

▶ London

LONDON defies all expectations. This cornerstone of western civilization is hip yet traditional, edgy yet gracious. Whether you're seeking the hippest club or looking for a dose of history and culture, London does not disappoint. Packed with all forms of entertainment, stylish shops, grand monuments, museums and of course, British wit and hospitality, it is an exciting playground for just about everyone.

Go for a ride on a double-decker bus, grab a pint at an old ale house, get your ration of Shepard's pie or beans and eggs. Also make sure you indulge in the numerous international delights and festivities in town. One of the more alluring, and often surprising, facets of London is its rich cultural diversity. England's colonial legacy has today marked its capital as one of the most multicultural cities in Europe. There are tons of ethnic enclaves and neighborhoods brimming with little restaurants and shops serving up some of the most delicious meals and displaying interesting knick-knacks from around the world. Indulge in its cosmopolitan flair and you'll find London at once captivating and inviting, sophisticated and down to earth.

Beware of your cash flow, though. London is far from a budget traveler's dream - it has the second highest cost of living worldwide next to Tokyo. Plan carefully in terms of lodging, meals and traveling around and you'll be treated to an exceptional experience unrivaled by any other city in Europe.

▶▶ Getting There

See **pages 12-17** for information on tours and transport to and from London and England.

▶▶ From the Airport

London is generally the most common and cheapest entry-point for visitors to continental Europe. It is served by two international airports, **Heathrow (LHR)** - the busiest in the world - and **Gatwick (GTW)**. Both airports lie on the outskirts of the city with easily accessible rail transport into the city of London.

From Heathrow Airport

The cheapest option to London is the Underground (or "tube"). The **Piccadilly Line** runs from Heathrow terminals to the heart of the city. The fare is £4 one-way. The trip takes about 50-60 minutes and runs frequently until 11:30pm daily. The new **Heathrow Connect** to/from Paddington Station costs £8.50 o/w, £16.50 r/t and take about 25 minutes.

If you are in a hurry, the **Heathrow Express** train zips non-stop to Paddington station in 15-20 minutes for



▶▶ Visitor Info

www.visitlondon.com

▶▶ Quick Facts

Calling Information

Country Code: 44

Calling in the UK: add a "0" before the area code

Calling overseas: 00+country code+area code+number

Currency & Exchange Rates

Currency: British Pound (£)

Currency Breakdown: 100 Pence equals £1

Exchange Rates: £1 costs: US\$1.65/€1.15/AUD\$1.54/CAN\$1.60

Must See/Must Do

Fish n' chips, Old London Town, English Countryside

Say What!

Subway=Tube; Toilet=Loo;
Cigarette=Fag; Kiss=Snog

▶▶ Featured Hostels

Hostels listed in alphabetical order. See **page 103** for a key to hostel icons.

CLINK78

78 King's Cross Road, *Kings Cross*
Dorms £10+; Private £20+ /pp
T: Kings Cross/St Pancras
(0207-183-9400)

www.clinkhostel.com

Clink78 combines 200 years of history with an utterly cool, elegant interior and modern facilities. In the heart of London, near Kings Cross & St Pancras station. All major London attractions are only a short tube ride away.



▶▶ London ▶▶ Getting There & Featured Hostels

£16.50 one-way, £32 round-trip. From there, you can catch a taxi or transfer to the various tube stations.

From Gatwick Airport

The **Gatwick Express** train departs between 4:30am and 1:30am from the airport to Victoria station, London and takes 30-35 minutes. Cost is £17.90 o/w, £30.80 r/t. From there, you can catch a taxi or transfer to the various tube stations.

From Stansted Airport

Many of the low-cost airlines now use this airport as their main hub. The **Stansted Express** train operates 24hrs from the airport to Liverpool St. station in 45 minutes for £20 o/w, £27.70 r/t. From there, you can catch a taxi or transfer to the various tube stations.

📍 Paddington Station Check-in

On the day of your flight, instead of trekking all your gear to the airport, you can check your bags at the airline check-in desks at Paddington Station (your luggage is sent ahead to the airport). This way you can spend your last hours exploring the city without your luggage and then take either the tube or one of the express trains to the airport.

▶▶ Rail

If you are arriving in London by rail from mainland Europe, it will most likely be via the famed Chunnel. The masterpiece of modern engineering that now links Britain and France is not cheap; however you arrive directly into the beautifully redeveloped **Waterloo** station on the south side of the Thames. Other major rail arrival points include **Victoria** and **Paddington** Stations. Connections to various tube lines are available from all three stations.

