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LUXE City Guides recommend



The main geographical feature of the city is the River Thames, which meanders through central London, dividing it into northern and southern halves. The central area and the greatest number of important sights, theatres and restaurants are within the Underground's Circle Line on the north bank of the river. In the past decade, however, the south bank of the river has been transformed into one of London's must-see district, with attractions such as Borough Market, the London Eye, Shakespeare's Globe theatre and the Tate Modern art gallery. The tourist-ridden West End includes Soho, Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly Circus, Leicester Square and Regent St. The East End, so beloved of Ealing comedies, lies east of the Circle Line; it used to be the exclusive preserve of the Cockney but is now a cultural melting pot.

There are interesting inner-city suburbs in North London, including Islington and Camden Town, with leafy Hampstead further north. Further south, London includes a mix of poor, dirty, graffiti-ridden suburbs, and increasingly gentrifying areas like Clapham and, to an extent Brixton.

SIGHTS

Buckingham Palace

Built in 1705 as Buckingham House for the duke of the same name, this palace has provided the royal family's London lodgings since 1837, when St James's Palace was judged too old-fashioned and insufficiently impressive. It is dominated by the 25m-high Queen Victoria Memorial at the end of the Mall. Tickets for the palace are on sale from a kiosk in Green Park. After a series of crises and embarrassing revelations in the early 1990s, the royal spin doctors cranked

things up a gear to try and rally public support behind the royals once again, and it was decided to swing open the royal doors to the public for the first time.

*Buckingham Palace Rd
St James*

tel: (020) 7766 7300

*underground rail: St James's Park, Victoria, Green Park
09:30 - 16:30 28 Jul-25 Sep, timed ticket with
admission every 15min*

St Paul's Cathedral

Occupying a superb position atop Ludgate Hill, one of London's most recognisable buildings is Sir Christopher Wren's masterwork, completed in 1710 after the previous building was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. The cathedral is undergoing a huge restoration project to coincide with its 300th anniversary in 2010, so some parts may be under scaffold when you visit. Along with its fascinating history and its impressive interior, people are usually most interested in climbing the dome for one of the best views of London imaginable. It's actually three domes, one inside the other, but it made the cathedral Wren's tour de force and only a handful of others throughout the world (mostly in Italy) outdo it in size.

St Paul's Churchyard

St Paul's

tel: (020) 7236 4128

underground rail: St Paul's



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Tate Modern

During its first six years the Tate Modern gallery was wildly successful because of its breathtaking appearance. Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron won the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize for their millennial transformation of Bankside Power Station, with refurbished Turbine Hall as the dramatic entrance space. The rearrangement of its permanent works is a refreshing bonus, rather than a vital reinvention. Watch out for the stunning temporary exhibitions.

Queen's Walk

Bankside

tel: (020) 7887 8888

*underground rail: St Paul's, Southwark, London Bridge
10:00 - 18:00 Sun-Thu, to 22:00 Fri & Sat*

St James's Park

Forget you're in the heart of the most dynamic city on earth by strolling through one of London's best city parks. The view of Buckingham Palace from the footbridge spanning St James's Park Lake is stunning. The large lake, with its swans and other waterfowl, acts as a focal point, while the flowerbeds are a blaze of summer colour. Of course, at the merest hint of sunshine, it's not just the flowers that come out, but hordes of sunbathers who drape themselves across the grass, the benches and the rentable deck chairs.

The Mall

St James's

tel: (020) 7930 1793

*underground rail: St James's Park
05:00 -dusk*



London

London Eye

With an extended lease until 2028, the London Eye made appearances in TV series such as Dr Who. Of course, the success of the 135m-tall Eye is down to its sweeping views of this great city. On a good day, you can see 40km in each direction – west to Windsor and east nearly to the mouth of the Thames River. Try a private capsule, which offer afternoon tea and wine tasting.

