

# ROADTRIPS

The Ultimate in Sports Travel

PRESENTS

London

A GUIDE TO  
LONDON  
ENGLAND





# Things to Know About London

It's one of the world's most visited cities and after you see it for yourself, you'll understand why. This sport-mad city is chock full of things to do and see, from first-class museums and galleries to designer shopping, and there are heaps of attractions and all things touristy. London has some of the top hotels and restaurants in the world and is a great destination for those seeking out the best of the best.

While the city is so quintessentially British, it is also incredibly diverse, with a third of the population having been born abroad. The multicultural aspect is a huge part of what makes London so unique. Where else can you experience so many other cultures without the culture shock?

As the host city to so many top sporting events, we've spent a lot of time in London and we want to pass along some of the things we've learned about this great city.





# Meet our London Expert

Sam Buffie



If you've travelled with Roadrips before, chances are you've had the pleasure of meeting Sam Buffie. Our resident Special Event Planner, Sam is one of our most

travelled and experienced hosts. Not only will you find her hosting at most of our biggest events, she's also the one that's responsible for planning all the logistics that make our events run so smoothly.

Prior to joining the Roadrips team, Sam spent three years living in London, a city she considers to be her "home away from home." With a passion for travel, she's visited dozens of cities but is quick to name London as one of her favorites, "London is simply one of the greatest cities in the world. It is dynamic, multicultural, beautiful and truly iconic. It is also very livable, and strangely despite its size, can feel very intimate. Each neighborhood has all the amenities one would need: from cafes and restaurants and local pubs, to chemists (pharmacies), grocery stores and local shops. And navigating the city is easy as it is just so visitor friendly."





## Travel Tips

London is a vibrant city with so much to see. While London competes with other world capitals in terms of entertainment, attractions, shopping and dining, the city is relatively compact and once you get the hang of it, it can be fairly easy to navigate. As is usual when venturing outside of our home country, there are always challenges present, usually extending from differing customs and common practices.

One of the great things about London (at least for our English-speaking guests) is that unlike many other international destinations, there is no language barrier. One of our goals at Roadrips is to help set your expectations and do whatever we can to ensure that you are prepared for London's challenges and triumphs, and to create the best possible experience for all of our guests.





## Getting to London

London is a major airline hub and as a result, there are plenty of flight options from major North American cities. The majority of these international flights arrive into Heathrow International Airport (LHR), which is located 15 miles west of the city. Gatwick Airport (LGW), 27 miles south of London, also handles a fair amount of international traffic. London City (LCY), Stansted (STN), and Luton (LTN) airports also service London but mainly with domestic and European flights.

To get to the city from Heathrow, we recommend pre-booking a private car and driver for a stress-free ride into central London. For the utmost in comfort, Roadtrips can arrange your transfer in a beautiful new Jaguar or Mercedes Benz. If you're feeling more adventurous, the tube (London's underground rail system), via the Piccadilly line, is an inexpensive and quick option. As an alternative, there are taxis and rideshares of course, but if you find yourself stuck in the notorious London traffic, the meter can rise quickly.

## Travel Times & Transportation

Like most major world cities, traffic can be a significant issue in London. In particular, when it comes to major sporting events, traffic patterns are, by nature, always somewhat dynamic. Roadtrips accesses official information from local authorities and from our destination partners to provide the best information possible about traffic, estimated travel times, and permitted drop off points at the venues.

## Dining Out & Reservations

Boasting a long list of Michelin-starred restaurants, London is a standout in the restaurant scene. London restaurants are generally open for lunch around noon and dinner from 6 pm. Often Londoners take later meals than we are used to in North America, so if you find yourself without a reservation for dinner, you can opt for an earlier seating time and will most likely find a table. Many restaurants also offer a pre-theatre seating before 7pm, often a special pre-set menu. For top-end restaurants it's wise to reserve a table in advance. Be sure to check out our London Restaurant Guide to hear about some of our favorites.





