



City Guide

LONDON

QUINTESSENTIALLY

Welcome to London

Though the British like to present themselves as highly mannered, life in the capital can be harsh. As the writer Stephen Fry once put it, “the English language is like London: proudly barbaric yet deeply civilised, too; common yet royal, vulgar yet processional, sacred yet profane.”

The old rule that West London is the richer side of the city and the East End is the poorer still stands, though there are a few new neighbourhood exceptions. Tech firms in north-eastern spots such as King’s Cross and Hoxton have scrubbed up these once-gritty neighbourhoods; the under-25s reworked sleepy districts such as Dalston and Peckham into nightlife destinations, while areas such as South Kensington’s museum district are in rude health with the recent extension of Victoria & Albert Museum and the addition of the nearby Design Museum.



ACCOMMODATION

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FOUR SEASONS HOTEL LONDON AT PARK LANE

HAMILTON PLACE, PARK LANE, MAYFAIR W1J 7DR

When the French interior designer Pierre-Yves Rochon came to oversee this 11-storey, five-star hotel, he drew inspiration from the staterooms of luxury passenger ships, using classic English shades and furniture. Though the hotel opened in 2011, the Four Seasons' history goes back a little further at this address: the original Four Seasons Inn on the Park – the company's first European Hotel – opened on this site in 1970.

THE ZETTER TOWNHOUSE

49-50 ST. JOHN'S SQUARE, CLERKENWELL EC1V 4JJ

Feeling more like the private home of an eccentric relative than a conventional hostelry, this chic hotel, slightly to the east of the city centre, features 11 bedrooms, two suites and a spectacular rooftop apartment, which comes complete with a terrace and al fresco bathing.

THE CONNAUGHT

CARLOS PLACE, MAYFAIR W1K 2AL

Founded in 1815, The Connaught assumed its current title in 1917 from Queen Victoria's seventh child Arthur – who later became the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn – and has been drawing in admirers ever since. In 1970, the US designer Ralph Lauren was said to be so impressed by The Connaught's lobby staircase that he had a replica of it installed in his Madison Avenue store.

HAM YARD HOTEL

1 HAM YARD, SOHO W1D 7DT

This discreet, art-filled hotel on the south-western side of Soho has a tree-lined garden, 91 individually designed bedrooms and suites, 24 apartments, 13 independent stores and a restaurant and bar with outdoor dining, along with a basement bowling alley.

THE DORCHESTER

53 PARK LANE, MAYFAIR W1K 1QA

There's no denying this hotel's distinctive, traditional charm, nor its impressive views over Hyde Park. However, this luxury hotel, which opened in 1931, was known as one of the safest locations during the Second World War. General Dwight D. Eisenhower took a suite here in 1944, later making it his headquarters.

BVLGARI HOTEL LONDON

171 KNIGHTSBRIDGE SW7 1DW

The Italian jewellery and accessories brand branched out into hotels around the turn of this century and opened its first London property in 2012. The elegant, luxurious interiors are exactly what you would expect from a hotel within walking distance from Harrods. However, the hotel also prides itself on a high staff-to-guest ratio, meaning help, even for the smallest things, is always at hand.

THE RITZ

150 PICCADILLY, MAYFAIR W1J 9BR

This Grade-II listed, high-society hotel is beside Green Park, within easy reach of Buckingham Palace, and has several beautifully appointed restaurants, as well as an excellent casino. Don't be surprised if the interiors look familiar; scenes from the 1999 romantic comedy Notting Hill, and the final, 2015 episode of Downton Abbey were filmed here.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL HYDE PARK

66 KNIGHTSBRIDGE SW1X 7LA

The international luxury hotel group Mandarin Oriental has owned this Edwardian hotel, originally called the Hyde Park Hotel, since 1996. Sandwiched between the southern edge of Hyde Park and Harvey Nichols department store, the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park has 173 elegant rooms, 25 richly furnished suites and Dinner by Heston Blumenthal, a restaurant overseen by one of Britain's best-loved chefs.

THE SAVOY

STRAND, EMBANKMENT WC2R 0ET

Perfect for London's theatres, close to Parliament, and with views over the Thames, The Savoy has hosted Frank Sinatra, The Beatles, Marilyn Monroe and Winston Churchill. The hotel's drive, Savoy Court, is also the only street in Britain where cars are allowed to drive on the right.

