



BEST OF
London
THE BEST

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WELCOME TO THE BEST OF THE BEST: LONDON

Thank you so much for downloading our guide to one of our favorite cities: London. It's a place that needs little introduction, but one that can be hard to navigate. There's just so much to do!

We are Drew and Julie, the couple behind Drive on the Left, and American expats who lived in London for three years. Our site was originally created to pacify our friends and family who miss us. But, after a year of writing for them, we decided to write for all travellers, armchair explorers, wanderlusts, and those whose travel itch needs a little scratching.

As avid travellers living in the US, we took cherished but infrequent vacations to far flung destinations. We spent every spare dollar on blockbuster meals in dazzling locations, and taking crazy excursions like that time when we rode Icelandic horses on the dark frozen tundra, after which Drew couldn't feel his feet for two hours.

In 2013 fate intervened, and Julie's company offered her the chance to take an expat position in the UK.

A few months later, we packed up our shoe box apartment and leapt across the pond. Drew decided to take the relocation as a sign that he should leave restaurant management for good. Julie decided to take the transfer as a sign that she needed a passable fake British accent (which she is still working on).

So after three years living, eating, and drinking around London, we feel we got to know this city quite well. Where to eat, what to do, and what can't be missed. This guide is designed to help anyone visiting London make the most of their holiday, to find the 'best of the best' that London has to offer.

Happy exploring!

Drew and Julie

London town

ACTIVITIES.....

.....RESTAURANTS

PUBS.....

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MARKETS.....

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RESOURCES.....



ACTIVITIES

AFTERNOON TEA AT THE WALLACE COLLECTION

The Wallace Collection, an art museum in Marylebone, holds a secret. The Wallace Restaurant is one of the best spots for afternoon tea in all of London. The light filled atrium is an oasis within the hustle and bustle of central London. Unlike many of the other afternoon tea destinations, it is a relative bargain, at £18.50.

SKYLINE VIEW FROM PRIMROSE HILL

On a nice summer's day, walking to the north side of Regent's Park and up Primrose Hill makes for an ideal picnic destination with a classic view of the London skyline.

CATCH A LATE NIGHT FLICK AT BACKYARD CINEMA

Held during the summer at Camden Market, Backyard Cinema shows cult classics as well as current films. The movie starts at dark, and you view from deck chairs and beanbags on a narrow cobblestone alley. Wait for the film to start with a burger and beer.

ENJOY A SHOW AND A PINT AT AN ISLINGTON PUB

Islington in north London is known for its unique theatre pubs. The ground level is a traditional pub, but the upstairs space showcases nightly performances, seating around thirty people. Bring your pint upstairs and enjoy the show!

VINTAGE SHOPPING ON CAMDEN PASSAGE

Camden Passage is tucked just behind Upper Street, the main thoroughfare in Angel. There are a few restaurants, quality coffee shops, quirky gift stores, and street vendors selling vintage clothing and antique jewelery. You can always find something to buy on this short pedestrian street.

GRAB COFFEE AT THE CHARLES DICKENS MUSEUM

The Charles Dickens Museum is open to the public all year round, but if you are near Holborn, it also has a small coffee counter, with a back garden and big comfortable sofas, that is free and open to the public.

BREW YOUR OWN GIN AT COLD DISTILLERY

London is known for its gin, and COLD is the only distillery located in the City of London. For a fun activity, book their "Gin Lab Experience" which allows you to select your own botanicals, distill the gin, bottle it, and make a custom label for your very own bespoke bottle of gin.

SMELL THE ROSES AT COLUMBIA ROAD FLOWER MARKET

There are flower markets, and there is the Columbia Road Flower Market. Well over a century old, this Sunday-only market brings out huge crowds. Burly East London vendors shout, "Two roses for a fiver" and always try to work a deal. Truly a sight to behold.

ENJOY A FULL ENGLISH AT SHEPHERDESS CAFE

You can't come to London and not dive into a classic full English breakfast. Fried eggs, mushrooms, tomatoes, beans, sausage, and fried bread, topped with HP sauce if you like. The Shepherdess Cafe on City Road is where to go for a fry up, served with mugs of strong breakfast tea.

EAT THE BEST STREET FOOD AT DALSTON STREET FEAST

Held every weekend from April-September in an old, crumbling industrial warehouse in East London, Street Feast gets our vote for best food vendor paradise. There are loads of food options, numerous bars, and even live music. It is super hipster, but super fun. Head over before 7:30pm to avoid the £3 admission fee.

ENJOY A COCKTAIL WITH A VIEW AT THE SHARD

While you can pay to go to the observation deck of the Shard, why not spend that money on a cocktail at Aqua Shard restaurant, located on the 31st floor, with sweeping views of London. Make a booking online and do note that they take the dress code very seriously.

WALK AMONG THE DEER AT RICHMOND PARK

Richmond Park, located in southwest London, is home to Hampton Court, once the home of Henry VIII. The park, which used to be the Royal hunting grounds, now contains hundreds of wild deer that are completely tame towards humans.

JACK THE RIPPER TOUR

The popularity of serial killer Jack the Ripper cannot be overstated in London. Indulging in one of the evening Jack the Ripper tour with "Ripper Vision" is fun, if not a bit spooky. They are held at night, and you get a taste of Whitechapel as you retrace the steps of his victims.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AT KEW GARDENS

London goes crazy for Christmas, and Kew Gardens puts on a fantastic event during the holidays. A section of the gardens is illuminated by dozens of spectacular Christmas lights displays. Mulled wine and toasted marshmallows are even available to keep you warm.

STREET ART WALKING TOUR OF EAST LONDON

Shoreditch Street Art Tours offers amazing walking tours of the East London neighborhood, detailing the history of street art in the area. You see a variety of art, as well as a few pieces by the famous artist, Banksy.

HAVE LUNCH AND SHOP AT BOOKS FOR COOKS

This is our favorite bookstore in London, because it sells only cookbooks! Located in the middle of Notting Hill, Books for Cooks also offers lunch in the back of their store, starting at 12pm. Recipes come from different cookbooks, and it's a true bargain: 2 courses for £5, 3 for £7.

LATE NIGHT SALT BEEF BEIGEL ON BRICK LANE

No night of partying in Shoreditch is complete without a salt beef beigel. There are two shops next to each other on Brick Lane, but choose Beigel Bake. You can thank us later.

CATCH A SHOW AT THE SOHO THEATRE

While the pricey West End theatres get most of the crowds, London is packed with theatre venues. We love SoHo Theatre, for its eclectic productions.

SEE A MOVIE AT AN EVERYMAN CINEMA

Movies are expensive in London, so when we go, we go to an Everyman Cinema, with small theatres, squishy velvet seats and great snacks to choose from.

FAN OUT AT THE ATP WORLD TOUR FINALS

While Wimbledon is in a class of its own, the ATP World Tour Finals is still a top tier sporting event, gathering the top 8 singles and doubles tennis players in the world. The event is especially fun for fans, thanks to a dedicated Fan Zone with interactive games and open viewing of the practice courts.

QUEUE FOR WIMBLEDON

Arguably the largest annual sporting event in London, the famed tennis tournament is played over two weeks at the private All England Club. Spectators get a little dressed up, wear funny hats, drink Champagne, and eat strawberries in cream. It is a dignified event that is still a blast. Tickets are hard to come by, so many queue up in the morning for a shot at tickets for the day session. The queue at Wimbledon is almost an event in itself!

ENJOY A PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL MATCH

London is currently home to six English Premier League teams. The energy, excitement, and enthusiasm of the fans is legendary. Rivalries are so intense that visiting team supporters are grouped together and barred from interacting with home team fans. In fact, if you purchase a ticket in the home section and show up at the gate wearing an away uniform, you will be denied entrance. Tickets are pricey for the top clubs like Arsenal and Chelsea, but deals can be found for West Ham, Crystal Palace, and Watford.



