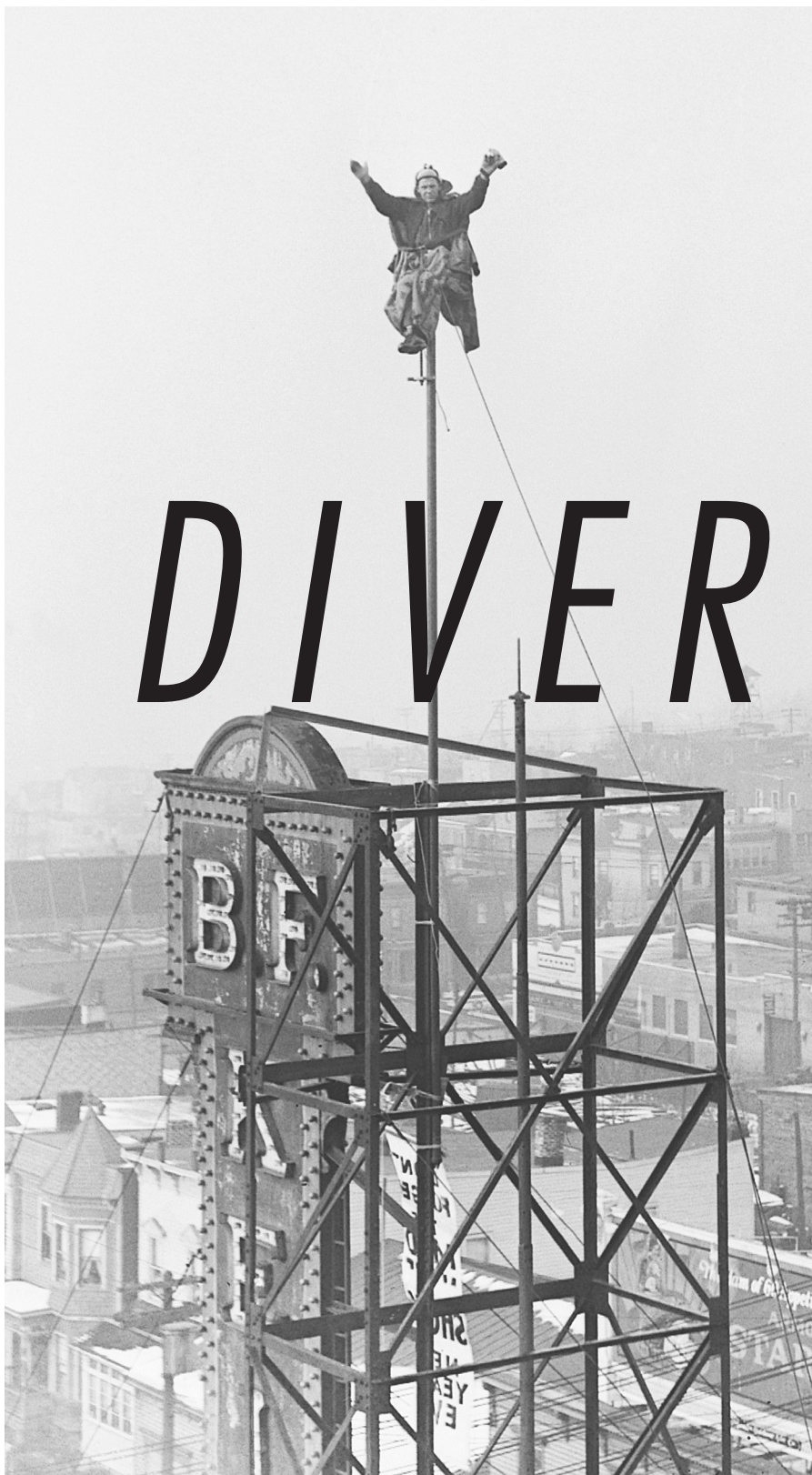


# *DIVER*

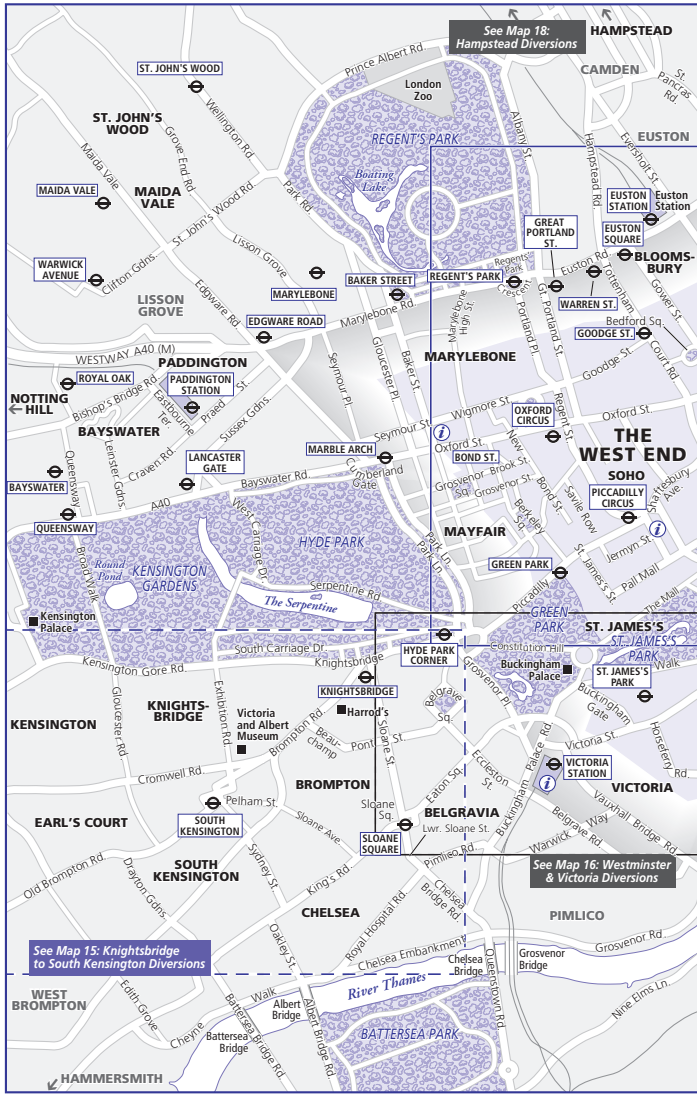


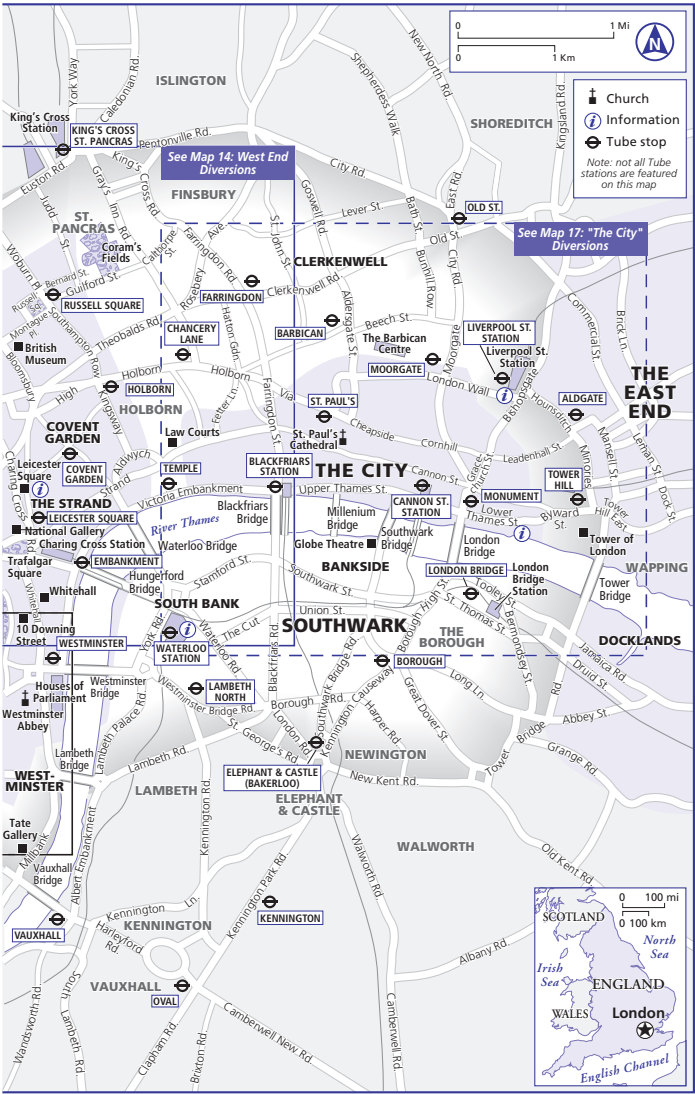
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## Map 13: London Orientation—Diversions

**DIVERSIONS**





DIVERSIONS

## Basic Stuff

As with any big-city vacation, a London visit demands a strategy—maybe more so than most, because this city's so big and sprawling and there's so much to see. Decide what your priorities are. Does history turn you on? Is art your interest, or are you happiest just hanging? Time spent here is weather-dependent, too, since everything from the mood on the streets to the choice of activities changes in the rain. Fortunately, since rain can set in for 3 weeks without respite, there's plenty of scope for lousy weather.

### Getting Your Bearings

The most important thing to do is to buy a copy of the pocket street atlas *London A to Z* (called simply “the A to Zed”—even Londoners themselves usually have one on hand). Buy it at the airport or at a newsagent in town (it's available everywhere) and navigating the city will become much easier. What follows here is a potted geography of London, containing the only parts of the *A to Z* you need to know.

**West End:** the center—you'd call this downtown. It's the younger of the two historic centers from which London grew, dating from 1050, when Edward the Confessor moved his court here and founded an abbey at **Westminster (SW1)**, where the Houses of Parliament are. **St. James's (SW1)**, now a posh area of shops and hotels, is named after the (Tudor) Court of St. James's; dignitaries are still said to be ambassadors to St. James.

**Mayfair (W1)** includes Bond Street and Oxford Street and most of the grand hotels. **Soho (W1)**, east of Mayfair, is a small area packed with restaurants, bars (including gay bars), and nightclubs. **Covent Garden (WC2)** is the easternmost part of the West End, a target zone for shopping, museums, and restaurants. These last two areas also contain much of London's diverse theater scene—but don't dismiss what is staged at “fringe” venues in other districts.

In between Covent Garden and the City is the legal district, which contains the **Inns of Court (WC2)**, the historic barristers' quarters and courts. **Holborn (“Hoe-bn”)** borders this, an in-between area; **Bloomsbury (WC1)** is also here, with the British Museum and the University of London.

**The City (EC2, EC4):** The far older, Roman-founded center of town, dating from the first century A.D., it's still the financial center and still an autonomous entity. It is the City of London, with a capital C, aka “the Square Mile,” although it

isn't square. The Tower of London and St. Paul's Cathedral are here, also the Barbican (a concert-and-theater complex within one of the ugliest '70s redevelopment areas ever built) and the worth-seeing Museum of London. Plus a lot of churches designed by Christopher Wren, and a bunch of hideous skyscrapers from the 1980s, Norman Foster's just-opened "glass gherkin" rising among them.

**West London:** not West End. You'll spend a lot of time in neighborhoods like **Knightsbridge (SW3)**, for Harrods, shopping, ladies lunching, and Hyde Park; and adjacent **South Kensington (SW5)**, for the big museums (Science, Natural History, V&A). You'll probably spend less time in residential **Kensington (W8)**; and **Chelsea (SW3, SW10)**, though the former is worth visiting for its High Street Kensington shopping and the latter for King's Road shopping.

**Notting Hill (W11)** is the hip place for restaurants, gastropubs, and Portobello Market; it's bordered by residential **Holland Park (W11)**, which has a park and restaurants. **Hammersmith (W6)** offers pleasant Thames-side walks and some restaurants.

**The East End**, where Cockneys come from (which makes it the true center, some say), is rough-and-tumble, with gentrified bits, and is definitely not touristy. Neighborhoods here include **Whitechapel (EC1)** and **Spitalfields (E1)**, where you'll find art galleries, Georgian houses, and Petticoat Lane market. **Clerkenwell (EC1)** and **Farringdon (EC4)** are not really East End—they're trendy, with restaurants. In fact, Clerkenwell is so trendy, it's become a dining, shopping, drinking, hanging-out, art-gallery destination in itself. **Spitalfields**, too, has spawned a youthful art subculture that's fast dominating the neighborhood. Check them out.... **The Docklands (E14)**, London's newest section, was reclaimed from industrial wasteland and old warehouses. A weird place with de Chirco-like empty urban landscapes is adjacent **Canary Wharf (E19)**, a megabucks postmodern fake town containing Europe's tallest office tower, shops, and a concert hall. Don't make a special trip, though: The U.S. does this kind of development so much better.

**North London:** Here you'll find **Regent's Park (NW1)**, which is not only a big green park that contains the zoo, but also the bordering streets, including **Marylebone**, with Madame Tussaud's. **Camden Town (NW1)** has the vast Camden Lock market; it's a grungy youth mecca. Mainly residential **Islington (N1)**, which borders on Clerkenwell, has restaurants and the



Almeida Theatre. It's indicative of changing times that this arty area was the stamping ground of Labor Prime Minister Tony Blair, who sold his house for £615,000 (\$1,014,750) when he came to power. (Margaret Thatcher hailed from suburban Grantham.) **Hampstead (NW3)** is a quaint, expensive hilltop village hemming a vast heath.

**South of the River:** This fast-evolving area first attracted Londoners to the **South Bank (SE1)**, an arts complex that includes the National Theatre and Royal Festival Hall. Great views. **Bankside (SE1)** comes next, the site of the new Tate Modern, the OXO Tower and its surrounding activity, and the Globe Theatre.... **Butler's Wharf (SE1)** has the Design Museum, "Gastrodrome," and Tower Bridge; **Brixton (SW2)** is a funky neighborhood once synonymous with drugs and crime, now a byword for a rapidly increasing youth culture into music, art, and...well...drugs and crime. It must be said that SW2 is home to some great cheap eats and cool bars.

### Getting from Here to There

London is usually described as being a good walking city, but you must add a coda to that: It's great to walk from, say, St. James's up Bond Street and across Regent Street to Soho, but it's a day's hike to go on foot from Chelsea to Regent's Park. London's a very big place. Also, the climate has not been exaggerated in folklore: You may find your entire stay is too damp and chilly to enjoy even a window-shopping stroll. However, using your trusty street atlas, *London A to Z*, walking is still the best way to see the details that make London a fun city.

Taking a bus costs less than the tube in money, but it can cost you much more time, especially during rush hour. The scarlet double-decker bus, however, is one of those features that screams "London," and when you're not in a hurry, the top deck provides the cheapest and best tour, especially for seeing residential nontourist neighborhoods. All you need to do is stay on the bus and when you've had enough, cross the street and take the same route back to where you started. Bus routes, of which there are some 300, are somewhat tough to decipher (pick up free maps at travel information centers). The bus stops are marked by concrete posts, each with a white or red sign on top and a rectangular one at eye level. A white sign means the bus stops automatically; at a red "Request" stop, you have to stick out your arm to flag a bus down. The rectangular sign shows the major stops on the route. Pay the conductor, or (usually) the driver/conductor, as you board; the fare if you're traveling anywhere

within Central London is £1 (\$1.65), otherwise 70 pence (\$1.15). “N”-prefixed buses are Night Service buses. They run less frequently and cost £1.50 (\$2.50). Thrifty night owls will also be glad to know that 1-day Travelcards are now valid on buses until 4:30am on the day after purchase.