Jubilee Gardens

South Bank

tel: 0870 500 0600

underground rail: Waterloo

10:00 - 20:00, to 21:00 Jun-Sep, closed 1 week in Jan

DINING



© Ali Bullock

Tom Aikens

The Tom of the title made his name by picking up two Michelin stars at Pied à Terre by the time he was only 26. He returned with this handsome restaurant

in 2003 and, three years later, the even more relaxed Tom's Kitchen nearby. The food here is excellent, with phenomenal starters like braised scallops with pork belly and partridge with truffled mash. There is a great tasting menu with accompanying wines.

43 Elystan St

Chelsea

tel: (020) 7584 2003

underground rail: South Kensington

lunch & dinner Mon-Fri

Cinnamon Club

Domed skylights, high ceilings, parquet flooring and a book-lined mezzanine - this just had to be a library in a former life - and the hushed, efficient staff only add to the illusion. The atmosphere is colonial club and the food modern - or perhaps palace - Indian. Breakfast, which includes both Indian and English dishes, is also served.

Old Westminster Library

30 Great Smith St

Westminster

tel: (020) 7222 2555

underground rail: St James's Park

Hakkasan

This basement restaurant - hidden down a most unlikely back alley, combines celebrity status, stunning design, persuasive cocktails and sophisticated Chinese food to great success - it was the first Chinese restaurant to receive a Michelin star. The low, nightclub-style lighting is intimate, while the long, glamorous bar is a great place for truly inventive cocktails. You should book in advance for dinner, or do as Londoners do, and lunch in the informal Ling Ling lounge.

8 Hanway Pl

Bloomsbury

tel: (020) 7907 1888

underground rail: Tottenham Court Road

Capital

Of the five restaurants in London to have won two Michelin stars, the Capital behind Harrods department store is probably the least known - and so much the

better. The modern yet warm décor, the welcoming and accommodating staff and chef Eric Chavot's award-winning dishes - a large, glass plate like an artist's palate of duck preparations called assiette Landaise, pan-roasted lobster with crab ravioli, roasted fillet of venison served with pan-fried foie gras - all remain our secrets. And now yours.

Knightsbridge

22-23 Basil St

tel: (020) 7589 5171

underground rail: Knightsbridge

Royal Exchange Grand Café & Bar

This stunning café sits in the middle of the covered courtyard of the beautiful Royal Exchange Bank building, which is situated right in the heart of the business district. The food runs the gamut from sandwiches to oysters, fisherman's pie and seafood platters. It's the perfect place for an informal business meeting, whether it be for breakfast, lunch or dinner. There's also a private dining area available for hire.

City

Threadneedle St

tel: (020) 7618 2480

underground rail: Bank

08:00 - 23:00 Mon-Fri

ENTERTAINMENT

Elemis Day Spa

This incredible Mayfair spa is almost ridiculously elaborate and features themed suites: Balinese, Moroccan, the purple room and the emerald room. Upmarket and offering a huge range of services, this is one hell of a place to treat yourself. Book ahead.

Bond St

West End

tel: (020) 8909 5060

underground rail: Bond St

Wigmore Hall

This is one of the best concert venues in town, not only because of its fantastic acoustics, beautiful Art Nouveau hall and great variety of concerts and

recitals, but also because of the sheer standard of the performances. Built in 1901 as the recital hall for Bechstein Pianos, it has remained one of the top places in the world for chamber music.

36 Wigmore St

Mayfair

tel: (020) 7935 2141

underground rail: Bond St



© Dough Mckinlay. Lonely Planet Images.

Vertigo 42

The stratospheric views from this 42nd-storey champagne bar are matched only by the extensive champagne menu. Seats are arranged around the glass-walled circular space, where you sip champagne while taking in an unforgettable 360-degree view. Evenings are the better time to visit, when you can watch the lights come on across London. The crowd, not surprisingly, is as rarefied as the view. For security reasons you must book ahead.

