



Seeing the Capital Differently

Opera

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
address: CityThemes PO Box 42530, London E1W 3WL

Enjoy Your Explorations

Royal Opera House Archives

Floral Street, WC2E
020 7240 1200

transport: Covent Garden & Leicester Square u/g,
Charing Cross u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,15,23,59,68,
77A,91,168,171,176,188

opening: by prior arrangement

*memorabilia and archives of the Royal Opera Company,
the Royal Ballet and the Birmingham Royal Ballet*

Theatre Museum

Russell Street, Covent Garden, WC2E
020 7943 4700 www.theatremuseum.org

transport: Covent Garden & Leicester Square u/g,
Charing Cross u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,15,23,59,68,
77A,91,168,171,176,188

*facilities: disabled access; library with research room by
appointment; shop for theatrical books and children's
novelties; 30 minute tours (daily 11.00,14.00,16.00);
booking service for West End shows; costume workshops
for children; theatre make-up demonstrations (daily
11.30,13.00,14.30,15.30,16.30, of 30 mins duration)*

opening: Tue-Sun 10.00-18.00 (last admission 17.30)
admission charge

*this museum has a semi-permanent exhibition on the
history of theatre. Other regularly changing exhibitions
are devoted to musical themes - opera, ballet,
pantomime, music hall, variety, circus and rock & pop*

Hogshead at Covent Garden pub

23 Wellington Street, WC2
020 7836 6930

transport: Covent Garden & Leicester Square u/g,
Charing Cross u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,15,23,59,68,
77A,91,168,171,176,188

*memorabilia about Gilbert and Sullivan operetta provide
an interesting theme in this pub*

Sir William Schwenck Gilbert

near Charing Cross Pier, WC2

transport: Embankment u/g, Charing Cross u/g & rail;
buses 6,9,11,13,15,23,77A,91,176

*small bronze figures of Comedy and Tragedy are on each
side of this medallion of 1914, erected in memory of the
parodist, librettist, playwright and poet William Gilbert
(1836-1911). He was well-known, with Arthur Sullivan,
for light operas such as 'Trial by Jury' and the
'Gondoliers'. The plaque also shows the Gilbert coat of
arms and is by Sir George James Frampton*

Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan

Victoria Embankment Gardens, east from Embankment
station, SW1

transport: Embankment u/g, Charing Cross u/g & rail;
buses 6,9,11,13,15,23,77A,91,176

*this 1903 memorial by Sir William Goscombe John is to
the composer Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900) who, with
William Gilbert, wrote light operas such as 'Trial by Jury'
and the 'Gondoliers'. The memorial bust is set on a plinth
against which the mourning female figure of Music leans*

Queen Elizabeth Hall

South Bank, SE1
020 7960 4242 (box office)

transport: Embankment u/g, Charing Cross & Waterloo
u/g & rail; buses 1,26,59,68,76,168,171,172,176,188,
341,381; boat Waterloo Millennium and Embankment
Piers

*part of the South Bank complex, this hall, opened in
1967, can seat 900 for operas and musicals. It is only
open in the evenings for events*

Royal Opera House

Bow Street, Covent Garden, WC2
020 7212 9389 (information), 020 7304 4000 (box office
& tours) www.royalopera.org

transport: Covent Garden u/g, Charing Cross u/g & rail;
buses 1,6,9,11,13,15,23,26,59,68,76,77,77A,91,168,171,
172,176,188; boat Savoy & Embankment Piers

opening: tours Mon-Sat 10.30, 12.30, 14.30
admission charge for tours

*the leading venue for opera performances. Tours offer a
unique glimpse behind the scenes of one of the busiest
opera houses in the world. The Backstage Tour gives an
introduction to the history of the House, its
redevelopment and aspects of its productions. You may
be able to see performances being rehearsed or artistes in
costume - what and where you are shown depends on
what is going on at the time of your visit*

Savoy Theatre

Strand, WC2
020 7836 8888 (box office). 020 7836 8117 (admin)

transport: Temple, Embankment & Covent Garden u/g,
Charing Cross & Waterloo u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,
15,23,26,59,68,76,77A,91,168,171,172,176,188,341;
boat Savoy & Embankment Piers

*originally built in 1881 by the theatre impresario Richard
D'Oyly Carte (1844-1901) to stage the light operas of
Gilbert and Sullivan, this theatre was transformed into an
interesting example of art deco work in the 1930s. It was
the first London theatre to be lit by electricity*

