

## ten things to do

**[1]** View Westminster, the Thames and beyond from the slowly rotating London Eye (*pictured below and see p. 33*).

**[2]** Visit the British Museum (*see p. 69*): Egyptian mummies, Greek statues, Roman coins, Chinese vases; artefacts from pre-history to modern fascinatingly explained and displayed.

**[3]** Buy one of Ian Bennett's snappy hats in his boutique (*see p. 40*) on the South Bank; couture, cloth cap or baseball cap, you can get them all from the milliner of the millennium.

**[4]** Visit both iconic Tate galleries: Tate Modern (*see p. 27*) and Tate Britain (*see p. 101*). You can travel between the two on the Tate Boat (*see p. 8*) decorated by Damien Hirst.

**[5]** See the markets which have provided London with its food for hundreds of years: Smithfield (meat; *see p. 63*), Leadenhall (meat and fish; *see p. 61*), and Borough (fruit and veg; *see p. 40*).



**[6]** Study examples of Sir Christopher Wren's beautiful classical architecture at St Paul's Cathedral (*see p. 44*) and the Monument (*see p. 54*).

**[7]** Take tea in Claridges hotel (*see p. 12*), where the restored 1920s Art Deco interior features an ultra-modern Dale Chihuly chandelier.

**[8]** Identify 15 species of waterfowl in St James's Park (*see p. 109*), watch the feeding of the pelicans at 3pm, and take a guided tour of Duck Island.

**[9]** Stroll in Kensington Gardens (*map p. 120, C1-D2*) with its Princess Diana memorial fountain designed by Kathryn Gustafson.

**[10]** Have a cocktail with a view. Vertigo 42 in the City is the ultimate skyscraping London bar (*see p. 60*).

# St Paul's Cathedral

**Open:** Daily 8.30–4, except during special services or events  
**Charges:** Entry charge **Tel:** 020 7246 8357 **Web:** www.stpauls.co.uk  
**Underground:** Bank, Mansion House, St Paul's **Map:** p. 42, B2–C2  
**Highlights:** American Memorial Chapel; choir stalls; the dome and its galleries; Wellington monument; wrought iron by Jean Tijou

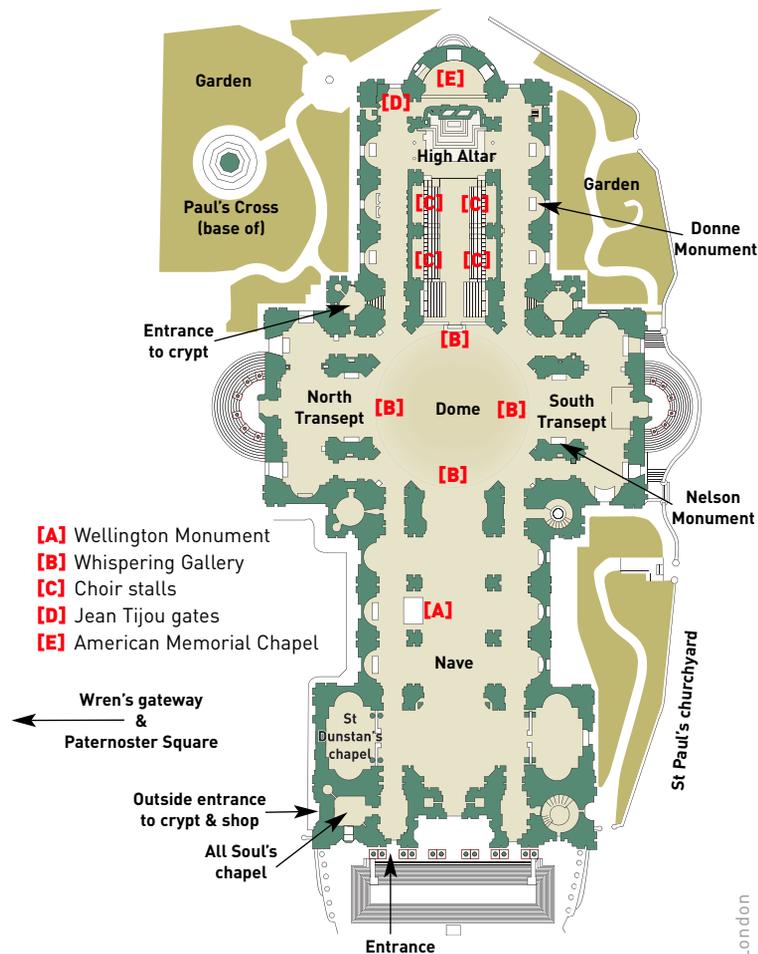
One of the most familiar silhouettes of London is the dome of St Paul's, Britain's major cathedral and the work of the eminent British architect Sir Christopher Wren. It stands grand and dignified at the top of Ludgate Hill, where it has been host to many significant events and celebrations, including Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee service in 1897, Winston Churchill's funeral in 1965, the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer in 1981, and the present Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 and her 80th birthday in 2007. This cathedral is the fourth church on this site; the first was founded in 604.

