



Seeing the Capital Differently

Astronomy

Welcome to *CityThemes*

By printing this leaflet you have decided to discover, or rediscover, the sights and delights of **London** in a different way. We hope that you enjoy your explorations of our fascinating and historical capital city.

This leaflet has been designed to allow you to explore as the mood takes you. Both well-known and lesser-known attractions are included and they are randomly listed so that you plan your own itinerary and visit as many or as few as you wish.

Please note:- some places restrict entry and ask for prior application either in writing or by telephone. This is indicated where known. Others may change opening days and hours with little warning – it may be worth checking by phone if they are off the beaten track.

A very brief description of the reason for the choice of site is given but because of space it is not possible to include much detail. Again a telephone call to the site may help you to decide on whether a visit is worthwhile. Remember there may be other items that interest you at the same site.

Themes are constantly being updated and new titles added so please keep looking at our website or get in touch with us by e-mail or letter. We welcome your comments especially if you feel that some site should be included or details are incorrect/inaccurate. Contact details are

website: www.citytheme.co.uk
e-mail: [info@ citythemes.co.uk](mailto:info@citythemes.co.uk)
address: CityThemes PO Box 42530, London E1W 3WL

Enjoy Your Explorations

London Planetarium

Marylebone Road, NW1
020 7935 6861/0870 400 3000
www.london-planetarium.com

transport: Baker Street u/g, Marylebone u/g & rail; buses 2,13,18,27,30,74,82,113,139,189,274

facilities: disabled access; induction loop; souvenir shop

opening: daily 10.30-17.30

admission charge

opened in 1958 a Digistar projector situated in the famous domed auditorium reveals the mysteries of the cosmos and the wonders of the galaxy through interactive demonstrations, displays and scale models

Hampton Court Palace

East Molesey, Surrey, KT8
020 8781 9500 www.hrp.org.uk

transport: Richmond u/g, Hampton Court rail; buses 111, 216,411,416,461,513,727,R68; boat Hampton Court

facilities: audio guides in 6 languages; disabled access (wheelchairs available); disabled wcs; parking; Tiltyard Tearoom or Privy Kitchen Coffee Shop, ice cream kiosks; 4 themed shops (Base Court, Garden, Tudor Kitchen, Barrack Block); costumed guides and family trails; free group tours (choose from daily programme)

opening: daily mid Mar-Oct Mon 10.15-18.00, Tue-Sun 09.30-18.00 (last admission 17.15); Nov-mid Mar Mon 10.15-16.30, Tue-Sun 09.30-16.30 (last admission 15.45)
admission charge

on the wall of the Clock Court is the 1540 astronomical clock of King Henry VIII. This clock was made by Nicholas Ourslan for the King so that so that he could calculate high water at London Bridge, a useful piece of information when most travel was by royal barge along the River Thames. It has an 8ft dial and shows the hour, month, date, signs of the zodiac, the year and the phase of the moon. Predating Galileo it was made in a time when it was believed that the sun revolved round the earth

Natural History Museum

Cromwell Road, SW7
020 7942 5000 www.nhm.ac.uk

transport: South Kensington u/g; buses 9,10,14,45,49, 52,74,C1

facilities: disabled access via Earth Galleries entrance; disabled wcs; library; Waterhouse Café (10.00-17.00), Life Galleries Restaurant (10.00-17.00), Globe Fast Food (11.00-16.00), Snack Bar & Picnic Area (11.00-16.30); bookshop & gift shops; British Geological Survey Information Office; tours by arrangement

opening: Mon-Sat 10.00-17.50, Sun 11.00-17.50; Wildlife Garden May-Sept noon-17.00 with guided tours at noon & 15.00 (020 7942 5011)
admission free

an avenue leading to the Earth Gallery has sculptures and slate walls displaying star and planet constellations. It aims to help the visitor explore our planet Earth, the effect we have on it and its place in the universe

Science Museum

Exhibition Road, SW7
020 7942 4455 www.sciencemuseum.org.uk

transport: South Kensington u/g; buses 9,10,14,45,49, 52,74,C1

facilities: disabled access (helpline 020 7942 4446) & wcs; library; refreshments; shop

opening: daily 10.00-18.00
admission free

the collection relating to astronomy includes manuscripts, letters, broadsheets, posters, maps, star charts and ships' plans