CLARIDGE'S

BROOK STREET, MAYFAIR W1K 4HR

London's oldest and most highly respected hotel has hosted everyone from Queen Victoria to Mick Jagger. Legend has it that in 1945, Winston Churchill had Suite 212 declared Yugoslavian territory, enabling Crown Prince Alexander II to be born on sovereign ground.

Q U I N T E S S E N T I A L L Y



RESTAURANTS

QUINTESSENTIALLY

COYA

118 PICCADILLY, MAYFAIR W1J 7NW

A modern Peruvian restaurant, Coya blends traditional and contemporary flavours from its three kitchens and an open charcoal grill. Reflecting the vibrant menu, the restaurant is decked out in colourful furnishings with bright murals adorning the walls, while the sultry pisco bar showcases an eclectic cocktail list with low lighting and rich tones.

PARK CHINOIS

17 BERKELEY STREET, MAYFAIR W1J 8EA

Expect to be taken on an opulent, theatrical journey, with dishes to engage your senses and emotions at London's best dim sum and Chinese restaurant. The cuisine is not defined by a specific region and can be enjoyed across both floors.

THE IVY CHELSEA GARDEN

195-197 KING'S ROAD, CHELSEA SW3 5EQ

A casual British restaurant with an extensive all-day menu by Executive Chef Sean Burbidge, and an aura of approachable sophistication and luxury. Make sure you take a look at the restaurant's extensive garden, complete with a terrace and orangery.

NOVIKOV RESTAURANT & BAR

50A BERKELEY STREET, MAYFAIR W1J 8HA

A real feature of the Asian restaurant is its open kitchen. Fronted by an amazing display of seafood and vegetables, it evokes the atmosphere of an Asian food market. Novikov specialises in Chinese and Pan Asian cuisine, with a menu designed by Japanese-trained Head Chef Luca Malacarne.

SEXY FISH

BERKELEY SQUARE HOUSE, BERKELEY SQUARE, MAYFAIR W1J 6BR

This Asian restaurant and bar on the corner of Berkeley Square in Mayfair serves Japanese-inspired sushi, sashimi, seafood, fish and robata-grilled meat, and is decorated with artworks by Damien Hirst, Frank Gehry and Michael Roberts. The bar, which is open until late, holds one of the world's biggest Japanese whisky collections.

NOBU LONDON BERKELEY ST

15 BERKELEY STREET, MAYFAIR W1J 8DY

Nobu Berkeley attracts a loyal crowd of well-heeled diners in pursuit of Nobu Matsuhisa's innovative Japanese specialties. Creating a menu with all of Nobu's signature flair, Matsuhisa and Executive Chef Mark Edwards offer a dependable yet impeccable variety of dishes.

CHILTERN FIREHOUSE

1 CHILTERN STREET, MARYLEBONE W1U 7PA

Michelin-starred chef Nuno Mendes draws on a career split between the United States and Europe, to create a changing menu of reimagined classics and bold new flavours, with an emphasis on seasonality and healthy eating.

ZUMA

5 RAPHAEL STREET, KNIGHTSBRIDGE SW7 1DL

The venue may be chic, and the décor opulent, but Zuma's true success lies in its contemporary Japanese food, featuring high-class ingredients that haven't been overly fussed over. This is one place our specialists are happy to go back to time and again.

MNKY HSE

10 DOVER STREET, MAYFAIR W1S 4LQ

Michelin-trained Mexican Executive Head Chef Pablo Peñalosa Najera (of Restaurante Martín Berasategui and El Celler de Can Roca) revisits his roots, combining colourful Latin American cuisine with seasonal ingredients, to create a diverse, distinctive and flavoursome menu. In keeping with the MNKY HSE ethos of 'eat, drink and play', Pablo's experimental dishes are destined to surprise and delight.

HAKKASAN MAYFAIR

17 BRUTON STREET, MAYFAIR W1J 6QB

Awarded a Michelin star just one year after opening, Hakkasan Mayfair's glamorous dining room combines Chinese history, tradition and architecture. This restaurant offers authentic Cantonese cooking with contemporary flair.