RESTAURANTS



DISHOOM, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

An ever-expanding group of Indian restaurants, Dishoom specializes in interesting and diverse Indian dishes that do not appear on every curry house menu. The interiors are inspired by the colonial-era British clubs in Bombay, and they have a serious cocktail program. Luckily, it won't break the bank, with most dishes under £10.

DUCK AND WAFFLE, CITY OF LONDON

For the best combination of serious eats and stunning views, check out Duck and Waffle, perched on the 40th floor of the Heron Tower. The crispy BBQ pig ears, and the namesake dish, a fried leg of confit duck with a waffle and mustard/maple syrup, are not to be missed.

FOXLOW, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

This more relaxed and casual cousin of the Hawksmoor Group supplies hungry locals with quality food and drink for a reasonable price. Bottles of house wine for £17, crispy and delicious fried chicken, and some of the highest quality beef around are our highlights.

GRAZING GOAT, MARYLEBONE

Just a few blocks from Marble Arch, this gastropub is second home to neighbourhood residents. The wine and beer list is well curated, the upstairs is a comfortable place for dinner and the ground floor is ideal for Sunday brunch.

HAWKSMOOR, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

The best and most consistent steakhouse in London, Hawksmoor features a variety of rare breed UK cattle and all of the diet-crashing side dishes you want at a steakhouse. Also come for one of the most decadent breakfasts in town.

HILL AND SZROK, LONDON FIELDS

Retail butcher shop by day, funky steak restaurant by night. About 6pm, the main island butcher block transforms into a communal dining room table, and the menu highlights the freshest cuts of meat.

LIMA FLORAL, COVENT GARDEN

Peruvian food is very trendy right now in London, but Lima Floral is our favourite. Bright, flavorful ceviches and killer Pisco sours will keep you happy, no matter the weather.

MORITO, EXMOUTH MARKET

Morito is the baby brother of Moro, a well-known fine dining restaurant located directly next door. Morito offers tapas with a Middle-Eastern flair, like crispy squid with sumac. There is limited seating, but it is worth the wait.

OTTOLENGHI, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

These popular restaurants from Yotam Ottolenghi specialize in Middle-Eastern cuisine. They all have a small bakery and cold salad bar in front for takeaway, and a full dining room in the back. If you want a table, book in advance, as these are some of the most popular restaurants.

POLPO, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Polpo specializes in Venetian-style small plates, all expertly executed. The pizzettes and a bottle of the house Prosecco always hits the spot.

SMOKEHOUSE, CANONBURY

This gastropub is home to barbecue and smoked meats - everything from pork belly to wild game. Their Sunday roast, served with all of the traditional trimmings, is delicious.

THE DAIRY, CLAPHAM

This restaurant opened to immediate success and rave reviews. The owners have opened three more restaurants, but the original is our favourite. A cozy, rustic dining room and value-for-money tasting menus starting at £45pp.

TRUSCOTT ARMS, MAIDA VALE

A stellar gastropub in its own right, Truscott Arms also offers nearly its entire menu fully gluten-free, including onion rings, burgers, and fish and chips. For a more refined experience, the upstairs dining room also has set menus and a tasting menu.

ANDINA, SHOREDITCH

Peruvian cuisine is definitely having a moment right now in London, and we're okay with that. Andina's small plates pack a flavor punch. It's an ideal location to meet up with a group of people. Added bonus? They also serve a killer brunch.

PIDGIN, HACKNEY

Each day, the crew at Pidgin devises a short tasting menu with four courses for £35, making it one of the most affordable tasting menus in London. The food is inventive and the menu options change each week and are posted on their website.

TABERNA DO MERCADO, SPITALFIELDS

A casual Portuguese restaurant from the chef behind celebrity hangout Chiltern Firehouse. Unlike most chefs at celebrity hangouts, Nuno Mendes can cook, and his casual Portuguese restaurant impresses. We really enjoyed sampling various cured fish, served in small metal cans.

PADELLA, LONDON BRIDGE

From the crew behind the busy Italian restaurant Trullo in Highbury, this new restaurant in Borough Market specializes in fresh, handmade pastas. The beef shin ragu over pappardelle is our go to.

BEAGLE, HOXTON

Seasonal British cooking is up for grabs in a railway arch turned restaurant in Hoxton. Part restaurant, part bar, part cafe, Beagle is perfect for all occasions. There is also plenty of space for a large party for your next occasion.

JOSE, BERMONDSEY

A tiny tapas restaurant that makes you feel like you are in Barcelona, not South London. If you are lucky enough to grab one of the few bar chairs, tuck into some simple seafood from the plancha or crispy croquetas.

DUMPLINGS LEGEND, CHINATOWN

For quality dim sum in London, Dumplings Legend must be on your hit list. Obviously, dumplings are the best order here, and they have at least 10 varieties on the menu.

KOYA BAR, SOHO

If you love udon noodles, then Koya Bar should not be missed. True, authentic, Japanese udon noodles, served cold or hot, with cold or hot broth and plentiful dipping sauces. So many options!



BAO, SOHO

Many restaurants make baos, small Taiwanese steamed buns, but no one does it better than Bao. Patrons queue for a seat before opening, and the baos, as well as any of the other small plates, do not disappoint.

BREAKFAST CLUB, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

This 80's themed restaurant makes one of the best breakfasts in London, with everything you could want, from avocado toast to fluffy pancakes and eggs benedict. The arcade themed website is also hilarious.

DELHI GRILL, ANGEL

We are regulars at this Indian joint in our neighbourhood. We love that the menu is not ten pages long like most Indian restaurants, only serving family recipes. Trust us that we've tried everything they serve and we've never had a bad meal.

HONEST BURGER, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Honest Burger gets a special nod on this list due to its gluten free options. There are GF buns and sides always available, as well as GF beer. The beef is well sourced from British cattle, and is always juicy and delicious. The gluten-filled versions are also terrific.

HOPPERS, SOHO

Hoppers is new to town, specializing in the Sri Lankan dish called hoppers, a crepe-like dish made from rice flour, shaped into a bowl and served with curry. Rave reviews all around.

KANADA-YA, SAINT GILES/PICADILLY

The whole world seems to be ramen crazy right now, and for the moment, Kanada-Ya is the best ramen in London. They specialize in tonkotsu broth, made from pork bones, and it's rich and delicious. Expect a queue.

MANGAL OCAKBASI, DALSTON

Londoners love a good kebab, and it doesn't get much better than those at Mangal Ocakbasi. Near the nightlife of Dalston and open late on Friday and Saturday night, this is an essential last stop of a big night out.

MEAT MISSION, HOXTON

A burger joint, set within a former mission in East London, Meat Mission embraces its funkiness. There is a full bar area, an active radio station on the mezzanine, and menu chock full of items like "Monkey Fingers" and the "Dead Hippy" burger.

OKAN BRIXTON

This little stall in Brixton Market only has a few tables, but it is worth the wait for their okonomiyaki, a classic Osaka street food. It is a savoury pancake, mixed with a variety of toppings like squid, beef, or pork belly. The dish is finished off with Japanese mayonnaise, brown sauce, and bonito flakes, all for around £7.

ROTI KING, EUSTON

This is a true hidden gem, in that it is very hard to find. Look for the Chinese Food sign, go down the steps, and that is where you will find Roti King. Roti, a traditional flatbread, is the star of the show, but we also love the curries.

