



Welcome To London!

Everybody loves this extraordinary, cosmopolitan and ancient city! Now London is one of the most modern cities in the world. It is a centre of technology, a noisy and chaotic town, but it can also be very peaceful and relaxing with its many beautiful parks and squares.

Basically, you can do anything you want in London. So ... are you ready? Let's take a look together!

The British people have always been great explorers and their museums are full of things from all over the world. In the **British Museum**, for example, you can admire the Rosetta Stone (which helped decipher Egyptian hieroglyphics), mummies from Egypt (including Cleopatra's), as well as Roman, ancient Greek, Assyrian, Babylonian and Sumerian antiquities.

In the east of the city, along the **River Thames** and just by the **Tower Bridge** (which opens to let big ships pass through) you should visit the **Tower of London**. This is a Norman fortress built by William the Conqueror where many famous historical figures were imprisoned (or beheaded) for all sorts of reasons. At the Tower you can see big black ravens, which are fed by **The Beefeaters**, the guardians of the monument. You can also visit the **Crown Jewels** collection, which includes the famous Koh-i-Noor diamond.

One of the most important churches in London is **Westminster Abbey**, where all the Kings and Queens of England were crowned. Many of them are buried there as well. In **Poets' Corner** you can also see the tombs of many famous English poets and writers such as Geoffrey Chaucer, Charles Dickens and Rudyard Kipling. Next to the Abbey you can admire the **Houses**

of Parliament, with the **Clock Tower** housing the famous **Big Ben**. This famous clock is one of the symbols of London.

Right in the middle of London is **Piccadilly Circus**, one of the most exciting squares in London, with its statue of Eros. Start your trip shopping from here and visit Oxford Street, Tottenham Court Road, Regent Street and Bond Street.

Trafalgar Square takes its name from Admiral Nelson's victory over the French and Spanish navies in 1805 at Trafalgar off the southern coast of Spain. In the middle of the square you can see Nelson's statue on top of a tall column. Londoners usually meet here to celebrate the New Year. On one side of the Square you can't miss the **National Gallery**, which contains famous paintings from all over the world.

Buckingham Palace is where the Queen lives when she's in London. It is a huge building with about 1,000 rooms. You really must see the **Changing of the Guard**: this takes place in



front of the gates of the Palace every day at 11.30 am. The Guards wear fantastic red uniforms and big bearskin hats. When the Queen is at home, the **Royal Standard** flies over the palace.



Tired of old-style museums? Then it's time for you to visit **Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum**, where you can come face-to-face with famous people and shake hands with kings and queens, movie stars like Elizabeth Taylor and Humphrey Bogart, and pop singers like Michael Jackson, The Beatles and Elvis Presley. They are not the real thing, though, they're figures made of wax and dressed up in the real clothes of the famous people they represent!



Kids (and adults!) love riding **The London Eye**, a giant observation wheel placed on the South Bank of the River Thames. From the top, 135 metres above the ground, you can enjoy a breathtaking panorama of London including the nearby Houses of Parliament.

Finally, there are the **London parks**, which are attractions in themselves. Hyde Park, Green Park, St James's Park (next to Buckingham Palace) or Regent's Park can offer you a relaxing break from the traffic and chaos of the City. Have a sandwich and enjoy a boat ride on the **Serpentine** in Hyde Park, visit **London Zoo** in Regent's Park, or watch the Guard walking along the **Mall** in St James's Park ... there are always plenty of things to do and see!



1 Now answer these questions.

- 1 What can you see in the British Museum?
- 2 Why does the Tower of London have such a unique place in British history?
- 3 What is a 'Beefeater'?
- 4 What is the 'Koh-i-Noor' and where can you see it?
- 5 Your friends love shopping: where do you advise them to go and why?
- 6 Who was Nelson and why is he famous?
- 7 Why is Madame Tussaud's different from all the other London museums?
- 8 What is 'The Changing of the Guard'?