



## Sluggo's Guide to London

When it's three o'clock in New York,  
it's still 1938 in London. — *Bette Midler*

Here are some tips on how to enjoy your lovely stay in London

### **Survival Tips**

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#### **Arriving at Heathrow**

The Heathrow Express is the quickest way into central London. If you are flying into Heathrow Terminal 4, when you exit after customs, turn left and you will see the Heathrow Express train. (For Terminals 1-3, follow signs for the Heathrow Express.) Buy tickets (£13 one way) from the ticket machine. It's a fast 20 minute ride into Paddington Station, with connections to the Bakerloo, Central, District, and Hammersmith & City lines. You can take the Piccadilly line tube, but it's more than twice as long (but also much less expensive if you have the time.) [thetube.com](http://thetube.com), [heathrowexpress.com](http://heathrowexpress.com)

#### **Where Am I?**

Post Codes in London will help to tell you where you are in the city. Starting from the Center of London (Trafalgar Square), they tell you the direction, and (roughly) how far out you are. WC1 is west of center, 1 "click." SE17 would be southeast of center. The numbers after the letter(s) generally get higher as you go further out, but not always. The center of London is Charing Cross Station in Trafalgar Square.

#### **Money Matters**

Avoid the Bureau du Change like the plague. The exchange rates are better if you a) buy on your credit card and b) get cash at ATMs, which will all accept your American bank card. Limit your visits to ATMs, because the fee is usually \$5 per transaction (but you make that up in the better exchange rate.) Prices quoted here are in GBP, you can multiply by 1.6 to get an approximate US\$ equivalent (the exchange rate, of course, varies.)

#### **I'm Floored**

Buildings street level floors are called "Ground", the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor up is the "first" floor and so on.

## Zebra Crossing Ahead

In London (and most of the UK), some crosswalks are marked with heavy white lines, and black and white striped poles, topped by flashing yellow globes. These are called zebra (ZEB-rah) crossings, after the stripes. Cars *must* stop for pedestrians when you enter these crossings. Normal unmarked crossings, wait for the walk sign and remember to look LEFT first!

## Cheap Tickets

There is a half-price tickets booth in Leicester Square, most theatres also sell rush tickets a half hour before the show

## London Calling

When you are trying to call within London, drop the first 0 in the phone #, except always dial the full #, including the 0, for any UK mobile phones. (If you are interested in having a cell phone in the UK, you can buy phones you can “top up” for about £59 (\$75) at the major mobile phone stores – Orange, T-Mobile, Vodafone, etc)

## A Tip

Brit's are notoriously bad tippers, so go easy on the tips:

- **Restaurants:** 10% is a good tip (like 17% in the US)
- **Cabs:** tipping is not expected, but round up to the next pound
- **Bars/Clubs:** Tipping is NOT done. If you are spending a lot of time with one bartender, he (or she) is friendly and helpful and you like them, you can buy them a drink by saying “and one for you” when you order. They’ll add a drink for themselves (to drink after closing) to your tab
- **Hotel:** Tip your maid £1 a day or so.

## Transport in London

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The London subway is called the Tube or Underground, and is supplemented with an integrated system of buses and mainline (commuter and inter-city) trains. London is a zoned system, so you’ll have to tap your Oystercard on the far gates to enter *and exit* so keep it available at journey’s end. Most tourist destinations are within zones 1 & 2.

## Fares

Basic fares for a single journey on the Tube are (as of Sept 09):

**Underground - within Zone 1:** £4 cash; £1.60 on Oystercard

**Underground - within Zone 1&2:** £4 cash; £2.20 peak / 1.60 off-peak on Oystercard

**All Buses (incl. 24h and Night):** £2 cash, or £1 on Oystercard

Visitors can choose whether to get an Oyster card to pay as they go or buy printed tickets.

See [www.tfl.gov.uk/tickets](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tickets) for details.

## **Oyster Cards**

Oyster cards are stored-value proximity cards you pass by readers on the tube or buses. Currently only *7-day* travelcards (and longer) are available online at [oystercard.com](http://oystercard.com) or at major stations. They are refillable at most stations. Using an Oyster as a pre-pay card gives you a 40-50% discount on each trip as well, and you will always get the lowest possible fare based on your day's trips.

## **Travelcards**

Travelcards are printed tickets available for one, three or seven consecutive days, and for various combinations of days and zones. For more info, see [www.tfl.gov.uk/tickets](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tickets), but here are basic TravelCards for zones 1 & 2:

**1 day - £7.20**

**3-day £18.40**

**7 day - £25.80**

You will have to do the math to figure out if, based on your journeys per day, the Oystercard or Travelcard is a better deal. Honestly, the Oystercard is easier to use and way more convenient and flexible.

