

# WELCOME TO LONDON

SPRING 2010

**LONDON**  
DEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY

**MAYOR OF LONDON**



**Transport  
for London**

**VISIT  
LONDON**

[VISITLONDON.COM](http://VISITLONDON.COM)

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Welcome to London, the world's most exciting city! This booklet has been designed to help you get started in London with some useful tips to help you make the most of your trip and practical advice on getting around town. For more in-depth information look out for other free guides while you are here including London Planner and the Visit London City Guide, available in Tourist Information Centres and at branches of Thomas Cook around town. Or check out the many other specialist guides to London that you will find in bookshops across the capital.

London is packed with events, festivals, activities, exhibitions and entertainment - for inspiration online and the latest tips, including information on bars, restaurants, shops, attractions and more, go to London's official website [visitlondon.com](http://visitlondon.com)

Visitor information is also available by calling **0870 1 566 366** (in the UK).

To find out more about our Tourist Information Centres, see the following pages.

# 1 Visitor Information

## Tourist & Travel Information Centres

We know that face-to-face contact is always valued, especially when you are in a new city, so you will find a welcoming face, inspiring ideas, and tickets to many attractions at Tourist & Travel Information Centres in key locations around Central and Greater London. See [visitlondon.com/welcome](http://visitlondon.com/welcome) for more details.

## London Tourist Information Centres

### Britain & London Visitor Centre

1 Regent Street, London SW1Y 4XT  
⊖ Piccadilly Circus Exit 3  
Open: Mon 09.30-18.30 (18.00 Oct-Mar)  
Tues-Fri 09.00-18.30 (18.00 Oct-Mar)  
Sat, Sun & Bank Holidays  
10.00-16.00

### Bexley Hall Place TIC

Bourne Road, Bexley  
Kent DA5 1PQ  
⊖ Bexley  
Open: Mon-Sat 10.00-16.15  
Sun 11.00-16.15

### City of London TIC

St Paul's Churchyard,  
London EC4M 8BX  
⊖ St. Paul's/Mansion House  
Open: Mon-Sat 09.30-17.30  
Sun 10.00-16.00

### Greenwich TIC

46 Greenwich Church Street,  
Greenwich SE10 9BL  
DLR Cutty Sark  
⊖ Greenwich  
Open: Daily 10.00-17.00

### Harrow TIC

Gayton Library, Garden House,  
5 St. John's Road, Harrow HA1 2EE  
⊖ ⊕ Harrow-on-the-Hill  
Open: Mon-Sat 09.00-17.00  
Sun closed

### Holborn Visitor Information Kiosk

Kingsway, London WC2B 6BG  
⊖ Holborn  
Open: Mon-Fri 08.00-18.00  
Sat & Sun closed

### Kingston TIC

Market Place,  
Kingston-upon-Thames KT1 1JS  
⊖ Kingston  
Open: Mon-Sat 10.00-17.00  
Sun closed

Britain & London Visitor Centre



### Lewisham TIC

Lewisham Library,  
199-201 Lewisham High Street,  
SE13 6LG

⇌ **DLR** Lewisham

Open: Mon 10.00-17.00  
Tues-Sat 09.00-17.00  
Sun closed

### Richmond TIC

Old Town Hall, Whittaker Avenue,  
Richmond TW9 1TP

⇌ **Richmond**

Open: Mon-Sat 10.00-17.00  
Sun closed

### Swanley TIC

Swanley Library & Information Centre,  
London Road, Swanley BR8 7AE

⇌ **Swanley**

Open: Mon-Thurs 09.30-17.30  
Fri 09.30-18.00, Sat 09.00-16.00  
Sun closed

### Twickenham TIC

Civic Centre, 44 York Street,  
Twickenham TW1 3BZ

⇌ **Twickenham**

Open: Mon-Thurs 09.00-17.15  
Fri 09.00-17.00  
Sat & Sun closed

## Travel Information Centres

⇌ **Euston Railway Station**

Opposite platform 8  
Open: Mon-Fri 07.15-21.15  
Sat 07.15-18.15  
Sun & Bank Holidays  
08.15-18.15