The tube, aka the underground (but never called the subway), is far easier than the buses to negotiate—once you’ve decoded the system’s rather beautiful, stylized map (unchanged since Harry Beck designed it in 1933), usually posted on station walls at just the points where you need to consult it. Get your own free map from any station, along with a booklet that explains the ticket price system. Fares are based on zones traveled. You can buy tickets for individual journeys, but at £1.60 (\$2.65) a pop within Central London (up to £3.70/\$6.10 for Zone 6), you’ll save quite a bit by buying a **Travelcard**. The card works for buses and tubes (after 9:30am weekdays), and costs from £5.10 (\$8.40) for a day within Central London. For £8 (\$13), the **LT Card** covers all zones and is good for early risers because it’s valid as long as the tubes are running—which is from 5am to about midnight. For buses only, a 1-day **bus pass** costs only £2 (\$3.30), which makes it the most cost-effective way to travel London. Travelcards and bus passes are available from newsagents and at tube station windows and vending machines. You can also get weekly and monthly **Travelcards**

### Pomp & Circumstance

Your basic London ceremony is the **Changing of the Guard** at Buckingham Palace, which attracts throngs of visitors.

The economy being what it is,

they do it every day at 11:30am from April through early June and then every other day for the rest of the year (heavy rain stops it entirely). It may be a tourist cliché, but you cannot see a busby (the guards’ fetching fur hats) anywhere else in the world. Another cliché of royal London is the **Crown Jewels**,

housed in the Tower of London. Also at the Tower, and free, though you have to plan ahead, is the **Ceremony of the Keys**, a hilarious 10pm

locking-up ritual that has used the same script and costumes every night for 700 years (for tickets, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope [British stamps] or International Reply Coupon, preferred dates, and names and addresses of others in your party to: Ceremony of the Keys, 2nd floor, HM Tower of London, London EC3N 4AB). “Halt! Who comes

there?” demands the Sentry. “The Keys,” answers the Chief Yeoman Warder. “Whose keys?” asks the Sentry.

“Queen Elizabeth’s keys,” answers the CYW, whereupon the Sentry dispenses with grammar and announces: “Pass Queen Elizabeth’s keys and all’s well.”



### Money-Saving Passes

*If you're coming to London to pubcrawl, forget doing it cheaply; but if you plan to visit a lot of museums, you can save money with the **London GoSee Card**. It's valid for admission to many of London's major attractions, including Apsley House, Barbican Art Gallery, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, and the Design Museum, plus a lot more. Validity ranges from 3 to 7 days. An adult 3-day card costs £16 (\$26), and a 7-day card goes for £26 (\$42). Families of two adults and up to four children can purchase a 3-day card for £32 (\$51) or a 7-day card for £50 (\$80). Cards are sold at British tourist information centers, London Transport centers, airports, and various attractions. For more details, call % **800/223-6108** in the U.S. or % **020/8995-4007** in the U.K., or try the website [www.visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com).*

*The **London Pass** provides admission to 60 attractions in and around London, £5 worth of phone calls, "timed" admission at some attractions (bypassing the queues), plus free travel on public transport (buses, Tubes, and trains) and a pocket guidebook. It costs £26 (\$42) for 1 day, £58 (\$93) for 3 days, or £91 (\$146) for 6 days (children pay £16/\$26, £37/\$59, or £50/\$80). Visit the website at [www.londonpass.com](http://www.londonpass.com) or call % **870/242-9988**. **Tip:** Purchase the pass before you go because passes purchased in London do not include free transportation.*

(at tube stations, and requiring a photo), and the **Visitor Travelcard**, which you can buy only in the U.S. or Canada, for 3, 4, or 7 days (\$31, \$42, and \$62, respectively). Basically it's the same as the all-zone LT Card, with a booklet of discount vouchers thrown in. Get it from your travel agent or **Rail Europe** (tel 877/257-2887 in the U.S.; 800/361-RAIL in Canada; [www.raileurope.com](http://www.raileurope.com)).

You have to take a taxi (aka a "black cab," although they're not always black) at least once during your stay in London, just for the experience. Unlike taxi drivers in most cities, London cabbies have "the Knowledge"—they must pass an exhaustive exam to get their license, for which they memorize every single cul-de-sac, one-way system, and clever backstreet route in the entire metropolitan area. Many London cabbies are immensely proud of their encyclopedic memories and will regale you with information about the sights you pass; most will bore you senseless with some inane chitchat or other, anyway. Taxis have chuggy diesel-powered motors, doctored-up steering that enables them to make U-turns on a dime, and signs that say "Sit well back in your seat for safety and comfort." They cost £1.40 (\$2.30) for the first 81.6 seconds or 378.6m (1,242 ft.), then 20p (30¢) for every 4.8 seconds or 189.3m

(621 ft.) until the fare display hits £11.20 (\$18), when your 20p (30¢) will only buy you 126.2m (208 ft.) or 3.7 seconds. “But that is completely illogical, captain,” we hear you cry. Yup. What can I say, they’re British and they do things weird. Oh yeah, and they also add an incomprehensible surcharge of anything from 20p to £2 (30¢–\$3.30) depending on luggage, number of passengers, pickup point, and so on. Don’t try to understand; just pay up. What you end up paying is, of course, dependent on London’s erratic traffic flow, but you’ll be lucky to go anywhere for less than £8 (\$13). While tipping is not obligatory—like in New York, for example—a meager 10% is always a good idea. A taxi is available when the yellow FOR HIRE sign on the roof is lit—though try an unlit one when desperate; sometimes they cruise without the light to skip drunks. Taxis have a way of not being there when you need them. When that happens, unlicensed minicabs come in handy. Minicabs belong to privately owned car services and must be ordered by phone or by stopping in at the office, since they can’t be hailed on the street. The toll-free phone number (tel 0800/654-321) connects you with the nearest minicab operator—or look for a flashing orange light by the side of many of London’s busier streets. Restaurants will usually call their pet service for you. Minicab fares may be about 20% lower than black cabs, but be prepared to bargain and give directions—although, before panic sets in, we should stress that most drivers carry a *London A to Z*, so a spot of map reading should be the only directions required.

## The Lowdown

**Is this your first time?...** Where should you point your camera so that everyone knows you were in London? These places may be corny and crammed with visitors, but they are essential London sights. Start with the **Tower of London**, and to get an idea of the sheer age of this city, ogle the Beefeaters and the Crown Jewels. Next to that is the familiar silhouette of **Tower Bridge**, clad in Portland stone to make it seem as old as the neighboring Tower, though it is several centuries younger. Three more of the big sights are also strung along the banks of the Thames: **St. Paul’s Cathedral**, **Westminster Abbey**, and the **Houses of Parliament**. The latter includes probably the most famous thing of all, the Clock Tower, better known as **Big**

**Ben**, although Ben himself is actually a bell housed in the tower, which is really named after St. Stephen. The adjacent Westminster Abbey was founded by Edward the Confessor in 1067 and was the structure around which London grew. St. Paul's, with its distinctive dome, is the great architect Sir Christopher Wren's masterpiece. If you had to choose only one museum, one art collection, and one park, you should make it the **British Museum**, the **National Gallery**, and **Hyde Park**, although you ought to also throw in one of the great Victorian museums of South Kensington—probably the **V&A**, which is almost never given its full title, the Victoria & Albert. It's not very cool to be fascinated by royalty, but, let's face it, we all are. Therefore you must look at the not especially beautiful **Buckingham Palace** (its fairly boring staterooms now open daily from July through September for a hefty fee) and catch the Changing of the Guard. Also, you'd better see the revamped and more pedestrian-friendly **Trafalgar Square**, containing **Nelson's Column**, another of those London landmarks you've seen in a million establishing shots in movies and on TV. And, of course, wend your way 'round **Piccadilly Circus** for a hit of neon and mostly sham-glam geared to tourists. Before you do any of this, though, you might want to catch a ride on the **British Airways London Eye**, a giant observation wheel that's been revolving across from the Houses of Parliament since 2000 and is so popular it will probably continue to revolve a few years more. It takes half an hour, and from the passenger pods you have incredible views over the entire city.

**London's special moments...** It's small things and details that arrest the attention and take the breath away, and these have done it for us: the **Holland Park peacocks'** bedtime, when the big blue birds flap into the trees, screeching in their special way, while the sun sets over the ruins of the Jacobean mansion. Sneaking in to swim the **Serpentine** in Hyde Park after midnight during a heat wave. Pacing the Glass Gallery walkway at the **V&A** on a day without school parties, or looking down on Waterhouse Way—the great hall at the **Natural History Museum**—when it's swarming with children on their way to have the bejesus scared out of them by the animatronic T-Rex in the dinosaur exhibit. **Trafalgar Square** at 2am in December (when the

giant Norwegian fir tree's up and lit), waiting for a night bus. The romantic bleakness of the **Thames** during misty gray weather as you walk along the river from Westminster Bridge to Tower Bridge. Crossing one of the bridges at night, with the mighty river below and the city illuminated all around, can also bring out the eternal romance of London. And London's lovely when new segues into old, especially if you come upon an ancient thing when you weren't looking for it—like the **Temple of Mithras**, or parts of the **Roman walls** near the Museum of London. The very best London moments come out of just happening on odd little lanes and garden squares, mews and mansions, noticing details and watching life go on. If time is limited and you want the picturesque highly concentrated, try the **Inns of Court** and **Hampstead**.

**Only in London...** The most screamingly London activities have history, a special relationship with the weather, and are taken for granted by the locals. Qualifying on all counts is a **Thames boat trip**, starting at Westminster Pier, passing St. Paul's and the Tower on the left, the South Bank Centre on the right, and going under Tower Bridge to **Greenwich**. Disembark there and see the one and only **prime meridian**, from which all time is measured. Parks exist elsewhere, but few cities have palaces across the lawn. **St. James's Park** has two—the **Buckingham Palace** facade and the back of St. James's Palace, while **Kensington Gardens** and **Kew Gardens** have an eponymous palace apiece. For assessing the current state of eccentric English behavior, **Speaker's Corner** is the lodestone, though a visit to **Sir John Soane's Museum** illustrates how London-style unconventionality looks when taken to its natural conclusion. Number **18 Folgate Street** shows the same thing, but being the brainchild of an American, suggests that London may be more a state of mind than a collection of historic buildings. It's not meant to be grisly, but you can practically hear the screams at the **Old Operating Theatre**, a completely intact operating theater that presents a vivid picture of surgical before HMOs and anesthesia. And of course you've heard of the Bank of England, but have you heard of the **Bank of England Museum**, devoted to filthy lucre in all its British forms?

**What if it's raining?...** And it probably will be (nobody lives in England for the climate). Museums are the obvious thing to do, especially now that so many of them are free, and the **British Museum** (with its fabulous new Great Court) is big enough—it has about 100 galleries—to keep you indoors all day. So is the **V&A**, but here you can do more than just look—this enterprising museum of decorative arts runs short drawing and painting courses attended by everyone from total beginners to art-school professors. Or you could just pig out at the V&A's Sunday morning brunch and read the papers. Take in the Glass Gallery first, because it's so full of reflected light, you'll forget the awful weather. Another hot ticket for a cold rainy day is the new **Saatchi Gallery** in County Hall next to Westminster Bridge, where you can view deliberately controversial contemporary works. Further down the Thames, in Bankside, the new **Tate Modern** is another great place to spend a few rainy hours, though it's heaving on weekends. Afterwards, have a coffee in the cafe and watch the rain on the Thames. Two art-laden houses in which to forget the gray clouds are that eccentric wonderland **Sir John Soane's Museum**, and the 18th-century version, the **Wallace Collection**. Satisfy a different sense during lunchtime concerts at the churches of **St. John's Smith Square** and **St. Martin-in-the-Fields**. (At the latter, descend to the crypt for the **London Brass Rubbing Centre** and fashion your own souvenir.) For some unpredictable and occasionally ghoulish live theater, drop in on a trial at the **Old Bailey**, the principal criminal courts of the land. If you must shop, the department stores are obviously good, but better still are the **Piccadilly Arcades** (see the Shopping chapter), which predate the oldest mall by about 150 years and are rather more posh. Have afternoon tea nearby, because it's always best in the rain.

That pre-eminent London sleuth Sherlock Holmes didn't ever actually live at 221B Baker Street—it's the Abbey National Building Society's offices now—but there is a hokey **Sherlock Holmes Museum** that has appropriated the famous address, though it's really at number 237.

**When the sun shines...** Anything you do in London on a warm, sunny day is enhanced at least 100%, since everyone's idiotically happy (this doesn't apply to heat waves,

when complaints soon set in), but a **Thames boat trip** is the best of all. Take one downriver from Westminster to the Tower, or to **Greenwich**, but think twice before committing to a long (about 3-hour) upstream trip to **Hampton Court Palace** or **Richmond** since there are great stretches of nothing to look at. The **Regent's Canal** is fun, whether on foot or by canal barge; the prettiest parts are between **Camden Lock** (by the markets) and **Regent's Park**, and at **Little Venice**, an expensive, little-visited area of big white houses. The **Canal Café Theatre** (see the Entertainment chapter) can be your destination, or maybe you're here on the first weekend in May for the water festival called **Canalway Cavalcade**, a celebration with boat pageants, crafts stalls, and a teddy bears' picnic (Blomfield Rd., Little Venice, W9). The **London Zoo** is where everyone with children congregates on sunny days. Avoid it. Go instead to the recently renovated **Ham House** in Richmond, with its great 17th-century gardens, or to the exquisite **Chelsea Physic Garden**, both in neighborhoods that cry out for aimless strolling. Or stay in **Regent's Park** and buy tickets for Shakespeare (usually one of the comedies) at the open-air theater. Another open-air theater is secreted in exquisite **Holland Park**, on a stage fashioned from the ruins of a Jacobean mansion blitzed in the Blitz. It stages opera and dance, all to the sound of peacocks screeching. For a theatrical experience without script, go to **Speaker's Corner**, by Marble Arch, where anyone is welcome to stand on a soapbox and hold forth. You may be lucky enough to catch a memorable loony—sunny days attract them.

**The oldest things...** London's very oldest thing has nothing to do with London, or with the person it's named after. It is the Egyptian obelisk by Victoria Embankment, **Cleopatra's Needle**, and it's around 3,500 years old. Younger, but still ancient, are two of the **British Museum's** best treasures, the 4th-century **Mausoleum of Halicarnassus**, one of the Wonders of the Ancient World, and the controversial **Parthenon Sculptures** (called the Elgin Marbles in less PC times), carved in Athens in about 440 B.C. They should now go back to Greece, say the Greeks (and many Brits). Only about 200 years younger than Cleopatra's Needle is the **Sarcophagus of Seti I**, which the fun-loving architect of the Bank of England, Sir



John Soane, bought for a song and installed in the basement of his house, now **Sir John Soane's Museum**. As for indigenous things, you can see parts of London's **Roman walls** in and around the **Museum of London**, as well as the 3rd-century A.D. **Temple of Mithras**, which was unearthed about 50 years ago. It's a little strip of history, although there's nothing but a boring set of foundations to look at. A better example of ancient/modern juxtaposition is the rose window of **Winchester House**, palace of the Bishops of Winchester until 1626, built into the St. Mary Overie Dock development adjacent to the bishops' old jail, now a museum called **The Clink**. Down in the law enclave, on High Holborn, you'll find London's oldest (1586) Elizabethan black-and-white half-timbered building, the **Staple Inn**, where wool traders were lodged and their commodity weighed and traded. Times have changed; now it's Ye Olde Smoke Shoppe. The oldest part of the famously old **Tower of London** is the **White Tower**, which was the tallest building in London on its completion in 1097. Westminster Abbey, with tombs of those arch-rivals Queen Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots, dates mostly from the 13th and 14th centuries, though there's been a church on the site for at least a thousand years. Meanwhile, the oldest operating theater in Britain—appropriately called the **Old Operating Theatre and Herb Garret**—is tucked away on the South Bank; it dates from 1822 and was discovered completely intact a few years ago after being walled up and forgotten.