Sir John Soane's Museum

13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2A
020 7405 2107 www.soane.org

transport: Holborn u/g; buses 1,8,25,38,59,68,91,98, 168,171,188,242

facilities: library; sales desk; tours (Sats 14.30, small charge)

opening: Tue-Sat 10.00-17.00. 1st Tues of every month 18.00-21.00 when parts lit by candle
admission free except for tours

among the items in this fascinating museum is a late 18th century astronomical clock by Raingo of Paris

Old Royal Observatory

Greenwich Park, Romney Road, Greenwich, SE10
020 8858 4422 www.rog.nmm.ac.uk

transport: Greenwich DLR & rail, Cutty Sark DLR; buses 177,180,188,199,286,386; boat Greenwich Pier

opening: daily 10.00-17.00

free but admission charge to Planetarium

at one time the working headquarters of the Astronomer Royals the Observatory was moved in 1945 to Herstmonceux Castle in Sussex because of the need for cleaner air. The first Astronomer Royal, John Flamsteed, had been appointed in 1675 by King Charles II and details of his life and some of his instruments are displayed along with information about other Astronomer Royals in the various rooms.

the collection aims to trace the foundation and purpose of observation, the various interpretations of the stars and the evolution of man's understanding of the heavens. It also looks at the discovery of longitude and latitude

a Telescope Dome provides video images from space while the Planetarium has an animated explanation of how the stars and planets move in relation to one another

Albert Memorial

Kensington Gardens, opposite the Royal Albert Hall, SW7
020 7495 0916/5504

transport: South Kensington, High Street Kensington & Knightsbridge u/g; buses 9,10,49,52,70

opening: can be seen at all times but tours take place on Suns at 14.00 & 15.00. Advance booking advisable. Other times by arrangement with Albert Memorial Tours tel: 020 7495 0916

this magnificent monument to Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, is topped with bronze pillars with allegorical figures representing astronomy, chemistry, geology and geometry. Above the top spires stand eight gilt bronze angels. Tours beyond the railings give you an opportunity to see the frieze close-up, hear the story and learn about the restoration work

Bracken House

Cannon Street, EC4

transport: Mansion House u/g, Cannon Street u/g & rail; buses 11,15,26,76,100,172

over the doorway of this building is a bronze, one metre diameter, astronomical clock with a mask face of Sir Winston Churchill in the centre. It was designed by Frank Dobson in 1959

St Mary's New Church

Stoke Newington Church Street, N16
020 7254 6072

transport: Stoke Newington rail; buses 67,73,76,149, 243

a stained glass window of 1960 shows Greenwich Observatory and Jodrell Bank. Jodrell Bank is a leading radio astronomy facility and observatory in Cheshire

Obelisk

Kew Towpath, Richmond, Surrey

transport: Kew Bridge rail

an 18th century stone obelisk marks the terrestrial meridian. It was used by Kew Observatory along with movement of the stars to calculate and set the time for Horse Guards Parade and Parliament. Unfortunately it can only be seen from the tow path as it is obscured by scrubwood

Sir William Herschel

St Laurence's Church, Upton Court Road, Upton, Slough, Berkshire

transport: Slough rail

the Astronomer Royal in 1782, Sir William (1738-1822) lived in the area and is buried beneath the church tower. There is a stone memorial tablet on the north wall and a stained glass window installed in 2001 commemorates him and his discovery of the planet Uranus in 1781.

a monument in Herschel Street in Slough town centre is close to the spot where the 40foot telescope stood. More information about this famous astronomer can be found in the William Herschel Museum in King Street, Bath

Edmond Halley

St Margaret's Church, Lee Terrace, SE3

transport: Blackheath rail; buses 54,89,108,202

the burial place of Edmond Halley (1656-1742), appointed in 1719 as Astronomer Royal. He is famous for the comet named after him

John Flamsteed

St Bartholomew's Church, Church Road, Burstow, Surrey

transport: by road junction 9, M23; Gatwick Airport rail + 1.7miles (2.7 kilometres)

Flamsteed was the first Astronomer Royal; appointed by King Charles II in 1675 he held the post until 1719. He is buried in the churchyard

University College London, Geological Sciences Collections

Gower Street, WC1
020 7679 7900

transport: Goadge Street, Euston Square & Russell Square u/g, Euston u/g & rail; buses 10,18,24,29,30,59, 68,73,91,134,168

opening: Wed lunchtimes, otherwise by appointment with curator

this important research collection of 40,000 rocks, minerals & fossils has been collected worldwide during the last 150 years. One part of it is the Planetary Science Collection consisting of image data of the solar system surveyed on spacecraft missions. It is only available for consultation by appointment