NIGHTLIFE

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RADIO ROOFTOP

336-337 STRAND, EMBANKMENT WC2R 1HA

Radio Rooftop is a bar situated on the 10th floor of the ME London hotel, with striking views across the River Thames and London's skyline. This stunning bar is the perfect place to sip champagne, celebrate with friends over a signature cocktail or two, and take in the views.

CIRQUE LE SOIR

15-21 GANTON STREET, SOHO W1F 9BN

Having won Best London Club Night in the London Club and Bar Awards in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2015, Cirque Le Soir continues to deliver some of London's most exciting parties. Expect a fantastic nightclub experience, with a stunning mix of fire eaters, aerial, burlesque and circus acts.

CLARIDGE'S BAR

BROOK STREET, MAYFAIR W1K 4HR

From the finest vintage champagnes to the most sought-after spirits and wines, Claridge's Bar serves an impeccable selection of rare and exceptional drinks. The staff is also highly knowledgeable and the interior, overseen by acclaimed architect David Collins, is equally impressive.

SWIFT

12 OLD COMPTON STREET, SOHO W1D 4TQ

Taking inspiration from the European style of bar where a quick drink marks the end of the day or the beginning of the night, Swift sits somewhere between being a local pub and a reservation-only bar, and now very much represents part of the new cultural hub in the centre of Soho.

MR FOGG'S RESIDENCE

15 BRUTON LANE, MAYFAIR W1J 6JD

This Mayfair townhouse is decorated to represent the abode of the fictional Victorian traveller Phileas J. Fogg Esq, housing all the weird and wonderful artefacts of the period that he collected from his around-the-world trip. Mr Fogg's faithful butler, Jean Passepartout, is on hand to take coats, keep all house guests entertained and to serve the adventurer's favourite drinks from Suez to Yokohama.

THE NAPOLEON

9 CHRISTOPHER STREET, HACKNEY EC2A 2BS

This, the world's smallest boutique hotel, has just one room, though it is served from all three of The Napoleon's bars, each offering its own specialty. There's the Devil's Darling, an Italian-style cocktail bar, with an achingly beautiful green marble bar, Sack, a sherry bar modelled on the taverns of southern Spain, and Black Rock, a subterranean whisky bar.

ARTESIAN BAR AT THE LANGHAM

1C PORTLAND PLACE, MARYLEBONE W1B 1JA

Voted 'World's Best Bar' for several consecutive years by Drinks International, Artesian is a glamorous hotel bar located within The Langham, London. Having taken the title away from an amazing New York speakeasy, the interior is beautiful, and the cocktails will without doubt impress you and your companions.

WAESKA BAR AT THE MANDRAKE

20-21 NEWMAN STREET, FITZROVIA W1T 1PG

Waeska (it means 'confident' in Arabic) is a decadent new cocktail lounge at the avant-garde Mandrake Hotel. Showcasing the opulent and exotic, the glittering marble bar is topped off with a crazy, chimeric, taxidermied creation. Put together from bits of a gazelle and a peacock. Look out for the beast, before taking in the bar's mystical courtyard with hanging gardens of jasmine and passion flower.

THE BOX

11-12 WALKER'S COURT, SOHO W1F 0SD

A night at The Box, one of London's most sought-after high-end, clubs, promises to be a night to remember and booking a table is advised. The cabaret show starts at midnight, from Wednesday through to Saturday, with acts ranging from impressive fire stunts to burlesque shows.

TAPE LONDON

17 HANOVER SQUARE, MAYFAIR W1S 1HU

With an eclectic DJ offering, a star-studded clientele and all-out frivolity, Tape London is one of the most exclusive spots to go partying in the city. Expect to rub shoulders with a beautiful A-list crowd. Fridays at Tape are all about recognised DJs while Saturdays deliver a varied playlist and surprise special guests.



RETAIL

QUINTESENTIALLY

LIBERTY

REGENT STREET, SOHO W1B 5AH

Though this department store stocks the latest prêt-à-porter collections, as well as flowers, food, homeware and cosmetics, Liberty is still known for selling beautiful, Art Nouveau-style printed cloth, not dissimilar in design to the fabrics it once sold to London's 19th century, Pre-Raphaelite artists.