## Language

The language spoken in England is of course, English. While this makes things easy for our Anglophone guests, even those most skilled at the language may be occasionally tested (and amused) with the notorious British slang. While you'll hear more English than any other tongue, London is a very diverse city and you may hear dozens of different languages spoken throughout your visit.

## Weather

Summer can be very pleasant with temperatures averaging 18°C (64°F) and often rising into the low 20s (70s F), perfect for taking in a match. While warm summers are the norm, London does occasionally experience heat waves with temperatures soaring well above 30°C (86°F).

The number of rainy days is fairly consistent throughout the year with between 11 and 15 rainy days each month. Overall rainfall is highest in November and August and is lowest in March and April.

## Banking & Local Currency

The UK's currency is the pound sterling (£ / GBP). Just as Americans have dollars and cents, the UK has pounds and pence, with 100 pence equaling one pound. More colloquially, pence are often referred to simply as "p," a pound is known as a "quid", a five-pound note is a "fiver" and a ten-pound note a "tenner."

Credit cards, especially Visa and Mastercard, are widely accepted in London's restaurants, bars, cafés and shops. American Express and Diners Club cards are less commonly accepted. There are plenty of cash machines (also known as cashpoints or ATMs) dotted around London. Most accept international cards with the Visa, Plus, Mastercard, Cirrus or Maestro symbols. Note that if you have a non-UK account you will almost certainly have to pay a charge when you withdraw cash.

## What About Tipping?

It's standard practice to leave a tip for good service in a restaurant, generally 10-15% of your total bill. Some restaurants may include a service fee in the total (particularly for larger groups) so it's wise to check your bill first. Tipping the bar staff in London's many pubs is not necessary or expected. As for taxis, it's common to show your appreciation by rounding up to the nearest pound, or leaving up to 10% for longer rides or exceptional service.

## Electricity

Voltage in London runs between 220-240 V. You will need to use a converter, which allows your electronic device to run on a different voltage, especially for anything that runs on 110 V. Most outlets in London are the European 3-prong style or two round, oversized prongs and will require an adapter to convert a North American pronged plug to fit the outlet.

## Time Zone

London is on British Summer Time (BST) from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October. In the winter, London is the same as GMT.





# Getting Around London

London is a very compact city, making it easy to take in a lot of its spectacular attractions in a day. As one would expect, London has plenty of other transportation options available, with the tube (underground railroad) being the most popular. If you plan on using primarily public transportation, we recommend picking up a Visitor Oyster Card, a prepaid combined travel pass that allows you to access the tube, bus and most rail services.





## Taxi & Rideshare

Black cabs (which are not necessarily black) can be hailed in the street or at designated ranks situated in prominent places including most mainline rail, tube and bus stations. They can also be booked by telephone. If the yellow TAXI sign is illuminated, the cab is available for hire. Fares are metered, and cabs are licensed to carry up to five people plus luggage. All black cabs are wheelchair accessible. The black cabs (also referred to as taxis) are different from minicabs, which must be pre-booked. You'll also find a number of rideshare options in London including Uber and Bolt

## Private Hire Vehicles

Roadrips can arrange for a private vehicle for those preferring the comforts of a dedicated car, including brand new Jaguars and Mercedes Benz. In addition, the concierge at our premium hotels can make private chartered vehicle arrangements on request, when and where available.

## Underground

London's underground rail network, or 'the tube' as it is more commonly known, is usually the quickest and easiest way of travelling around the city. Greater London is served by 12 lines; the color-coded routes have clear signage and lots of connections to service most of the city. To get to Wimbledon on the Tube, take the District Line to Southfields, then follow the signs for the short 15 minute walk to the gate.

## Tram

A relative newcomer on the London transport scene, London's tram network began service in 2000. The tram network (Tramlink) runs between Beckenham and Wimbledon and is wheelchair accessible.

