

Lauren
PLUS 03



51.5072° N, 0.1276° W

LONDON, ENGLAND

London is one of my favorite cities in the world and will likely steal your heart too. I've lost count of the times we've flown over the pond but I'm upwards of 10! December is my absolute favorite, Christmas markets everywhere, lights and trees have taken over the city, its an absolute amazing place to spend the holidays! I was in awe... and that's hard to do! It is also fairly easy to navigate with its robust transportation system. So, when visiting London with kids, it is easy to get around using an Oyster card on the London tube or bus system. However, if you have any more than three days in the city, take the opportunity to get out of London and see more of the United Kingdom.



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ON TOP OF THE SKY IN THE LONDON EYE

LONDON, ENGLAND

CHANGING OF THE GUARDS

Changing the Guard is one of the oldest and most familiar ceremonies associated with Buckingham Palace

During the ceremony, the New Guard takes over the formal duty of protecting The Queen from the Old Guard. The guards wear their full dress uniform of red tunics and black bearskin caps and music is played by a Regimental band

There is so much fascinating history with the changing the guard ceremony. Everyone enjoys catching a glimpse of the “guards that don’t smile” and listening to the fun music as they march along quickly. We marched alongside them (on the other side of the barricade, of course!) but the kids got to see them up close! We ran, literally, to catch a piece of each part of the ceremony

The official Changing the Guard APP has been designed by The Royal Collection to enhance the experience of watching this traditional military ceremony. We didn’t discover this until the following day but would have definitely used it!

What we did: We ended up joining a small tour, booked through Viator, and it was well worth it! Considering the age of the kids (5,5,7) and the fact I was exhausted, it helped me out a little not having to figure it all out! Would I recommend using a small guide? I wouldn’t personally do it again, it’s total feasible on your own!

WHERE WE STAY

Dilly at Piccaddilly (formerly Le Meridian at Piccaddilly) - Stay in the heart of the action in Central London, next to everything you want to see and do! The rooms are a little “dated” but spacious and comfortable and with a big family this is key!

London Hyatt Riverside - next to London Eye but not my favorite location



OUR FAVORITE THINGS TO SEE AND DO

- London Eye
- Afternoon Tea
- Hop-On Hop-Off Bus Tour
- Big Bend
- Piccadilly Circus
- Tower Bridge (details below)
- Relax at Hyde Park
- Hyde Park British Summer Festival
- Kensington Palace
- Princess Diana Memorial Playground/ Kensington Gardens
- Greenwich Market
- Reagent Street
- Carnaby - SOHO
- Buckingham Palace
- Changing of the Guards
- Incredible free museums (British Museum, Natural History Museum, Science Museum and Victoria and Albert Museum)
- Day Trips: Bath, Windsor Castle & Stonehenge; Paris by Eurostar, Harry Potter Warner Bros Studio

TOWER BRIDGE

Tower Bridge is undoubtedly a symbol of London. The suspension bridge crosses the River Thames, connecting two central London boroughs. See inside Tower Bridge the views from the walkways, dare yourself to walk across the spectacular glass floors and marvel at the feat of victorian engineering inside our Engine Rooms. The inside is just as marvelous as the outside! Don't miss it!

Here how we saw it with no tour:

1. Begins by climbing the North Tower.
2. Then head along East Walkway and West Walkway, crossing the iconic Glass Floor.
3. Descend down the South Tower to road level.
4. Then follow the blue line commemorating the workers of Tower Bridge.
5. Victorian Engine Rooms and gift shop.

LIVE. LOVE. LONDON.

LONDON, ENGLAND

WELCOME TO GREENWICH

Fancy a Thursday morning stroll? Utterly hip and charmingly artsy, Greenwich Market is home to stacks of books and vinyl records, vintage fashions and a tempting array of foods, all with a charming small town atmosphere.

The historic neighborhood of Greenwich is a must-visit for travelers. Take your time and explore The National Maritime Museum, The Royal Observatory at beautiful Greenwich Park and the recently reopened Cutty Sark clipper ship.

Stand on the historic Prime Meridian of the World #PrimeMeridian

Getting to Greenwich Market: we opted to take the boat from the London eye which was about 30-40 minutes. Nice commentary plus easy and fun for the kids!

AFTERNOON TEA

One of the quintessential experiences in London is Afternoon Tea. If you are visiting London, having a tea party is part of the fun. Afternoon Tea is a welcome break from sightseeing and we always make it part of our itinerary!

The Original Sweetshop Afternoon Tea at The Chesterfield Mayfair is a sweet tooth's delight! A playful, imaginative twist on a classic British tradition. The adult version is just as delightful. Enjoy nibbling on dainty freshly made finger sandwiches and homemade sconces! Before you leave, The Chesterfield's very own red and white-striped candy man offers a final treat in the form of a take away pick and mix. Choose your favorites from a sweet shop cart!

Charlies and The Chocolate Factory at One Aldwych was our pick in 2022. In the heart of London's theatre district, feast on scrumptious savories then journey on to fabulously fluffy floss and a box stacked high with wondrous cakes, sweets, mallowes and creams – all washed down with chocolate or lemon sherbet tea, water pistol punch cocktails, or fizzy lifting Champagne.

Other Favorites: Mad Hatters Afternoon Tea at Sanderson London Hotel and Peter Rabbit Afternoon Tea at The Dilly

KENSINGTON GARDENS

CRADLE WALK

An arched arbor of red-twigged lime, the walk surrounds the Sunken Garden with arched viewpoints equally spaced along the sides.

In the summer, this shady tunnel provides the perfect place to view the bright colors in the Sunken Garden to the north or the re-landscaped gardens to the south.

Some people will remember the colloquial name 'Nanny Walk' as this beautiful spot was a favorite meeting point for the many nannies in Kensington.

HYDE PARK IN SUMMER

Hyde Park's British Summer Time Festival isn't just two weekends of performances from world class music superstars. During the week the event site remains open Hyde Parks Open House, when the site comes alive with an amazing array of free entertainment such as an outdoor cinema, a children's theatre, live music, trapeze workshops, horticultural shows and many more educational activities!

I watched Wimbledon on the big screens while the kids created a flowery artwork using Hapa Zome, a Japanese method of flower pressing. The giant swing was a favorite, a 4 times favorite, actually! We made fun videos and photos with movie star props and motorcycles. A perfect day of free fun!

Insider tip: "OPEN HOUSE" and free entry and activities is only available for a select few days. Be sure to check the website for details!



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