SONG QUE CAFE, HOXTON

This stretch of Kingsland Road has a dozen Vietnamese restaurants, but Song Que Cafe is our favorite. The crispy pancake and the perfectly aromatic pho hit the spot every time.

TAYYABS, WHITECHAPEL

A cult cheap eats restaurant, Tayyabs is known for traditional Punjabi cuisine, particularly the lamb chops. They are also known for brusque service, so don't expect a smile and a handshake. Just go for the food.

THE GOOD EGG, STOKE NEWINGTON

A perpetually packed restaurant for breakfast and brunch in Stoke Newington (or Stokey if you're a local). It has a Middle Eastern vibe, so don't expect a full English here, but instead, get your fill of shakshuka, spiced baked eggs with tomatoes and peppers.

CHICK 'N' SOURS, HACKNEY

A loud, cramped East London destination in trendy Hackney, serving up some of the city's finest fried chicken, along with a variety of sour cocktails, most for around £6.

BLEEKER STREET BURGERS, SPITALFIELDS

With a setup in Spitalfields in East London and popping up around the city with different street food festivals, there is no excuse to miss out on one of the city's finest burgers. Get the double burger, smashed thin and griddled, like American fast food burgers, only tastier.

SILK ROAD, CAMBERWELL

Silk Road specializes in northwest Chinese food, so think hand pulled noodles and dumplings. Some of the most authentic Chinese in London, and you'll eat well for less than £10 per person.

ROTI CHAI, MARYLEBONE

A modern Indian canteen, Roti Chai serves some of the street food classics in a fun, warm setting, without breaking the bank. The added bonus? It is right around the corner from Oxford Street, making it an ideal place to duck into after an afternoon of shopping.

LUCKY CHIP, HACKNEY/ISLINGTON

Bear with us here for a second as we explain: Lucky Chip burgers and crispy fries were once only available inside other pubs (the Old Queens Head Pub in Islington, for example). Now, they have their own stand alone restaurant in Hackney, and will soon open a second. Just check online for their latest availability. They're worth seeking out. We love the Royale with Cheese and the garlic and herb fries.

FRANCO MANCA, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

With locations now open around the city, it is not hard to find one of Franco Manca's now legendary sourdough pizzas. Expect queues at most locations, but it is worth the wait, as these thin, Neapolitan-style pies are outstanding.

SMOKESTAK, SALSTON/CANADA WATER

In our opinion, Smokestak is the best barbecue in London, cranking out top notch brisket and ribs at Dalston Street Feast (the weekend festival). While some items, like the Flinstone-sized beef rib, are a little pricey, the overflowing brisket roll with pickled chiles cost around £8 and will definitely fill you up.



BARRAFINA, SOHO/COVENT GARDEN

Hands down, the best Spanish cooking in London right now. Grab a seat at the counter and watch the kitchen team in action. And whatever you do, don't forget to order the tortilla.

CLOVE CLUB, SHOREDITCH

The Clove Club delivers top notch food in a fun, laid back (dare I say hipster) environment. No gimmicks or tricks, just delicious house-cured hams and outstanding produce. The front bar room is fun for a drink or three.

FERA, MAYFAIR

Chef Simon Rogan recently took over the space at Claridge's from Gordon Ramsey and has hit a home run. The service is polished, the space opulent, the food outrageous. Worth the price of admission.

KITCHEN TABLE, FOTZROVIA

This spot is tucked in the back room of the perpetually packed Bubbledogs. The craziness of the entrance is washed away by the calm serenity of the open kitchen and counter seating arrangement. Be prepared for 12 courses of perfection.

LYLE'S, SHOREDITCH

An understated, and rather affordable Michelin-starred restaurant, the £44 tasting menu is a bargain for the quality of the dishes produced. Check it out before everyone finds out and they increase their prices.

ST. JOHN'S, SMITHFIELD

If you want to eat classic British food, including dishes like deviled kidneys and Welsh rarebit, then St. John's is the place. No one does offal like Chef Fergus Henderson. A true food destination.

TRISHNA, MARYLEBONE

Fine dining Indian at its best. Specializing in Southern Indian food, with an emphasis on seafood, go for the tasting menu and let the joy begin.

GYMKHANA, MAYFAIR

From the successful team that brought London Trishna and Hoppers, Gymkhana was a hit the second it opened its doors, serving traditional Indian cooking with British flair. Watch out for the vindaloo; it is seriously spicy!

RESTAURANT STORY, LONDON BRIDGE

A beacon of modern British cooking, from chef Tom Sellers. Expect lengthy tasting menus with lots of innovative cooking and presentations with flair.

HARWOOD ARMS, FULHAM

A casual gastropub in West London. While the vibe may be laid back, but the cooking is serious. Make sure to try the Scotch eggs - the best we've ever tried.



PUBS

CAT AND MUTTON, LONDON FIELDS

After shopping and eating up and down Broadway Market on a Saturday, make the Cat and Mutton your final stop. It is a large pub, with an expansive ground floor bar, with a smaller space upstairs for more intimate gatherings.

COACH AND HORSES, SOHO

This area of SoHo, on the edge of Chinatown, does not have many quality pubs for grabbing a drink, so Coach and Horses is a true oasis. A few tiny seating rooms, a television for watching rugby or football, and an always entertaining crowd.

LAMB AND FLAG, COVENT GARDEN

The Lamb and Flag is a welcome retreat from the retail frenzy of Covent Garden. Once a haunt of Charles Dickens and known for bare-knuckle boxing, this is a true traditional English pub.

PRIDE OF SPITALFIELDS, SPITALFIELDS

Spitalfields is becoming a major tourist hub in London, with more retail outlets and restaurants opening everyday. The Pride of Spitalfields is old school, with carpeted floors and even a resident cat. It's a nice break from the shiny new surroundings in the neighbourhood.

THE CROWN, BARNBURY

To be fair, this is our local pub within sight of our flat. It has a small outdoor patio, a warm and comfortable bar area and the food is great. See you there!

WINDSOR CASTLE, KENSINGTON

This pub from the 19th century has a cozy front bar area, perfect for winter, and a secluded garden in the back, ideal for a warm London summer.

YE OLDE CHESHIRE CHEESE, CITY OF LONDON

This is the oldest pub in London, dating from the mid-1500s, containing a collection of small rooms, in a rambling two storey space. Grab a drink in the 'standing room only' front room for the full experience.

CHURCHILL ARMS, KENSINGTON

To see how intense flower arrangements can get on the exterior of a pub, then Churchill Arms is a must see. Randomly, it has a Thai restaurant in the back, which serves surprisingly decent Thai food.

BRADLEY'S SPANISH BAR, OXFORD STREET

Oddly, this space is not overly Spanish, nor is it a bar. It is a pub, perhaps slightly on the shabbier side. Don't be scared off though, as it is a great place for a pint and to watch some football or rugby. And it's right in central London, so you're likely to be nearby!

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NIGHTLIFE

AMERICAN BAR AT THE SAVOY, MAYFAIR

The Savoy is one of London's classic hotels, and its American Bar is a classic as well. Live pianist and strong drinks are the highlights of the Art Deco-inspired space.

ARTESIAN, WEST END

This establishment was named the #1 Bar in the World in 2015. Set just off the lobby of the Langham Hotel, the staff is friendly and engaging for such a posh and polished bar. The cocktails are expensive (£18), but are truly unique creations.

BOOKING OFFICE, ST. PANCRAS

Set in the original booking office for St. Pancras train station when it opened, Booking Office is only a few steps from the Eurostar tracks to Paris and beyond. The ticket booths form the back of the bar, and the space is covered in dark wood, a moody location for a quiet drink.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, KENTISH TOWN

Ever drink a cocktail in an old Victorian-era public bathroom? We have. Ladies and Gentlemen is a subterranean bar that was converted from public restrooms (hence the cheeky name) and is a hot spot in Kentish Town. The staff is friendly, the music is good, and the drinks are plentiful.