42nd floor

25 Old Broad St

Tower 42

tel: (020) 7877 7842

underground rail: Bank, Liverpool St

closed Sat & Sun

Spitalfields Market

Although the new retail development has encroached on the original market, it's still a vibrant place. Pack your suitcase full of things to take home at the equally



Asia Miles



DRAGONAIR



CATHAY PACIFIC

London

popular but food-orientated Borough Market. Nearby Brick Lane, Dray Walk and Cheshire St are full of quirky shops and vintage dens. Come here if you want to see London at its hippest, and search out small boutiques for something unique.

Brushfield St
underground rail: *Liverpool St*
10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sun,
Fine Foods Market
10am-5pm Thu, Fri & Sun

Lamb & Flag

Good pubs can be hard to come by in over-touristy Covent Garden, but the Lamb & Flag makes up for any character or soul lost in the area – the interior is over 350 years old, with creaky wooden floors and winding stairs, there's live jazz on Sunday afternoons and come sunshine or summer evenings, it's a miracle if you can approach the bar for all the people crowding outside. Its setting is equally charming: the main entrance is on top of a tiny cobbled street, but you can also reach it from the backstreet donkey path that'll make you think of Victorian England.

33 Rose St
tel: (020) 7497 9504
underground rail: *Covent Garden*

HOTELS

Threadneedles

Discreetly located in the heart of the City, Threadneedles is an elegant boutique hotel that has been converted from a 19th-century bank. The centrepiece is the grand circular lobby, which is covered with a majestic hand-painted glass dome. Staff are particularly attentive to the needs of business travellers, who are supplied with personalised business cards on arrival. Do business over an award-winning 'power breakfast' at its Bonds restaurant.

5 Threadneedle St
City
tel: (020) 7657 8080
underground rail: *Bank*



© Jonathan Smith. Lonely Planet Images.

Brown's

This stunning five-star hotel was created in 1837 from 11 houses joined together. Some traditional English features include stained-glass windows, Edwardian oak panelling, working fireplaces and gilt mirrors. The updated rooms have soft colours and artwork by young English artists. In the heart of fashionable Mayfair, Brown's has a gym and spa that are both private, and the concierge service is renowned for being impeccable. Elegant private meeting rooms can also be hired.

30 Albemarle St
Mayfair
tel: (020) 7493 6020
underground rail: *Green Park*

Halkin

Fashionable Halkin is for those wanting a minimalist approach. Bedroom doors are hidden within curved wooden hallways, and rooms are filled with natural light, cream walls and wood panelling. Staff, who wear Armani-designed uniforms, are as stylish as the rooms, and offer a traditional concierge service. Nestled into a quiet street, Halkin is close to the shopping, parks and galleries of Knightsbridge and Mayfair. Nahm, on the ground floor, is one of London's best Thai restaurants.

5 Halkin St
Hyde Park
tel: (020) 7333 1000
underground rail: *Hyde Park Cnr*

Mandeville

The townhouse exterior of this wonderful deluxe hotel gives no clue as to the luxurious and vibrantly coloured rooms inside. Relax with an organic cocktail in the explosively coloured DeVigne Bar, or take in the unforgettable view from the roof terrace of the Penthouse Suite. Private rooms, including the vibrant Red Room, which cater for up to 50, are available for business meetings. It's perfectly situated in fashionable Marylebone, with its eclectic boutiques and speciality shops.

Mandeville Pl
tel: (020) 7935 5599

Dorchester

This opulent tour de force has long been the hotel of choice for movie stars, fashion designers and models, and those with money to spend and an image to cultivate. The lobby is possibly the most lavish in London and the enormous ballroom, with its sparkling mirrored walls, remains one of the most grand, and perfect for larger functions. Rooms offer a mixture of antique and individual furniture: four-poster beds, chaise lounges and roaring fireplaces evoke an English country-house feel.

Park Lane
Mayfair
tel: (020) 7629 8888
www.dorchesterhotel.com
underground rail: *Hyde Park Corner*

FAST FACTS

Population

7300000

Language

English

Currency

Pound Sterling
GBP

Money & cost

London is extremely expensive. Many restaurants add a 'discretionary' service charge to your bill; in others, you're expected to leave a tip. Round up cab fares to the nearest pound.