**The newest...** The **Museum in Docklands**, London's newest museum, opened in 2003 but probably isn't the sort of place to draw a general-interest tourist pressed for time, though it's got some interesting stuff. Just as new is the **Saatchi Gallery**, which moved its controversial stable of self-publicizing contemporary art to a high-visibility location in County Hall next to Westminster Bridge (above the London Aquarium). Two new galleries have opened in **Somerset House**, a 1,000-room civil palace on the Strand that has been tarted up for the public with a lovely courtyard fountain (the courtyard becomes a skating rink in the winter) and a summer-only river-terrace cafe: The **Gilbert Collection** is a cornucopia of snuff boxes and valuable objets d'art, and the **Hermitage Rooms** show off on-loan treasures from the strapped-for-cash Hermitage Museum

in St. Petersburg. A new, improved **Queen's Gallery** at Buckingham Palace reopened in 2002 during QEII's Golden Jubilee; it's even got a coffee shop. The **Tate Modern**, housed in the old Bankside power station, is high on everyone's must-see list; it's no longer new, but newish, having opened in 2000, and it's connected to the St. Paul's area by the sleek new **Millennium Bridge**, a pedestrian walkway designed by Lord Norman Foster, everyone's architectural darling. He also designed London's newest skyscraper, the **Swiss-Re Tower**, an unmistakable glass gherkin of a building on St. Mary's Axe in the City, and the just-opened **London City Hall**, a super-green building shaped like a wasp's behind beside Tower Bridge. **Shakespeare's Globe Theatre** is newish in one sense (it's about 5 years old), but it's also London's oldest stage: a reconstruction of the Bard's "wooden O" on its original site (give or take a few meters), using original materials and building techniques. Erected for the duddish millennium celebrations, the **British Airways London Eye** is a 135m-high (450 ft.) observation wheel that offers 30-minute "flights" on the south bank of the Thames. It was supposed to have a built-in shelf life but has proved to be so popular that it will probably continue to revolve for a couple of years more. The twin pedestrian walkways alongside **Hungerford Bridge** make walking to the South Bank Centre from Embankment a real pleasure. On the latte front, Starbucks has opened coffee bars on nearly every street in Central London.

**Architectural highs and lows...** The tallest building now is Cesar Pelli's 50-story tower at 1 Canada Square, the centerpiece of London's weirdest square mile, **Canary Wharf**. Modeled on an American downtown, this business district was reclaimed from slums as part of the 1980s redevelopment of the Docklands, but it never really fit in or took off; it makes for a really offbeat de Chirico-esque outing, from deserted mall to riverside pub. The newest train line in town, the **Jubilee line** extension, is the way to get there. Or see it all from the **Docklands Light Railway (DLR)**. The new **British Library** opened in 1997 after a decade of design traumas were solved and decanted its 18-million-odd books into an orange-brick edifice by King's Cross Station. Many dislike the building intensely and say it reminds them of a supermarket, but the exhibition galleries

show off a **magnificent horde of original manuscripts**. A building that's become for some inexplicable reason an instant architectural totem is the sinisterly ugly **Lloyd's Building**; Sir Richard Rogers was the culprit responsible for this graceless, unwelcoming, pseudo-science-fictionish behemoth. Everyone's current darling is Lord Norman Foster, whose pickle-shaped, 40-story **Swiss-Re Tower** can be seen rising in the City, and whose environmentally aware **London City Hall**, shaped like a wasp's behind (or a fencing helmet, depending on whom you talk to) stands next to Tower Bridge on the South Bank. Foster's **Millennium Bridge**, which had to be closed twice due to structural problems before it actually opened (pedestrians couldn't walk on it because of the bounce) spans the Thames between the **Tate Modern** (a reworking of the old Bankside Power Station).

**Go out of your way for...** If it's royal residences you're after, you can't get a better one than **Hampton Court Palace**, closely associated with that most colorful and obese king, 'Enery the Eighth, of the six wives and the gout problem, who moved in in 1525. The last monarch to call it home was poor George III—he of *The Madness of King George* fame—who decamped to Kew to go mad in relative peace. See one of the world's best privet mazes, the restored Tudor kitchens, the Great Hall, the Banqueting House, and—what you can't see at Buckingham Palace—the State Apartments, all in a beauteous Thames-side setting. It'll take the whole day, being 32km (20 miles) out of London, further still than Richmond. Ah, Richmond. **Richmond Park** is quite the wildest in London (well, near London), complete with herds of deer; you can go horseback riding there, or biking, or use it as an excuse for a few pints at the Cricketers, which is like a real village pub. There also are two stately homes almost facing one another on opposite banks of the Thames: **Ham House** and **Marble Hill House**. At the opposite end of town, and not too much of a trek if you're staying in the West End, is **Hampstead**, a pricey village high on a hill, with quaint cottages and Georgian mansions, expensive boutiques, **Keats House** and the Everyman Cinema, branches of the Gap and McDonald's (how the residents hate that), and surprisingly bad restaurants. Hampsteadites are represented in Parliament by the Oscar-winning former actress Glenda

Jackson, which should give you an idea of the tone up there. Some of the best things are the other wild park, **Hampstead Heath**, all rolling hills and dells and ancient woods, which leads to **Kenwood House**, worth seeing for two reasons: the Iveagh Bequest of paintings (Gainsborough, Rembrandt, Turner, Van Dyck, and Vermeer) and summer concerts at the open-air bowl—with tea at the cafe an important adjunct. The best and oldest necropolis in London is barely known by Londoners themselves: It's the 31-hectare (77-acre) **Kensal Green Cemetery**, where you can descend to the catacombs guided by fanatic local historians dressed in black, who also point out the last resting places of novelists Thackeray, Trollope, and Wilkie Collins.

**Inspiring spires...** You don't have to be a believer to love London's churches. Many of the most loved are the work of the great architect so closely associated with London, Sir Christopher Wren, who rebuilt 51 of the 87 churches destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. Twenty-five remain, plus, of course, his masterpiece, **St. Paul's Cathedral**. We'll leave it to other guides to do the exhaustive Wren tour, but here are a couple

### The Wren Style

*One of the great geniuses of his age, Sir Christopher Wren (1632–1723) was a professor of astronomy at Oxford before becoming an architect. After the Great Fire of London in 1666, Wren was chosen to rebuild the devastated city and its many churches, including **St. Paul's**, on which work began in 1675. His designs had great originality, and he became known for his spatial effects and his impressive fusion of classical and baroque. He believed in classical stability and repose, yet he liked to enliven his churches with baroque whimsy and fantasy.*

*In our view, his crowning glory is the **dome over St. Paul's**, which is celebrated for the beauty of its proportions. Surely Michelangelo would have patted Wren on the back. If, during his stay in France, Wren stole an idea or two from the Invalides in Paris, so what? We'll never tell.*

*Nothing better represents the Wren style than the **facade of St. Paul's**, for which he combined classical columns, reminiscent of Greek temples, with baroque decorations and adornments. Regrettably, the town plan that Wren conceived for rebuilding London was rejected, and the city was reconstructed piecemeal.*

*Could you imagine what London would look like if Wren had been turned loose? Surely Prince Charles would praise the architecture of London rather than denouncing it.*

from the Wren stable. The usefully central **St. James's Piccadilly** was his last (1684) and his favorite; its spire, hit by the WWII blitz, is now fiberglass. Learn to read the tarot, or hear a Handel recital there—the acoustics are angelic. **St. James's Garlickhythe** (with **St. Michael Queenhithe** and **Holy Trinity-the-Less**, to give it its full name) also has recitals, Tuesday lunchtimes, under Wren's highest ceiling (apart from St. Paul's). It's a handy stop en route to Shakespeare's Globe across the river and the adjacent **Southwark Cathedral** (more recitals there). A lesser building than Westminster Abbey, Southwark Cathedral is London's second-oldest church, with parts of its 12th-century self still intact. Shakespeare worshipped here, and his brother Edmund is buried here. It's also the only church with its own pizza cafe. The Cafe-in-the-Crypt at **St. Martin-in-the-Fields** is pretty good, too, and the church itself is fab. The music program at St. Martin-in-the-Fields is the best, apart from the June music festival at an exquisite church hardly anyone visits: Sir Nicholas Hawksmoor's 1728 **Christ Church Spitalfields**. Admittedly, it will hardly ever be open, until restoration is finished in the next few years, but go see the gorgeous colonnaded portico on a Brick Lane outing.

**Their Majesties live here...** After her death, Diana's former home, **Kensington Palace**, became a prime place of pilgrimage. (It was Princess Margaret's London address, too, but nobody really cared much when she died in 2002.) K.P. hasn't harbored a monarch since Victoria decamped from here to Buckingham Palace at her accession (1837); its none-too-successful run as primary royal residence started with the Bill and Hill of English monarchs, William and Mary (1689–1702). William fell off his horse and died of pleurisy; Mary succumbed to smallpox; Queen Anne suffered a fatal apoplectic fit due to overeating; so did George I (he OD'd on melons); and poor George II met the most ignominious Kensington Palace end—he burst a blood vessel while on the royal commode. But by far the most embarrassing monarch was “Farmer George,” George III, the mad one. He succumbed to lunacy and died at **Kew Palace**, the most intimate and domestic and

the least visited of all London's palaces, though lots of visitors stroll around its gardens. I've already accused **Buckingham Palace** of being the most boring of royal residences, but it does have the best gardens in London and since you probably won't manage to wrangle an invitation to one of HRH's garden parties, the only way to see them is to buy the exorbitantly priced ticket to the palace during its summer opening. The queen is in, by the way, when the royal standard is hoisted, and is never there (God forbid) when the place is open to tourists. You can't see the current HRH's living quarters, but you can see her horses and coaches at the **Royal Mews**. And you can see treasures she holds in trust for the nation at the newly revamped **Queen's Gallery**. Previous palaces are much more fun than Buckingham: I've already mentioned the **Tower of London** and **Hampton Court Palace**, but I haven't said a word about another piece of Henry VIII's real estate, **St. James's Palace**, the sweetest and smallest of all, and the one to which visiting dignitaries are still sent. The catch is that it's a completely private palace and all you can see is its red-brick Tudor facade and some side views. The present queen, by the way, has nothing to do with the **Queen's House** in Greenwich, which was designed by the great Inigo Jones for James I's queen, Anne of Denmark. The first classical building in Britain, it is important and exquisite. Inigo Jones was also responsible for all that remains of yet another of Henry VIII's palaces (and the one he died in), **Banqueting House**, the only surviving bit of the labyrinthine Whitehall Palace, which burned to the ground in 1698. **Windsor Castle** nearly burned down, too, in 1992. You'll need an entire day for the excursion to this place, reputed to be Elizabeth II's favorite of her modest homes and now all back in working order, thanks to funding by...you. Right, 'nuff palaces.

**Modern art...** Art lives. It starts in the national collections, continues in galleries mounting exhibitions of new work, and culminates in commercial spaces, avant-garde *boîtes*, and independent dealerships. The **Tate Britain** holds by far the most important and extensive modern collection of British artists in London (though works on display date



back to 1500). They were constantly rehanging the stuff around to give it all a fair show...until they built a whole new museum, the fabulous **Tate Modern**, in Bankside on the South Bank. It's near **Shakespeare's Globe Theatre** and is one of London's busiest attractions; the works here are international in scope. The **Hayward Gallery** in the South Bank Centre is also a major public space, with changing shows favoring sculpture and installation. Neither is especially known for taking risks, though the Tate causes an occasional outcry when it buys a controversial work (most infamously when it invested in Carl André's *Bricks*—a block of bricks). For controversy a la mode, you have to visit the new home of the **Saatchi Gallery** in County Hall, where all those self-publicizing and occasionally repellent works by Saatchi's current in-crowd are displayed. These are the pieces that were shown at the "Sensation" show in Brooklyn and caused New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani to threaten closure (which, of course, only increased attendance). The **ICA** and the smaller but creatively curated **Serpentine Gallery** are close to the cutting edge, too, and so is the **White Cube** gallery in Hoxton Square. If you're heading eastward, the **Whitechapel Gallery** is always worth the trek, with major shows, lecture series, and a good cafe. Among the other newer outlying spaces, **Gasworks** is worth checking out for exciting artists not yet sanctified by the establishment. But if you want one neighborhood for unplanned, aimless gallery-hopping, then head to Notting Hill, where many tiny independent galleries around Portobello Road have led to a little scene like New York's SoHo. Way the hell out in the East End (combine it with the White Cube, the Whitechapel, and the **Lux Cinema**, which promotes art-house films and young filmmakers), the radical **Camerawork** is a standout for photography. Convenient to Covent Garden is the consistently excellent **Photographers' Gallery**, while the **Barbican Centre**, the **National Portrait Gallery**, and the foyer of the **Royal Festival Hall** often feature photography exhibits. For a somewhat surreal look at surrealism, you might want to check out the newish **Dali Universe** exhibition on the South Bank, but don't put it high on your list of priorities unless you love him.

**The old masters...** The world does not need another guide to the **National Gallery**, so I'll just point you in that direction and leave you to it. The adjacent **National Portrait Gallery** is not to be sniffed at, though it's smaller and has many obscure faces among the familiar ones. In this museum, who is represented is of more interest than how, and so some of the work is egregiously bad. That can't be said for the **Royal Academy of Arts**, housed in the imposing Burlington House, and center of the British art establishment—except during the annual Summer Exhibition, which consists of thousands of works, many unsolicited and chosen by committee in “auditions.” In the newly refurbished and quite wonderful Somerset House, you find the wonderful **Courtauld Institute Gallery**, which still has the most impressive Impressionists and Post-impressionists, plus the odd Rubens (speaking of which, don't miss the Rubens ceiling at **Banqueting House**). For viewing pleasure and fewer crowds, try the exquisite **Wallace Collection**, where the Fragonards, Bouchers, and Canalettos are displayed *in situ*, as if the marquesses of Hertford who collected them were about to stroll by. Ditto the small, eccentric collection of paintings, starring several from Hogarth's bawdy “Rake's Progress” series, at **Sir John Soane's Museum**, with countless statues and architectural fragments and *objets* bursting the walls of this amazing house. Soane also designed what was London's first public art gallery, the practically perfect **Dulwich Picture Gallery**, little changed since its 1811 opening, right down to its parkland surroundings; it's a mere 12-minute train ride from Victoria for Tiepolo, Canaletto, Gainsborough, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Poussin...and all for free on Fridays. In leafy Hampstead, lovely **Kenwood House** is also free; inside you can ponder some astounding works left to the nation by Lord Iveagh in 1927, including a Rembrandt self-portrait and Vermeer's *The Guitar Player*. There are some vast old-master paintings in **Apsley House**, and usually some are on view in the **Queen's Gallery** at Buckingham Palace.