An imposing flight of steps leads up to the two-tiered Corinthian portico of the cathedral, flanked by elaborate twin towers framing the dome. Three bells in the left tower include Great Paul, the biggest in Europe (it strikes at 1pm). The garden on the south-east offers the best view of the dome and lantern topped off by a gold ball and cross of 1821, stretching a total of 111.3m into the sky. The Golden Gallery at 85.4m is the highest level that visitors can climb—540 steps from the ground—whereas Wren was hauled up and down in a basket.

## The interior

**Nave and Chapels:** The short wide nave, flanked by a three-bay run of rounded arches uses the Corinthian order and saucer domes, picked out elegantly in white, and leads the eye to the High Altar. Preceding the nave are All Soul's Chapel with a memorial to First

World War Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener, and St Dunstan's Chapel, in memory of the Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury (908–988). In the nave is the elaborate, multi-tiered **[A] Wellington monument** (1912) by Alfred Stevens to the military





**Petticoat Lane**, between Middlesex & Goulston Streets (*map p. 42, B2*) open Sun 9–2; a smaller market, Mon–Fri, is held on Wentworth Street. *Underground: Aldgate, Aldgate East.* Petticoat Lane was already an old-clothes market in the early 17th century, when Huguenot silk weavers were selling their wares. The Great Plague of 1665 drove out the upper classes from this fashionable area and Jewish traders moved in later, so that by the 1750s it was a well-established trading centre. Although the street was renamed in 1846, the more appropriate Petticoat Lane is still used for the inexpensive clothes market, for which it's so well known. All types of fashions are sold, especially leather goods. With around 1,000 or so stalls on a Sunday morning, stamina is required for searching and haggling for bargains amongst the many shoppers.

**Smithfield**, Charterhouse Street, open Mon–Fri 4am–midday, *Underground: Barbican, Farringdon.* London's oldest market, which has traded in meat for some 800 years stands on a site which has hosted a cattle market since the 10th century. Housed in a listed Victorian building, the whole site has undergone a £70-million refit to make it the most advanced, state-of-the-art meat market in Europe, including sealed delivery bays and robotic sorting mechanisms. However, visi-

tors can still wander the central aisles of the market and see the huge range of produce on offer. Smithfield market also sells cheeses and delicatessen goods, not only to butchers, but to restaurateurs and caterers. **Map p. 42, B2** **Spitalfields**, Brushfield Street, stalls open 10–4, shops 11–7 (*may vary*): Mon, Tues & Sat shops, no stalls; Wed traders market, 1st & 3rd of month records & books; Thur antiques & vintage objects; Fri: fashion and art; Sun 9–5, all shops and stalls, *Underground: Aldgate East, Liverpool Street.* Trading goes back to 13th century at this most important of wholesale fruit and vegetable markets, to the extent that in 1991 the produce section moved to another more spacious location in London. The building revamped its image and the whole area has experienced something of a revival, attracting modern designers, artists and craftsmen. The old covered market is at its liveliest on Sunday with around 200 stalls and shops selling everything from way-out fashions to organic food. Friday Fun Fashion Market is the opportunity for up-and-coming young designers to show off, and hopefully sell, their creations. Weekdays are less busy, except at lunchtime. Christ Church Spitalfields, a fine church by Nicholas Hawksmoor, is the focus of an annual music festival. **Map p. 42, A4**

**Bric-a-brac on sale at Brick Lane market, in London's East End**

**Houses of Parliament & Big Ben** (*tours during summer opening end-July to end-Sept, pre-book by phone or online, or buy from the ticket office in Old Palace Yard. When in session, all visitors may attend debates. UK residents can obtain tickets through their MP for Question Time and free tours throughout the year, Tel: 0870 906 3773, Web: [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk), Underground: Westminster*). The stunningly beautiful Houses of Parliament are a 19th-century version of Tudor architecture (*pictured opposite*). The original Palace of Westminster, built by Edward the Confessor, was a royal residence from c. 1065 until 1512 when Henry VIII moved to Whitehall Palace. It evolved as the centre of government from the 12th century. The Houses of Parliament as we see it now was rebuilt by architects Charles Barry and A.W.N. Pugin from 1837. Barry was responsible for the overall design, and Pugin took care of the detail and the meticulous interior decorations. The tour takes you along the route the Queen walks when she opens Parliament each year, through the rich Robing Room and Royal Gallery, to the monarch's throne in the House of Lords, and on to the House of Commons. **Big Ben** (*tours open to UK residents through their local MP, 393 steps, free entry*), with its gilded clock casing and elegant tapered bell stage, has become a potent symbol of London. Big Ben properly refers to the Great Bell of Westminster weighing 13.5 tons with a hammer of 300kg. The clock faces, seven metres in diameter, are by A.W.N. Pugin. The original cast-iron hands were too heavy and were remade, the 2.74m hour hands in gunmetal, and the 4.2m minute hands in hollow copper. **Map p. 96, E4-97, D4**