NIGHTJAR, SHOREDITCH

Also rated as one of the top 10 bars in the world last year, the basement Nightjar is not just for cocktail snobs, though they will be happy too. Come for a drink and stay for the music, featured on the weekends.

69 COLEBROOKE ROW, ANGEL

Near the Angel tube stop, this cocktail bar has no sign, but rest assured, it is located at 69 Colebrooke Row. Expertly crafted cocktails are mixed in this tiny drinking den. Bookings for a table on the weekends are a necessity.

ZETTER TOWNHOUSE, CLERKENWELL

Set within a traditional Georgian townhouse, the Zetter feels like a friend's sitting room, one with a remarkable cocktail program. Come when you're up for a creative cocktail.

EXPERIMENTAL COCKTAIL CLUB, CHINATOWN

A hidden speakeasy, the Experimental Cocktail Club slings some of the finest cocktails in the capital, with some of the most well-known bartenders around.

EUSTON CIDER TAP, EUSTON

At a busy intersection near Euston train station, two bars sit next to each other: Euston Tap and Euston Cider Tap. There's something for everyone, to which the large crowds can attest. We love the cider selection - one of the finest around.

MOTHER KELLY'S, BETHNAL GREEN

A beer-lover's dream in a converted railway arch in East London. In the summer, the front doors open up to the large front patio and you relax in the sun, or grab some beers for the road.

OPIUM/PEONY, CHINATOWN

Behind a nondescript door on Gerrard Street lies Opium, a dim sum parlor and cocktail lounge. For an even more special night, go behind another door within Opium to drink the night away at Peony, their bar within a bar. Hard to find, but worth the effort.



MARKETS

BOROUGH MARKET, TOWER BRIDGE

This is the one market that finds its way into every guidebook there is. The notoriety means big crowds, and great food. There are lines of stalls selling freshly cooked food, like grilled cheese sandwiches and pad thai, as well as artisan food producers, hawking their wares. If you plan on going for lunch, be advised: go on a Thursday, the "slowest" day for the market (open Thursday - Saturday).

BRIXTON MARKET, BRIXTON

This funky collection of shops is a permanent fixture, open every day. The entire space is enclosed as well, so no need to check the weather forecast. There are butchers, fishmongers, artists, and restaurants galore.

BROADWAY MARKET, LONDON FIELDS

This Saturday-only market is our favourite in London, packing several blocks with street vendors. There are food stalls cooking up sausages, Vietnamese sandwiches, and Indian curries, along with folks selling vintage clothes and accessories. The market itself is surrounded by fun bars, restaurants and independent bookshops, making it a perfect place to spend a lazy Saturday afternoon.

CAMDEN LOCK MARKET, CAMDEN

This market sits right on the canal in the truly funky neighborhood of Camden in north London. The market is open everyday and packs in dozens of food stalls. We prefer to visit on warm summer nights, when there is often live music and the crowd is a little more rowdy.

EXMOUTH MARKET, CLERKENWELL

During the week, about a dozen vendors set up shop on Exmouth Market, selling a wide range of lunch items for local workers. The street itself has some stellar restaurants, so the additional food stalls make your lunch decision even more challenging.

STREET FEAST, DALSTON YARD

The people behind Street Feast are fabulous curators of London street food, assembling the best vendors from around the city into their party every Friday and Saturday night from April through September, in a refurbished industrial warehouse space.

STREET FEAST, CANADA WATER

The fully indoor version of the Dalston Yard Street Feast, only even bigger! When winter hits, the Street Feast crew relocates to this location, jam packed with stalls, live music, and huge crowds of hungry Londoners every Friday and Saturday night.

BROCKLEY MARKET, BROCKLEY

This small Saturday market is a hidden gem for locals, with many fantastic street food vendors without the massive queues. In addition, there are a variety of produce, meat, and seafood stalls, all selling quality local products.

COLUMBIA ROAD FLOWER MARKET, TOWER HAMLETS

For something different, head east to the Columbia Road Flower Market, held every Sunday, when the street is taken over by flower vendors. The crowds are insane, and full of true, East London flair, with vendors yelling out deals, trying to outdo each other. For a break, the area is surrounded by cafes and restaurants, as well as few quality pubs like Royal Oak if you need a pint!



MUSEUMS

BRITISH LIBRARY, BLOOMSBURY

Our favorite little gem, the British Library is a functioning library, but head to its "Treasures" room for some amazing finds, like the Magna Carta, sheet music written by Beethoven, and the original hand-written manuscript of Alice in Wonderland.

BRITISH MUSEUM, BLOOMSBURY

One of the most visited museums in London, the interior atrium is worth checking out in and of itself. Top marks for the Egyptian and Greek exhibits. Free admission.

CHURCHILL WAR ROOMS

If you are going to pay to visit one museum (since so many are free!), then make it the Churchill War Rooms. The underground bunker from WWII, right near Big Ben, has been meticulously maintained. Anyone with even a passing interest in WWII will find it fascinating.

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM, ELEPHANT AND CASTLE

Any military enthusiast has to head south to explore the Imperial War Museum. The recently refurbished museum contains an incredible amount of artifacts, especially from WWI and WWII. Free admission.

TATE MODERN, SOUTHBANK

For any modern art lover, this is a must see. The former power station has been transformed into a beautiful museum, highlighting the best of modern art, and the permanent free exhibitions are fantastic.

TOWER OF LONDON, CITY OF LONDON

Arguably the most historically significant destination in London, we suggest going on a free tour with one of the Yeoman (or Beefeaters), who actually live in the Tower. Tickets are a bit pricey, around £18.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, KENSINGTON

This mammoth museum contains an ungodly number of items, from gold and silver, to sculptures and relics. We particularly like the hall filled with silver platters. Admission is free, but special exhibits are extra.

THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, TRAFALGAR SQUARE

For an in-depth look at the history of the English royal families, take a stroll through this free museum. It is organized chronologically and by ruling family. You can see how the crown has passed down, and just how many royal people were executed along the way.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, KENSINGTON

Who doesn't love a good natural history museum? The building alone is worth a visit, as it may be the most stunning museum in all of London. In the winter, an ice rink is constructed on the grounds, and the museum hosts many nighttime events, turning the museum into much, much more.

TATE BRITAIN, PIMLICO

If you want to dive into British art history, the Tate Britain is dedicated solely to British artists, from classical to modern. The beautiful building along the Thames is well curated and easy to navigate, and includes a large Turner exhibit.

ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM, COLINDALE

If you are a war buff or a lover of aviation, this museum, situated in far north London, has multiple hangers full of aircraft, from original machines from the beginning of the 20th century, all the way to modern times. We particularly enjoyed the British Airways 747 on display.



RESOURCES

ARTICLES FROM OUR BLOG TO HELP YOU GET THE BEST OF THE BEST OUT OF YOUR LONDON EXPERIENCE

London Holiday Festivities

The ATP World Tour Finals in London

Sunday Brunch in London

The Classic Car Boot Sale in London

Two Years in London: Part 1 and Part 2

7 Tricks To Score Tickets to an English Premier League Match

London Airport Guide

London Neighborhood Guide: King's Cross

London Neighborhood Guide: Chinatown

London Neighborhood Guide: Bethnal Green

Two Foodies Eat London for £40

Making My Own London Gin

Broadway Market, London

Classic London: Henley Royal Regatta

An Ode to the London Book Shop

Springtime at London's Markets

Classic London: Wimbledon

Drive ON THE LEFT

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WELCOME TO THE BEST OF THE BEST: LONDON

Thank you so much for downloading our guide to one of our favorite cities: London. It's a place that needs little introduction, but one that can be hard to navigate. There's just so much to do!