**Art alfresco...** Avert your eyes when passing the paintings hung along the sidewalks on Sundays at Green Park's Piccadilly border and the Bayswater Road edge of Hyde Park, unless you like paintings on velvet and watercolors of

big-eyed kittens and weeping clowns. But do keep an eye out for the ubiquitous statues on London streets. A random sampling: Hubert le Sueur's equestrian **Charles I** (on Trafalgar Sq. near Whitehall), re-erected by his son, Charles II, nearly on the spot of his father's execution; **Oliver Cromwell**, who was responsible for that execution; Rodin's **The Burghers of Calais** (nearby, in the Victoria Tower Gardens); and a 600-year-old—though nobody's quite sure of the exact date—**Alfred the Great** (Trinity Church Sq. SE1). **Kensington Gardens** has three famous sculptures: a rather splendid bronze horse and rider titled **Physical Energy**; a whimsical bronze **Peter Pan**, near the home of his creator, J. M. Barrie; and another children's favorite, the **Elfin Oak**, carved from a tree. The following are more obscure: **William Huskisson**, the first man to be killed by a train, confusingly dressed in a toga (Pimlico Gardens); the pretty blue column of the **Thames Water Surge Shaft** kinetic water barometer—functional art at its finest and most fun (Shepherd's Bush Roundabout W11); the granite Bedouin tent **Tomb of Sir Richard Burton** (the Victorian explorer, not the actor).

**Won't bore the kids...** That **Elfin Oak** statue stands just outside a much-loved playground in **Kensington Gardens**. There's also the newish **Princess Diana Memorial Playground** in the northwestern corner of Kensington Gardens. You'll find playgrounds in most parks, but the appropriately named **Holland Park Adventure Playground** is among the best. More touristy things that children like include the **London Zoo**, though it isn't much different from any other zoo; the **Royal Mews**, with its horses and ornate coaches; and the **Tower of London**, especially the gory parts. An expensive ticket, but worth the investment for older or tougher children, is the **London Dungeon**, a sort of extrapolation of the Tower's aforementioned gory bits crossed with Madame Tussaud's. Skip overpriced **Madame Tussaud's** and go next door instead, into the **London Planetarium**, with its laser shows and new star projector. You'll find it better than the **Pepsi Trocadero's** plasticky high-tech shows, but the kids may disagree. In similar vein, try steering them straight past the scary **Namco Station**, which sits outside the London Aquarium's shop, its horrible lights blinking, disco music on a loop,

video games bleeping. Ugh to London's least welcome new thing. The **London Aquarium**, by contrast, is more appealing, though Sea World alumni will scoff and the basement locale can feel claustrophobic and tacky. It's small scale, but it takes you deep into its watery world. The museums to pick are: the **Natural History Museum** (especially the animatronic T-Rex—although it may scare the little ones—and the Creepy-Crawlies Gallery), and the next-door **Science Museum** (the computer and outer-space stuff is brilliant). Also a hit are the **London Transport Museum**, where you can climb all over old double-deckers and tube cars, and the far-off **Horniman Museum**, with its bee colony and musical-instrument collection. Smaller kids will prefer the V&A's **Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green**; it's way out in the East End but worth the trek because it has the world's biggest toy collection, including loads of fabulous dollhouses. If that's too far for you, try the quirky, labyrinthine **Pollocks Toy Museum**. **Greenwich** makes a great day out. Arrive by boat, and save the **Cutty Sark** for last, because it's the children's favorite, though kids also like seeing the **prime meridian**, from which the world's time is measured, at the **Old Royal Observatory**—you can stand with one foot in each hemisphere. You can do a canal day, too, taking a **Canal Barge Trip** from Little Venice to the zoo. You may be in luck and find the **Puppet Theatre Barge** is in town. Although the **Theatre Museum** in Covent Garden is pretty boring, they do hands-on stage makeup and costume demonstrations that kids love.

**Photo ops...** Essential tourist shots start with Trafalgar Square's **Nelson's Column**, which is the official center of London, or at least of the tourists around its now-pigeonless base. The rest of the shots you'd expect: the **clock tower** of the Houses of Parliament, which everyone mistakenly calls Big Ben (Big Ben is the largest bell inside), **Westminster Abbey**, and **Westminster Bridge** you can buy on postcards. Well, okay, shoot Big Ben from the walkway in front of the London Aquarium because you'll probably be there in any case. If the sun isn't too glaring or the day too gray, you can snap a bunch of aerial views of the city from the **British Airways London Eye** observation wheel. But then why not look for something more subtle? The **Chelsea**

**Pensioners** who live in Wren's **Royal Hospital**, a stunning Palladian retirement home for ex-soldiers, are just as picturesque as the **Beefeaters** in their red-and-gold frock coats; then whiz over to the **Monument**, Wren's memorial to the Great Fire. Run up the 311 steps and snap a view from the top. In late May, bring lots of color stock to capture the great tumbling banks of rhododendrons in **Kensington Gardens**, **Holland Park** (where you can maybe get a peacock in, too), and **Kew Gardens**. Get out a zoom lens for the facade of the **Natural History Museum**, with its intricate arches of fauna—extinct creatures to the right, living ones to the left. If, like John Lennon, you've wondered how many holes it takes to fill Royal Albert Hall, take a shot of this curious circular, domed Victorian building just off Kensington Gardens, then point your camera across the street toward the **Albert Memorial**, that ridiculously ornate love token from Victoria to her prematurely dead consort, now sparkling in new gold leaf after a decade of restoration. Forget nearby Harrods and go instead to **Fortnum & Mason** (see the Shopping chapter) and get a shot of one of the city's sweetest clocks, featuring automata of the founders shaking hands on the hour.

**A day of romance...** You must also take a **walk**—perhaps **along the banks of the Thames** around Embankment, or on the south side along Bankside, going as far east as Tower Bridge and timing things to end up at **Le Pont de la Tour** (see the Dining chapter) for cocktail hour and oysters from the raw bar. Any park is also good, especially in summer after dark, and there's something very appealing about London's squares, with trees in the middle and maybe a row of Georgian houses around it. Try 18th-century **Kensington Square** (take Derry or Young streets off Kensington High St.), or the even older—laid out around 1670—**St. James's Square**, from which you could explore the wonderful perfumers and shaving accoutrement emporia and shirt shops of Jermyn Street. Drop in to the **National Gallery** and restrict yourself to the romantic works, like Velasquez's *The Toilet of Venus* (you'll recognize her when you see her), Constable's *The Hay Wain* (so

bucolic), and perhaps some Canalettos, then on to the **Tate Britain** for the splendid Turners and pre-Raphaelites. An evening stroll in **Hampstead** might segue into a show at the Everyman, one of London's last repertory cinemas and a sweet old-fashioned place. Alternatively, spend all day at the **Porchester Baths**, having massages and sweating in the steam rooms.

**For gardeners...** Serious horticulturalists should seriously consider coming to London in late May for the **Chelsea Flower Show**, one of the world's foremost flower shows and so pricey you may gasp or fall into a swoon. Failing that, try to be in London during the summer, when all the parks have flower beds stuffed full of color. In **Regent's Park**, St. Mary's Rose Garden is scented and formal, while **Holland Park** has its Dutch Garden, where the first dahlias in England grew in the late 18th century. With 60,000 plant species, **Kew Gardens** has something flowering in every season, and it also has the pair of spectacular 19th-century greenhouses, the Palm House and its corollary the Temperate House, which boasts the world's biggest greenhouse plant—a Chilean wine palm rooted in 1846. An even bigger greenhouse than those two is the 1987 Princess of Wales Conservatory, with its 10 separate climates. **Columbia Road Flower Market** (see the Shopping chapter) has just the one English climate, but you can fantasize planting your ideal English garden among the overflowing, blooming stalls and buy horticultural accoutrements to take home. Garden historians should under no circumstances miss **Ham House**, with its meticulously restored 17th-century grounds; they should also allow time to get to **Hampton Court Palace** for the Elizabethan Knot Garden, the Great Vine, the maze, and the topiary—not to mention the only flower show that rivals Chelsea. Speaking of which, the **Chelsea Physic Garden** is exquisite and educational in equal measure—medicinal plants are grown here alongside the country's oldest rock garden. There's one more stop on the itinerary: the **Museum of Garden History**, housed in a deconsecrated church and featuring another 17th-century knot garden for those who failed to get to Hampton Court.



**For the impecunious...** Get on a bus, climb the stairs to the top deck, show your Travelcard, and sit back for the least expensive grandstand tour in the land. Good bus routes include the **94** or **12**, for Hyde Park on the north side, Oxford and Regent streets, Piccadilly Circus, Trafalgar Square, and more; the **11** for Chelsea through to Knightsbridge, the City via Westminster; the **74** for the South Ken museums through Hyde Park Corner past Lord's cricket ground to the zoo; and the **29** from Victoria or Piccadilly Circus through Bloomsbury and the British Museum to Camden Lock. Bus maps are free from major tube stations. Or else you could splash out and board a sightseeing bus. Outside the Green Park tube stop is the best place to get one. They travel around "the sights," allowing you to hop on and off at will. I'm happy to report that admission to the greatest museums in town is now free, free, free: The **British Museum**, the **National Gallery**, the **National Portrait Gallery**, **Tate Britain**, **Tate Modern**, the **V&A**, the **Natural History Museum**, the **Science Museum**, the **Museum of London**, and scads more won't cost you a penny. If it's late June, look in *Time Out* magazine for news of the student degree shows, where you get the chance to buy work straight from the hands of art-schoolers at ridiculously low prices. **Lunchtime classical recitals** in churches are another great delight of London to look up in the listings, and most are free or bargains. Hang around **Covent Garden** to see the buskers perform, too—if it's summer, the piazza may even feature a particularly juicy opera production beamed onto giant screens, courtesy of the Royal Opera House. **Street markets** (see the Shopping chapter) are probably the best free shows of all, though; those and just walking. Traveling by foot is especially entertaining because you will get lost and you will find yourself in the mews and alleys and streetlets with which London is crammed.

**Go east...** There's a strong argument that the East End is the true London, following the truism that a real Cockney must be born within the sound of Bow Bells (at St. Mary-le-Bow church). *Eastenders*, the *Melrose Place* of England, is set here in the fictional, but recognizable, Albert Square. And this is Jack the Ripper land (take a Ripper walking tour if you must—there are loads of them). The neighborhoods of the east are gritty, so don't expect a smooth tourist patina.

The major museum, the **Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green**, an outpost of the V&A, is a good excuse to head east, especially with kids in tow. There are several city farms nearby for them, too—**Spitalfields City Farm** has the works: sheep, goats, cows, horses, pony rides, and summer barbecues. Ask about the horse-and-cart local-history tour. Instead of Tobacco Dock, which sounds fab with its pirate ships and crafts fairs but turns out to be one of the most depressing malls you've ever seen, go to **Spitalfields Market** (see the Shopping chapter), where there are great sports facilities and a little opera house, a farmers market and good crafts shops. It's near Hawksmoor's **Christ Church Spitalfields**, which you should probably not make a special trip to see, since it's usually closed, but do check the concert schedule and watch for the two music festivals because both are real treats. Last but not least is one of London's most surprising and evocative museums, the **Geffrye Museum**, which contains a series of period rooms done with a Hollywood movie-scale attention to detail and authenticity. Unlike the stately homes you normally have access to, these interiors are domestic, so you get a powerful sense of how people lived. It's really out of the way but worth it if your interests tend at all toward popular and cultural history. Easier to reach (right next to the tube) is the **Whitechapel Gallery**, most certainly worth a special trip for anyone with an eye for the big-name and up-and-coming artists of now (plus it's got a pretty good cafe). From there, stroll down to the **Whitechapel Bell Foundry** to see the birthplace of the Liberty Bell (yes, that one) and Big Ben. You can't go into the actual foundry, but you can buy a hand bell and look at a cute little exhibit. The classic thing to do around here is to spend Sunday at the markets. Chief among them are the adjacent **Brick Lane** and **Petticoat Lane**, and **Columbia Road Flower Market** (see the Shopping chapter for details). The last one is not much use for souvenirs, but it's full of local color and then some, and some of the shops that open only on market day (Sun) are also well worth a gander. Number **18 Folgate Street** was the home of eccentric California-born Dennis Sever, who shared it with a ghostly fictional family named Jervis, who "lived" in the house from 1754 to 1914; on Monday evenings, a guide leads the audience on a silent tour of the house to appreciate

its style but above all to conjure up the atmosphere of Olde Worlde London. The Georgian house in Spitalfields is in perfect period style, outdoing the Geffrye Museum in authenticity, since Sever actually lived here, without electricity but with a butler in 18th-century livery.

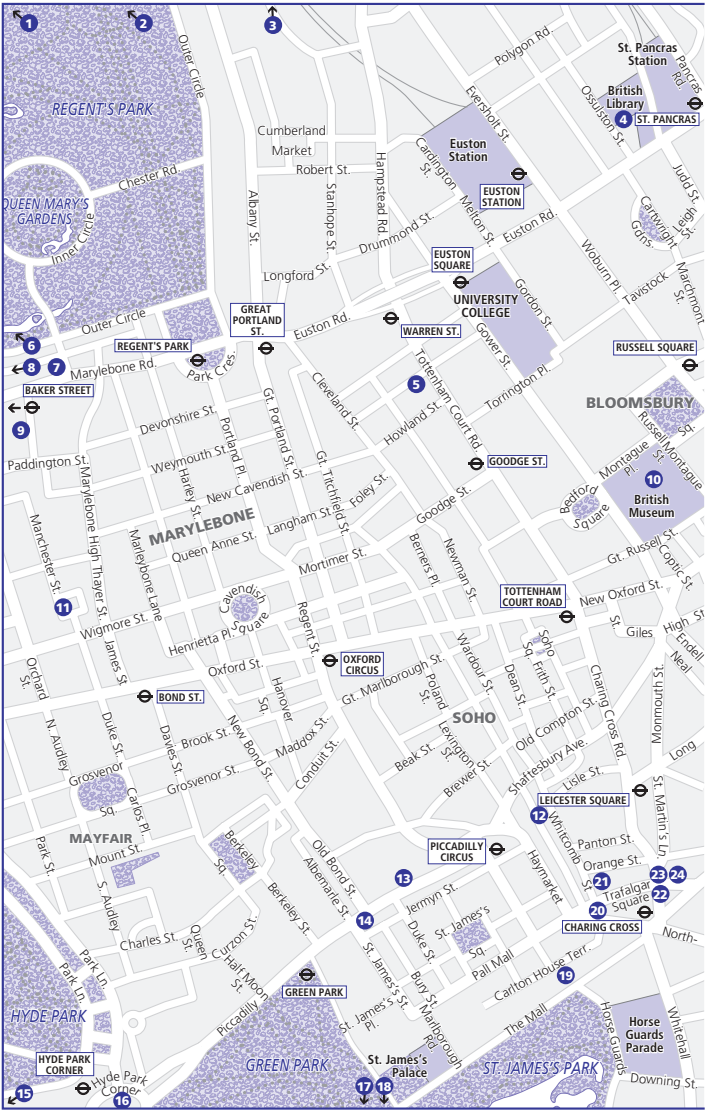
**The deep south...** Ignore any South of the River snobbery and lame jokes you encounter (don't forget your passport, and so on)—there really is life across the Thames. In fact, it's one of the hottest happening areas of the city just now, with new development all over the place. Walk from Westminster Bridge to Tower Bridge and you'll see what I mean. Catch one of the summer shows on the open-air stage of **Shakespeare's Globe Theatre**. Its neighbor is the all-new, all-fabulous **Tate Modern**, sister to the Tate Britain in Pimlico. There's a rather vibrant emerging arts scene in the cheaper, bigger spaces south of the river—check gallery listings in *Time Out* under “Alternative Spaces.” After gallery-hopping, you could head to **Tower Bridge Experience** (check out the new Norman Foster-designed **London City Hall** next to the bridge), or lunch in one of the “**Gastrodrome**” restaurants, or visit the **Design Museum**, or the warship **HMS Belfast**, or the **Golden Hinde**, an exact replica of the ship Sir Francis Drake used to circumnavigate the globe. There's also the somewhat creepy **Old Operating Theatre and Herb Garret** in the church of St. Thomas, a place once attached to St. Thomas's Hospital. Back upstream, the **South Bank Centre** is still vibrant and fun, fun, fun, after all these years—London's biggest arts complex, housed in a set of Brutalist-style buildings by Denis Lasdun (about to be covered in Richard Rogers's glass canopy, if the funding comes through) that have weathered into classic London landmarks. Don't ignore **Southwark Cathedral**, between the Globe and the Royal National Theatre, as most people do. And **Battersea Park** is a charmingly different sort of place that will show you the echt atmosphere of South London like no museum can. Battersea is metamorphosing into the new Chelsea, with bars, shops, restaurants, and very, very young residents and their 4x4-driving preppy parents—hence the nickname “Nappy Valley” for the area along the south side of the park.