When to go

London is a year-round tourist centre, with most attractions staying open in winter. Naturally, your best chance of good weather is summer – a time of huge crowds and inflated prices.

Electricity

240V
50Hz

Phone

country dialling code: 44
mobile network: GSM 900

Local Cathay Pacific contact information

Reservation numbers: 44 (20) 88348888
Check-in counters: Heathrow Airport, Terminal 3, Zone B



London

LUXE CITY GUIDES RECOMMEND

The following suggestions are selected exclusively for Cathay Pacific by LUXE City Guides, the consummately stylish pocket travel guide, packed with astute, opinionated information for the busy and sophisticated visitor.

Accommodation

The Soho Hotel. The fashion and media set can't get enough of this former carpark touched with Kit Kemp's style stick, now one of London's choicest inns with spacious rooms in signature stripped back English country meets metro-eccentric décor, tucked down a quiet street in the thick of London's entertainment district.

4 Richmond Mews, W1 / T: Piccadilly Circus / +44 020 7559 3000 / firmdalehotels.com

Restaurants

The Wolseley. Carbon and cream marble ultra-glam verve and vibe café-salon with Euro menu and wines, in a gorgeous restored car showroom, heaving with movers and shakers from brekky to nightcap.

160 Piccadilly, W1 / T: Green Park / +44 020 7499 6996 / daily.thewolseley.com

La'Anima. Scene queen in travertine and limestone buzzing with the city's flitterati delicately perched on white leather chairs and tucking into delicious southern Italian morsels.

1 Snowden St, EC2A / T: Liverpool St / +44 020 7422 7000 / *breakfast, lunch & dinner Mon-Fri* / lanima.co.uk

Great Queen St. Basic, inspired, meaty, nostalgic, cramped, simplistic, brilliant, chaotic, gutsy and excellent gastropub. Book now.

32 Gt Queen St, WC2 / T: Holborn / +44 020 7242 0622 / *closed Sun & Mon lunch*

Bar

London is all about private clubs, but you'll need contacts/concierge. Of these, Shoreditch House / Ebor St, E1 / +44 020 7739 5040 / shoreditchhouse.com / is hip and happening. Otherwise, the Connaught Bar, designed by the ubiquitous David Collins, is a den of sophistication and excellent cocktails with bar menu from star chef Hélène Darroze, and is open to all.

The Connaught / Carlos Pl, W1 / T: Bond St / +44 020 7499 7070 / *Mon-Sat 4pm-am*

Spa

Beauty à la Carte. Small but perfectly formed haven secreted inside providore extraordinaire Fortnum & Mason, with an excellent, extensive menu for head to toe pampering.

Fortnum & Mason / 181 Piccadilly, W1 / T: Green Park / +44 020 7973 4094 / *closed Sun* / fortnumandmason.com

Shopping

Dover St. Market. Rei Kawakubo's one-stop fashion, art and design furnace over six floors, with her own Comme label plus hot and soon-to-be-hot names and cute Rose Bakery caff.

17 Dover St, W1 / T: Green Park / +44 020 7518 0680 / *closed Sun* / doverstreetmarket.com

Activities

The Wallace Collection. This lovely private townhouse holds a treasury of joys including C.18th French painting, porcelain and funny, plus pretty courtyard café.

Hertford House / Manchester Sq, W1 / T: Bond St / +44 020 7563 9500 / *daily 10am-5pm* / wallacecollection.org

Sir John Soane's Museum. Stacked to the rafters with art, sculpture, wonders and curiosities. The 1st Tue of each month 6-9pm the museum is candlelit, but arrive early, the queue is heinous. A unique treat.

13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2 / T: Holborn / +44 (0) 20 7440 4263 / *Tue-Sat 10am-5pm* / soane.org

Borough Market. 'London's Larder' is a delicious day out, but avoid cram packed Sat like you would a dose of Ebola.

Borough High St / T: London Bridge / *Thu 11am-5pm, Fri 12pm-6pm, Sat 9am-4pm* / boroughmarket.org.uk

