



Works of art Factum Arte's facsimile of Tutankhamun's tomb (left) and of Paolo Veronese's *The Wedding Feast at Cana*; the Lascaux grotto in France (below, left)



CULTURE

NEAR PERFECT

Next time you're on holiday and think you're basking in the glory of an ancient relic that's survived the ravages of time, it may be worth checking you're seeing the real McCoy.

With some of the world's most important historical sites unwittingly damaged by visitors (particularly by the carbon dioxide in breath), access is increasingly being restricted – and the trend for producing top-notch replicas nearby has boomed.

The tomb of Tutankhamun, for example, re-created by experts Factum Arte, opens later this year at the entrance of the Valley of the Kings in Egypt. But is it still worth a trip if it's not the genuine article? Adam Lowe, director of Factum Arte thinks so. 'Visiting the kind of high-resolution facsimiles produced today can rival the experience of seeing a heavily restored original,' he says. Here are five of the best to see for yourself:

1. LASCAUX CAVES, FRANCE

The iconic Palaeolithic cave drawings in Lascaux were replicated in 1983 and

located 200m away on the same hill as the original.

2. CAVE OF ALTAMIRA, SPAIN

Visitors' breath caused phosphorescent micro-bacteria to grow inside the cave and on the painted ceiling. A fibreglass facsimile, the *Neocueva*, was opened in 2001 at the nearby Altamira Museum.

3. PAOLO VERONESE'S THE WEDDING FEAST AT CANA, VENICE

While the original is in the Louvre, a replica of the 450-year-old masterpiece by Factum Arte hangs in its original place in the Palladian Refectory, Venice.

4. THE ROSETTA STONE, THE BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON

The replica is located just one room away from the original. The latter is protected by heavy glass, while you can smudge the replica with your fingerprints as much as you'd like.

5. ST MARK'S CAMPANILE, VENICE

The bell tower of St Mark's Basilica was re-created brick for brick and unveiled in 1912 after the original collapsed in 1902.

Words by Zane Henry. Photographs: Factum Arte; C Sappa/De Apollini/Getty Images; Shutterstock; Nick Morris; Eiv Andriessen