⇌ **Heathrow Airport**

Heathrow Terminals 1,2,3 Tube Station  
Open: Daily 07.15-21.00



London Info-Bikes

⇌ **Liverpool Street Tube Station**

Open: Mon-Sat 07.15-21.15  
Sun & Bank Holidays 08.15-20.15

⇌ **Piccadilly Circus Tube Station**

Open: Mon-Sat 07.15-21.15  
Sun & Bank Holidays  
08.15-20.00

⇌ **Victoria Railway Station**

Opposite platform 8  
Open: Mon-Sat 07.15-21.15  
Sun & Bank Holidays  
08.15-20.15

## InfoBikes

Each summer, look out for the instantly recognisable **InfoBikes** on the south side of the river every weekend from 10.00–16.00, all summer long until the end of September. Ready to give you advice, what's on information, maps and leaflets, the friendly and helpful InfoBike teams can be found near the National Theatre, London Eye, Tate Modern and Tower Bridge.

## London Ambassadors

Over 300 London Ambassadors are now on the streets of London providing you with on-the-spot information to help you get the most from your visit. London Ambassadors can be found on the streets around key destinations and attractions, and at Heathrow Terminal 5. You'll identify them by their badge with an 'i' sign and the Visit London logo (see below) and of course by their welcoming smile!



London Ambassador

# 2 Useful Tips

## Quality Assurance & Star Ratings

A quality rating is a sign that an establishment has been checked to a minimum standard and assessed to agreed criteria on all quality aspects. While the Quality Assurance Scheme is not compulsory, the rating is a sign of quality and is designed to give you confidence in the accommodation you book. VisitEngland and the AA's star ratings are the official signs of quality for accommodation. These are awarded following annual assessments by trained, impartial assessors. Annual visits are made to give up-to-date assurance of what to expect. All participating establishments are awarded between one and five stars. The more stars, the higher the quality and range of services and facilities provided.

### Look out for the stars:

- ★ Simple, practical, no-frills accommodation
- ★★ Well-presented and well-run
- ★★★ Good level of quality and comfort
- ★★★★ Excellent standard throughout
- ★★★★★ Exceptional, with a degree of luxury

VisitEngland recognises the top scoring properties at all star ratings by awarding Silver and Gold Awards. These are for B&Bs, hotels, self-catering accommodation and serviced apartments that are the 'best of the best'.

## Travellers with Access Needs

Access for disabled visitors in London has greatly improved in recent years. Buses are a highly accessible way to travel; all of London's 8,000 buses

(except heritage Routemasters) are low-floor, wheelchair accessible vehicles. For maps showing step free routes around the city, and information on accessible Tube stations and black cabs, go to [visitlondon.com/access](http://visitlondon.com/access). There are also details of over 200 hotels with accessible facilities. Look out for the new 'Open London' guidebook at TICs and bookshops.

## Visit London Approved Scheme

Visit London has recently introduced a new quality assurance marque for accommodation called 'Visit London Approved'. Accommodation displaying this marque meets all regulatory requirements and offers an acceptable level of guest services.



## Green Tourism for London scheme

Green Tourism for London is London's official green accreditation scheme for hotels and attractions. If you want to make your trip to London an eco-friendly one, look out for the Green Tourism for London logo when booking your accommodation and choosing attractions to visit. See [visitlondon.com/green](http://visitlondon.com/green) for a full list of hotels and attractions which have achieved the award, and a host of other tips on how make your trip to London environmentally friendly, from organic London restaurants to ethical shopping.





## Money

The unit of currency in Britain is the pound sterling (£), and all London areas are served by ATMs, which accept Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus or Maestro cards. If you have travellers cheques, these can be exchanged at banks, bureaux de change, hotels and post offices; there are a wide range across town.