## **Ticket Extensions**

If you are traveling outside a zone for which you have a valid ticket (for instance traveling to Zone 3 and you have a Zone 1&2 travelcard), you must buy an extension ticket from any collector, or fare machine. Put the *extension* ticket through the exit barriers at your final destination.

## **London Buses**

London has an excellent and very well signed bus system. You can use your weekly or daily travelcard on buses (as long as you stay within the corresponding zones). Maps at every bus stop will tell you what buses serve that stop, where they go, how frequent and even where to catch other buses nearby.

## **Night buses and 24 hour buses**

After the tube shuts down at 12:30am, Night run on many lines on the half hour using Trafalgar Square as hub. Night buses are marked with an "N." 24-hour buses run on popular routes and have a "moon" logo.

Then boarding tap your Oystercard on the yellow reader (no need to tap on exit as with the tube) or pay cash on board.

## **Using the Tube**

Journey Planner maps are in every Tube station. Use them to determine what line you want, and follow the signs to the proper line. One at the platform level, check the line maps for what platform you want and follow the signs. Electronic signboards on each platform will tell you the termination point of the next train, and when it is due to arrive. Make sure you know what branch you want and that you are getting on the proper train!

## Tube Stations

All listings below note the nearest Tube (Subway) station. There may be other subway stations near the sites, and London is well-served by an excellent bus system. Consult the websites of the individual attractions for more transit information, or [thetube.com](http://thetube.com).

## Taxis and Mini-Cabs

Black taxis in London are reliable, relatively cheap and roomy. Cab drivers are required to pass “The Knowledge” of London streets and are required by law to take you the most direct route. Extra fare will be added for each additional passenger, this is normal. Round up to the nearest pound as your tip.



Mini-cabs are unlicensed, or gypsy cabs, operating in unmarked cars that will be around many clubs at closing times (or can be ordered from mini-cab offices.) Mini-cab drivers are not as scrupulous as Black taxi drivers, so be sure and negotiate your fare *up front*, (minicabs aren't metered) and until you know London well, stick to Black cabs.

## Where to Stay

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This is an incredibly subjective (and short!) list of hotels in London, all tried out by Sluggo. Keep your expectations small, as London (as with most European) hotel rooms are small, by American standards. Many, but not all, include English breakfast or continental breakfast in the room rate. Also, make sure when requesting rooms to clearly state the dates as August 1 (since 8/1 in England means the 8<sup>th</sup> of January!). All rates are double rooms with ensuite baths (you can get cheaper rooms by sharing a bath.)

### Cheap



**Citadines** ([citadines.com/uhot/uwres\\_ltpms70.htm](http://citadines.com/uhot/uwres_ltpms70.htm))  Charing Cross, Embankment  
20 Northumberland Street, Trafalgar Sq.  0870 400 3040

This French chain has small studio type apartments with small kitchens and comfortable pull-out sofas. This location is tremendously convenient to all of central London. Room service nightly is extra. [£85 / night]

**The Royal Adelphi** ([www.royaladelphi.co.uk](http://www.royaladelphi.co.uk))  Charing Cross, Embankment  
21 Villiars Street, off the Strand, WC2N  020 7930 8764

This slightly run down hotel's location can't be beat, and the staff is super-friendly (even a little nosey.) Be sure and ask for a room away from the front, as the noisy gay club Heaven is across the street. *No elevator*. [£90 / night]

### Not Cheap

**Grange Holborn Hotel** ([grangehotels.com/holborn/holborn.htm](http://grangehotels.com/holborn/holborn.htm))  Holborn  
50-60 Southampton Row, London WC1B  020-7242-1800

Four star hotel with a fab location near Soho, Covent Garden, the City and the British Museum. [£210 / night, but frequent £90 summer rates]

## Sightseeing & Attractions

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*Note on URLs: The URLs listed are the shortest ones that work, so type them as shown! Prices listed are adult / child prices.*

### Take a Bus Tour!

Definitely take a bus tour. They are touristy, but do give you a good overview of London. Buses generally allow you to “hop on /hop off” privileges. (Even former Londoners say the tour buses gave them a new perspective on their hometown.) Most buses start at Piccadilly Circus (🚏 Piccadilly Cir) or Trafalgar Sq. (🚏 Charing Cross.)