## Bus

London buses run an extensive network throughout the city, stopping at designated bus stops. Many routes

operate 24 hours a day, though night service is less frequent. All buses are wheelchair accessible. During the Wimbledon Championships, there is direct bus service to Wimbledon from St. Pancras, Euston, Baker Street, Marble Arch, and Victoria Stations.

## Car Rental

As there are so many transportation options in London, car hire isn't necessary or required to get around. Navigating the streets of London can be a hassle, finding parking even more so. If you do feel a car is the best option, London has all the major international car rental agencies. Ensure that you have proper insurance, good maps and that you stay on the "right" side of the road!

## Walking

It's very possible to explore the essentials of London by foot if you prefer. It's worth it to grab a map from your hotel concierge, plan out your route and take a stroll along the

Thames. If you get tired, there are plenty of options to get you back to your hotel – a taxi, a double-decker bus or the tube are all very accessible. The London A-Z guide is also very helpful if you are going to try to navigate the streets on your own; it's sold in bookstores, tube and train stations all over the city.

## Cycling

A 24-hour bike rental program called Santander Cycles has a network of over 700 stations around London. The program allows you to borrow a bike and then return to any station. Payment is by credit card or debit card only. A guided bike tour is also a great way to see the city of London





# Our Top 5 Things to do in London

## I. The Palaces

London has its share of royal residences and Buckingham Palace and Kensington Palace are two of the most impressive.

Buckingham Palace has served as the official London residence of Britain's sovereigns since 1837 and today is the administrative headquarters of the Monarch. Marvel at the magnificent architecture and be sure to stay for the changing of the guard.

After a major £12 million project in 2012 to create a palace for everyone, Kensington Palace features gorgeous landscaped gardens, entrance loggia, free public spaces, and a café. The green spaces alone are worth the visit.

### **Nearest London Underground Stations to Buckingham Palace:**

St James's Park - District & Circle Lines (0.4 miles)

Victoria - Victoria, District, & Circle Lines (0.4 miles)

### **Nearest London Underground Stations to Kensington Palace:**

High Street Kensington - District & Circle Lines (0.4 miles)

Queensway - Central Line (0.5 miles)





## 2. Green Spaces

One of the most wonderful things about London (and the rest of England) is its green spaces. From the bigger names like Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, Green Park, and St James's Park to the dozens of smaller parks and gardens dotted around the city, there's an abundance of natural beauty in London. We love taking a few minutes whenever we can to recharge in one of these lovely, picturesque little havens.

## 3. Westminster Abbey

The world-famous church presents a stunning trip through the history of the British Isles. A working church, the Abbey is home to countless tombs and memorials to the most famous kings and queens, statesmen and soldiers, poets and priests, and was more recently the venue for the Royal Wedding.

### **Nearest London Underground Stations:**

*St James's Park - District and Circle Lines (0.2 miles)*

*Westminster - Jubilee, District and Circle Lines (0.2 miles)*

## 4. Borough Market

Borough Market is London's most renowned food market; it's a source of exceptional British and international produce. This market has developed into a vast repository of culinary knowledge and understanding. It's a place to explore, to ask questions, to discover new flavors and to savor a unique atmosphere.

### **Nearest London Underground Stations:**

*London Bridge - Northern and Jubilee Lines (0.1 miles)*

*Borough - Northern Line (0.3 miles)*

## 5. Tower of London

The Tower of London spans over 900 years of British history. Fortress, palace, prison, arsenal and garrison, it is one of the best-preserved and most famous fortified buildings in the world, and houses the priceless Crown Jewels, armories, Yeoman Warders and ravens.

### **Nearest London Underground Stations:**

*Tower Hill - Circle and District Lines (0.2 miles)*





# Our Favorite Ways to Experience London

Seeing all the big attractions is one way to tour the city, but we've discovered so many other ways to enjoy London. From simple ways to spend a few hours to quintessential British experiences, these are some of our favorite things to do when we're in London.

## See a West End Show

Right up there with Broadway in terms of prestige, the West End theatres feature some of the hottest shows in the world. There are few better ways to spend a London evening than a great dinner (check out our restaurant guide on page 29) and a West End Show.