Queen's Chapel of the Savoy

Savoy Place, Strand, WC2
020 7836 7221

transport: Temple, Embankment & Covent Garden u/g,
Charing Cross & Waterloo u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,
15,23,26,59,68,76,77A,91,168,171,172, 176,188,341;
boat Savoy & Embankment Piers

opening: Tue-Fri 11.30-15.30

*there is a stained glass window memorial to the theatre
impresario, Richard D'Oyly Carte (1844-1901) who staged
the light operas of Gilbert and Sullivan at the Savoy
Theatre (just round the corner in the Strand). It shows a
procession of angelic musicians*

Wilton's Music Hall

Grace's Alley, Wellclose Square, E1
020 7702 9555

transport: Shadwell u/g & DLR; buses 100, D3

*originally built in 1858 as an East End music hall, this
theatre fell into neglect. In 1999 it was restored and
reopened by Broomhill Opera for staging musical theatre
and opera. It has a special 'pay what you can' scheme for
local people*

Sundial

Savoy Gardens, WC2

transport: Temple, Embankment & Covent Garden u/g,
Charing Cross & Waterloo u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,
15,23,26,59,68,76,77A,91,168,171,172,176,188,341;
boat Savoy & Embankment Piers

*a sundial of 1989 commemorates the theatrical
impresario, Richard D'Oyly Carte (1889-1901) and other
members of the Cartes family and Chairmen of the
SavoyTheatre. D'Oyly Carte produced the first operettas*

by 'Gilbert and Sullivan' and in 1881 built the nearby Savoy Theatre

Sarastro

126 Drury Lane, WC2
020 7836 0101

transport: Covent Garden & Holborn u/g; buses 1,59,68, 91,168,171,188

opening: daily noon-23.30

you can dine and hear live opera on Sunday and Monday evenings at this restaurant

Sadlers Wells Theatre

Rosebery Avenue, EC1
020 7863 8000 (box office)

transport: Angel u/g, Farringdon u/g & rail; buses 19,30, 38,73,153,214,341

facilities: tours covering the control rooms & technical galleries (75 mins prebook 3rd Friday in month at noon)

the original theatre was built in 1683 as a side attraction to the medicinal well borehole at the site. Between 1893-1906 it was a skating rink, a pickle factory and a boxing arena, then reverted back to use as a theatre presenting ballet, dance and opera often from visiting companies from abroad

Opera Tavern

21 Catherine Street, Covent Garden, WC2B
020 7379 9832

transport: Covent Garden & Leicester Square u/g, Charing Cross u/g & rail; buses 6,9,11,13,15,23,24,29, 77A,91,176

facilities: bar food (noon-20.00)

opening: Mon-Sat 11.00-23.00

posters and portraits of stars decorate the walls of this pub

HOK International Ltd

216 Oxford Street, W1

transport: Bond Street & Oxford Circus u/g; buses 3,6,7, 8,10,12,13,15,23,25,53,55,73,94,98,113,137,139,159, 176,189

this former department store was converted into an office building in 1999. The vaulted ceiling has murals of operas painted on it

South Bank Arts Centre, SE1

transport: Embankment u/g, Waterloo and Charing Cross u/g & rail; buses 1,26,59,68,76,77,168,171,172,176,188, 211,341,381

the South Bank is an arts complex containing the Royal Festival Hall (music, opera and ballet), Queen Elizabeth Hall (small hall for orchestral & chamber music), Purcell Room (seats 400 for solo recitals & chamber music), Hayward Gallery (5 gallery spaces and 3 open air courts for art & sculpture), National Film Theatre and National Theatre

London Coliseum

St Martin's Lane, WC2
020 7632 8300 (box office)

transport: Leicester Square u/g, Charing Cross u/g & rail; buses 3,6,9,11,12,13,15,23,24,29,53,77A,88,91,139,159, 176

built in 1904 by architect Frank Matcham this opera venue has a tower supporting an illuminated globe and the first

revolving stage in Britain and has been the home of the English National Opera since the late 1960s

refurbished & reopened in 2004 with new facilities it has been restored to its original colours of gold, cream and white with purple drapes and gold tassels on the boxes. The terracotta façade has been restored with its original lions and angels while a new glass vaulted roof can be seen from inside

Museum of London

150 London Wall, EC2Y
020 7600 3699 www.museumoflondon.org.uk

transport: Barbican, St Paul's & Moorgate u/g, Liverpool Street u/g & rail, City Thameslink rail; buses 8,56,100, 172,242

facilities: audio tapes and braille sheets; disabled access via ramps; disabled wcs; library; restaurant and snacks; shop

opening: Mon-Sat 10.00-17.50, Sun noon-17.50 (last admission 17.30)
admission free

among the interesting variety of material about London is a collection of costumes and accessories from the late 18th century to 1970 associated with the theatre and performing arts (music hall, opera, ballet, circus, cabaret & television)

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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