**The London Eye** ([www.londoneye.com](http://www.londoneye.com)) 🚏 Waterloo, Exit 6 for Southbank  
Southbank, London ☎ 0870 400 3040  
Spectacular views of London from this engineering marvel, the largest “observation wheel” in the world. This is a **must do!** [Adm: £17.50 / 8.75]

**The British Museum** ([thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](http://thebritishmuseum.ac.uk)) 🚏 Holborn  
Great Russell Street, Holborn, London ☎ 0207 323 8299  
Home of the Rosetta Stone, the famous Elgin Marbles and other ancient treasures stolen from other countries. Sir Norman Foster’s glass-enclosed courtyard is worth a visit. [Free, except special exhibits]

**The Imperial War Museum** ([www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)) 🚏 Lambeth North, Waterloo  
Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ. ☎ 0207 416 5320  
Excellent museum covering wars of the twentieth century, covering all aspects of life in wartime, including a chilling concentration camp exhibit, and of course lots of tanks, planes and bombs! A note of interest, the building housing the Museum is the former Bedlam insane asylum, from which we get the word “Bedlam.” [Free, except special exhibits]

**War Cabinet Rooms** ([www.iwm.org.uk/cabinet](http://www.iwm.org.uk/cabinet)) 🚏 Westminster  
Clive Steps, King Charles St, London SW1A 2AQ ☎ 0207 766 0120  
Fascinating look at Churchill’s WWII fortified basement bunker, with its warren of corridors, rooms and period equipment. *Recently Expanded* [£12.95 / Free]

**St Paul’s Cathedral** ([stpauls.co.uk](http://stpauls.co.uk)) 🚏 St Paul’s  
St. Paul’s Churchyard, The City, London ☎ 0207 236 4128  
Christopher Wren’s magnificent church, including crypts, the whispering gallery, and a great view of London if you want to climb to the top of the dome. [£11 / 3.50]

**Westminster Abby** ([westminster-abby.org](http://westminster-abby.org)) 🚏 Westminster  
20 Dean’s Yard, Whitehall ☎ 0207 222 5152  
One of the most famous cathedrals in the world. Site of Coronations, in the shadow of Parliament, it is the final resting place of Kings and Queens, as well as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Handel, etc. [£15 / 6]

**National Portrait Gallery** ([www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk))      🚶 Leicester Sq or Charing Cross  
St. Martin's Place, London WC2H 0HE      ☎ 0207 312 2463  
I personally find the National Gallery kind of boring, but LOVE the NPG. [Free, except special exhibits]

**Tate Modern** ([www.tate.org.uk/modern](http://www.tate.org.uk/modern))      🚶 Southwark or Blackfriars  
Bankside, London SE1 9TG      ☎ 0207 887 8000  
Housed in the former Bankside Power Station (The "Turbine Hall" alone is worth the trip), houses a collection of international modern art from 1900 to the present day, including major works by Dalí, Picasso, Matisse, Rothko and Warhol [Free, except special exhibits]

**Saatchi Gallery** ([saatchi-gallery.co.uk](http://saatchi-gallery.co.uk))      🚶 Sloane Sq or Victoria  
Sloan Square, Kings Road, SW3 4SQ      ☎ 0207 823 2332  
Housed in the former County Hall (also home of London's new Aquarium), contains Ad Man Richard Saatchi's provocative collection of contemporary art, including Tracey Emin, the Champan Brothers, and Damien Hirst's sliced up animals. [Free]

**Museum of London** ([www.museum-london.org.uk](http://www.museum-london.org.uk))      🚶 Barbican  
London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN      ☎ 0207 600 3699  
The largest city museum in the world, telling the fascinating story of London from prehistoric times to the present day. [Free]

**The V&A** ([www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk))      🚶 South Kensington  
Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL      ☎ 0207 942 2000  
The Victoria & Albert museum houses an incredible collection of design and art from the ancient Greeks and Romans, to dresses, shoes, glass, tapestries, ironwork and on and on. One of my favorite exhibits is an office designed by Frank Lloyd Wright transported to London and reassembled in the V&A (Note: It's a LONG walk from the tube via a subway – underground pedestrian tunnel). [Free, except special exhibits]

**London's Transport Museum** ([ltmuseum.co.uk](http://ltmuseum.co.uk))      🚶 Covent Garden  
The Pizza, Covent Garden      ☎ 379 6344  
The Transport Museum is one of my favorite places in London, and you might like it even if you are not a train spotter (transport freak). Refurbered in 2007. The huge gift shop alone is worth a visit for the fun Tube merch. [£10 / free]

**London Design Museum** ([designmuseum.org](http://designmuseum.org))      🚶 London Bridge or Tower Hill  
28 Shad Thames, London SE1 2YD      ☎ 0207 403 6933  
A bit out of the way, but the walk from London Bridge Tube, along Thames, or across the famous Tower Bridge from Tower Hill are both worth it. Excellent museum of modern design in a cool Deco building with a café and superior store.. [£8.50 / free]

## Suggested Excursions

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### Southbank / City

For a good day of stuff, Do the **London Eye** on the south bank (🚇 Waterloo), then walk down the river to the **Tate Modern**, check out the giant glass testicle that is **London City Hall** (and the giant glass gherkin across the river) then across the **Millennium Bridge** to **St Paul's**. Do climb the dome at St Paul's. (Even if you are scared of heights like I am). If you have time, walk to the **Museum of London** close by. (Alternately, continue from Tate Modern down the Thames past **Shakespeare's Globe Theatre** to the **London Design Museum**.