Vauxhall Bridge

on the upstream side of Vauxhall Bridge, SW1/SE1

transport: Pimlico u/g; buses 2,36,77A,88,185,C10

one of the 1906 allegorical sculptures by Frederick W.Pomeroy on the bridge represents astronomy

Lancaster House

Stable Yard Road, Green Park, SW1

transport: Green Park & Hyde Park Corner u/g; buses 2,8, 9,10,14,16,19,22,36,38,52,73,74,82,137

opening: usually by invitation only as this lovely house is used by the government and diplomatic service for conferences and entertaining heads of state, politicians and other celebrities. If you do have the chance to see inside you will find very beautiful, richly decorated historic rooms - make the most of the opportunity!

the painting on the ceiling of the South-West Drawing Room depicts the solar system with the signs of the zodiac

British Museum

Great Russell Street, WC1B

020 7323 8000

www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

transport: Russell Square & Tottenham Court Road u/g; buses 10,24,29,73,134

facilities: audio guides for certain displays including the Parthenon Sculptures (6 languages); disabled access & wcs; licensed restaurant (self-service) and snacks (daily Mon-Sat 10.00-16.30, Sun noon-17.30); shop selling books, postcards, posters and replicas; eyeOpener gallery tours of 50mins +Spotlight talks of 20mins

opening: daily Sat-Wed 10.00-17.30, Thur-Fri 10.00-20.30; Great Court Mon-Wed 09.00-21.00, Thur-Sat 09.00-23.00, Sun 09.00-18.00. Clearance 10mins before closing

admission free except for some tours - donation welcomed

the Strasbourg carillon clock with automata was made in 1589. An astronomical dial shows the position of the sun and moon in the zodiac and a calendar provides the date. A revolving carousel shows the days of the week represented by the ruling planet riding as a person in a chariot. The automata moves and music plays when the clock strikes at every hour and quarter. By the clockmaker Isaac Habrecht the gilt metal frame is engraved with the figures of Faith, Hope, Charity, Wisdom, Fortitude and Justice

Old Deer Park

Twickenham Road, Richmond, Surrey

transport: Richmond u/g & rail, St Margarets & Syon Lane rail; buses 190,337,371,391,419,H22,H37,R68,R70

the King's Observatory built for King George III. Standing in this 370 acre former Royal Hunting Park it was used in 1769 to watch the transit of Venus

Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood

Cambridge Heath Road, E2

020 8983 5200 www.museumofchildhood.org.uk

transport: Bethnal Green u/g, Cambridge Heath rail; buses 8,106,253,309,D3,D6

facilities: limited disabled access; library; parking; refreshments; shop; tours by arrangement

opening: Mon-Thur, Sat-Sun 10.00-17.00

admission free

this is one of largest collections in the world devoted entirely to the history of children and all aspects of childhood. Displayed in a wrought-iron building that was originally at the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington. it was established on this site in the 1860s. Mosaic friezes on the outside show many professions and crafts including architecture, astronomy, botany, chemistry, fishing, haymaking, mechanics, music, painting, geometry, ploughing, poetry and sculpture

Hampton Court House

The Green, East Moseley, Surrey, KT8
020 8943 0889

transport: Richmond u/g, Hampton Court rail; buses 111,
216,411,416,461,513,727,R68; boat Hampton Court Pier
opening: by arrangement

this 18th century summerhouse was built by the astronomer and garden designer Thomas Wright (1711-86). Constructed between 1757 and 1767 it is of Rococo design and uses seashells. It has a celestial ceiling with a sphere in mother of pearl showing the birth of Venus 1757-67 Thomas Wright has been credited with discovering the Milky Way.

Slightly Further Afield

Observatory Science Centre, Herstmonceux

Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27
01323 832731 www.the-observatory.org

transport: by car via A271. The Centre lies 2 miles east
of Herstmonceux village

facilities: picnic area; parking; café; gift shop,

opening: daily Apr-Sept 10.00-18.00, Oct 10.00-17.00
(last admission 1 hour before closing)
admission charge

*until 1990 this was part of the Royal Greenwich
Observatory. Now the telescopes are being restored with
computer controls so that they can be used for star-
gazing. Domes of Discovery outline the work and findings
of the RGO when it was in residence*

A great deal of care has been taken in collecting the information in this leaflet but *CityThemes* cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of that information. It can cover only a few of the many interesting sites to be found in London and therefore must not be considered a definitive guide.

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