## Afternoon Tea

Is there anything more quintessentially British than afternoon tea? We think not. Whether you're a tea drinker or not, it really is quite an experience. Our favorite spot for this wonderful tradition is at the Palm Court in the iconic Ritz London.

## Sunday Roast at a Local Pub

The Sunday roast is one of England's most beloved traditions. You'll find many different versions ranging from very casual at the neighborhood pub

to trendy upscale gastropub offerings. Whichever route you choose, it's likely to be one of your most memorable meals.

## Explore a New Neighborhood

If you're feeling adventurous, hop on the tube (an experience in itself) and head to one of London's many interesting neighborhoods to do some exploring. Each neighborhood seems to have its own personality and you're likely to discover new restaurants, shops, and gardens. Outside of London's core which includes Mayfair, Westminster, the West End and Knightsbridge,

some other sure bets include Chelsea, Richmond, Kensington and Bloomsbury. There are endless choices for exploring London's unique neighborhoods.

## Check out the Culture

There's an endless list of museums and art galleries in London, many of which don't charge an admission fee. The well-known National Gallery, Tate Britain, British Museum and National Portrait Gallery are amongst the most popular and frequently visited. In South Kensington, spend a drizzly day exploring the Natural History Museum,

the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Science Museum; they form an excellent collection within walking distance of each other. The Wallace Collection, Saatchi Gallery and Dulwich Picture Gallery are smaller, more hidden away gems.

## The Shops

London is a wonderful city for shopping. You'll find pretty much everything you might be looking for (and lots of it). Even with the overwhelming amount of shops to choose from, it's hard to beat the experience of wandering around Marks and Spencer (be sure to check out their wonderful food hall too).





# Best Places to Sleep

London really has it all when it comes to accommodations; you can find everything including a great selection of charming boutique hotels and the utmost in luxury properties. All of our London hotels have been carefully selected for their location, service, amenities, and comfort. We take pride in offering the most coveted properties in the city.

The Ritz is a London icon with over 100 years of history. It's a true luxury hotel that never fails to get it right. Grand guest rooms, outstanding dining, impeccable personal service and a full range of amenities are all part of the Ritz experience.

The Corinthia hotel is ideally located but it's so much more than just a desirable address. Just steps from Trafalgar Square, Westminster, and Covent Garden, you'll find classic elegance combined with modernity and lots of pleasant extras. We especially love the stunning pool area and the impressive spa.

There are plenty of other names worth mentioning too: the Savoy, a London landmark, and the elegant May Fair Hotel are a couple of our favorites. With so many amazing properties to choose from, it's easy to find a perfect fit for your home in London.





# Best Eats in London

London is a fabulous destination for a foodie. As one of the most diverse cities on the planet, you can find almost any type of food, and often at any hour of the day (or night). You'll find everything from mouth-watering takeaway at hole-in-the-wall type places to the finest of dining at Michelin-starred restaurants. We've listed some of our favorites below, sorted by neighborhood.





## Mayfair

### The Wolseley

📍 160 Piccadilly

☎ 020 7499 6996 📍 [www.thewolseley.com](http://www.thewolseley.com)

If you're not sure what you're in the mood for, the Wolseley is a great option. This grand café-restaurant buzzes from early morning until late, seven days a week. The Wolseley features eclectic menus for any time of day including breakfast, afternoon tea, lunch, dinner and an all-day menu which encompasses European classics. It's classy and vibey, definitely not your typical late night diner.

## Tamarind of Mayfair

📍 20 Queen Street

☎ 020 7629 3561 📍 [www.tamarindrestaurant.com](http://www.tamarindrestaurant.com)

London has plenty of great Indian restaurants but Tamarind is a standout. Tamarind is a modern Indian restaurant with an extensive menu and excellent service. The Hyderabad Shank, a slow-cooked lamb shank with turmeric, yogurt, browned garlic and freshly ground spices is excellent. We recommend saving room for one of their unique desserts.