### Thomas Cook is Visit London's Official Foreign Exchange Partner

You can exchange travellers cheques or foreign currency at their centrally located bureaux around London. Thomas Cook offer 0% commission on more than 80 currencies, go to [visitlondon.com/thomascook](http://visitlondon.com/thomascook) for offers and savings.

## Lost Property

Lost property left on public transport, including taxis, is dealt with at the Transport for London (TfL) Lost Property office at 200 Baker Street.

+44 (0)845 330 9882

## Opening Hours

Shops are generally open Mondays to Saturdays, from 10.00-18.00, although some central stores stay open until 20.00-21.00 and later still on Thursdays. On Sundays many shops open from midday to 16.00. Visitor attractions and museums typically open daily from 10.00-18.00, although most close for a couple of days during the Christmas holidays.

## Tipping

If you've received good service, whether in a restaurant, café or hotel, it is quite normal to leave a tip of 10 per cent of the total bill.

### GOING GREEN

The most environmentally friendly way of getting around the city is on foot or by bike. Walking is one of the best ways of getting a feel for the city and most major landmarks are within easy reach of each other. It's also a great idea to offset the carbon emissions generated by any flights here. For walking and cycling tours and more tips on how to be a green traveller, check out [visitlondon.com/green](http://visitlondon.com/green) Also be sure to recycle this guide, either literally or by passing it on to another traveller for their trip.

## Maps

A wide variety of maps are available from TICs and all bookstores. Collins offer a comprehensive range of city maps to help you navigate your way around the city, see [visitlondon.com/maps](http://visitlondon.com/maps) or try out the interactive maps online at [visitlondon.com/explorer](http://visitlondon.com/explorer)

### LOCAL TIP

"London has more parks and green space than most major capital cities - great for relaxing away from the busy streets"  
*Hannah, from Notting Hill*  
[visitlondon.com/outdoors](http://visitlondon.com/outdoors)

## Post and Email

Stamps can be bought at Post Offices or newsagents. Postcards to Europe and the rest of the world cost 56p. Many hotels have internet access and there are internet cafés throughout the city.

## Left Luggage

It is possible to store luggage at a number of London's main railway stations and Victoria Coach Station. Bags may be inspected for security reasons see [visitlondon.com/baggage](http://visitlondon.com/baggage)



Legible London sign

## Walk this Way

Need a map to help you find your way? While you're exploring the areas around Bond Street, the South Bank, Bloomsbury, Holborn, Richmond and Twickenham, keep an eye out for new Legible London signs. They're designed just for pedestrians and feature maps to help you plan your journey, and reassure you that you're still on the right track. You'll be amazed at how easy it is to walk between many London landmarks!