We are Drew and Julie, the couple behind Drive on the Left, and American expats that lived in London for three years. Our site was originally created to pacify our friends and family who miss us. But, after a year of writing for them, we decided to write for all travellers, armchair explorers, wanderlusts, and those whose travel itch needs a little scratching.

As avid travellers living in the US, we took cherished but infrequent vacations to far flung destinations. We spent every spare dollar on blockbuster meals in dazzling locations, and taking crazy excursions like that time when we rode Icelandic horses on the dark frozen tundra, after which Drew couldn't feel his feet for two hours.

In 2013 fate intervened, and Julie's company offered her the chance to take an expat position in the UK.

A few months later, we packed up our shoe box apartment and leapt across the pond. Drew decided to take the relocation as a sign that he should leave restaurant management for good. Julie decided to take the transfer as a sign that she needed a passable fake British accent (which she is still working on).

So after almost three years living, eating, and drinking around London, we feel we got to know the city quite well. Where to eat, what to do, and what can't be missed. This guide is designed to help anyone visiting London make the most of their holiday, to find the 'best of the best' that London has to offer.

Happy exploring!

Drew and Julie

London town

ACTIVITIES.....

.....RESTAURANTS

PUBS.....

.....NIGHTLIFE

MARKETS.....

.....MUSEUMS

RESOURCES.....



ACTIVITIES

AFTERNOON TEA AT THE WALLACE COLLECTION

The Wallace Collection, an art museum in Marylebone, holds a secret. The Wallace Restaurant is one of the best spots for afternoon tea in all of London. The light filled atrium is an oasis within the hustle and bustle of central London. Unlike many of the other afternoon tea destinations, it is a relative bargain, at £18.50.

SKYLINE VIEW FROM PRIMROSE HILL

On a nice summer's day, walking to the north side of Regent's Park and up Primrose Hill makes for an ideal picnic destination with a classic view of the London skyline.

CATCH A LATE NIGHT FLICK AT BACKYARD CINEMA

Held during the summer at Camden Market, Backyard Cinema shows cult classics as well as current films. The movie starts at dark, and you view from deck chairs and beanbags on a narrow cobblestone alley. Wait for the film to start with a burger and beer.

ENJOY A SHOW AND A PINT AT AN ISLINGTON PUB

Islington in north London is known for its unique theatre pubs. The ground level is a traditional pub, but the upstairs space showcases nightly performances, seating around thirty people. Bring your pint upstairs and enjoy the show!

VINTAGE SHOPPING ON CAMDEN PASSAGE

Camden Passage is tucked just behind Upper Street, the main thoroughfare in Angel. There are a few restaurants, quality coffee shops, quirky gift stores, and street vendors selling vintage clothing and antique jewelery. You can always find something to buy on this short pedestrian street.

GRAB COFFEE AT THE CHARLES DICKENS MUSEUM

The Charles Dickens Museum is open to the public all year round, but if you are near Holborn, it also has a small coffee counter, with a back garden and big comfortable sofas, that is free and open to the public.

BREW YOUR OWN GIN AT COLD DISTILLERY

London is known for its gin, and COLD is the only distillery located in the City of London. For a fun activity, book their "Gin Lab Experience" which allows you to select your own botanicals, distill the gin, bottle it, and make a custom label for your very own bespoke bottle of gin.

SMELL THE ROSES AT COLUMBIA ROAD FLOWER MARKET

There are flower markets, and there is the Columbia Road Flower Market. Well over a century old, this Sunday-only market brings out huge crowds. Burly East London vendors shout, "Two roses for a fiver" and always try to work a deal. Truly a sight to behold.

ENJOY A FULL ENGLISH AT SHEPHERDESS CAFE

You can't come to London and not dive into a classic full English breakfast. Fried eggs, mushrooms, tomatoes, beans, sausage, and fried bread, topped with HP sauce if you like. The Shepherdess Cafe on City Road is where to go for a fry up, served with mugs of strong breakfast tea.

EAT THE BEST STREET FOOD AT DALSTON STREET FEAST

Held every weekend from April-September in an old, crumbling industrial warehouse in East London, Street Feast gets our vote for best food vendor paradise. There are loads of food options, numerous bars, and even live music. It is super hipster, but super fun. Head over before 7:30pm to avoid the £3 admission fee.

ENJOY A COCKTAIL WITH A VIEW AT THE SHARD

While you can pay to go to the observation deck of the Shard, why not spend that money on a cocktail at Aqua Shard restaurant, located on the 31st floor, with sweeping views of London. Make a booking online and do note that they take the dress code very seriously.

WALK AMONG THE DEER AT RICHMOND PARK

Richmond Park, located in southwest London, is home to Hampton Court, once the home of Henry VIII. The park, which used to be the Royal hunting grounds, now contains hundreds of wild deer that are completely tame towards humans.

JACK THE RIPPER TOUR

The popularity of serial killer Jack the Ripper cannot be overstated in London. Indulging in one of the evening Jack the Ripper tour with "Ripper Vision" is fun, if not a bit spooky. They are held at night, and you get a taste of Whitechapel as you retrace the steps of his victims.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AT KEW GARDENS

London goes crazy for Christmas, and Kew Gardens puts on a fantastic event during the holidays. A section of the gardens is illuminated by dozens of spectacular Christmas lights displays. Mulled wine and toasted marshmallows are even available to keep you warm.

STREET ART WALKING TOUR OF EAST LONDON

Shoreditch Street Art Tours offers amazing walking tours of the East London neighborhood, detailing the history of street art in the area. You see a variety of art, as well as a few pieces by the famous artist, Banksy.

HAVE LUNCH AND SHOP AT BOOKS FOR COOKS

This is our favorite bookstore in London, because it sells only cookbooks! Located in the middle of Notting Hill, Books for Cooks also offers lunch in the back of their store, starting at 12pm. Recipes come from different cookbooks, and it's a true bargain: 2 courses for £5, 3 for £7.

LATE NIGHT SALT BEEF BEIGEL ON BRICK LANE

No night of partying in Shoreditch is complete without a salt beef beigel. There are two shops next to each other on Brick Lane, but choose Beigel Bake. You can thank us later.

CATCH A SHOW AT THE SOHO THEATRE

While the pricey West End theatres get most of the crowds, London is packed with theatre venues. We love SoHo Theatre, for its eclectic productions.

SEE A MOVIE AT AN EVERYMAN CINEMA

Movies are expensive in London, so when we go, we go to an Everyman Cinema, with small theatres, squishy velvet seats and great snacks to choose from.

FAN OUT AT THE ATP WORLD TOUR FINALS

While Wimbledon is in a class of its own, the ATP World Tour Finals is still a top tier sporting event, gathering the top 8 singles and doubles tennis players in the world. The event is especially fun for fans, thanks to a dedicated Fan Zone with interactive games and open viewing of the practice courts.

QUEUE FOR WIMBLEDON

Arguably the largest annual sporting event in London, the famed tennis tournament is played over two weeks at the private All England Club. Spectators get a little dressed up, wear funny hats, drink Champagne, and eat strawberries in cream. It is a dignified event that is still a blast. Tickets are hard to come by, so many queue up in the morning for a shot at tickets for the day session. The queue at Wimbledon is almost an event in itself!