### Greenwich

Another good day or half day trip is take a boat from **Westminster** or **Embankment Pier** (🚇 Westminster or Embankment) to **Greenwich** ([greenwichengland.com](http://greenwichengland.com)) and check out the **Royal Observatory**, and the town is quite cute as well with pubs, shops and a market. (You can also go to 🚇 Bank for the **Docklands Light Railway** to 🚇 Cutty Sark.)

### Chelsea

Chelsea is one of the poshest neighborhoods in London. Take the tube to 🚇 **Sloane Square** and check out **Peter Jones** dept. store, then wander down King's Road toward the River, where you can see **Albert Bridge**, which is particularly pretty lit up at dusk. Along the way stop in the fabulous **Heal's** and Jasper Conran's **Habitat** stores, which feature great home furnishings.

### To Market!

Check out **Camden Market** ([camdentown.co.uk](http://camdentown.co.uk) - 🚇 Camden Town), esp on Saturday when it is mobbed. (Camden Town tube station is closed to riders *entering* the station on Saturday due to overcrowding, so walk to a nearby station for service back into London.) The infamous **Portabello Road market** is also fun ([portobelloroad.co.uk](http://portobelloroad.co.uk) - Notting Hill Gate). On Sundays, the **Columbia Road flower market** is a riot of flowers, food, and fabulous people (8a-3p - [columbiaroad.info](http://columbiaroad.info))

### War, War War!

Two museums I'd definitely recommend are **The Imperial War Museum** in South London, and the **Cabinet War Rooms** just off Whitehall (see listings above) For a day of warfare, visit both!

## Eating in London

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### Lunch:

- Pick a pub that looks doesn't look to tatty, and have a Pub Lunch (Try Steak and Guinness Pie, Bangers and Mash, or the daily special.)
- **Pizza Hut's** in London have (on weekdays) an all you can eat pizza and pasta buffet, which I really like.
- **Prêt a Manger** - I love these Au Bon Pain-like places scattered all over London. Note there is a discount if you take your food to go (to ease crowding.)

#### **The Rock & Sole Place**

47 Endell Street, Covent Garden WC2 9AJ

 Covent Garden


 020 9836 3785

Excellent traditional fish and chips in s storefront. Even if you eat upstairs, venture downstairs to see the fun sea mural.

#### **Ed's Easy Diner**

12 Moor Street, , Soho W1V 7HN

 Leicester Sq

 020 9836 3785

Right in the heart of Soho is the great little American-style diner, with original 50's jukeboxes for every diner and some of the best cheese-sauce chips (fries) in town!


### Dinner

#### *Cheap*

**Browns** (browns-restaurants.com)

82-84 St Martin's Lane

 Embankment, Charing X


 020 7395 6091

A loud, fun barn of a place. Very British, with a cheap (£10?) pre-theatre menu.

#### **Cappuccetto**

17 Moor Street, London, W1V 5LH

 Leicester Square


 0207 437 2527

Might look a little to "red sauce and Chianti bottle Italian), but we've always had excellent traditional Italian there. (Good for lunch, too.)

#### **Zizzi**

73-75 The Strand, London

 Embankment, Charing X

 0207 240 1717


Very well done pizza and pasta in a modern yet romantic space.

#### *Moderate*

#### **Balans**

60 Old Compton St, Soho W1D 4UG

 Tottenham Court Rd

 0207 437 5212

Balans is truly a great gay bistro so put up with the "aren't we fab!?" the attitude cause the atmosphere is fantastic, the food is fabulous and the price is good too. And right across from Compton's for great boy watching.



**Getti**

16/17 Jermyn Street, Picadilly SW1Y 6LT  
Excellent modern Italian with a welcoming staff.

 Leicester Square  
 0207 734 7334

**Sri Thai**

16 Old Compton Street, Soho W1D 4TL  
Excellent Thai in a modern and tranquil setting.

 Leicester Sq, Tottenham Ct Rd  
 0207 434 3544

***Expensive*****OXO** ([www.oxotower.co.uk](http://www.oxotower.co.uk))



Riverside, Oxo Tower Wharf, London, SE1 9PH

 Blackfriars  
 0207 803 3888

Someone wrote that OXO is probably one of London's best kept secrets. Expensive, and frankly, a little attitudey. But try to catch a window table at sunset, believe me you won't be disappointed.

**The River Café**

Thames Wharf, Rainville Rd, London, W6 9HA

 Hammersmith (then take cab)  
 020 7386 4200

The restaurant the begat Jamie "The Naked Chef" Oliver still has the best Italian food I have ever had (yes, including in Rome!) Very expensive and worth every penny.