**Street scenes...** **Brixton** is the center of Caribbean culture in London and a magnet for the young and hip, though it helps to have a local to show you around. **Notting Hill** is the posher version, and even hipper. It's *the* place, with galleries, restaurants, gewgaw shops, antiques shops, and clothes shops, all clustered around the hub of **Portobello Road Market** (see the Shopping chapter) and the formerly Rasta ganja-dealing, now restaurant- and cafe-laden **All Saints Road**. You may hear people refer to this area as West Eleven, which is simply its post code. The 3-day **Notting Hill Carnival**, held over the August Bank Holiday weekend, is the biggest carnival in the Northern Hemisphere and the ultimate London street party; West Indian culture rules here, but it's eclectic. It once had a reputation for trouble, but the worst you'll have to deal with anymore is the crush of thousands of revelers. **Camden Town** is way less groovy and cool, being more populated with high-school kids and wannabes than are the Portobello environs, but it's not dissimilar. A million miles more touristy, and also dead central, is **Covent Garden**. Every single visitor to London swarms to the piazza, especially in summer, and actually, it's not too bad there—with its cobbled streets and picturesque converted market building, it's just a big ole mall. Nearby is **Leicester Square**, home of large movie houses and a backpackers' mecca. In London, which tends to close down early, it's nice to see so much life at night, and Leicester Square never gets too quiet. Next to that is **Soho** (see the Nightlife chapter).

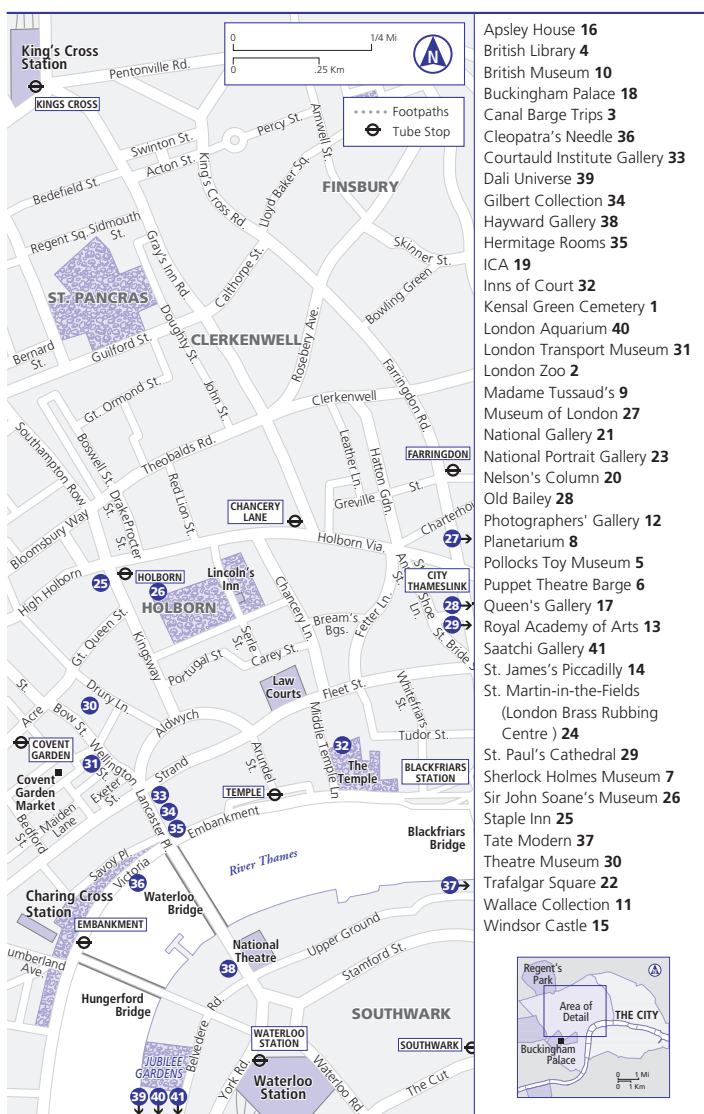
**Unwinding...** When it's all been too, too much, try these relaxing diversions. London's best and finest-looking yoga school is the **Notting Hill Gate Life Centre**, where a very bendy staff teaches various levels mainly of the energetic Vinyasa technique. Iyengar devotees should try the **Maida Vale Institute of Iyengar Yoga**. Head to **Bodywise** for a one-on-one refresher if you're already started on the Alexander Technique—others can get massaged (whether *reiki-ed*, *shiatsued*, or *cranio-sacral-ed*) at this East End holistic health center. If you're a fan of that other conscious body-realignment therapy, Pilates, the **Belsize Studio** won't disappoint.

Map 14: West End Diversions

DIVERSIONS



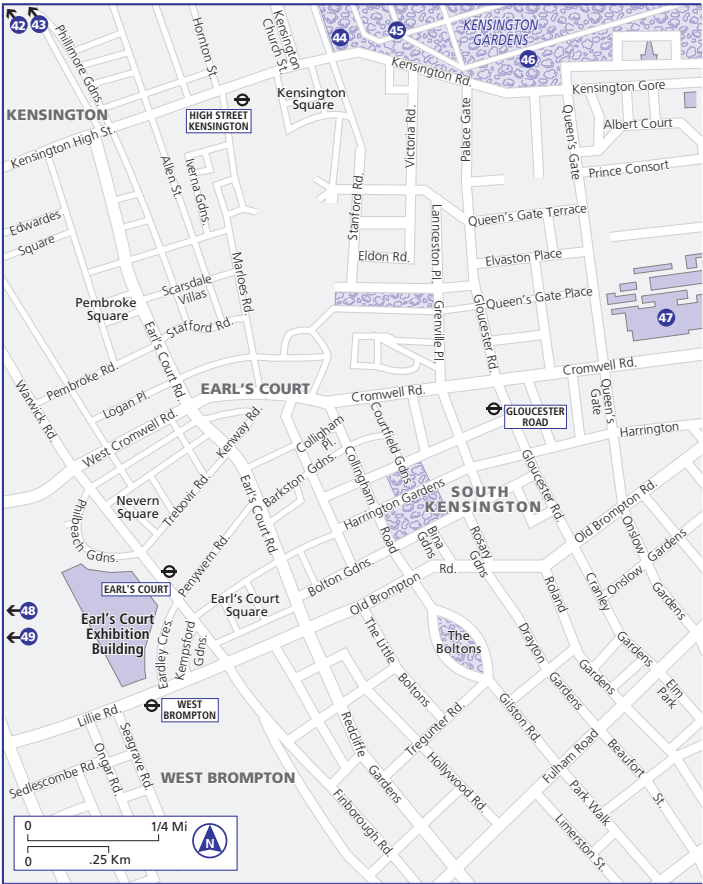
## DIVERSIONS





# Map 15: Knightsbridge to South Kensington Diversions

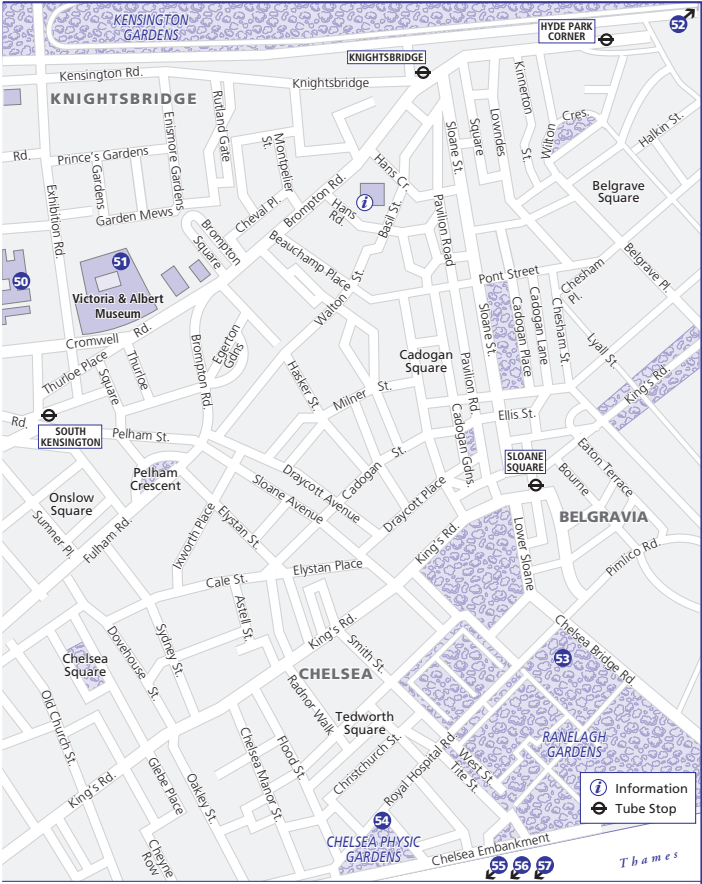
DIVERSIONS



- Chelsea Physic Garden **54**
- Ham House **55**
- Hampton Court Palace **56**
- Kensington Gardens **46**
- Kensington Palace **44**
- Kew Gardens **48**
- Kew Palace **49**
- Maida Vale Institute of Iyengar Yoga **42**

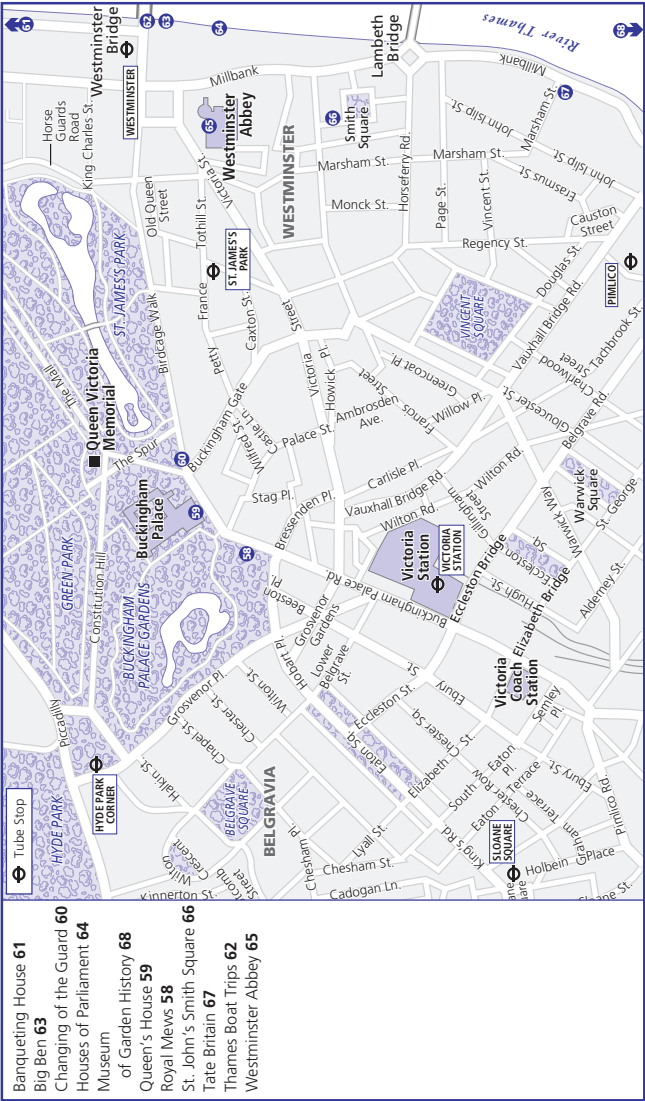
- Marble Hill House **57**
- Natural History Museum **47**
- Notting Hill Gate Life Centre **43**
- Royal Hospital **53**
- Science Museum **50**
- Serpentine Gallery **45**
- Speaker's Corner **52**
- Victoria and Albert Museum **51**

DIVERSIONS

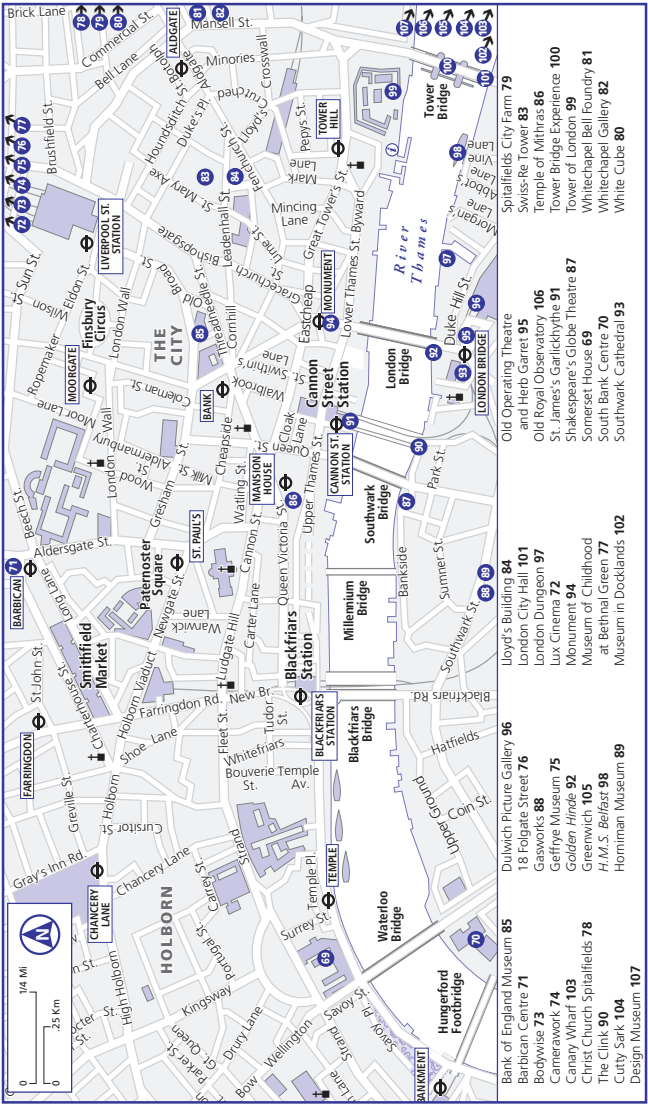


# Map 16: Westminster & Victoria Diversions

## DIVERSIONS



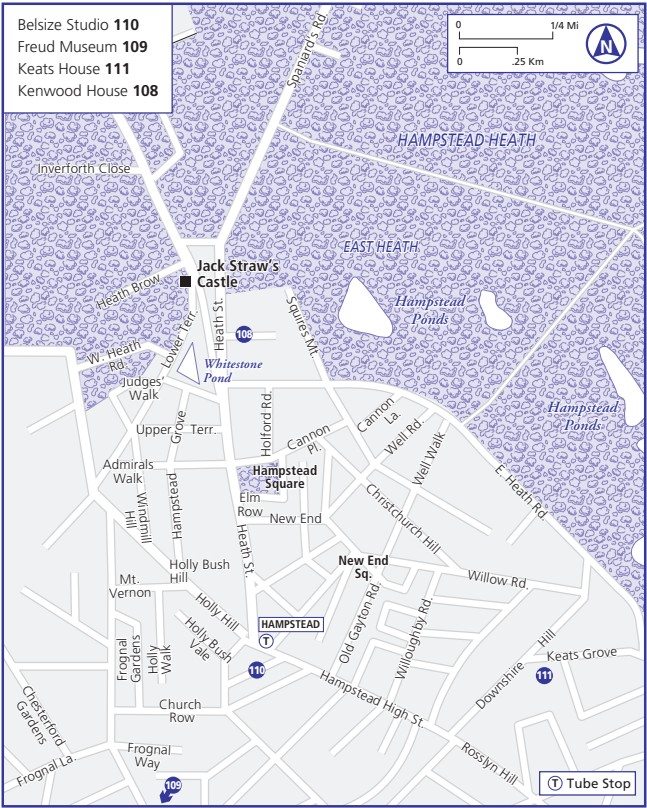
# Map 17: "The City" Diversions



DIVERSIONS

# Map 18: Hampstead Diversions

DIVERSIONS





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DIVERSIONS

THE INDEX

**Apsley House (p. 125)** WEST END The duke of Wellington was presented with this magnificent neoclassical mansion (completed in 1778) for his military prowess and it still contains his collections of art and silver. A rare chance to see the mostly unaltered interior of a private London town house.... *Tel 020/7499-5676. Hyde Park Corner W1. Tube: Hyde Park Corner. Open Tues–Sun 11am–5pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 16.**