ENJOY A PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL MATCH

London is currently home to six English Premier League teams. The energy, excitement, and enthusiasm of the fans is legendary. Rivalries are so intense that visiting team supporters are grouped together and barred from interacting with home team fans. In fact, if you purchase a ticket in the home section and show up at the gate wearing an away uniform, you will be denied entrance. Tickets are pricey for the top clubs like Arsenal and Chelsea, but deals can be found for West Ham, Crystal Palace, and Watford.



RESTAURANTS



DISHOOM, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

An ever-expanding group of Indian restaurants, Dishoom specializes in interesting and diverse Indian dishes that do not appear on every curry house menu. The interiors are inspired by the colonial-era British clubs in Bombay, and they have a serious cocktail program. Luckily, it won't break the bank, with most dishes under £10.

DUCK AND WAFFLE, CITY OF LONDON

For the best combination of serious eats and stunning views, check out Duck and Waffle, perched on the 40th floor of the Heron Tower. The crispy BBQ pig ears, and the namesake dish, a fried leg of confit duck with a waffle and mustard/maple syrup, are not to be missed.

FOXLOW, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

This more relaxed and casual cousin of the Hawksmoor Group supplies hungry locals with quality food and drink for a reasonable price. Bottles of house wine for £17, crispy and delicious fried chicken, and some of the highest quality beef around are our highlights.

GRAZING GOAT, MARYLEBONE

Just a few blocks from Marble Arch, this gastropub is second home to neighbourhood residents. The wine and beer list is well curated, the upstairs is a comfortable place for dinner and the ground floor is ideal for Sunday brunch.

HAWKSMOOR, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

The best and most consistent steakhouse in London, Hawksmoor features a variety of rare breed UK cattle and all of the diet-crashing side dishes you want at a steakhouse. Also come for one of the most decadent breakfasts in town.

HILL AND SZROK, LONDON FIELDS

Retail butcher shop by day, funky steak restaurant by night. About 6pm, the main island butcher block transforms into a communal dining room table, and the menu highlights the freshest cuts of meat.

LIMA FLORAL, COVENT GARDEN

Peruvian food is very trendy right now in London, but Lima Floral is our favourite. Bright, flavorful ceviches and killer Pisco sours will keep you happy, no matter the weather.

MORITO, EXMOUTH MARKET

Morito is the baby brother of Moro, a well-known fine dining restaurant located directly next door. Morito offers tapas with a Middle-Eastern flair, like crispy squid with sumac. There is limited seating, but it is worth the wait.

OTTOLENGHI, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

These popular restaurants from Yotam Ottolenghi specialize in Middle-Eastern cuisine. They all have a small bakery and cold salad bar in front for takeaway, and a full dining room in the back. If you want a table, book in advance, as these are some of the most popular restaurants.

POLPO, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Polpo specializes in Venetian-style small plates, all expertly executed. The pizzettes and a bottle of the house Prosecco always hits the spot.

SMOKEHOUSE, CANONBURY

This gastropub is home to barbecue and smoked meats - everything from pork belly to wild game. Their Sunday roast, served with all of the traditional trimmings, is delicious.

THE DAIRY, CLAPHAM

This restaurant opened to immediate success and rave reviews. The owners have opened three more restaurants, but the original is our favourite. A cozy, rustic dining room and value-for-money tasting menus starting at £45pp.

TRUSCOTT ARMS, MAIDA VALE

A stellar gastropub in its own right, Truscott Arms also offers nearly its entire menu fully gluten-free, including onion rings, burgers, and fish and chips. For a more refined experience, the upstairs dining room also has set menus and a tasting menu.

ANDINA, SHOREDITCH

Peruvian cuisine is definitely having a moment right now in London, and we're okay with that. Andina's small plates pack a flavor punch. It's an ideal location to meet up with a group of people. Added bonus? They also serve a killer brunch.

PIDGIN, HACKNEY

Each day, the crew at Pidgin devises a short tasting menu with four courses for £35, making it one of the most affordable tasting menus in London. The food is inventive and the menu options change each week and are posted on their website.

TABERNA DO MERCADO, SPITALFIELDS

A casual Portuguese restaurant from the chef behind celebrity hangout Chiltern Firehouse. Unlike most chefs at celebrity hangouts, Nuno Mendes can cook, and his casual Portuguese restaurant impresses. We really enjoyed sampling various cured fish, served in small metal cans.

PADELLA, LONDON BRIDGE

From the crew behind the busy Italian restaurant Trullo in Highbury, this new restaurant in Borough Market specializes in fresh, handmade pastas. The beef shin ragu over pappardelle is our go to.

BEAGLE, HOXTON

Seasonal British cooking is up for grabs in a railway arch turned restaurant in Hoxton. Part restaurant, part bar, part cafe, Beagle is perfect for all occasions. There is also plenty of space for a large party for your next occasion.

JOSE, BERMONDSEY

A tiny tapas restaurant that makes you feel like you are in Barcelona, not South London. If you are lucky enough to grab one of the few bar chairs, tuck into some simple seafood from the plancha or crispy croquetas.

DUMPLINGS LEGEND, CHINATOWN

For quality dim sum in London, Dumplings Legend must be on your hit list. Obviously, dumplings are the best order here, and they have at least 10 varieties on the menu.

KOYA BAR, SOHO

If you love udon noodles, then Koya Bar should not be missed. True, authentic, Japanese udon noodles, served cold or hot, with cold or hot broth and plentiful dipping sauces. So many options!



BAO, SOHO

Many restaurants make baos, small Taiwanese steamed buns, but no one does it better than Bao. Patrons queue for a seat before opening, and the baos, as well as any of the other small plates, do not disappoint.

BREAKFAST CLUB, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

This 80's themed restaurant makes one of the best breakfasts in London, with everything you could want, from avocado toast to fluffy pancakes and eggs benedict. The arcade themed website is also hilarious.

DELHI GRILL, ANGEL

We are regulars at this Indian joint in our neighbourhood. We love that the menu is not ten pages long like most Indian restaurants, only serving family recipes. Trust us that we've tried everything they serve and we've never had a bad meal.

HONEST BURGER, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Honest Burger gets a special nod on this list due to its gluten free options. There are GF buns and sides always available, as well as GF beer. The beef is well sourced from British cattle, and is always juicy and delicious. The gluten-filled versions are also terrific.

HOPPERS, SOHO

Hoppers is new to town, specializing in the Sri Lankan dish called hoppers, a crepe-like dish made from rice flour, shaped into a bowl and served with curry. Rave reviews all around.

KANADA-YA, SAINT GILES/PICADILLY

The whole world seems to be ramen crazy right now, and for the moment, Kanada-Ya is the best ramen in London. They specialize in tonkotsu broth, made from pork bones, and it's rich and delicious. Expect a queue.

MANGAL OCAKBASI, DALSTON

Londoners love a good kebab, and it doesn't get much better than those at Mangal Ocakbasi. Near the nightlife of Dalston and open late on Friday and Saturday night, this is an essential last stop of a big night out.

MEAT MISSION, HOXTON

A burger joint, set within a former mission in East London, Meat Mission embraces its funkiness. There is a full bar area, an active radio station on the mezzanine, and menu chock full of items like "Monkey Fingers" and the "Dead Hippy" burger.

OKAN BRIXTON

This little stall in Brixton Market only has a few tables, but it is worth the wait for their okonomiyaki, a classic Osaka street food. It is a savoury pancake, mixed with a variety of toppings like squid, beef, or pork belly. The dish is finished off with Japanese mayonnaise, brown sauce, and bonito flakes, all for around £7.

ROTI KING, EUSTON

This is a true hidden gem, in that it is very hard to find. Look for the Chinese Food sign, go down the steps, and that is where you will find Roti King. Roti, a traditional flatbread, is the star of the show, but we also love the curries.