**Rhodes 24**

Tower 42, Old Broad Street, EC2N 1HQ

 Liverpool Street  
 0207 877 2424

CelebriChef Gary Rhode's nice modern space in the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest building in Britain with great views of London, also on the 42<sup>nd</sup> floor of the same building: Vertigo seafood and champagne bar.


**Places to Stay Away From**


Stay away from these chains: Pizza, Pizza; Bella Pasta; and Spaghetti House.


## Shopping Areas


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Here are some of the areas to check out for shopping: (All Phone #s start with 0207).

**Oxford Street** ([oxfordst.co.uk](http://oxfordst.co.uk))  Tottenham Ct Rd, Oxford Cir, Marble Arch  
Start at any of the tube stations listed above, and take in the scene on this crowded high-street, perhaps the most famous shopping district in England. If you think of Oxford Circus as the center, you can go either towards Marble Arch or Tottenham Court Rd, and most of the stores repeat themselves. For cheap designer clothing (think Marshalls in the states) check out **Mad House** and often good stuff at **Next** and **Top Shop**. Make sure and take a side trip onto **Carnaby Street** (see below).

**Carnaby Street** ([streetsensation.co.uk/carnaby/cs\\_intro.htm](http://streetsensation.co.uk/carnaby/cs_intro.htm))  Oxford Circus  
Carnaby Street was the epicenter of swinging 60's London fashion, though it is now a little rundown with touristy shops, but you can still find **Merc** (skinhead gear), the **Ben Sherman** store, and around the corner on Beak Street, **Lonsdale** boxing gear. The biggest draw might be the stunning **Liberty** department store, which despite the Tudor exterior and warren of old-school rooms, is surprisingly fashion-forward.

**Covent Garden** ([coventgardenlife.com](http://coventgardenlife.com))  Covent Garden  
Touristy (a la Boston's Fanueil Hall) but some good stores, including **Banana Bookstore** in the Covent Garden building itself, and a **Fred Perry** store. Also in Covent garden the excellent **London Transport Museum**.

**Islington** ([islington.gov.uk](http://islington.gov.uk))  Angel  
Yuppified North London neighborhood has not only a slew of fetish shops (**Expectation**, **Hard-Wear** and **Regulation**), but cafes, and shops with lovely ... things.



## Shopping in London

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Some shopping of note in London - also see hints under "Shopping Areas" above.

### Gay Lifestyle Stores

**Prowler Soho**, 3 - 7 Brewer St. Soho  734 4031  Tottenham Ct Rd  
**Prowler Camden**, 283 Camden High Street  Camden Town  
An ex called this "they gay mall," featuring gay books, DVDs, clothing, some fetish gear and of course, porn. ([prowlerdirect.co.uk/prowlersoho](http://prowlerdirect.co.uk/prowlersoho))

**Clone Zone**, 64 Old Compton Street, Soho  287 3530  Tottenham Ct Rd  
Gay clothing, porn and some "accessories", across the street from Compton's. Also a branch in Earle's Court. ([clonezone.co.uk](http://clonezone.co.uk)).

## Fetish Gear

**Lonsdale**, Beak Street, Soho ☎ 434 1741 🚇 Oxford Circus  
Lonsdale boxing gear (also available at Merc and some Oxford St stores.)

**Regulation**, 17A St, Albans Place, Islington ☎ 226 0665 🚇 Angel  
Rubber, Leather & Fetish store leaning toward rubber gear. The surrounding area also has some nice shops. (**regulation-london.co.uk**)

**Rob**, 24 - 25 Wells Street, London ☎ 735 7893 🚇 Oxford Circus  
Gorgeous (and pricey) leather gear and accessories from the Dutch company.  
(**rob.nl/html/london.html**)

**Expectations**, 75 Great Eastern Street, Islington ☎ 739 0892 🚇 Old Street  
Rubber, leather and fetish gear, and the cutest sales clerk I know! (**expectations.co.uk**)

## Men's (& Women's) Clothing

**Fred Perry**, 14 The Piazza, Covent Garden ☎ 836 3327 🚇 Covent Garden  
Fred-a-Palooza. (**fredperry.com**)

**Ben Sherman**, 50 Carnaby Street, London ☎ 437 2031 🚇 Oxford Street  
The First Ben Sherman “concept store.” All Ben, All the Time. (**bensherman.co.uk**)

**Harvey Nicols**, 109 - 125 Knightsbridge St ☎ 235 5000 🚇 Knightsbridge  
Skip the predictable Harrod's next door, and check out the *much* more fashionable Harvey Nick's next door. Check out the 5th floor café -- Eddie and Pats would be proud!  
(**harveynichols.com**)