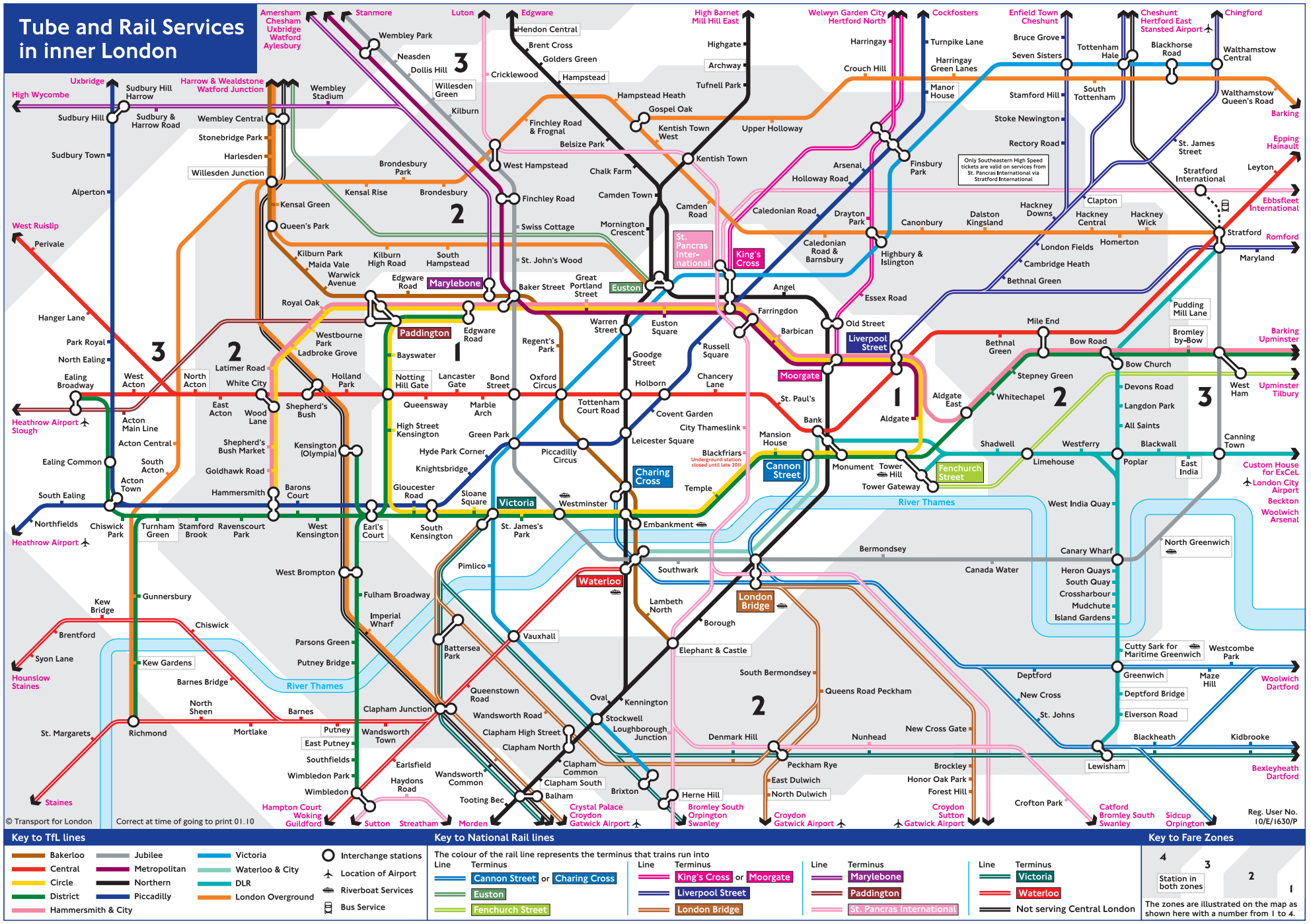
Regent's Park



## Embassies and Consulates

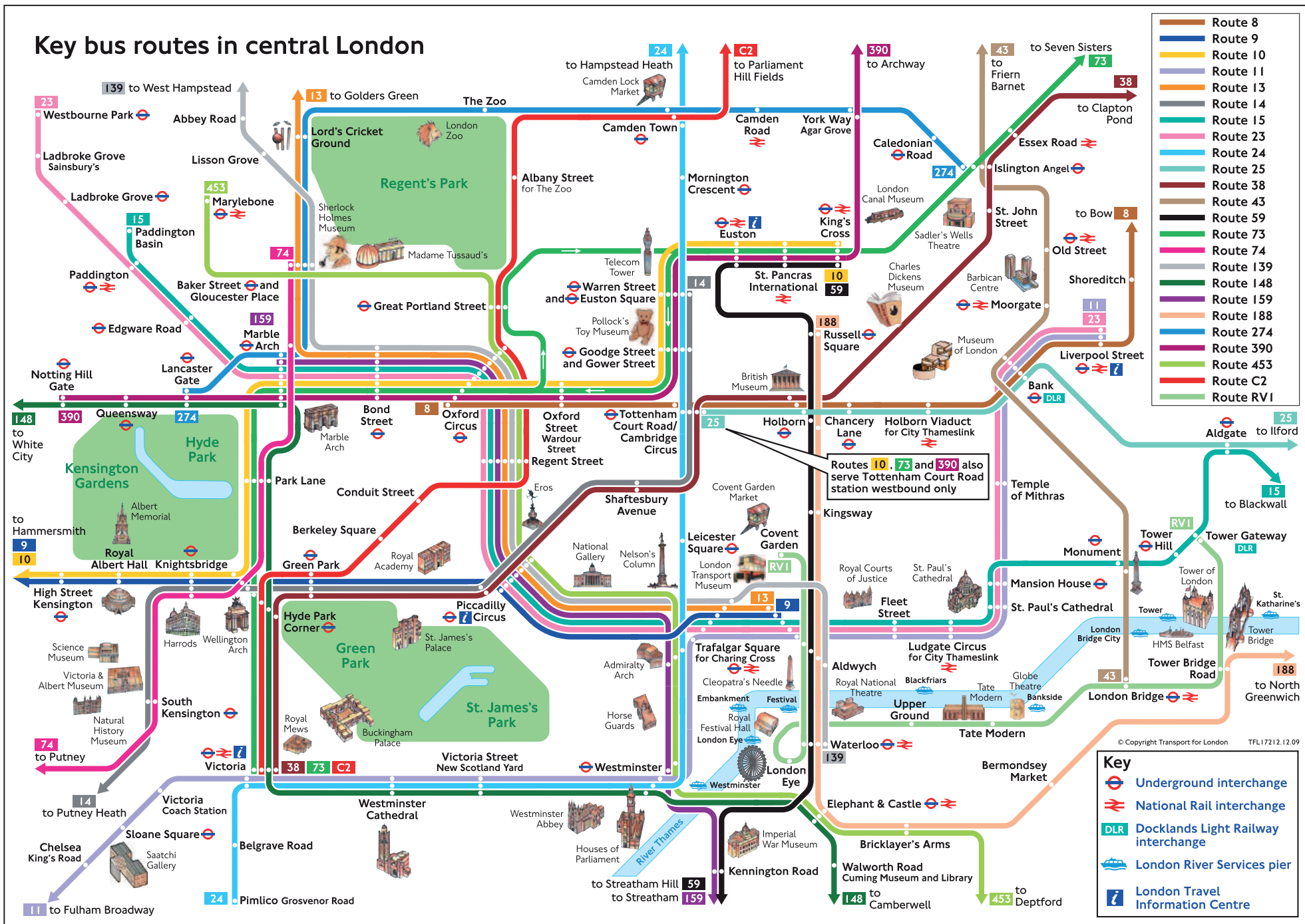
<b>Australia</b> T: +44 (0)20 7379 4334	<b>India</b> T: +44 (0)20 7836 8484
<b>Belgium</b> T: +44 (0)20 7470 3700	<b>Ireland</b> T: +44 (0)20 7235 2171
<b>Canada</b> T: +44 (0)20 7258 6600	<b>New Zealand</b> T: +44 (0)20 7930 8422
<b>China</b> T: +44 (0)20 7299 4049	<b>South Africa</b> T: +44 (0)20 7451 7299
<b>France</b> T: +44 (0)20 7073 1000	<b>Spain</b> T: +44 (0)20 7589 8989
<b>Germany</b> T: +44 (0)20 7824 1300	<b>USA</b> T: +44 (0)20 7499 9000

# 3 Tube and Rail Map



# 4 Bus Routes

## Key bus routes in central London





## Toilets

Public toilets are provided at coach and mainline rail stations. Most charge 30p, and there are facilities for people with disabilities and for those with babies. 'Superloos' are also available across London.

## Public Holidays

You can expect to find most businesses closed on these public holidays, but many shops, bars and restaurants will remain open as usual or operate to their Sunday hours:

### 2010

1 January  
2 April  
5 April  
3 May  
31 May  
30 August

## Telephones

+44 is the international dialling code for the UK. Public telephones take coins, telephone cards (available in newsagents, post offices and bureaux de change) or credit cards. The minimum cost for a call is 40p. The operator is on 100 (calls within UK and Eire) or 155 (calls abroad or to a ship).

