume and necklace were worn by Taylor Swift as a Cinderella-like character in the video for the song *Bejeweled*. The video features a number of celebrity cameos including Hollywood actor Laura Dern and burlesque artist Dita Von Teese, and sees Swift reject Prince Charming (played by her long-time songwriting collaborator Jack Antonoff), in a twist on the original tale.

Ensemble worn by Taylor Swift in the *Bejeweled* music video

Designed by Euro Co

Satin, silk, polyester, glass beads, faux pearls

2022

A concept album inspired by sleepless nights, *Midnights* is 'a collection of music written in the middle of the night, a journey through terrors and sweet dreams'. Sonically experimental, the album includes nods to electronic and synth-pop as well as R&B. The album broke streaming records on its release, was the bestselling album of 2022 and won Swift her fourth 'Album of the Year' Grammy Award.

Ensemble worn by Taylor Swift to announce the *Midnights* album at the MTV Music Video Awards, 2022

Dress designed by Oscar de la Renta

Nylon, crystal

2022

Shoes designed by Christian Louboutin

Crystal





In 2021 Swift began re-recording her first six albums to take back control of her catalogue. Each new edition is subtitled 'Taylor's Version' and includes reworked versions of her original compositions as well as additional tracks 'From The Vault'. This shirt dress features previous album titles and was worn when Swift was awarded 'Artist of the Decade' at the American Music Awards in 2019.

Dress worn by Taylor Swift at the American Music Awards

Designed by Joseph Cassell and Jessica Jones

Cotton

2019



Taylor Swift's second album *Fearless* was a breakthrough hit, taking her from the country charts to the mainstream. Following the sale of her recording masters, Swift embarked on a project to re-record her first six studio albums to regain control and ownership of her past work.

Shirt worn by Taylor Swift for the *Fearless (Taylor's Version)* album cover shoot

Designed by Ulla Johnson

Silk, polyester

2021



Hats have featured during significant moments on Swift tours. This top hat was used as part of her ringmaster outfit for the grand finale of shows during the Red tour. The fedora was used in the video for *22*, and a similar hat is given by Swift to a lucky unsuspecting fan every night on the current tour.

Fedora hat worn for the *22* music video

Wool, polyester

2013

Top Hat worn for performances of *We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together* on the Red tour

Designed by Marina Toybina

Wool, polyester, acrylic

2013



Taylor Swift | The Eras Tour film is now officially the highest grossing concert film of all time and highlights the elaborate staging, costume and choreography that make up a show of this scale and ambition. The film captures the spectacle of the live show, which has been an unprecedented phenomenon of cultural, social, and economic impact across the international stage.

Gown worn by Taylor Swift for the *Taylor Swift | The Eras Tour* film premiere

Designed by Oscar de la Renta

Polyester

2023

From an emerging country-pop star on her first *Rolling Stone* cover to just a handful of her *Vogue* covers, this selection of magazines illustrates Taylor Swift's rise from a promising young singer to a global superstar. In 2023, *Time* magazine named Swift their Person of the Year and created three commemorative covers for the occasion. The cat version is Swift's favourite.

***Rolling Stone*, March 2009, photograph by Peggy Sirota**

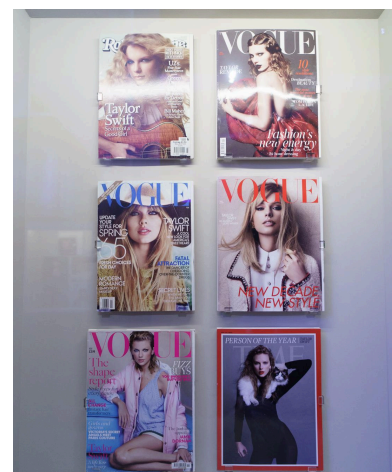
***Vogue* U.S., February 2012, photograph by Mario Testino**

British *Vogue*, November 2014, photograph by Mario Testino

British *Vogue*, January 2018, photograph by Mert Alas and Marcus Piggott

British *Vogue*, January 2020, photograph by Craig McDean

***Time* Person of the Year issue, 2023, photograph by Inez and Vinoodh**





Taylor Swift directed four music videos for tracks from her *Midnights* album, each containing fan-favourite hidden clues and Easter eggs relating to Swift lore. In and around this era Swift also released four re-recorded versions of earlier studio albums, smashing Billboard charts and sales records in the process. *1989* (*Taylor's Version*) outsold the original version within the first week of its release.

***Fearless* (*Taylor's Version*) record (2021)**

***Red* (*Taylor's Version*) record (2021)**

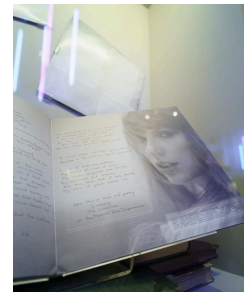
***Midnights* record (2022)**

***Speak Now* (*Taylor's Version*) record (2023)**

***1989* (*Taylor's Version*) record (2023)**

Paper

In February 2024 Swift announced her forthcoming album *The Tortured Poets Department* as she received the Best Pop Vocal Album of the Year Grammy Award for *Midnights*. An example of her extraordinary creative output this double album features 31 tracks. Its eclectic mix of poetic and emotional songs reference a range of female artists including Patti Smith, Stevie Nicks and Clara Bow.