## Homegoods / Etc


**American Retro**, 35 Old Compton St. Soho ☎ 734 3477 🚇 Tottenham Ct Rd  
A great place to browse eclectic and unusual gifts, accessories, menswear, bags and homeware, from Fred Perry shirts to rubber duckies and “council scum” badges (pins.)  
(**americanretrolondon.com**)

**LASSCO**, 30 Wandsworth Rd, Vauxhall ☎ 394 2100 🚇 Vauxhall  
The London Architectural Salvage & Supply Company (**LASSCO** – **lassco.co.uk**) If you are into architecture or interior design, this is worth a visit! (**lassco.co.uk**)

**Also see:** The shops at the **London Transport Museum** and **London Design Museum** (see listings under “Museums & Attractions”) are both free to enter and have excellent, well designed items.


## Nightlife



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Though gay nightlife is scattered all over London, there are a concentration of gay pubs in Soho and Vauxhall. Some of the other clubs are further out, so plan to catch a night bus or minicab home.  Indicates Sluggo's picks for a must-visit.



### Pubs


Pubs open from Noon, and many still close at 11:00P despite the liberalization of Pub closing laws. Some of my fave pubs are:


**Admiral Duncan**, 54 Old Compton Street, Soho  Tottenham Court Road  
The scene of a fatal nail-bombing in the 90's (a memorial sculpture(?) hangs on the ceiling.)

 **Compton's of Soho**, 53 Old Compton St, Soho  Tottenham Court Road  
Two-floor pub with blaring disco and lots of skinheads. My first and still favorite London pub!

**Duke of Wellington** Old Compton Street, Soho  Tottenham Court Road  
Sharp-looking Soho pub, with a good looking crowd, but little attitude.


 **The King's Arms**, 23 Poland Street, Soho  Oxford Circus  
Friendly pub full of bears (literally packed on Fridays) with an upstairs room.



**G.A.Y Bar** , 30 Old Compton Street, Soho  Tottenham Court Road  
Pub spinoff of the popular London Astoria night on 3 floors with a video jukebox, adding to the gay-village feel of Soho.

**The Yard**, 57 Rupert Street, Soho  Piccadilly Circus  
Upmarket café bar on two levels with the Loft upstairs and an outdoor courtyard.  
*Closed Sundays*

### Clubs

Clubs can stay open later, usually 'till 2 or 4 AM. Open 7 days unless noted.

 **Bar Code**, 3-4 Archer Street, Soho  Picadilly Circus  
Cruisy mix of skinheads, lads and professionals. Dancing downstairs (comedy on Monday nights, Bears on Thursday). Open till 1a (Also a branch in Vauxhall with later hours on weekends.)

 **The Hoist**, The Arches, 47c South Lambeth Road  Vauxhall  
Housed in two converted brick railway arches. The main arch has a bar area where people stand and chat, whereas the back half is more cruisy. There's also a metal mezzanine level at the back where people stand and watch what's going on below. See website for somewhat strict dress policy Open Thurs – Sunday. ([thehoist.co.uk](http://thehoist.co.uk))

**Central Station**, 37 Wharfdale Road, Kings Cross 🚇 King's Cross  
Host to **Gummi** rubber night on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, and Fetish night ("Tattoos, Crops and Piercing") on Mondays. Slightly seedy area, so be aware. [centralstation.co.uk](http://centralstation.co.uk)

! **The Eagle**, 349 Kennington Lane, SE11 🚇 Vauxhall  
Friendly local gay pub (formerly Duke's, then South Central) in the burgeoning gay district in Vauxhall, host to "Bootcamp" fetish gear night on Tuesday, and "Tonker" Bear night on Friday (till 3am.) *Tue-Thurs, 9p-2a, 'till 3am Fri-Sun*

**Heaven**, Under the Arches, Villiers Street, Charing Cross 🚇 Charing X, Embankment  
Established 25 years and holding firm, very international crowd of mixed ages (e.g. lotsa twinks). Three levels with 2 dance floors, separate bars, VIP lounge and coffee shop/chill out zone. *M, W, Fri and Sat till 5AM.* [www.heaven-london.com](http://www.heaven-london.com)

**Substation South**, 9 Brighton Terrace, Brixton 🚇 Brixton  
Very. Very. Sleazy.

! **XXL** 53 Southwark Street, Southwark 🚇 Tower Bridge, Borough High St Exit  
London's best bear night, but more and more, this is just a good casual night out. No dress code, but you'll see plenty of skins and leathermen. Four arches with a bar, dancefloor, smaller dancefloor and "activity area" (yes, it's what you think), and another bar and patio. *Open Sat 9P - 6A and Wed 9P - 3A only.* [phatsandsnalls.com](http://phatsandsnalls.com)

