

Fantastic landmarks and where to find them

There is no shortage of tourist staples in London: Buckingham Palace, Piccadilly Circus, Tower Bridge, Big Ben, the House of Parliament, but London's appeal doesn't lie only in its architectural and cultural treasures. It's the jaw-dropping views across the city, taking in most of the Big Five landmarks, which are remarkable. Here are five ways to see London's landmarks, in just 48-hours.

Text and photos: Cindy-Lou Dale

→ It's a credit to the capital that there are simply too many galleries, museums and cultural attractions in London worth visiting—but don't try and do it all. Should this be your first visit, take in the views from above, experience the River Thames and pick one or two landmarks, then save the rest for another time —otherwise you'll spend your weekend queueing.

GET HIGHER

Start off with The Shard, Western Europe's tallest building. The distinctive Shard skyscraper is the only place to take in over 1,000 years of London's history. The panoramic views, from the observation deck on the 72nd floor, stretch across the city for some 40-miles. Pre-book at £25.95.

www.therviewfromtheshard.com

ON THE WIRE

For panoramic views of London's skyline, book a journey on the Emirates Air Line, the UK's first urban cable car, which soars across the River Thames and connects Greenwich with the Royal Docks and two world-class venues—the North Greenwich Arena and ExCeL. It's located just five minutes from the O2, adjacent to the North Greenwich Tube Station. Cabins arrive every 30 seconds and cable car flights are approximately 10 minutes each way. Prices start from

www.emiratesairline.co.uk

THE ALL-SEEING EYE

Gracefully rotating over the River Thames, opposite the Houses of Parliament and Big Ben, is Europe's tallest Ferris wheel, the London Eye. The £22.50 price tag is worth every penny of its half-hour spin, just for the breathtaking 360-degree views of the capital and its famous landmarks. Once you've boarded your glass capsule (each holds 25 people) you'll creep along at an excruciatingly slow 0.6 mph, but from the top of the 135-m wheel, you'll be rewarded with gloriously unimpeded

Gracefully rotating over the River Thames, opposite the Houses of Parliament and Big Ben, is Europe's tallest Ferris wheel, the London Eye.

www.londoneye.com

A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT

Avoid buses and underground trains; instead, see the city's historic landmarks from on board the MBNA Thames

vistas across London. At night, take a special "Champagne Flight" and find yourself in one of the capital's best bars. Pre-booking is advised.

www.londoneye.com

Clippers—a London River Bus service that ferry's passengers along the River Thames. There's a River Bus every 20 minutes from Putney to Woolwich that includes stops at North Greenwich for The O2, Greenwich, Canary Wharf, Tower, London Bridge, Embankment and London Eye for Waterloo, as well as several residential piers. Passengers are guaranteed a seat and can enjoy a coffee or something a little stronger from the onboard café and bar. Tickets cost £6.50 per person for a single journey from central London to The O2 (using Oyster pay-as-you-go) or £14.70 for a hop-on-hop-off River Roamers day ticket. It's one of the best ways to get around and a great way to see London's landmarks.

www.thamesclippers.com

ROYAL SIGHT

No trip to London would be complete without a visit to Buckingham Palace, the official London residence of the HRH Queen Elizabeth II. During the Queen's annual visit to Balmoral in Scotland (from August to September) the lavish State Rooms at Buckingham Palace are open to visitors and are laid out as they would be during state visits. The State Rooms hold some of the greatest treasures from the Royal Collection and include masterpieces by Rembrandt and Rubens, sculpture by Canova and Chantrey, exquisite examples of Sévres porcelain as well as some of the finest English and French furniture in the world. To end your palace visit on a high note take tea and strawberry and cream scones on the terrace of the Garden Café, overlooking the palace's famous lawns and lake. A typical visit takes around 2 hours. Pre-book for £21.50.

www.royalcollection.org.uk

Let's be honest; it would be an impossible task to see all of London in just 48-hours and it'd be foolish to stay for only a weekend. But sometimes visits have to be fleeting—and you're certain to return soon.



London tips

If you plan to use a London bus you need to buy an Oyster Card (or if you have the gizmo on your bank card, go "contactless"). For some bizarre reason, you can't board a London bus without having an Oyster card; cash is no longer accepted.

www.oyster.tfl.gov.uk

Don't go anywhere near Oxford Street if it's a weekend. There is nothing you can find there that you can't also find everywhere else in London. The same goes for Piccadilly Circus and Westfield Shopping Centre.

For further inspiration and great ideas about things to see and do in London visit

www.visitlondon.com



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Lækjarbrekka
Restaurant

Scandinavian cuisine

Enjoy a four course Icelandic set menu in one of Reykjavik's oldest buildings

"Great first meal in Reykjavik"
"Amazing food, excellent staff"
"Best restaurant in Iceland"



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