## Drinking Age Restrictions

The legal age for buying alcohol in the UK is 18 years old, although some bars and restaurants will only serve customers over the age of 21. If you are lucky enough to look under 21 it is a good idea to carry some identification with you.

## Smoking

Smoking is banned in all enclosed public places, including public transport, restaurants, bars and clubs.

## Emergency Services

999 or 112 (24 hours) for ambulance, fire or police services.

## Medical Help

### NHS Direct

T: 0845 4647

(24-hour advice within UK)

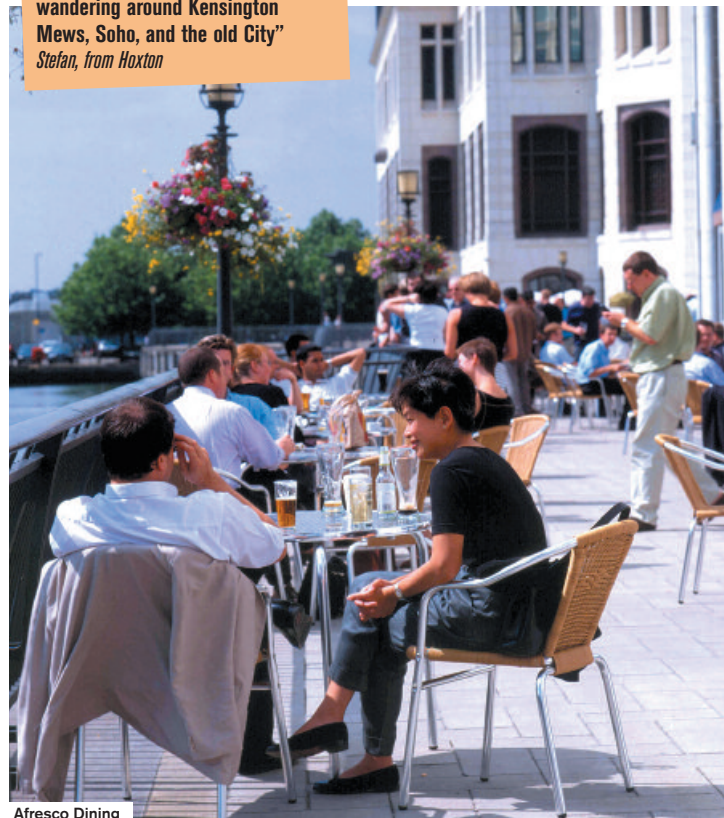
[nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

Ambulance ☎ 999

For minor ailments, pharmacists can dispense certain drugs. The largest chain is Boots, see [boots.com](http://boots.com) for locations. To find a 24-hour pharmacy see [nhs.uk](http://nhs.uk)

### LOCAL TIP

**"Walk! Taking the Tube can be addictive, but by walking around you'll gain a different appreciation for the city, and often it's much quicker too. For starters try wandering around Kensington Mews, Soho, and the old City"**  
*Stefan, from Hoxton*



Afresco Dining



London Eye

### LOCAL TIP

**"Many of London's big museums are free, so it won't cost you a penny to see all that they have to offer"**  
*Katherina, from Wembley*  
[visitlondon.com/value](http://visitlondon.com/value)

### FEEDBACK

If you have a comment to make about your stay in London, go to [visitlondon.com/contact\\_us](http://visitlondon.com/contact_us)



# 5 London's Regions



Richmond

London buzzes night and day with an unforgettable energy, and each area of the city has its own distinct atmosphere. Here is a quick introduction to the points of our compass:

## Central London

London's heart is made up of many districts from the iconic City of Westminster to the City of London, the main financial area of the capital. This central area has a dense concentration of landmarks, theatres, museums, nightspots and famous shopping areas like Covent Garden, Carnaby Street and Oxford Street.