**Royal Academy of Arts** (*Burlington House, open daily 10-6, Fri 10-10, Fine Rooms Tues-Fri 1-4.30, Sat-Sun 10-6, entry charge, Tel: 020 7300 8000, Web: [www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk), Underground: Green Park, Piccadilly Circus*). The Academy was founded in 1768 under the patronage of George III, with the aim of promoting art and design through its teaching schools. The first President was the English artist, Joshua Reynolds. The annual Summer Exhibition of contemporary British work has been shown since 1769, but less well-known is the Academy's permanent collection. Its greatest treasure, Michelangelo's exquisitely carved marble *Madonna and Child with the Infant St John* (c. 1504-05) known as the *Taddei Tondo*, was bequeathed to the Royal Academy in 1830. Other works include a self-portrait by Reynolds with a bust of Michelangelo, Constable's *Leaping Horse* (1825), sculpture by Flaxman and Chantrey, and architectural drawings by Sir John Soane (*see p. 86*). **Map p. 97, B3**



**Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament, designed by Charles Barry and A.W.N. Pugin**



**Sleek interior decoration at The Wolseley restaurant on Piccadilly**

pastry with almonds, cinnamon and orange confit. Mint tea and sweetmeats are served in the exotic bazaar or on the terrace. The bar serves *kemia* (Arabic tapas) to a backdrop of live music from 8pm.

**££ Tate Britain, Millbank, (map p. 96, G4), Tel: 020 7887 8825, open Mon–Fri 11.30–3 & 3.30–5; Sat & Sun 10–3 & 3.30–5, Underground: Pimlico.**

With Rex Whistler décor, this is a peaceful haven opposite the Tate cafeteria, attracting both local business people as well as gallery enthusiasts. The British sourced food is well cooked and presented, and includes Devilled kidneys or Confit duck terrine with

plum chutney, followed by Grilled plaice from Newlyn or Devonshire beef. The wine list is outstanding, with a huge choice constantly updated and a good range of half bottles.

**8 ££ The Wolseley, 160 Piccadilly, Tel: 020 7499 6996, open Mon–Fri 7am–midnight, Sat 8am–midnight, Sun 8am–11pm, Underground: Green Park, Piccadilly Circus.** It is imperative to book well in advance for this hugely popular restaurant in the former Wolseley car showroom. Eating here is a fashionable event. The sleek surroundings emulate a Viennese café, and the service is smooth. The food tends towards old-fashioned with mid-European influences, such as Steak tartare, chopped liver, and Wiener Holstein;

alternatively, there is traditional Dover sole. The small café and bar, for drinks or tea (excellent cakes) are good alternatives to the hectic lunch and dinnertime. The owners, Christopher Corbin and Jeremy King, also run the St Alban at 4–12 Regent Street.

**9 £-££ Fortnum & Mason, 181 Piccadilly, Tel: 0845 602 5694, Underground: Green Park, Piccadilly Circus.** Fortnum & Mason, the upmarket grocery store (see also p. 117 below), has several eating places. The swish new 1707 wine bar (open Mon–Sat 12–11, Sun 12–5.30), is named after Fortnum's foundation year. It proposes 'flights'

of 3 wines to accompany a selection from the bar menu, or a bottle from the Wine department. At the brasserie-style Fountain Restaurant (open Mon–Sat 7.30–11, 12–3, 5–11, Sun 12–5.30) over-looking Jermyn Street, you can sample Fortnum's famous Welsh Rarebit. The Gallery Restaurant, (open Mon–Sat 10–6, Sun 12–5.30) looks out onto the Food Hall from which it takes its inspiration. On the fourth floor, the St James's (open Mon–Sat 12–7, Sun 2–5) is an elegant and comfortable setting for lunch or a peaceful afternoon tea.

The first floor Parlour (open Mon–Sat 10–7, Sun 12–5.30) is the place for heavenly hot chocolate, desserts or an over-the-top knickerbocker-glory sundae.

**10 £ Shepherd's Tavern, 50 Hertford Street, Tel: 020 7499 3017, open Mon–Sat 11–11, Sun 12–10, Underground: Green Park.** On the edge of Shepherd Market, laid out by architect Edward Shepherd in the early eighteenth century, Shepherd's Tavern (pictured below) is a good place to stop for a pint of London Pride ale in handsome Georgian surroundings.

**The elegant Georgian townhouse that is home to the Shepherd's Tavern, one of the traditional pubs in the Shepherd Market area of central London**