**Bank of England Museum (p. 115)** THE CITY We all know money makes the world go 'round, especially in expensive London, and this museum unabashedly devoted to capitalism shows you how.... *Tel 020/7601-5545. Bartholomew Lane EC2. Tube: Bank. Open Mon–Fri 10am–5pm. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 85.**

**Banqueting House (p. 120, 123, 125)** WEST END Inigo Jones (1573–1652) designed this Palladian hall, all that remains of Henry VIII's Whitehall Palace, which burned down in 1698. Charles I commissioned the Rubens ceiling in tribute to his father, James I.... *Tel 020/7839-3787. Westminster Embankment. Tube: Charing Cross. Open Mon–Sat 10am–5pm. Closed Easter, Dec 24–Jan 1, and at short notice for government functions (call first). Admission charged.*

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 61.**

**Barbican Centre (p. 124)** THE CITY This mega-arts complex is famed for being ugly and labyrinthine, but it's useful for the gallery, the theaters—this is one of the London homes of the Royal Shakespeare Company—and the concert halls.... *Tel 0207/638-8891 (box office). www.barbican.org.uk. Silk St. EC2. Tube: Moorgate/Barbican. Open Mon–Sat 9am–11pm, Sun noon–11pm. Call or check the website for a list of events, times, and fees.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 71.**

**Belsize Studio (p. 133)** BELSIZE PARK The Pilates body-alignment therapy is taught and practiced here.... *Tel 020/7431-6223. 5 McCrone Mews, Belsize Lane NW3. Tube: Belsize Park. Call for hours and fees.*

**See Map 18 on p. 140, bullet 110.**

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## THE INDEX

**Big Ben (p. 113, 127, 131)** WESTMINSTER The nickname for the bell contained in St. Stephen's Clock Tower of the Houses of Parliament, often erroneously applied to the clock and tower as well. You can go on a tour, but you need a proven interest in horology (the science of measuring time) and a 3-month lead time.... *At the Houses of Parliament. Tube: Westminster. Admission free.*

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 63.**

**Bodywise (p. 133)** BETHNAL GREEN A holistic health center in the East End offers various massages, yoga, osteopathy, homeopathy, and other therapies, and classes in the Alexander Technique.... *Tel 020/8981-6938. 119 Roman Rd., Bethnal Green E2. Tube: Bethnal Green. Call for hours and fees.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 73.**

**British Library (p. 119)** ST. PANCRAS The new home of every book that's ever been published in England has a series of exhibition galleries open to the public and displaying famous documents (Magna Carta), handwritten novels (*Jane Eyre*), plays (Shakespeare's First Folio), and musical scores (Handel to Beatles); also audio recordings of authors like Virginia Woolf and T. S. Eliot reading.... *Tel 020/7412-7332. Euston Rd. NW1. Tube: King's Cross/St. Pancras. Open Mon and Wed–Fri 9:30am–6pm, Tues 9:30am–8pm, Sat 9:30am–5pm, Sun 11am–5pm. Admission free.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 4.**

**British Museum (p. 108, 114, 116, 117, 130)** BLOOMSBURY The national collection of man-made objects from all over the world—some as old as humankind—fills 4km (2.5 miles) of galleries. Highlights are the Egyptian Rooms, including the Rosetta Stone and many mummies, and the Parthenon Sculptures, plus the spectacular new Great Court.... *Tel 020/7636-1555. Great Russell St. WC1. Tube: Russell Sq. Open Mon 9am–5pm, Tues–Wed 9am–8pm, Thurs–Sat 9am–9pm, Sun 9am–8pm. Closed Good Friday, Christmas, Jan 1. Admission free.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 10.**

**Buckingham Palace (p. 114, 115, 119, 120, 122, 123, 125)** ST. JAMES'S The staterooms in the queen's London home are open to visitors for a limited period each summer. A great moneymaking scheme for one of the world's richest women, something of a rip-off and a bore for the rest of us. You can check out the Royal Mews, the Queen's Gallery, and the Changing of the Guard (see entries below) if you've lost your invitation to the palace.... *Tel 020/7839-1377. Buckingham Palace Rd. SW1. Tube: Green Park. Open Aug–Sept daily 9:30am–4:15pm (ticket office opens 9am). Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 18.**



**Camerawork (p. 124)** BETHNAL GREEN An East End gallery with a political conscience, it shows the latest in "lens-based media."... Tel 0208/980-6256. 121 Roman Rd., Bethnal Green E2. Tube: Bethnal Green. Open Thurs–Sat 1–6pm, Sun noon–5pm. Admission free.

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 74.**

**Canal Barge Trips (p. 117, 127)** REGENT'S PARK/CAMDEN Cruise the Grand Union and Regent's canals by barge, from Little Venice or Camden Lock to the zoo.... Jason's Trip, Tel 020/7286-3428, [www.jasons.co.uk](http://www.jasons.co.uk). London Waterbus Co., Tel 020/7482-2660. Both operate daily April–Oct; Sat–Sun Nov–March; call for details.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 3.**

**Canary Wharf (p. 109, 119)** CANARY WHARF Futuristic new business district fashioned from a once-decrepit loop of the Thames called the Isle of Dogs.... Tel 020/7418-2000 (general information), 020/7418-2783 (arts and events). Cabot Place E14. Tube: Canary Wharf. Admission free.

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 103.**

**Changing of the Guard (p. 114)** ST. JAMES'S Assigned to the queen as her personal guard, the Foot Guards of the Household Division of the Army change places in a colorful photo op that takes places in front of Buckingham Palace. If you miss this one, you can see something not quite as grand in front of Horse Guards in Whitehall at 11am (10am Sun).... Tel 020/7839-1377. Buckingham Palace Rd. SW1. Tube: Green Park. Ceremony takes place daily April to early June 11:30am, alternate days thereafter. Admission free.

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 60.**

**Chelsea Physic Garden (p. 117, 129)** CHELSEA An exquisite and educational garden of medicinal plants, herbs, shrubs, and flowers, including England's first rock garden, dating from 1673.... Tel 020/7352-5646. 66 Royal Hospital Rd. SW3. Tube: Sloane Sq., and Bus 11, 19, or 22. Open April–Oct Wed noon–5pm and Sun 2–6pm (during Chelsea Flower Show, daily noon–5pm). Admission charged.

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 54.**

**Christ Church Spitalfields (p. 122, 131)** SPITALFIELDS Nicholas Hawksmoor's 1729 masterpiece is one of only six London churches by the great associate of Wren's. The Spitalfield's Festival puts on classical concerts in June and December.... Tel 020/7247-7202 (rectory), 020/7377-1362 (festival information). Commercial St. E1. Tube: Liverpool St. Free admission, concerts.

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 78.**

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**Cleopatra's Needle (p. 117)** WEST END This granite obelisk, dating from about 1475 B.C., was given to the British by the viceroy of Egypt (named Mohammed Ali) in 1819.... *Victoria Embankment Gardens. Tube: Embankment. Admission free.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 36.**

**The Clink (p. 118)** SOUTH BANK The jail of the bishops of Winchester's palace is now a black-walled prison museum, including a history of prostitution in the "Southwark Stews" and a reconstruction of a 1690 debtors' cell complete with Rat Man (a man who eats rats).... *Tel 020/7378-1558. 1 Clink St. SE1. Tube: London Bridge. Open daily 10am-6pm; summer 10am-9pm. Closed Christmas, Jan 1. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 90.**

**Courtauld Institute Gallery (p. 125)** WEST END Impressionists and Postimpressionists star in this Somerset House gallery, with plenty of old masters to back them up.... *Tel 020/7848-2526. Strand WC2. Tube: Holborn. Open daily 10am-6pm. Closed Easter, Christmas, Jan 1. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 33.**

**Cutty Sark (p. 127)** GREENWICH One of the Greenwich delights, this handsome tea clipper is evocative of the seafaring life and has a wicked collection of figureheads.... *Tel 020/8858-3445. Cutty Sark stop on Docklands Light Railway. Open daily 10am-5pm. Closed Easter, Christmas, Jan 1. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 104.**

**Dalí Universe (p. 124)** SOUTH BANK To enjoy this Dalí-rama you have to believe the Spanish surrealist was such a genius that everything he did was brilliant and that it looks good against black walls. Underwhelming.... *Tel 020/7620-2720. County Hall, Riverside Building, Southbank SE1. Tube: Westminster or Waterloo. Open daily 10am-5:30pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 39.**

**Design Museum (p. 110, 132)** BUTLER'S WHARF A temple to domestic and small-scale commercial design, from Corbusier chairs to the Coke bottle, this south-of-the-river museum (across Tower Bridge) always has special exhibitions on tap.... *Tel 020/7403-6933. Butler's Wharf SE1. Tube: Tower Hill. Open daily 10am-5:45pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 107.**

**Dulwich Picture Gallery (p. 125)** DULWICH Reopened in May 2000 after extensive renovation. Britain's first purposefully built art gallery, designed by Sir John Soane, has some 300 works on display, all old masters.... *Tel 020/8693-5254. Gallery Rd. SE21. BR: West or North Dulwich. Open Tues-Fri*

10am–5pm, weekends and holidays 11am–5pm. Free on Fri.  
Admission charged.

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 96.**

**18 Folgate Street (p. 115, 131)** THE CITY Every Monday evening a small group is allowed in to view this meticulously authentic early-18th-century house created by American artist Dennis Severs; each room is a “still-life drama” pertaining to the life of a family of Huguenot weavers from 1754 to 1914.... *Tel 020/7247-4013. 18 Folgate St. E1. Tube: Liverpool St. Open Mon; time varies according to hour of dusk. Booking is required. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 76.**

**Gasworks (p. 124)** SOUTH BANK One of South London’s alternative gallery spaces.... *Tel 020/7582-6848. 155 Vauxhall St. SE11. Tube: Oval. Open Wed–Sun noon–6pm. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 88.**

**Geffrye Museum (p. 131, 132)** SHOREDITCH In a row of 18th-century almshouses, this perfect museum re-creates the sitting rooms of England’s urban middle classes from 1600 to 2000.... *Tel 020/7739-9893. Kingsland Rd. E2. Tube: Liverpool St. Open Tues–Sat 10am–5pm, Sun and bank holidays noon–5pm. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 75.**

**Gilbert Collection (p. 118)** WEST END A collection of gold and silver snuffboxes (ah-choo!), portrait miniatures, and mosaics donated to the nation in 1996 forms the basis of this intriguing addition to the Somerset House galleries.... *Tel 020/7420-9400. Somerset House, Strand WC2. Tube: Temple. Open daily 10am–6pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 34.**

**Golden Hinde (p. 132)** SOUTH BANK An explorable full-scale reproduction of Sir Francis Drake’s 16th-century flagship that circumnavigated the globe; this one did the same before being parked here.... *Tel 08700/118-700. St. Mary Overie Dock, Cathedral St. SE1. Tube: London Bridge. Open daily but at varying times so call first. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 92.**

**Greenwich (p. 115, 117, 123, 127)** This riverside town has many attractions, most of them free, some of them UNESCO World Heritage sites—the Cutty Sark (see above); the Royal Naval College; and the National Maritime Museum, Queen’s House, and Old Royal Observatory (see below). Get there via boat (see Thames boat trips, below), tube (Jubilee Line to Greenwich) or the Docklands Light Railway (Island Gardens stop).

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 105.**

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**Ham House (p. 117, 120, 129)** RICHMOND This Stuart stately home, dating from about 1610, has 17th-century furniture and gardens; it's recently been restored.... *Tel 020/8940-1950. Ham St., Richmond, Surrey. Tube: Richmond. Open April-Oct 1-5pm (closed Thurs-Fri). Gardens only 11am-4pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 55.**

**Hampton Court Palace (p. 117, 120, 123, 129)** EAST MOLESEY, SURREY Henry VIII's stunning Thames-side palace satisfies every royal fantasy—see everything from the King's Apartments to the Tudor kitchens, and maybe a royal ghost. The 1714 yew maze is famous.... *Tel 0870/752-7777. East Molesey, Surrey. BR: Hampton Court. Open April-Oct Mon 10:15am-6pm, Tues-Sun 9:30am-6pm; Nov-March Mon 10:15am-4:30pm, Tues-Sun 9:30am-4:30pm. Closed Dec 24-26, Jan 1. Admission charged.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 56.**

**Hayward Gallery (p. 124)** SOUTH BANK The art department of the South Bank Centre stages about five exhibitions of modern work per year.... *Tel 020/7260-4242. Belvedere Rd. SE1. Tube: Waterloo. Open Thurs-Mon 10am-6pm, Tues-Wed 10am-8pm. Closed between exhibitions. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 38.**

**Hermitage Rooms (p. 118)** WEST END Desperate to raise cash now that it's gone capitalistic, Russia's Hermitage Museum has been selling franchises of itself all over Europe like so many Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets, only with art. The goods on display are from the fabulous Hermitage collections and the shows change periodically.... *Tel 020/7845-4600. Somerset House, Strand WC2. Tube: Temple. Open daily 10am-6pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 35.**

**HMS Belfast (p. 132)** SOUTH BANK Built in 1938, this huge navy cruiser was used in World War II and is now berthed between Tower Bridge and London Bridge. You can poke around all seven decks and even "experience" a re-created battle.... *Tel 020/7940-6300. Morgan's Lane, Tooley St. SE1. Tube: London Bridge. Open Mar 1-Oct 31 10am-6pm, Nov 1-Feb 28 10am-5pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 98.**

**Horniman Museum (p. 127)** FOREST HILL An anthropological museum of great charm, best known for its bee colony and its 1,500 musical instruments.... *Tel 020/8699-1872. 100 London Rd. SE23. BR: Forest Hill. Open Mon-Sat 10:30am-5:30pm, Sun 2-5:30pm. Free admission.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 89.**

**Houses of Parliament (p. 108, 113, 114, 127)** WESTMINSTER

"The mother of all parliaments" takes place in Charles Barry and Augustus Pugin's mid-19th-century neo-Gothic pile, complete with the famous Clock Tower housing Big Ben. It's possible to visit both the House of Commons and the House of Lords in session, but the lines are long; better to take one of the tours now offered during the summer recess.... Tel 020/7219-3000 (*House of Commons*), 020/7219-3107 (*House of Lords*). Bridge St. and Parliament Sq. SW1. Tube: Westminster. Open (*Commons*) Mon–Wed 2:30–10:30pm, Thurs 11:30am–7pm, Fri 9:30am–3pm. Closed Easter week, May 1, July–Oct (tours available), 3 weeks at Christmas. Admission free.