*And some straight pubs of note:*

**The Princess Louise**, 208 High Holborn 🚇 Holborn  
A decent city pub with an amazing Victorian interior [pubs.com/louiwc2.htm](http://pubs.com/louiwc2.htm)

**The Dove**, 19 Upper Mall, Hammersmith 🚇 Hammersmith  
Riverside pub with a lovely outdoor deck overlooking the Thames. It also boasts the smallest bar in Britain, at 4'2" x 7'10". A regular hangout of Graham Greene & Ernest Hemingway ([pubs.com/dovew6.htm](http://pubs.com/dovew6.htm))

## Guide to Gay Clubbing by Night

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Here are my picks for what to do what night. For a good breakdown of the London fetish bar scene, see **John's Guide**. at [www.paws.dircon.co.uk/London.htm](http://www.paws.dircon.co.uk/London.htm).

**Sunday** – If you are there on the right weekend), head to Central Station for *Squaddies* (Military/Skin – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday), or *Gummi* (rubber – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday).

**Monday** – London's surprisingly busy, but the British take their weekends seriously and many are still going on Monday night. Head to **Compton's** till 10 or so, then over to **Barcode** (open 'till 1am)

**Tuesday** – Not a lot going on, this is a good night to rest

**Wednesday** – **XXL** hosts a smaller version of its Sat night party (remember: quality, not quantity!) with only the back two arches open (enter at the side) until 3AM. **The Eagle** in Brixton has **Bootcamp** from to 2A.

**Friday** – Anywhere's bound to be busy, but if you are into friendly bears, you can't beat stopping at the **King's Arms** around 8, and at close, head over to **The Eagle** for "Tonker" with the rest of the punters (ask anyone where it is.) If you are still haven't met Mr. Right Now, check out the very sleazy **Substation South**.

**Saturday** – Rest up early , then head over the **XXL**, the most laid back and friendly club in town around 11, it goes till 6am. Alternately: check out **The Hoist**, which is good any Sat, but holds various fetish nights on different Sat nights (Check the website!)

## Fun London Factoids

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**Tower of London Ravens:** Legend had it that 6 ravens must remain at the Tower of London, or the Tower and Monarchy will fall. Just to be safe There are seven ravens at the Tower today (the required six plus one spare!) Their names are Hardey, Thor, Odin, Gwyllum, Cedric, Hugine and Munin. Oh, yeah, to be doubly safe, their wings are clipped. <http://www.historic-uk.com/DestinationsUK/TowerRavens.htm>

**The Fleet River:** Fleet Street gets its name from the Fleet River, a tributary of the Thames, which still runs underground through central London, emptying into the Thames at Blackfriars Bridge. [pvd.best.vwh.net/fleet5.html](http://pvd.best.vwh.net/fleet5.html)

**The Thames Barrier:** In 1953 a particularly disastrous flood occurred. Over 300 people drowned and about 160,000 acres on Canvey Island, near the mouth of the Thames, were covered in seawater. May 1984, the Thames Barrier opened in an attempt to tame the Thames floodwaters. The 1716 feet width of the river is divided by nine reinforced concrete piers, forming 9 openings. The four largest steel gates are 200 feet wide and weigh 1500 tonnes each. <http://greenwichengland.com/tourism/barrier.htm>

**Londinium:** London was founded by the invading Romans in 43AD marshy ground sprinkled with small islands of gravel and sand. The commander of the Roman troops built a bridge Plautius was forced to build a bridge to get his men across the Thames. The Roman settlement on the north side of the bridge, called Londinium, evolved into modern London. <http://www.britainexpress.com/London/roman-london.htm>

**The Other Tube:** In its heyday, a 75-year-old small-tunnel underground rail service carried four million letters a day and stopped at nine stations between Paddington and Whitechapel. Begun by the government in 1913, but halted for WWI, the tiny tunnels were used to store art treasures from the Tate and the National Portrait Gallery. The first trains started delivery in 1927 under the banner of the Post Office Underground Railway. Renamed Mail Rail, sadly, these have recently been discontinued due to their expense. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/2934052.stm>

**Hell in a Hand basket:** In the 1700's you could purchase insurance against going to hell, in London.

## Guidebooks

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Sure you look dorky carrying around your guidebooks, but hey, would you rather miss stuff?



### **Eyewitness Guide to London, DK Publishing**

**ISBN: 0789448904**

I've used this on every trip to London for 10 years now. It has neighborhood by neighborhood information, bird's eye maps, fascinating tidbits, and great walking tours. Absolutely gorgeous production and worth every penny.



### **Pop-Up Map, Compass Maps Ltd.**

**ISBN 1841390062**

These pocket-size folding maps help orient you and point out major attractions in the city center. A "must have" at all times.