▶▶ Bus

Many long-distance bus lines travel to and from London (via train through the Chunnel or ferry). On a single bus you can traverse the entire European continent to Istanbul, Turkey. The major coach company is **National Express** (affiliated with Eurolines). Its buses arrive and depart from **Victoria Coach Station**, adjacent to the Victoria train station.

▶▶ Ferry

A sometimes comfortable and often very affordable means of reaching Britain and London from Europe is by boat. Ferries leave from Germany, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Spain and other countries for various British ports, the largest of which is Dover.

▶▶ Getting Around

London's subway system, the **Underground** (the "tube"), is probably the most famous in the world. One of the first to be built, the tube today runs as well as any other in the world. It is the best and most

▶▶ Featured Hostels

CLINK261

261-265 Grays Inn Road, *Kings Cross Dorms* £10+; Private £20+/pp
T: Kings Cross/St Pancras (0207-7833-9400)
www.clinkhostels.com
Clink261, formerly known as Ashlee House has been renamed & refurbished! Tastefully designed in the style of East London. In the heart of London, a short walk from Kings Cross & St Pancras Station. Modern, clean & comfortable.



DOVER CASTLE HOSTEL

6A Great Dover Street, *Southwark Dorms* £14+ night; Weekly £80+/pp
T: Borough Tube Station (0207-403-7773)
www.dovercastlehostel.com
If you're looking for a pleasant stay in one of the most exciting cities in Europe, just check in at Dover Castle and enjoy the lively atmosphere with our friendly staff. Rates include breakfast, linen and free luggage storage.



EQUITY POINT LONDON

100-102 Westbourne Terrace, *Paddington Dorms* £17+; Private £35+/pp
T: Paddington/Lancaster Gate Stations (0207-087-8001)
www.equity-point.com
Equity Point has opened a new hostel in Paddington located next to the tube station. Combining a Georgian style building with modern updates we have added inside, the result is comfort with a great atmosphere.



GENERATOR HOSTEL

37 Tavistock Place, *Russell Square Dorms* £10+; Private £20+/pp
T: Russell Square/St Pancras (0207-388-7666)
www.generatorhostels.com
UK's largest, liveliest and funkiest backpacker hostel with over 800 beds and famous for its party atmosphere. We are open 24 hours per day, 365 days a year with friendly staff who are always on hand to help.



efficient way to get around London. A single fare is based on zones and ranges from £4 to £19. You can purchase the **Travelcard** for only £6.60 (zones 1 & 2) which can be used on the tube, buses and light rail after 9:30am daily and all day on the weekends or £8 anytime. The **weekly card** is only £27.60 (zone 1-2). You can now also purchase the **Oyster** pay as you go card which allows you to put money on the card and use it as needed. The fares are £1.30-2.20 cheaper than purchasing a cash fare.

Please note that the London tube map is not always geographically correct - some subway stops are very far apart — often not what most consider walking distance.

Don't forget the infamous double-decker buses. These icons of London are great for sightseeing around town and essential after midnight when the tube stops running. The letter "N" before the number denotes the night buses. Single fares cost .90p to £2. The Travel Card is valid on these buses.

▶ Things to See & Do

▶ Tourist Information

The **Britain Visitor Centre** is located near Piccadilly Circus at 1 Regent Street. A large tourist office can also be found in Victoria Station, which offers help with accommodation bookings. Smaller branches are located at Paddington and Waterloo stations and at Gatwick and Heathrow airports.

▶ Visitor Discount Cards & Passes

🇸 London Pass

Pay one price and get free admission/travel card for transport to over 60 attractions, museums, tours, etc. Passes are available for 1 (£45), 2 (£58), 3 (£71) and 6 (£94) days. www.londonpass.com

🇸 English Heritage Overseas Visitor Pass

Get unlimited free entry to over 120 of England's finest castles, abbeys, Roman remains and prehistoric monuments including the awe-inspiring Stonehenge, Dover Castle and the Secret Wartime Tunnels. Costs only £21.50 for a 7-day pass, £26 for 2 weeks. www.english-heritage.org.uk (under Properties).

▶ Neighborhoods

East End

London's East End is one of the most enjoyable, interesting, and affordable neighborhoods to explore. Once infamous as **Jack the Ripper's** haunt, this historic conglomerate of formerly immigrant neighborhoods is now a lively, ethnically mixed, and young section of the city. It is here that many students and artists come to London and attempt to

▶ Featured Hostels

ST CHRISTOPHER'S INN - THE OASIS

161-165 Borough High Street, *Southwark*
Dorms £10+; T: Hammersmith
(207-407-6266)

www.st-christophers.co.uk/london
Kick back at this fantastic female only hostel minutes from London Bridge train station. If you can tear yourself away from this great London Hostel then be sure to take a right at the river to marvel at London Bridge.