DOVER STREET MARKET

18-22 HAYMARKET, MAYFAIR SW1Y 4DG

Founded by real-life couple Rei Kawakubo and Adrian Joffe, the duo behind the label Comme des Garçons, Dover Street Market is one of London's coolest multi-brand retailer. If you do happen to visit, make sure you take in the excellent Rose's Bakery on the top floor, run by Joffe's sister, Rose Carrarini.

HARRODS

87-135 BROMPTON ROAD, KNIGHTSBRIDGE SW1X 7XL

Harrods' Art Deco Food Halls are among the most lavish in the world, and a must-see for first-time visitors. The rest of the shop isn't far behind, with its new Qatari owners ensuring that this, considered London's best-known shopping destination, remains an enthralling and relevant place to indulge oneself.

CHRISTIE'S

8 KING STREET, ST. JAMES'S SW1Y 6QT

This, the world's oldest fine-art auctioneer, also deals in a large quantity of furniture, wine, watches, ceramics, rugs, and other upscale items. Though Christie's made headlines in 2018 selling the world's most valuable painting, some lots can be surprisingly affordable.

SELFRIDGES

400 OXFORD STREET, MAYFAIR W1A 1AB

This monumental fashion store carries lines by almost every clothes designer you could possibly desire, from emerging figures to established names. Its new accessories hall, and collaborations with such prominent figures including Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, has helped it prosper.

PORTOBELLO ROAD ANTIQUES

PORTOBELLO ROAD, NOTTING HILL W11

While there are market stalls along this street in West London most days of the week, Saturday is the best for antiques, bric-à-brac and vintage items. It's hard to assess the provenance of some supposedly 'antique' items, but it's always fun for a browse.

FORTNUM & MASON

181 PICCADILLY, MAYFAIR W1A 1ER

From its origins as a grocer and tea merchant servicing the requirements of Mayfair residents, Fortnum & Mason now sells luxurious hampers, alongside the best in food, tea, coffee, and wine to customers all over the world.

SOTHEBY'S

34-35 NEW BOND STREET, MAYFAIR W1A 2AA

Christie's great rival, Sotheby's, also has a reputation for multi-million-pound art sales, though it too deals in a wide variety of goods, from cars to jewellery, and, while the high numbers still make the headlines, there are good-value buys to be had here too.

DE BEERS

50 OLD BOND STREET, MAYFAIR W1S 4QT

As one of the most recognised firms in the diamond trade, De Beers' flagship store is the place to go for the very best gems in the capital. The staff is remarkably knowledgeable, and gems provenance couldn't be clearer.

BONHAMS

101 NEW BOND STREET, MAYFAIR W1S 1SR

Though this auction house doesn't quite manage to pull in the same fine artworks as its better-known adversaries, Bonhams host excellent art and antiques sales, as well as auctions dedicated to rare books, whiskies, watches, and more.



CULTURE

QUINTESSENTIALLY

THE NATIONAL GALLERY

TRAFALGAR SQUARE, ST JAMES'S WC2N 5DN

Britain's leading art institution and most visited museum displays important Western works of art, dating from the Medieval period, right up to the early 20th century. Its Trafalgar Square entrance can be crowded, though it's really worth braving, given the quality of works on show.

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

CROMWELL ROAD, SOUTH KENSINGTON SW7 2RL

This, perhaps the world's leading decorative arts institution, completed a successful extension in 2017, opening up even more display space to house its incredible collection of ceramics, metalwork, fabric, prints, sculpture, photographs and much more besides.

THE DESIGN MUSEUM

224-238 KENSINGTON HIGH STREET, KENSINGTON W8 6AG

Phones, computers, cars, hairdryers and thousands of other consumer durables are elevated to the status of important design objects in this exquisitely appointed new home for Britain's Design Museum. The building, refurbished by British architect John Pawson, is worth the trip alone.

TATE BRITAIN

MILLBANK, WESTMINSTER SW1P 4RG

Dedicated to British art from around 1500 up until the present day, Tate Britain is the place to go to familiarise yourself with everyone from William Blake to the Young British Artists. Hosting both free and ticketed exhibitions, Tate Britain suits a brief visit or a longer, dedicated trip.

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS' GALLERY

16-18 RAMILLIES STREET, SOHO W1F 7LW

Britain's leading photographic institution, The Photographers' Gallery stages shows of classic and contemporary photography, with a slight preference for the more arty end of the medium. There's also a good shop, specialising in photo books, cameras and prints.