See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 64.

**ICA (p. 124)** ST. JAMES'S The Institute of Contemporary Arts is secreted in a Nash terrace on the pink road and houses much arts action, with galleries, two small movie theaters, a theater, and a cafe/bar.... Tel 020/7930-3647. The Mall, SW1. Tube: Charing Cross. Gallery open daily noon–7:30pm (Fri until 9pm). Admission charged.

See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 19.

**Inns of Court (p. 108, 115)** HOLBORN Legal London is still centered around the four Inns of Court: Gray's Inn, Lincoln's Inn, Middle Temple, and Inner Temple, the earliest part of which is the 12th-century Temple Church (not open to the public).... Tel 020/7936-6000. The Strand WC2, Temple EC1. Tube: Chancery Lane, Temple, or Chancery Lane. Open (*law courts*) Mon–Fri 9am–4:30pm. Admission free.

See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 32.

**Keats House (p. 120)** HAMPSTEAD The poet lived 2 years of his short life here in handsome Hampstead; today it also houses the Keats archives.... Tel 020/7435-2062. Keats Grove NW3. Tube: Hampstead. Open April–Oct Tues–Sun noon–5pm (Nov–March, call for opening times). Admission free.

See Map 18 on p. 140, bullet 111.

**Kensal Green Cemetery (p. 121)** KENSAL GREEN London's oldest necropolis (from 1833) is atmospheric and beautiful to behold; it contains the remains of Wilkie Collins, Thackeray, Trollope, and other great Victorians.... Tel 020/8969-0152; 020/7402-2749 for tours. Harrow Rd. W10. Tube: Kensal Green. Open Mon–Sat 9am–5:30pm, Sun 10am–5:30pm; tours Sun 2pm. Donation requested.

See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 1.

**Kensington Palace (p. 122)** KENSINGTON The state apartments contain the possessions of the Stuart and Hanoverian monarchs who called it home, the rather fabulous Ceremonial Dress Collection (important tips on how to dress for court), and frocks worn by Her Maj and Diana, who lived in one of the palace

wings.... *Tel 020/7937-7079. The Broad Walk, Kensington Gardens W8. Tube: High St. Kensington. Open daily 10am–5pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 44.**

**Kenwood House (p. 121, 125)** HAMPSTEAD HOUSE A Robert Adam masterpiece, this neoclassical villa on a heavenly hillside near Hampstead Heath holds the Iveagh Bequest, which has some important paintings, and the glittering Hull Grundy Jewelry Collection. The lakeside concert bowl opens in summertime.... *Tel 020/8348-1286. Hampstead Lane NW3. Tube: Archway or Golders Green, and bust 210. Open daily April–Sept 10am–6pm; Oct 10am–5pm; Nov–March 10am–4pm (opens 10:30am Wed and Fri year-round). Closed Dec 24–25. Admission free.*

**See Map 18 on p. 140, bullet 108.**

**Kew Gardens (p. 115, 128, 129)** KEW The 300-acre Royal Botanic Gardens grow 40,000 kinds of plants and feature a visitor center, Victorian greenhouses, an 18th-century ornamental pagoda, and lots more, all of which makes this a perfect day trip.... *Tel 020/8332-5000. Tube: Kew Gardens. Open daily 9:30–dusk. Closed Christmas and Jan 1. Admission charged.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 48.**

**Kew Palace (p. 122)** KEW There's even a royal palace in the gardens—the littlest and most picturesque one of all, where King George III lost his marbles.... *Tel 020/8332-5000. Tube: Kew Gardens. Open April–Oct Sat–Sun 11am–5:30pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 49.**

**Lloyd's Building (p. 120)** THE CITY One of London's most unappealing and sinister-looking modern buildings, this 1986 inside-out glass-and-steel tower, headquarters of the venerable Lloyd's of London, is the handiwork of Sir Richard Rogers (architect of Paris's Pompidou).... *Tel 020/7327-1000. 1 Lime St. EC1. Tube: Monument. Closed to visitors.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 84.**

**London Aquarium (p. 118, 126, 127)** SOUTH BANK For Londoners, it's an especially surreal experience to penetrate the bowels of the former County Hall (one-time seat of the Greater London Council abolished by Thatcher) to find...fish! There aren't any really big ones, but there are luminous jellyfish, strokeable rays, unstrokeable piranhas, a deep Atlantic pool of hound sharks and conger eel—all set out on a downward spiral with marine sound effects and eerie subaqueous light.... *Tel 020/7967-8000. County Hall, Westminster Bridge Rd. SE1. Tube: Westminster. Open daily 10am–6pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 40.**

**London Brass Rubbing Centre (p. 116)** WEST END The crypt of St. Martin-in-the-Fields provides paper, metallic waxes, and instructions on how to rub your own replica of historic brasses.... *Tel 020/7437-6023. Trafalgar Sq. W1. Tube: Charing Cross or Leicester Sq. Open Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun noon-6pm. Closed Easter, Christmas, Jan 1. Charge for rubbing varies.*

**London City Hall (p. 119, 120, 132)** SOUTH BANK The mayor of London (a newly created elected office not to be confused with the ceremonial lord mayor) and the London Assembly meet in this spherical glass Thames-side building designed by Lord Norman Foster and completed in 2002. *Tel 020/7983-4000. The Queen's Walk SE1. Tube: Tower Hill. Open to visitors Mon-Fri 8am-8pm. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 101.**

**London Dungeon (p. 126)** SOUTH BANK Ghastly and gory exhibits of torture and treachery, mostly from the Middle Ages, appeal greatly to horrid children. Complete with the "Jack the Ripper Experience."... *Tel 020/7403-7221. 28-34 Tooley St. SE1. Tube: London Bridge. Open daily April-Sept 10am-6:30pm; Oct-March 10am-5:30pm. Closed Christmas. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 97.**

**London Transport Museum (p. 127)** COVENT GARDEN Better than it sounds, this has lots of hands-on stuff that kids like, and a fascinating collection of horse-drawn omnibuses, ancient buses, and early tube cars.... *Tel 020/7565-7299. The Piazza, Covent Garden WC2. Tube: Covent Garden. Open Sat-Thurs 10am-6pm, Fri 11am-6pm. Closed Dec 24-26. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 31.**

**London Zoo (p. 117, 126)** REGENT'S PARK About 8,000 creatures great and small call this home. You can get real close to the big cats, watch the penguins feeding, and ride a camel—all the usual stuff, but in a pretty setting.... *Tel 020/7722-3333. Regent's Park NW1. Tube: Camden Town. Open daily March-Oct 10am-5:30pm; Nov-Feb 10am-4pm. Closed Christmas. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 2.**

**Lux Cinema (p. 124)** SHOREDITCH This 120-seat cinema shows obscure films, hosts festivals, and showcases new talent; it also includes the first electronic art gallery in the United Kingdom and impressive projections.... *Tel 020/7684-0201. 2-4 Hoxton Sq. N1. Tube: Old St. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 72.**

**Madame Tussaud's (p. 109, 126)** MARYLEBONE A Frenchwoman learned to make waxwork people by fashioning death masks of aristocrats beheaded during the French Revolution, then inflicted this museum of the frozen famous on London. Expect to stand



in line forever and see waxen effigies of important world leaders like Naomi Campbell and Pierce Brosnan.... *Tel 020/7935-6861. Marylebone Rd. NW1. Tube: Baker St. Open daily 9am, 9:30am, or 10am–5:30pm (opening time changes seasonally). Closed Christmas. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 9.**

**Maida Vale Institute of Iyengar Yoga (p. 133)** MAIDA VALE For Iyengar yoga classes, just as the name promises.... *Tel 020/7624-3080. 223a Randolph Ave. W9. Tube: Maida Vale. Call for hours and fees.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 42.**

**Marble Hill House (p. 120)** RICHMOND Built in the Palladian style for George II's mistress, Henrietta Howard, this Thames-side villa, nearly opposite Ham House, offers summertime concerts and teas in the Coach House.... *Tel 020/8892-5115. Richmond Rd., Twickenham. Tube: Richmond. Open April–Sept Wed–Sun 10am–6pm; Oct Wed–Sun 10am–4pm. Closed Christmas. Admission charged.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 57.**

**Monument (p. 128)** THE CITY Christopher Wren's tower commemorates the terrible destruction wrought by the Great Fire of 1666. Climb the 311 steps for an iron-caged view of the City.... *Tel 020/7626-2717. Monument St. EC3. Tube: Monument. Open daily 10am–5:40pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 94.**

**Museum in Docklands (p. 118)** DOCKLANDS Housed in an early-19th-century warehouse at East India Quay, London's newest museum (it opened in May 2003) unlocks the history of London's river, port, and people with a wealth of objects that provide glimpses of the people who have come and gone from the Docks over the last 2,000 years.... *Tel 0870/444-3857. No. 1 Warehouse West India Quay, Hertsmere Rd. E14. DLR: West India Quay. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 102.**

**Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green (p. 127, 131)** BETHNAL GREEN The V&A's outpost focuses on all things small, from dollhouses to teddy bears, illustrating the history of play.... *Tel 0208/980-2415. Cambridge Heath Rd. E2. Tube: Bethnal Green. Open Sat–Thurs 10am–5:50pm. Closed May 1, Christmas, Jan 1. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 77.**

**Museum of Garden History (p. 129)** LAMBETH The Tradescant Trust, named after great botanist John Tradescant (1570–1638), runs this museum in a deconsecrated church, complete with a 17th-century knot garden and the tomb of Captain Bligh of

the Bounty.... Tel 020/7401-8865. St. Mary-at-Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Rd. SE1. Tube: Lambeth North. Open daily 10:30am–5pm. Admission free.

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 68.**

**Museum of London (p. 109, 115, 118, 130)** THE CITY This chronologically arranged museum with some beautiful new galleries gives the background to what you have and haven't seen outside. Highlights include prehistoric, Roman, and medieval artifacts and the incredible gilded coach used by the lord mayor of London.... Tel 020/7600-3699. 150 London Wall EC2. Tube: St. Paul's. Open Mon–Sat 10am–5:50pm, Sun noon–5:50pm. Closed Christmas, Jan 1. Admission free.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 27.**

**National Gallery (p. 114, 125, 128, 130)** WEST END The national collection of art is suitably impressive, full of familiar masterpieces. The Sainsbury Wing contains the early Renaissance collection, but the whole place spans 700 years, up to 1920.... Tel 020/7747-2869. Trafalgar Sq. WC2. Tube: Charing Cross. Open daily 10am–6pm (Wed until 9pm). Closed Easter, May 1, Dec 24–26, Jan 1. Admission free.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 21.**

**National Portrait Gallery (p. 124, 125, 130)** WEST END Next to the National Gallery, this intimate and likeable museum, recently renovated, features portraits of the famous and the forgotten from medieval times to now.... Tel 020/7306-0055. St. Martin's Place WC2. Tube: Charing Cross. Open Sat–Wed 10am–6pm, Thurs–Fri 10am–9pm. Closed Easter, Dec 24–26, Jan 1. Admission free.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 23.**

**Natural History Museum (p. 114, 127, 128, 130)** SOUTH KENSINGTON Almost as big as the world it depicts, this is one of the best museums around, with its many renovated galleries and terrifying T-Rex.... Tel 020/7942-5000. Cromwell Rd. SW7. Tube: South Kensington. Open Mon–Sat 10am–5:50pm, Sun and holidays 11am–5:50pm. Closed Dec 23–26. Admission free.

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 47.**

**Nelson's Column (p. 114, 127)** WEST END The touristic center of London is this 44m (145-ft.) granite column from which E. H. Baily's 1843 statue of Admiral Lord Nelson keeps watch.... Trafalgar Sq. Tube: Charing Cross. Admission free.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 20.**

**Notting Hill Gate Life Centre (p. 133)** NOTTING HILL Classes in Vinyasa yoga, Pilates, and tai chi offer a way to relax here.... Tel 020/7221-4602. 15 Edge St. W8. Tube: Notting Hill Gate. Call for hours and fees.

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 43.**

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## DIVERSIONS

## THE INDEX

**Old Bailey (p. 116)** THE CITY Crowned by a gilded statue of Justice, this incarnation of England's Central Criminal Court was built in 1907 on the site of notorious Newgate Prison.... Tel 020/7248-3277. Public gallery entrance at Newgate St. EC4. Tube: St. Paul's. Public gallery open Mon–Fri 10:30am–1pm and 2–4pm. No children under 14. Admission free.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 28.**

**Old Operating Theatre and Herb Garret (p. 115, 118, 132)** SOUTH BANK Britain's oldest operating theater, dating from 1822, features a wooden operating table, saws, and other "state-of-the-art" medical equipment that will make your knees go weak. Students watched medical procedures on patients whose only anesthetic was a bottle of booze and a blindfold. All that's missing is the blood and the screams.... Tel 020/7955-4791. 9A St. Thomas St. SE1. Tube: London Bridge. Open daily 10:30–5pm. Closed Dec 15–Jan 5. Admission charged.

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 95.**

**Old Royal Observatory (p. 127)** GREENWICH This 1675 Wren-designed observatory in Greenwich calls itself "the place where time begins," because Greenwich mean time is measured from here and the prime meridian, which bisects the world, is right beneath your feet. Inside there's a collection of 18th-century chronometers and astronomical instruments.... Tel 020/8312-6608. Greenwich Park SE10. DLR: Island Gardens. Open daily 10am–5pm (until 6pm in summer). Closed Christmas. Admission free.

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 106.**

**Photographers' Gallery (p. 124)** WEST END Conveniently central place to see top shows of 20th-century photographic art.... Tel 020/7831-1772. 5 Great Newport St. WC2. Tube: Leicester Sq. Open Mon–Sat 11am–6pm, Sun noon–6pm. Admission free.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 12.**

**Planetarium (p. 126)** MARYLEBONE You'll see better stars here than next door at Madame Tussaud's. There are outer-space exhibits, too.... Tel 020/7935-6861. Marylebone Rd. NW1. Tube: Baker St. Open daily 9am–5:30pm, shows every 30 minutes from 10 or 10:30am. Closed Christmas. Admission charged.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 8.**

**Pollocks Toy Museum (p. 127)** BLOOMSBURY A pair of 19th-century houses is crammed to the beams with every conceivable Victorian toy.... Tel 020/7636-3452. 41 Whitfield St. W1. tube: Goodge St. Open Mon–Sat 10am–5pm. Admission charged.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 5.**

**Puppet Theatre Barge (p. 127)** MARYLEBONE When it's open (usually until early June), this Little Venice floating marionette show is a treat for toddlers, with fairy tales, rhymes, and songs....