## North London

Over 120 languages are spoken in this multicultural and vibrant region, which is steeped in history and renowned for its culture. Areas of interest include Hampstead Heath and Primrose Hill with their huge green spaces, fabulous views and village feel, characterful Camden with its eclectic market and live music scene, and Green Lanes, where you can enjoy Turkish, Greek and Kurdish food.

## South London

The South is appreciated for its array of open spaces such as Clapham Common, the World Heritage Site at Greenwich and riverside Richmond. It's popular for sporting attractions such as the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum and cricket at the Brit Oval. It offers wonderful opportunities to escape from the hustle and bustle, from the village atmosphere of Barnes to historic stately homes and palaces such as Ham House and Hampton Court.

## East London

The East now claims its place in the limelight and is set to play a huge part in the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. The area is home to a unique arts scene and popular markets like Spitalfields, while the nightlife here in Hoxton and Shoreditch rivals that of the West End. Further east, Lee Valley Regional Park is London's biggest open space.

## West London

West London is remarkable for its leafy squares, fascinating museums and vibrant street markets. Here you will find upmarket Kensington and Chelsea, the peaceful streets and canals of Maida Vale, Hammersmith, which is home to some great riverside pubs, and the vibrant, multicultural communities of Shepherd's Bush and Southall.

### LOCAL TIP

"Research the several different ways to get into town from London's airports, there are lots of different options so you're sure to find something to suit, whether you're on a budget or just need to get there swiftly" *Chris, from Wimbledon*  
[visitlondon.com/travel/airport/](http://visitlondon.com/travel/airport/)



# 6 Getting Around

For all the information you need to plan your trip, go to [tfl.gov.uk/journeyplanner](http://tfl.gov.uk/journeyplanner), which provides the tools to easily plan your journey on public transport in advance, and is available in 19 languages. You can also telephone +44 (0)20 7222 1234. Alternatively visit one of the Travel Information Centres (listed on page 4) or any Tube Station.





## TICKETS TO TRAVEL

The Oyster card is London's travel smartcard and generally the easiest way to pay for journeys on bus, Tube, tram, DLR, London Overground and National Rail services in London. You can use your Oyster to either store period Travelcards or Bus Passes (for 7 days or longer), or you can use pay as you go for single journeys. With pay as you go you can travel as many times as you like in a day and the daily price cap means that you'll never pay more than the cost of an equivalent One Day Travelcard. Your Oyster card never expires so consider keeping it for your next visit.



If you are only in London for a short time, try a Visitor Oyster card. Visitor Oyster cards are pre-loaded with pay as you go credit and can be purchased before you arrive in London from National Express Coaches, Gatwick Express, Stansted Express, Eurostar, and easyJet services. You can also get them online at [visitorshop.tfl.gov.uk](http://visitorshop.tfl.gov.uk). To buy or top-up your Oyster card visit any Tube station, Travel Information Centre listed on page 4, or any of the 4,000 Oyster ticket stops around London.

To use your Oyster card, touch it flat on the yellow reader at the start and end of every journey, except on buses and trams where you only need to touch in at the start of your journey. For further information including travelling with children, and using Oyster on River Services and National Rail go to [oyster.tfl.gov.uk](http://oyster.tfl.gov.uk)

## London Underground

There are 11 colour-coded Underground or 'Tube' lines. Services run regularly from around 05.00 to 00.30 (Sun 07.30 to 23.30) on most routes. The network is divided into nine zones, with Zone 1 being the most central area. See page 8 for the Tube and Rail Map.

## London Buses

Buses generally run from 05.00 to 00.30. Night Buses operate on many major routes from around midnight to 05.00, and some routes operate a 24-hour service. Cash fares are not available for bus passengers in Zone 1, therefore passengers must obtain a valid ticket or Oyster card before boarding. Some routes are especially good for sightseeing including routes 9 and 15 which use heritage Routemaster buses during the day.