## Hakkasan

📍 17 Bruton Street

☎ 020 7907 1888 📍 [hakkasan.com/mayfair](https://hakkasan.com/mayfair)

Michelin-starred Hakkasan is an absolute gem. Chef Michael Zhen is a master of modern Cantonese cuisine and the innovative menu is constantly changing. The outstanding dishes are complemented by the buzzing and stylish atmosphere.

## Soho

### The Rock & Sole Plaice

📍 47 Endell Street

☎ 020 7836 3785 📍 [www.rockandsoleplaice.com](https://www.rockandsoleplaice.com)

You can't do London without having fish and chips. The Rock & Sole Plaice has been serving up this British staple since 1871 and you'll be hard pressed to find a place that does it better. Popular with both locals and tourists, Rock & Sole serves up generous

portions of deliciously battered fresh fish and hand-cut chips that can be enjoyed inside or on their charming patio.

## Bocca Di Lupo

📍 12 Archer Street

☎ 020 7734 2223 📍 [www.boccadilupo.com](https://www.boccadilupo.com)

Just steps from Piccadilly lies the trendy Bocca Di Lupo, serving unique tapas-style dishes from across Italy. The menu changes regularly to keep up with changing seasons and to ensure the freshest ingredients. They have an impressive wine list too. It's a popular spot, we recommend booking a table well ahead of time.





## Southbank

### OXO

📍 Oxo Tower, Barge House Street

☎ 020 7803 3888 📌 [oxotowerrestaurant.com/restaurant/](http://oxotowerrestaurant.com/restaurant/)

Perfect for a special occasion meal, OXO is located on the eighth floor of the OXO Tower. With floor to ceiling windows, OXO provides panoramic views of the Thames and the city, whether you're inside or dining al fresco on the terrace. Chef Jeremy Bloor's menu changes seasonally and can be complemented by the extensive wine list. Vegan friendly.

## Strand

### The Savoy Grill

📍 Savoy Hotel, Strand

☎ 020 7592 1600 📌 [www.gordonramsayrestaurants.com/savoy-grill](http://www.gordonramsayrestaurants.com/savoy-grill)

Set in an elegant art deco dining room boasting over 100 years of history, Gordon Ramsay's Savoy Grill offers both an a la carte and a tasting menu. Everything is outstanding: the exquisite starters, the fresh seafood, the wood-charcoal-grilled meats, the wine list, and the service. A sure bet in the wonderful Savoy Hotel.

## Multiple Locations

### Goodman

📌 [www.goodmanrestaurants.com](http://www.goodmanrestaurants.com)

London's version of the New York Steakhouse, Goodman's chefs pride themselves on serving you the most tender full-flavored steak in London, using the finest prime beef. Although steaks are king at Goodman, their all-day menu features plenty of other

tempting options such as the Goodman Burger served with the traditional chips and unique sides like the truffle mac and cheese.

### The Hawksmoor

📌 [thehawksmoor.com](http://thehawksmoor.com)

While England isn't traditionally known for their cuisine or their steak, you'd never know it from dining at The Hawksmoor. They take their steaks seriously and serve up some of the best beef in London (with a decidedly British twist). Definite recommends include shared chateaubriand for two, chips fried in beef drippings, and succulent creamed spinach.

## Best Spot for a Coffee

There are so many wonderful coffee shops dotted throughout London and new ones opening all the time that it's pretty much impossible to pick one place. Our onsite hosts would be happy to recommend a great spot for a cappuccino and some people watching in the neighborhood of your preference.

## Best Spot for a Cocktail

Similar to the coffee situation, there are so many great spots for a drink in London. That said, The Shard is a standout. Quickly becoming a London icon, this unique 309-foot high glass skyscraper offers some of the best views in London. Inside you'll find a luxury hotel, residential apartments, and offices, in addition to some amazing restaurants and bars. Try Gong on the 52nd floor for what may be the most memorable drink you'll ever have.



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