*Tel 020/7249-6876. Blomfield Rd. W9. Tube: Warwick Ave. Call for times. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 6.**

**Queen's Gallery (p. 119, 123, 125)** ST. JAMES'S QEII formally reopened "her" refurbished and enlarged gallery in 2002 during her Golden Jubilee year. The new galleries display royal goodies from the humongous royal collections, including paintings, *objets*, and photos from the Royal Archives at Windsor. There's even a Royal coffee shop.... *Tel 020/7321-2233. Buckingham Palace Rd. SW1. Tube: Victoria. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 17.**

**Queen's House (p. 123)** GREENWICH The first classical house in England, designed by Inigo Jones in 1616 for the Stuart Queen Anne of Denmark, is one of the delights of Greenwich; it was used as a model for the White House in Washington, D.C.... *Tel 020/8312-6608. Romney Rd., Greenwich Park. DLR: Island Gardens. Open daily 10am-5pm. Closed Christmas, Jan 1. Admission free.*

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 59.**

**Royal Academy of Arts (p. 125)** WEST END Eighteenth-century Burlington House is the venue for whatever major art show is in town, plus the vast and unruly Summer Exhibition.... *Tel 020/7300-8000. Piccadilly W1. Tube: Piccadilly Circus. Open Sat-Thurs 10am-6pm, Fri 10am-8:30pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 13.**

**Royal Hospital (p. 128)** CHELSEA The retirement home Charles II founded for his best soldiers, designed by Wren, still houses some 400 quaintly costumed ex-servicemen, "Chelsea Pensioners." Parts are open to the public, more when it's Chelsea Flower Show time.... *Tel 020/7730-0161. Royal Hospital Rd. SW3. Tube: Sloane Sq., and Bus 211 or 239. Open Mon-Sat 10am-1pm, daily 2-4pm (closed Sun Oct-March). Closed national holidays. Admission free.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 53.**

**Royal Mews (p. 123, 126)** ST. JAMES'S Not all the queen's horses are here, but many are, alongside her ceremonial fairy-tale coaches and carriages.... *Tel 020/7839-1377. Buckingham Palace Rd. SW1. Tube: Victoria. Open March-July daily 10am-4; Aug-Sept daily 10am-5pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 58.**

**Saatchi Gallery (p. 116, 118, 124)** SOUTH BANK All the sensationalistic, self-publicizing young Turks of the British art scene are snapped up by the self-publicizing older Turk, advertising and media maven Charles Saatchi, to be shown off in this brand-new gallery created within County Hall.... *Tel 020/7825-2363. County*

*Hall, Southbank SE1. Tube: Westminster. Open Sun–Thurs 10am–6pm, Fri–Sat 10am–10pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 41.**

**St. James's Garlickhythe (p. 122)** THE CITY One of Wren's City churches, notable for its concerts.... *Tel 0207/236-1719. Garlick Hill EC4. Tube: Mansion House. Concerts: Call to confirm. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 91.**

**St. James's Piccadilly (p. 122)** WEST END Another Wren church with a concert program, this one is improbably supplemented by various new-agey events, plus a crafts market and a cafe.... *Tel 020/7387-0441. Piccadilly. Tube: Piccadilly Circus. Call for hours. Admission free; call for details.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 14.**

**St. John's Smith Square (p. 116)** WESTMINSTER Yet another church with concerts, this one deconsecrated and next to Conservative Party headquarters.... *Tel 020/7222-1061. Smith Sq. Tube: Westminster. Admission and hours vary; call for details. Admission charged.*

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 66.**

**St. Martin-in-the-Fields (p. 116, 122)** WEST END Not another one? Yes, but this one's the granddaddy of all churches-with-music, being the home of the famous music ensemble, the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. This is where you can hear Bach and Mozart by candlelight and enjoy free noontime concerts. The James Gibbs church is well worth visiting in its own right.... *Tel 020/7930-0089, 020/7839-8362 (box office). Trafalgar Sq. W1. Tube: Charing Cross. Open Mon–Sat 10am–6pm, Sun noon–6pm. Concerts Mon, Tues, Fri noon, Thurs–Sat 7:30pm. Admission varies for evening concerts; call for details. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 24.**

**St. Paul's Cathedral (p. 109, 113, 121)** THE CITY Wren's undoubted masterpiece (and final resting place) is instantly recognizable as one of the defining buildings of the London skyline. It's on everyone's must-see list, though the vast interior is really rather dull. Bring a friend and check out the Whispering Gallery and its supernatural acoustics.... *Tel 020/7266-8348. St. Paul's Churchyard, Ludgate Hill EC4. Tube: St. Paul's. Open for sightseeing Mon–Sat 8:30am–4pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 29.**

**Science Museum (p. 127, 130)** SOUTH KENSINGTON Neighbor of the Natural History Museum, this is similarly popular with kids who love the interactive stuff, the cool Space Gallery and Flight Lab. But there's plenty of stuff here for adults, too, including lots of historic vehicles and thingamabobs, plus a giant IMAX.... *Tel 020/7942-4454. Exhibition Rd. SW7. Tube: South Kensington.*

*Open daily 10am–6pm. Admission free to museum; admission charged for IMAX.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 50.**

**Serpentine Gallery (p. 124)** KENSINGTON In the middle of Kensington Gardens is this space for avant-garde, modern shows.... *Tel 020/7298-1515. Tube: Lancaster Gate. Open daily 10am–6pm. Closed between exhibitions. Admission free.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 45.**

**Shakespeare's Globe Theatre (p. 110, 119, 122, 124, 132)** SOUTH BANK On the South Bank, in an area that was once London's Times Square for entertainment (theater, bear-baiting, prostitution), the Globe Theatre where Shakespeare's plays were performed has been re-created near its original site. There are tours, an exhibition on Elizabethan theater, and summer performances (you can sit on an authentic bum-numbing bench) of the Bard's immortal works.... *Tel 020/7902-1500. New Globe Walk, Bankside SE1. Tube: Mansion House. Open for tours and exhibition Oct–April 10am–5pm; May–Sept 9am–noon. Closed Christmas. Performances May–Sept. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 87.**

**Sherlock Holmes Museum (p. 116)** MARYLEBONE A hokey tourist trap cashes in on the fictional detective, but it's probably magnetic to addicts for the address alone.... *Tel 020/7935-8866. "221B" Baker St. Tube: Baker St. Open daily 9–6. Closed Christmas.*

**See Map 14 on page 134, bullet 7.**

**Sir John Soane's Museum (p. 115, 116, 118, 125)** HOLBORN One of London's most memorable museum experiences, the architect (1753–1837) of the Bank of England's house is full of ancient sculpture, mad perspectives, juicy colors, and art, art, art. It makes you smile; view by candlelight first Tuesday of the month.... *Tel 020/7405-2107. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields WC2. Tube: Holborn. Open Tues–Sat 10am–5pm (6am–9pm first Tues of month). Closed Christmas, Jan 1, bank holidays. Admission free.*

**See Map 14 on page 134, bullet 26.**

**Somerset House (p. 118, 125)** WEST END Somerset House is an enormous late-18th-century palace that was used for civil administration until it was transformed into a brilliant new public space with a beautiful courtyard (dancing fountains), a terrific riverside terrace cafe (summer), and new gallery space (see entries for the Courtauld Institute Gallery, the Gilbert Collection, and the Hermitage Rooms).... *Tel 020/7845-4600. Strand WC2. Tube: Temple or Charing Cross. Free admission to courtyard/cafe; admission varies for museums.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 69.**

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**South Bank Centre (p. 115, 119, 124, 132)** SOUTH BANK Home of the Royal National Theatre, the National Film Theatre, the Hayward Gallery, Royal Festival Hall, and other concert halls.... You're bound to end up here at least once. See the Entertainment chapter for more details.... Tel 020/7960-4242. *South Bank SE1. Tube: Embankment. Prices vary for plays, concerts, and exhibitions.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 70.**

**Southwark Cathedral (p. 122, 132)** SOUTHWARK London's second oldest church, after Westminster Abbey, is where Chaucer and Shakespeare worshipped, Shakespeare's brother Edmund is buried, and the founder of Harvard College was baptized. Look out for lunchtime concerts, usually Monday and Tuesday.... Tel 020/7367-6700. *Montagne Close SE1. Tube: London Bridge. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 93.**

**Speaker's Corner (p. 115, 117)** WEST END On Sunday afternoons, the northeast corner of Hyde Park welcomes anyone with anything to say and a soapbox to stand on; no swearing allowed.... *Tube: Marble Arch.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 52.**

**Spitalfields City Farm (p. 131)** SPITALFIELDS As it sounds, this is a farm in the middle of the East End, complete with cows, sheep, goats, and ducks, pony rides for kids, and summer barbecues.... Tel 020/7247-8762. *Weaver St. E1. Tube: Shoreditch. Open Tues–Sun 10:30am–5pm. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 79.**

**Staple Inn (p. 118)** HOLBORN Central London's oldest surviving Tudor (1586) half-timbered house was once the wool staple, where that commodity was weighed and traded.... *High Holborn. Tube: Holborn.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 25.**

**Swiss-Re Tower (p. 119, 120)** THE CITY Called the “glass gherkin” (or dildo, depending on whom you're talking to), Lord Norman Foster's newest City skyscraper is a 40-story, glass-clad, environmentally friendly office tower shaped like a pickle. It was just being completed as I wrote this, so there's no phone number and no info on public access, though there's supposed to be a rooftop observation floor. *30 St. Mary Axe EC3. Tube: Liverpool St.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 83.**

**Tate Britain (p. 123, 129, 130, 132)** PIMLICO Here you'll find the national collection of British painting from 1500 to now, including works by the mad genius William Blake, loads of pre-Raphaelites, the fabulous Turner collection, some oddball Stanley Spencers, and plenty more.... Tel 020/7887-8000. *Millbank SW1. Tube: Pimlico. Open daily 10am–5:50pm. Closed Christmas. Admission free.*

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 67.**



**Tate Modern (p. 110, 116, 119, 120, 124, 130, 132)**

**SOUTH BANK**  
 Located in the former Bankside power station, the Tate Modern opened in 2000 and is still the hottest gallery in town; come here for international 20th-century-and-newer art.... *Tel* 020/7887-8000. 25 Sumner St., Bankside SE1. *Tube:* Southwark. *Open* Sun–Thurs 10am–6pm, Fri–Sat 10am–10pm. *Closed* Dec 24–26. *Admission* free except for special exhibitions.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 37.**

**Temple of Mithras (p. 115, 118)** **THE CITY** Roman soldiers stationed in Britannia in the 3rd and 4th centuries worshiped Mithras, the Persian god of light, instead of Christ, and these meager foundation walls unearthed in 1954 are the remains of one of their churches.... *Queen Victoria St. Tube:* Mansion House. *Admission* free.

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 86.**

**Thames boat trips (p. 115, 117)** Daily from April to October and on weekends the rest of the year, boats operated by many different companies ply the Thames, most departing from Westminster Pier or Embankment Pier. Destinations downstream are the Tower of London, Greenwich, and the Thames Barrier, while the longer upstream trips end up at Richmond, Kew, and Hampton Court.... *Call for schedules.* Westminster Pier to: Greenwich and Thames Barrier, *Tel* 020/7930-1616; the Tower, *Tel* 020/7740-0400; Kew Gardens, Richmond, and Hampton Court Palace, *Tel* 020/7930-4721; [www.wpsa.co.uk](http://www.wpsa.co.uk).

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 62.**

**Theatre Museum (p. 127)** **COVENT GARDEN** It's the repository of the National Collections of the Performing Arts but it's oddly boring, unless you're into the artifacts (playbills, photos, model sets). Kids love the demonstrations of stage makeup and costuming, though.... *Tel* 020/945-4700. Russell St. WC2. *Tube:* Covent Garden. *Open* Tues–Sun 10am–6pm. *Admission* free.

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 30.**

**Tower Bridge Experience (p. 132)** **THE CITY** You can cross Tower Bridge for free, or you can pay to go inside and “experience” the inner workings. Harry, an animatronic Victorian bridge worker, tells the story of the famous drawbridge, complete with the architect's ghost and a miniature music-hall show. Fab walkway views, too.... *Tel* 020/7403-3761. North Pier, Tower Bridge SE1. *Tube:* Tower Hill. *Open* daily 9:30am–6pm. *Closed* Christmas. *Admission* charged.

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 100.**

**Tower of London (p. 109, 113, 118, 123, 126)** **THE CITY** A prime must-see sight, where London's history is oldest, bloodiest, and most fascinating. The 900-year-old Tower has the Beefeaters, countless firearms and suits of armor, and, of course, the eye-popping crown jewels.... *Tel* 0870/756-6060. Tower Hill EC3.

*Tube: Tower Hill. Open Mon–Sat 9am–6pm, Sun 10am–6pm (closes 5pm Nov–Feb). Closed Dec 24–26, Jan 1. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 99.**

**Trafalgar Square (p. 114, 127, 130)** WEST END The touristic center of London has just been connected to the National Gallery, making it more pedestrian friendly. The pigeons are gone but Nelson's Column still stands and so does the giant Christmas tree in December (a yearly gift from Norway for sheltering the Norwegian royal family during World War II).... *Tube: Charing Cross. Admission free.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 22.**

**Victoria and Albert Museum (p. 114)** SOUTH KENSINGTON The V&A is the national shrine of the decorative arts, with everything from the Shakespeare-immortalized Great Bed of Ware to last year's Lacroix and Comme outfits in the famous dress collection. Don't miss the new British Galleries and the glittering Glass Gallery.... *Tel 020/7942-2000. Cromwell Rd. SW7. Tube: South Kensington. Open daily 10am–5:45pm (until 10pm Wed and last Fri of month). Closed Dec 24–26, Jan 1. Admission free.*

**See Map 15 on p. 136, bullet 51.**

**Wallace Collection (p. 116, 125)** MARYLEBONE Four generations of Marquesses of Hertford assembled this exquisite collection of European paintings, Sèvres porcelain, Italian majolica, and Renaissance gold, all housed in a late-18th-century mansion. Don't miss Frans Hals's *Laughing Cavalier*.... *Tel 020/7563-9500. Hertford House, Manchester Sq. W1. Tube: Bond St. Open Mon–Sat 10am–5pm, Sun noon–5pm. Closed Easter, May 1, Dec 24–26, Jan. 1. Admission free.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 11.**

**Westminster Abbey (p. 113, 114, 118, 122, 127)** WESTMINSTER London's other ur-sight (along with the Tower), this Gothic church was founded by Edward the Confessor in 1067 on the site of a Saxon church. Inside are the Coronation Chair, on which 6 centuries of monarchs have been crowned, Poets' Corner, and many beautiful chapels, tombs, and monuments. Prepare to queue.... *Tel 020/7222-5152. Broad Sanctuary SW1. Tube: Westminster. Open Mon–Fri 9:30am–4:45pm, Sat 9:30am–2:45pm. Admission charged.*

**See Map 16 on p. 138, bullet 65.**

**Whitechapel Bell Foundry (p. 131)** WHITECHAPEL The place where Big Ben and the Liberty Bell (yes, the cracked one) were forged, this working foundry has a little exhibition and shop; phone and book to tour the foundry.... *Tel 020/7247-2599. 32–34 Whitechapel Rd. E1. Tube: Aldgate East. Open Mon–Fri 9am–4:15pm. Closed public holidays. Free admission to shop, foundry tours. Admission charged.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 81.**

**Whitechapel Gallery (p. 124, 131)** WHITECHAPEL An excitingly curated space where group and solo shows of notable contemporary work are mounted in an Art Nouveau building.... *Tel 020/7522-7878. 80–82 Whitechapel High St. E1. Tube: Aldgate East. Open Tues–Sun 11am–6pm (Thurs until 9pm). Closed between exhibitions. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 82.**

**White Cube (p. 124)** HOXTON One of the city's newer and more cutting-edge spaces, situated in trendy Hoxton.... *Tel 020/7930-5373. Hoxton Sq. N1. Tube: Old St. Open Tues–Sat 10am–6pm. Admission free.*

**See Map 17 on p. 139, bullet 80.**

**Windsor Castle (p. 123)** WINDSOR, BERKSHIRE The queen's favorite weekend home—and the world's largest inhabited castle—makes for a classy day trip. See the State Apartments, St. George's Chapel (restored after the fire of 1992), royal carriages, and Queen Mary's Doll's House. The town of Windsor is cute, too, and Eton is right next door.... *Tel 01753/868-618. Windsor, Berkshire. BR: Windsor & Eton. Open daily 9:45am–5:15pm (Nov–Feb until 4:15pm). Closed for some state visits (call first). Admission charged.*

**See Map 14 on p. 134, bullet 15.**