## Taxi

Hail one of London's famous black cabs (some are multicoloured!)

when the yellow 'Taxi' sign is lit; they can take you anywhere within the London area. Please note fares increase after 20.00. Private hire or minicabs must be booked in advance. We advise you against getting into any vehicle that approaches you in the street purporting to be a minicab. See [tfl.gov.uk/findaride](http://tfl.gov.uk/findaride) for details of local licensed minicabs, or Cabwise - text **CAB** to **60835** to get one taxi and two local licensed minicab numbers sent straight to your mobile phone (cost may vary depending on your mobile provider).

## Docklands Light Railway

Docklands Light Railway (DLR) runs from 05.30-00.30 Monday to Friday and 06.30-23.30 on Sunday. There are trains every 4-10 minutes running on routes from Bank and Tower Gateway to Docklands, East and South East London. Take the DLR to visit Canary Wharf, Cutty Sark for Maritime Greenwich, ExCeL London exhibition centre or London City Airport.

## River Services

Travelling on the river can be a relaxing way to travel across London whilst taking in the sights. For information go to [tfl.gov.uk/river](http://tfl.gov.uk/river) or pick up the River Services leaflet from Tube stations.

## Cycling

There are more than 4,000km of routes for cycling in London and the city is one of Europe's fastest growing cycling cities. Visit [tfl.gov.uk/cycling](http://tfl.gov.uk/cycling) for more information.

## Walking

Walking in London is a great way to get around. What's more, for short journeys it can sometimes be quicker. For more information on walking routes visit [tfl.gov.uk/walking](http://tfl.gov.uk/walking) and look out for Legible London signs to help you on your way.

## National Rail

There are 13 major National Rail stations in London. Paddington serves the West Country, Wales and the South Midlands. Liverpool Street and Fenchurch Street serve East Anglia and Essex. Euston, King's Cross, St. Pancras and Marylebone serve the Midlands, North and central Britain, and St. Pancras International is the station for Eurostar services. Charing Cross, Cannon Street, Blackfriars, Waterloo, London Bridge and Victoria serve southern England. For information on timetables and fares go to [nationalrail.co.uk](http://nationalrail.co.uk) or call 08457 484950 (UK only) or +44(0)20 7278 5240. For London destinations outside of the central area, the extensive network of National Rail trains is a great way to travel. To plan your route and for details of using Oyster on National Rail visit [tfl.gov.uk](http://tfl.gov.uk)

## TOP 5 TRAVEL TIPS

- Walking can often be quicker in central London than taking the Tube between two adjacent stops. For example, the walk between Leicester Square and Covent Garden is just a few minutes.
- Use the Tube outside the morning and afternoon rush hours to avoid crowded trains and platforms. Or perhaps take advantage of the River Services!
- The National Rail system is extensive, especially south of the river, and is sometimes the quickest way to reach destinations.
- Journey Planner is the best way to plan your journey from A to B by any form of public transport. Go to [tfl.gov.uk/journeyplanner](http://tfl.gov.uk/journeyplanner) or phone +44 (0)20 7222 1234
- Always stand on the right and walk on the left on escalators at stations.

## Coaches

London's main coach services use Victoria Coach Station, SW1 +44 (0)20 7730 3466 [tfl.gov.uk/coaches](http://tfl.gov.uk/coaches)

**Operators include:**  
Green Line Coaches  
+44 (0)844 801 7261  
[greenline.co.uk](http://greenline.co.uk)

Megabus  
+44 (0)9001 600 900  
[megabus.com](http://megabus.com)

National Express  
+44 (0)871 818 181  
[nationalexpress.com](http://nationalexpress.com)



## The easiest way to travel around London

Oyster cards are available and can be topped up with credit at:

- London Travel Information Centres
- Oyster Ticket Stops
- Tube and London Overground station ticket offices (minimum top up £5)
- Some National Rail station ticket offices

For more information visit [tfl.gov.uk/oyster](https://tfl.gov.uk/oyster)