SONG QUE CAFE, HOXTON

This stretch of Kingsland Road has a dozen Vietnamese restaurants, but Song Que Cafe is our favorite. The crispy pancake and the perfectly aromatic pho hit the spot every time.

TAYYABS, WHITECHAPEL

A cult cheap eats restaurant, Tayyabs is known for traditional Punjabi cuisine, particularly the lamb chops. They are also known for brusque service, so don't expect a smile and a handshake. Just go for the food.

THE GOOD EGG, STOKE NEWINGTON

A perpetually packed restaurant for breakfast and brunch in Stoke Newington (or Stokey if you're a local). It has a Middle Eastern vibe, so don't expect a full English here, but instead, get your fill of shakshuka, spiced baked eggs with tomatoes and peppers.

CHICK 'N' SOURS, HACKNEY

A loud, cramped East London destination in trendy Hackney, serving up some of the city's finest fried chicken, along with a variety of sour cocktails, most for around £6.

BLEEKER STREET BURGERS, SPITALFIELDS

With a setup in Spitalfields in East London and popping up around the city with different street food festivals, there is no excuse to miss out on one of the city's finest burgers. Get the double burger, smashed thin and griddled, like American fast food burgers, only tastier.

SILK ROAD, CAMBERWELL

Silk Road specializes in northwest Chinese food, so think hand pulled noodles and dumplings. Some of the most authentic Chinese in London, and you'll eat well for less than £10 per person.

ROTI CHAI, MARYLEBONE

A modern Indian canteen, Roti Chai serves some of the street food classics in a fun, warm setting, without breaking the bank. The added bonus? It is right around the corner from Oxford Street, making it an ideal place to duck into after an afternoon of shopping.

LUCKY CHIP, HACKNEY/ISLINGTON

Bear with us here for a second as we explain: Lucky Chip burgers and crispy fries were once only available inside other pubs (the Old Queens Head Pub in Islington, for example). Now, they have their own stand alone restaurant in Hackney, and will soon open a second. Just check online for their latest availability. They're worth seeking out. We love the Royale with Cheese and the garlic and herb fries.

FRANCO MANCA, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

With locations now open around the city, it is not hard to find one of Franco Manca's now legendary sourdough pizzas. Expect queues at most locations, but it is worth the wait, as these thin, Neapolitan-style pies are outstanding.

SMOKESTAK, SALSTON/CANADA WATER

In our opinion, Smokestak is the best barbecue in London, cranking out top notch brisket and ribs at Dalston Street Feast (the weekend festival). While some items, like the Flinstone-sized beef rib, are a little pricey, the overflowing brisket roll with pickled chiles cost around £8 and will definitely fill you up.



BARRAFINA, SOHO/COVENT GARDEN

Hands down, the best Spanish cooking in London right now. Grab a seat at the counter and watch the kitchen team in action. And whatever you do, don't forget to order the tortilla.

CLOVE CLUB, SHOREDITCH

The Clove Club delivers top notch food in a fun, laid back (dare I say hipster) environment. No gimmicks or tricks, just delicious house-cured hams and outstanding produce. The front bar room is fun for a drink or three.

FERA, MAYFAIR

Chef Simon Rogan recently took over the space at Claridge's from Gordon Ramsey and has hit a home run. The service is polished, the space opulent, the food outrageous. Worth the price of admission.

KITCHEN TABLE, FOTZROVIA

This spot is tucked in the back room of the perpetually packed Bubbledogs. The craziness of the entrance is washed away by the calm serenity of the open kitchen and counter seating arrangement. Be prepared for 12 courses of perfection.

LYLE'S, SHOREDITCH

An understated, and rather affordable Michelin-starred restaurant, the £44 tasting menu is a bargain for the quality of the dishes produced. Check it out before everyone finds out and they increase their prices.

ST. JOHN'S, SMITHFIELD

If you want to eat classic British food, including dishes like deviled kidneys and Welsh rarebit, then St. John's is the place. No one does offal like Chef Fergus Henderson. A true food destination.

TRISHNA, MARYLEBONE

Fine dining Indian at its best. Specializing in Southern Indian food, with an emphasis on seafood, go for the tasting menu and let the joy begin.

GYMKHANA, MAYFAIR

From the successful team that brought London Trishna and Hoppers, Gymkhana was a hit the second it opened its doors, serving traditional Indian cooking with British flair. Watch out for the vindaloo; it is seriously spicy!

RESTAURANT STORY, LONDON BRIDGE

A beacon of modern British cooking, from chef Tom Sellers. Expect lengthy tasting menus with lots of innovative cooking and presentations with flair.

HARWOOD ARMS, FULHAM

A casual gastropub in West London. While the vibe may be laid back, but the cooking is serious. Make sure to try the Scotch eggs - the best we've ever tried.



PUBS

CAT AND MUTTON, LONDON FIELDS

After shopping and eating up and down Broadway Market on a Saturday, make the Cat and Mutton your final stop. It is a large pub, with an expansive ground floor bar, with a smaller space upstairs for more intimate gatherings.

COACH AND HORSES, SOHO

This area of SoHo, on the edge of Chinatown, does not have many quality pubs for grabbing a drink, so Coach and Horses is a true oasis. A few tiny seating rooms, a television for watching rugby or football, and an always entertaining crowd.

LAMB AND FLAG, COVENT GARDEN

The Lamb and Flag is a welcome retreat from the retail frenzy of Covent Garden. Once a haunt of Charles Dickens and known for bare-knuckle boxing, this is a true traditional English pub.

PRIDE OF SPITALFIELDS, SPITALFIELDS

Spitalfields is becoming a major tourist hub in London, with more retail outlets and restaurants opening everyday. The Pride of Spitalfields is old school, with carpeted floors and even a resident cat. It's a nice break from the shiny new surroundings in the neighbourhood.

THE CROWN, BARNBURY

To be fair, this is our local pub within sight of our flat. It has a small outdoor patio, a warm and comfortable bar area and the food is great. See you there!

WINDSOR CASTLE, KENSINGTON

This pub from the 19th century has a cozy front bar area, perfect for winter, and a secluded garden in the back, ideal for a warm London summer.

YE OLDE CHESHIRE CHEESE, CITY OF LONDON

This is the oldest pub in London, dating from the mid-1500s, containing a collection of small rooms, in a rambling two storey space. Grab a drink in the 'standing room only' front room for the full experience.

CHURCHILL ARMS, KENSINGTON

To see how intense flower arrangements can get on the exterior of a pub, then Churchill Arms is a must see. Randomly, it has a Thai restaurant in the back, which serves surprisingly decent Thai food.

BRADLEY'S SPANISH BAR, OXFORD STREET

Oddly, this space is not overly Spanish, nor is it a bar. It is a pub, perhaps slightly on the shabbier side. Don't be scared off though, as it is a great place for a pint and to watch some football or rugby. And it's right in central London, so you're likely to be nearby!

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NIGHTLIFE

AMERICAN BAR AT THE SAVOY, MAYFAIR

The Savoy is one of London's classic hotels, and its American Bar is a classic as well. Live pianist and strong drinks are the highlights of the Art Deco-inspired space.

ARTESIAN, WEST END

This establishment was named the #1 Bar in the World in 2015. Set just off the lobby of the Langham Hotel, the staff is friendly and engaging for such a posh and polished bar. The cocktails are expensive (£18), but are truly unique creations.

BOOKING OFFICE, ST. PANCRAS

Set in the original booking office for St. Pancras train station when it opened, Booking Office is only a few steps from the Eurostar tracks to Paris and beyond. The ticket booths form the back of the bar, and the space is covered in dark wood, a moody location for a quiet drink.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, KENTISH TOWN

Ever drink a cocktail in an old Victorian-era public bathroom? We have. Ladies and Gentlemen is a subterranean bar that was converted from public restrooms (hence the cheeky name) and is a hot spot in Kentish Town. The staff is friendly, the music is good, and the drinks are plentiful.