ST CHRISTOPHER'S INN HAMMERSMITH

28 Hammersmith Bway, *Hammersmith*
Dorms £10+; T: Hammersmith
(208-748-5285)

www.st-christophers.co.uk/london
Right in the heart of West London's transport hub, this hostel is the ideal location for exploring London. We're right next door to one of London's biggest bus stations. You can't get more central London!



ST CHRISTOPHER'S INN CAMDEN

48-50 Camden High Street, *Camden*
Dorms £10+; T: Camden Town station
(207 388 1012)

www.st-christophers.co.uk/london
Be bohemian north of the city centre in this London Backpacker's Hostel. Party with the rock bands at Belushi's, shop around the famous Camden Markets and drink a little Jager into the early hours, at one of the best Hostels in London.



ST CHRISTOPHER'S INN GREENWICH

189 Greenwich High Road, *Greenwich*
Dorms £10+; Train: Greenwich
(208-748-5285)

www.st-christophers.co.uk/london
Escape the smog but stay within striking distance of the city centre in one of the best London Backpackers Hostels. Launch yourself into Greenwich Park or walk under the river Thames, through an amazing tunnel.



set up shop. **Brick Lane** is an excellent East End street to explore. At the southernmost part of Brick Lane near the Aldgate East tube stop and Whitechapel High Street, is a long string of Bangladeshi restaurants and shops. Even the street signs in this area are in Bengali. As you proceed north, exploring off-beat furniture and Bangladeshi outposts, you will find several of the most charming and down-to-earth coffee shops in London.

Also check out the one of the best flower markets in London. On Sunday morning, **Columbia Road** erupts into a fantastic array of beautiful colors. Just don't show up any other time, as this otherwise quaint and attractive street may be completely dead.

Islington

In recent years Islington has become increasingly popular and youthful. Lining Upper Street between the Angel tube stop and the Highbury and Islington tube stations are some of the most affordable, yet most delicious restaurants in London. You will also find many fantastic, low-key bars in this exciting, authentic London neighborhood. Islington is a great place to spend a night out and get away from the swarms of tourists in SoHo.

📍 Portobello Market

If you are into antiques, knick-knacks, second hand clothing and the like, head to this market on Saturdays. Located off Kensington Park Road in Notting Hill. Take the tube to Notting Hill Gate.

Camden Town

London's punk (and tourist scene) at its best! **Camden Town Market** is the center of this constantly bustling area. Here, not only will you find nose piercings, Mohawks, and some of the most outrageous clubbing clothes anywhere in the world, but strange items you never thought existed. Keep in mind, though, this especially trendy, touristy and commercial area can get very crowded.

Before leaving, be sure to check out one of London's most beautiful streets - the area on Regent's Park Road between King Henry's Road and Primrose Hill Road, near the Chalk Farm tube station. Here you can enjoy a quick meal or cup of tea at one of the many charming and moderately priced restaurants and coffee shops. Although the punks of Camden Town are long gone, the area has yet to feel too ritzy and posh.

Brixton

Brixton, a unique and interesting neighborhood across the Thames in South London, is worth visiting. With a distinctly Caribbean flavor due to the huge numbers of immigrants, Reggae music is always in the air as well as a more laid back, Caribbean attitude and energy.

▶▶ Featured Hostels

ST CHRISTOPHER'S INN - THE VILLAGE

161-165 Borough High Street, *Southwark*
Dorms £10+; T: London Bridge
(207-939-9710)

www.st-christophers.co.uk/london
This is the flagship London Hostel complete with a nightclub, Belushi's bar and a comedy club. A stone's throw from the attractions of the South Bank, including the London Eye, the Tate Modern, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.



ST CHRISTOPHER'S INN - THE INN

161-165 Borough High Street, *Southwark*
Dorms £10+; T: Hammersmith
(207-407-2392)

www.st-christophers.co.uk/london
Check out this London Hostel and Gastro Pub with a menu packed full of fresh food, from the nearby Borough Market. Take a trip through the market stalls and visit Sir Francis Drake's old ship - The Golden Hind and the London Dungeon.



ST CHRISTOPHER'S INN SHEPHERD'S BUSH

28 Hammersmith Bway, *Hammersmith*
Dorms £10+; T: Shepherd's Bush (not Shepherd's Bush Green)
(208-735-0270)

www.st-christophers.co.uk/london
When you stay at this Hostel in London you're guaranteed a good time. No other London Youth Hostel is closer to the deafening beauty that is The 02 Shepherd's Bush Empire and no other London Hostel is closer to the biggest shopping centre in Europe - Westfield, just over the road.