HAUSER & WIRTH

23 SAVILE ROW, MAYFAIR W1S 2ET

Savile Row might be known for men's tailoring, yet Hauser & Wirth's beautifully presented galleries have helped make it a great contemporary art spot, with critically acclaimed shows from Paul McCarthy, Pierre Huyghe, Roni Horn and many others.

TATE MODERN

53 BANKSIDE, SOUTHWARK SE1 9TG

This enormous, recently extended contemporary art museum may attract the tourists, yet it also hosts some of the world's greatest exhibitions. If you haven't got time to engage with any of the ticketed shows, do try to take in open entry rooms, which are well-organised, informative and filled with go-to exhibits.

DAVID ZWIRNER

24 GRAFTON STREET, MAYFAIR W1S 4EU

This grand Georgian town house has hosted shows by such artists as Luc Tuymans, Kerry James Marshall, Bridget Riley and Raymond Pettibon, among others. Over the past 25 years, Zwirner has gained a reputation for excellence in the contemporary art world.

GAGOSIAN

20 GROSVENOR HILL, MAYFAIR W1K 3QD

Though Gagosian, the world's dominant commercial art gallery, has three spaces in the British capital, this one allows you to really appreciate the work on display with great light and space to complement its powerful shows.

VICTORIA MIRO

16 WHARF ROAD, HOXTON N1 7RW

This prominent British gallerist does have a space in Mayfair, but its far larger property, between King's Cross and Old Street, stages bigger and more interesting shows. Look out for works from Yayoi Kusama, Chris Ofili and Elmgreen & Dragset here.



WELLNESS

QUINTESSENTIALLY

ESPA LIFE AT CORINTHIA HOTEL LONDON

WHITEHALL PLACE, WESTMINSTER SW1A 2BD

Westminster ESPA Life offers a fully integrated approach to wellbeing, bringing together a team of the world's top experts to offer a choice of complementary therapies, fitness, and beauty treatments. Spread over four floors, the spa features 17 treatment rooms, a nail studio, indoor swimming pool, amphitheatre sauna, marble heated loungers and private sleep pods.

BAMFORD HAYBARN BROMPTON CROSS

104 DRAYCOTT AVENUE, LONDON SW3 3AE

Designed as an urban sanctuary, Bamford Haybarn Brompton Cross brings the calm of the Cotswolds to the big city. As the first standalone Haybarn Spa, this location is everything you would hope for from the Daylesford family and its founder, Carole Bamford. Expect holistic rituals including the Detoxify Massage, as well as classes in meditation, sound healing and Pilates. Almost as delicious as Bamford's all-natural, skincare products are the sumptuously soft cashmere garments on display in the shop adjoining the spa.

BODYISM

222-224 WESTBOURNE GROVE, PADDINGTON W11 2RH

Founded by celebrity trainer James Duigan, this health and wellness club is staffed by world experts in bodyweight training, TRX, functional training, yoga, fascial stretching, ballet and Pilates, helping its clients improve both their mental and physical attributes.

THE ELIXIR CLINIC

3RD FLOOR, 75 WIMPOLE STREET, MARYLEBONE W1G 9RS

This specialist health company specialises in intravenous therapy to help its clients feel thoroughly rejuvenated as swiftly as possible. The clinic offers a VIP Re-vitality Package for two people, which includes tailored vitadrip IV laser therapy, oligoscan (mineral tissue Analysis) and a COMCIT facial, as well as other services.

BXR

20 MANCHESTER SQUARE, MARYLEBONE W1U 3PZ

World Heavyweight Champion Anthony Joshua's gym is more gentlemen's club than old slugger's ring. Ex-professionals train BXR's clientele, who can also team up with world-leading strength and conditioning instructors, and first-rate sports therapists to enhance all areas of athletic performance.

Essential Information

Local Office

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+44

Emergency

999

Official Language

English

Currency

Pound Sterling (£, GBP)

Time

CET / UTC +1 starting from last Sunday of March
UTC -2 starting from last Sunday of October

Electricity

The standard electrical voltage in London is 230 volts AC, 50HZ. The majority of electrical equipment takes a three-pin plug.