***The Tortured Poets Department* Album (2024)**

This summer Taylor Swift | The Eras Tour arrived in the UK, galvanising the British 'Swifties' - one of pop music's most devoted, engaged and influential fandoms. Creativity as an expression of their united love of all things Swift is encouraged, and the swapping of friendship bracelets is a key trend, inspired by Swift's song lyrics... "so make the friendship bracelets, take the moment and taste it."

Taylor Swift | The Eras Tour Poster and friendship bracelets



The Tortured Poets Department (Stop 12)

Room 25, under staircase (Sculpture)



The Tortured Poets Department represents Taylor Swift's current era. The album's release - over a year into her ongoing *Taylor Swift | The Eras Tour* - prompted changes to the show setlist to reflect the inclusion of the new era. This ensemble was worn by Swift in the video for the lead single *Fortnight*, which fuses monochromatic elements of B-movie sci-fi with a Victorian gothic aesthetic.

Ensemble worn by Taylor Swift in the *Fortnight* music video

Top designed by UNTTLD

Faux leather

2024

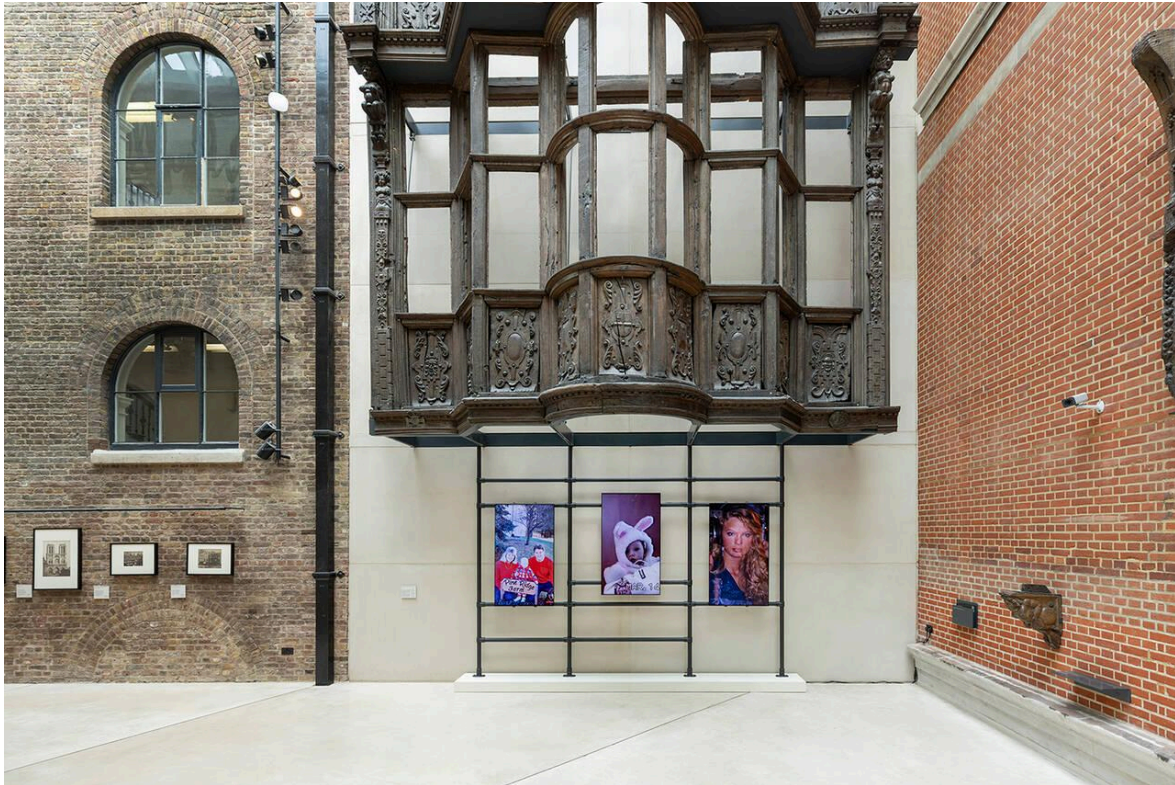
Skirt designed by Elena Velez

Faux leather

2024

Childhood (Stop 13)

Room 64B (Medieval & Renaissance)



Born in Pennsylvania on 13 December 1989, Taylor Swift began writing songs at a young age. The little girl with big dreams can be seen here in a selection of childhood photos, alongside the music video for 'The Best Day', which celebrates Swift's relationship with her mother. Her talent for songwriting and performing would eventually catapult her to international stardom.