NIGHTJAR, SHOREDITCH

Also rated as one of the top 10 bars in the world last year, the basement Nightjar is not just for cocktail snobs, though they will be happy too. Come for a drink and stay for the music, featured on the weekends.

69 COLEBROOKE ROW, ANGEL

Near the Angel tube stop, this cocktail bar has no sign, but rest assured, it is located at 69 Colebrooke Row. Expertly crafted cocktails are mixed in this tiny drinking den. Bookings for a table on the weekends are a necessity.

ZETTER TOWNHOUSE, CLERKENWELL

Set within a traditional Georgian townhouse, the Zetter feels like a friend's sitting room, one with a remarkable cocktail program. Come when you're up for a creative cocktail.

EXPERIMENTAL COCKTAIL CLUB, CHINATOWN

A hidden speakeasy, the Experimental Cocktail Club slings some of the finest cocktails in the capital, with some of the most well-known bartenders around.

EUSTON CIDER TAP, EUSTON

At a busy intersection near Euston train station, two bars sit next to each other: Euston Tap and Euston Cider Tap. There's something for everyone, to which the large crowds can attest. We love the cider selection - one of the finest around.

MOTHER KELLY'S, BETHNAL GREEN

A beer-lover's dream in a converted railway arch in East London. In the summer, the front doors open up to the large front patio and you relax in the sun, or grab some beers for the road.

OPIUM/PEONY, CHINATOWN

Behind a nondescript door on Gerrard Street lies Opium, a dim sum parlor and cocktail lounge. For an even more special night, go behind another door within Opium to drink the night away at Peony, their bar within a bar. Hard to find, but worth the effort.



MARKETS

BOROUGH MARKET, TOWER BRIDGE

This is the one market that finds its way into every guidebook there is. The notoriety means big crowds, and great food. There are lines of stalls selling freshly cooked food, like grilled cheese sandwiches and pad thai, as well as artisan food producers, hawking their wares. If you plan on going for lunch, be advised: go on a Thursday, the "slowest" day for the market (open Thursday - Saturday).

BRIXTON MARKET, BRIXTON

This funky collection of shops is a permanent fixture, open every day. The entire space is enclosed as well, so no need to check the weather forecast. There are butchers, fishmongers, artists, and restaurants galore.

BROADWAY MARKET, LONDON FIELDS

This Saturday-only market is our favourite in London, packing several blocks with street vendors. There are food stalls cooking up sausages, Vietnamese sandwiches, and Indian curries, along with folks selling vintage clothes and accessories. The market itself is surrounded by fun bars, restaurants and independent bookshops, making it a perfect place to spend a lazy Saturday afternoon.

CAMDEN LOCK MARKET, CAMDEN

This market sits right on the canal in the truly funky neighborhood of Camden in north London. The market is open everyday and packs in dozens of food stalls. We prefer to visit on warm summer nights, when there is often live music and the crowd is a little more rowdy.

EXMOUTH MARKET, CLERKENWELL

During the week, about a dozen vendors set up shop on Exmouth Market, selling a wide range of lunch items for local workers. The street itself has some stellar restaurants, so the additional food stalls make your lunch decision even more challenging.

STREET FEAST, DALSTON YARD

The people behind Street Feast are fabulous curators of London street food, assembling the best vendors from around the city into their party every Friday and Saturday night from April through September, in a refurbished industrial warehouse space.

STREET FEAST, CANADA WATER

The fully indoor version of the Dalston Yard Street Feast, only even bigger! When winter hits, the Street Feast crew relocates to this location, jam packed with stalls, live music, and huge crowds of hungry Londoners every Friday and Saturday night.

BROCKLEY MARKET, BROCKLEY

This small Saturday market is a hidden gem for locals, with many fantastic street food vendors without the massive queues. In addition, there are a variety of produce, meat, and seafood stalls, all selling quality local products.

COLUMBIA ROAD FLOWER MARKET, TOWER HAMLETS

For something different, head east to the Columbia Road Flower Market, held every Sunday, when the street is taken over by flower vendors. The crowds are insane, and full of true, East London flair, with vendors yelling out deals, trying to outdo each other. For a break, the area is surrounded by cafes and restaurants, as well as few quality pubs like Royal Oak if you need a pint!



MUSEUMS

BRITISH LIBRARY, BLOOMSBURY

Our favorite little gem, the British Library is a functioning library, but head to its "Treasures" room for some amazing finds, like the Magna Carta, sheet music written by Beethoven, and the original hand-written manuscript of Alice in Wonderland.

BRITISH MUSEUM, BLOOMSBURY

One of the most visited museums in London, the interior atrium is worth checking out in and of itself. Top marks for the Egyptian and Greek exhibits. Free admission.

CHURCHILL WAR ROOMS

If you are going to pay to visit one museum (since so many are free!), then make it the Churchill War Rooms. The underground bunker from WWII, right near Big Ben, has been meticulously maintained. Anyone with even a passing interest in WWII will find it fascinating.

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM, ELEPHANT AND CASTLE

Any military enthusiast has to head south to explore the Imperial War Museum. The recently refurbished museum contains an incredible amount of artifacts, especially from WWI and WWII. Free admission.

TATE MODERN, SOUTHBANK

For any modern art lover, this is a must see. The former power station has been transformed into a beautiful museum, highlighting the best of modern art, and the permanent free exhibitions are fantastic.

TOWER OF LONDON, CITY OF LONDON

Arguably the most historically significant destination in London, we suggest going on a free tour with one of the Yeoman (or Beefeaters), who actually live in the Tower. Tickets are a bit pricey, around £18.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, KENSINGTON

This mammoth museum contains an ungodly number of items, from gold and silver, to sculptures and relics. We particularly like the hall filled with silver platters. Admission is free, but special exhibits are extra.

THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, TRAFALGAR SQUARE

For an in-depth look at the history of the English royal families, take a stroll through this free museum. It is organized chronologically and by ruling family. You can see how the crown has passed down, and just how many royal people were executed along the way.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, KENSINGTON

Who doesn't love a good natural history museum? The building alone is worth a visit, as it may be the most stunning museum in all of London. In the winter, an ice rink is constructed on the grounds, and the museum hosts many nighttime events, turning the museum into much, much more.

TATE BRITAIN, PIMLICO

If you want to dive into British art history, the Tate Britain is dedicated solely to British artists, from classical to modern. The beautiful building along the Thames is well curated and easy to navigate, and includes a large Turner exhibit.

ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM, COLINDALE

If you are a war buff or a lover of aviation, this museum, situated in far north London, has multiple hangers full of aircraft, from original machines from the beginning of the 20th century, all the way to modern times. We particularly enjoyed the British Airways 747 on display.



RESOURCES

ARTICLES FROM OUR BLOG TO HELP YOU GET THE BEST OF THE BEST OUT OF YOUR LONDON EXPERIENCE

London Holiday Festivities

The ATP World Tour Finals in London

Sunday Brunch in London

The Classic Car Boot Sale in London

Two Years in London: Part 1 and Part 2

7 Tricks To Score Tickets to an English Premier League Match

London Airport Guide

London Neighborhood Guide: King's Cross

London Neighborhood Guide: Chinatown

London Neighborhood Guide: Bethnal Green

Two Foodies Eat London for £40

Making My Own London Gin

Broadway Market, London

Classic London: Henley Royal Regatta

An Ode to the London Book Shop

Springtime at London's Markets

Classic London: Wimbledon

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