### **A to Z**

You will find this in every cab, mini-cab, briefcase and backpack in London. It is pronounced "A to Zed" and is an indispensable map to London's streets. Perfect for finding that back alley club your friend told you about.



### **Timeout London**

Weekly magazine with entertainment, shopping and events listings in London, including TV listings, gay and lesbian listings and theatre. Comes out on Tuesdays. Pick it up at the WHSmith's at Terminal 4, start planning your stay!.

## Websites

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[www.thetube.com](http://www.thetube.com) - Greater London subway and buses..

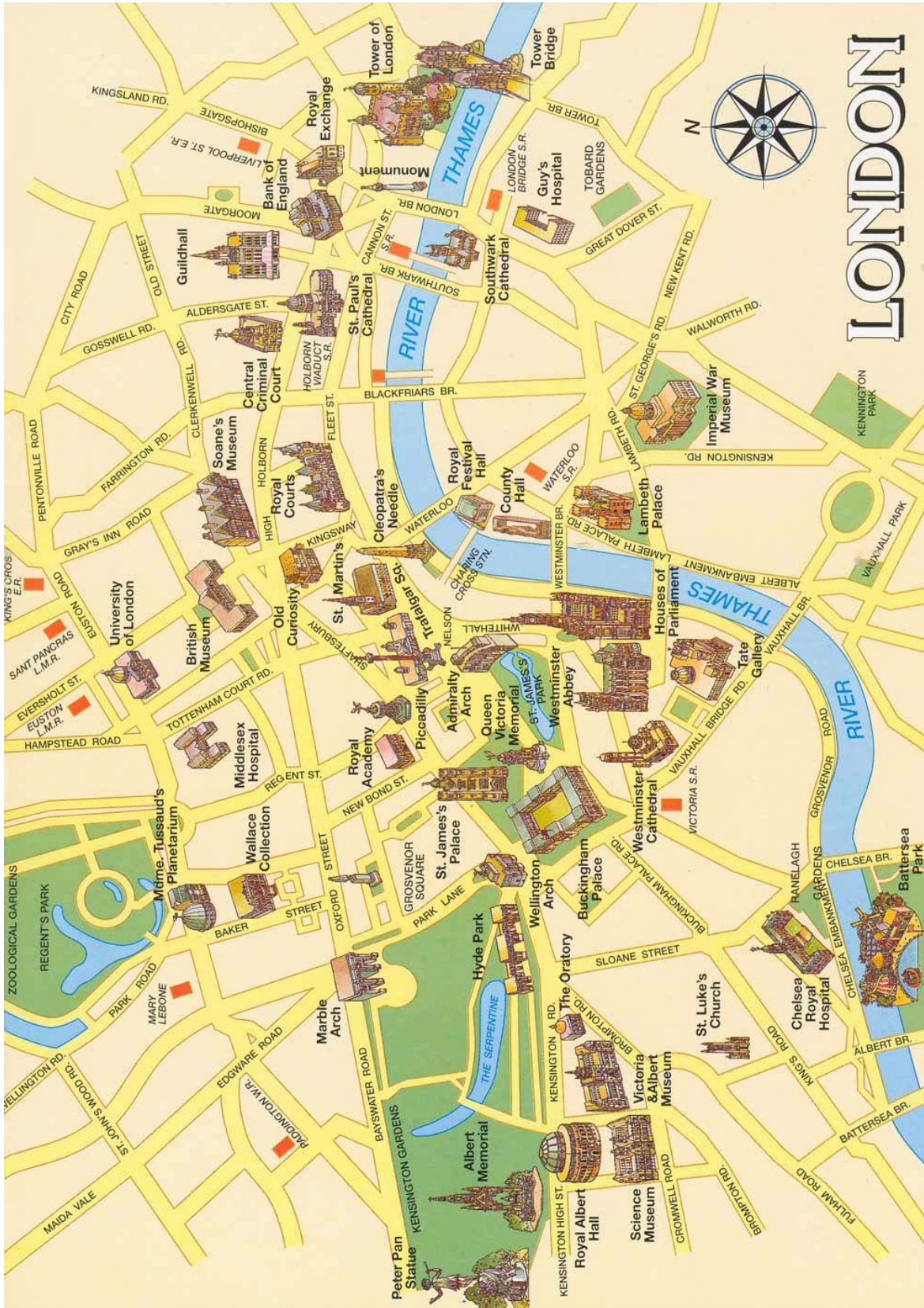
[www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) - UK Rail inter-city and international rail service.

[www.timeout.com /London](http://www.timeout.com/London) – What's going on in London entertainment.

[www.londontown.com](http://www.londontown.com) - Tourist information for London

[www.yell.co.uk](http://www.yell.co.uk) - London yellow pages online

# Central London



# The Tube

