

Maritime Travel

Inside Scoop: **LONDON**

Know before you go: travel isn't just your destination, it's also the journey

Tea biscuits with jam and clotted

cream is one of the best treats ever!

With a pot of hot tea, it's a great way to spend an afternoon or three.

Read and take this **Inside Scoop** with your documents.

travel: delighting in the spirit of adventure • a vacation from home to explore places that are not your home • knowing life is different, knowing this is a joy of travel • enjoying the journey, not just the destination • a privilege best used with patience, humour and curiosity • fun • coming home with great tales •

£ Pound or € Euro?

London is a terrific spot to pick up unique gifts (and special souvenirs for you). The UK uses pound sterling ("quid" slang for "pound"), the Great British Pound and the "pence" for coins. ATMs and banks abound and major chip/PIN credit cards can be used easily. If planning to visit Europe, the switch to Euros makes for simple conversion. Euro bills are accepted at most airports.

Your Counsellor

Our knowledge and experience help turn dreams into first-rate vacations. Ask your counsellor about any details, including:

- day trips from London
- special seasonal activities
- connections by air & sea
- theatre tickets
- insurance coverage.

Maritime Travel

We Know Travel Best.™

Whether a tour through history or glimpse of the latest art, England swings! With 8.7 million London residents, the public transit system is terrific (the "underground" or "tube") so it's easy to get around, even into town from the airports. With thousands of attractions and events and more than 300 galleries and museums; know that you won't see everything. And, don't always power through—sit in a pub (some great British beer) or a café and just watch the action. Some tips:

- Travel with the assurance your family/friends know how to reach you in case of an emergency. Before you leave, give out your information including full itinerary/phone numbers.
- Everyone must have a valid passport www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport/index.asp.
- The United Kingdom (and Europe) uses credit card chip/PIN technology. Notify credit card companies of the dates you'll be away.
- Internet access is easy and affordable at your hotel and in Internet cafés. Check with your cell provider about roaming charges.
- For electrical items, pack a universal power plug. The UK uses 230 volt/50Hz. Most hotels have hair dryers.

For peace of mind, we strongly recommend Maritime Travel cancellation/interruption and medical insurance. Above all, travel with a positive attitude—having patience and a spirit of adventure will carry you through anything!

Fancy a spot of lunch...in Europe?

The Chunnel high-speed train will whisk you to Paris or Brussels in 2.5 hours—you could be lunching on Belgium's *moules et frites* (mussels with *yummy crisp fries*) or having a café au lait by the Seine in Paris. The channel tunnel, opened in 1994, has an intriguing history. In 1802, a road tunnel to connect England and France was suggested to Napoleon!

Tip: Want to use BritRail, London Travel Cards, Chunnel and/or Eurail passes? No matter where (or how) you want to go—talk to your counsellor as many excursions and tickets are best (or can only be) booked in advance. Buying in advance also allows you to pay in Canadian funds and budget better before you go.

Pack Strategically

The world is overrun with black bags: put coloured tape or ribbon on your luggage to spot it quickly. Put your name outside and inside and remove old tags. In your carry-on, pack valuables such as jewellery; over-the-counter and prescription drugs in original containers with dosage and your doctor's phone number. Pack liquids/lotions/gels in checked bags (inside plastic bags). Carry-on restrictions mean the maximum size container is 100ml(3.4 oz). All must fit in 1 clear/resealable plastic bag of no more than 1 litre (often at the start of screening). You may take baby formula, food/milk for a child aged 2 or under (0-24 months).

Items regular travellers pack in carry-on: pen/notebook, hand wipes, munchies. Also permitted: cell phones, laptops, disposable razors, umbrellas, canes and nail clippers (although one zealous Heathrow security guard snapped off the file). Check with your airline and www.catsa.gc.ca/home for restrictions.

"She was a Daaaay Tripper..."

London is a convenient base for day trips. Whether **Brighton** for a classic seaside vacation (and Sea Life Centre) or **Chester**, the walled city, numerous famous spots are just a train or bus ride away. In **Bath**, see the renovated Roman Baths (how did that town get its name?) and Jane Austen's house. **Stratford Upon Avon** is home of arguably the world's best writer, William Shakespeare. Wander **Oxford** or **Cambridge** and pretend you're a student. **Stonehenge** is barren and beautiful with its ancient stone circle. **Blenheim Palace**, a Baroque masterpiece, has a great clock tower, and library with magnificent painted ceilings. The gardens are spectacular with a Butterfly House, herbs/lavender and a train with free rides. **Thorpe Park** in Chertsey is a top theme park; the world's first 10-loop rollercoaster. **Cornwall's Eden Project** is a 35-acre biodiversity oasis with 100,000+ plants. North of Chester, **Liverpool** is home of (*yeah! yeah! yeah!*), **The Beatles** Story at the Albert Dock, Penny Road and many other haunts in a 2hr Magical Mystery Tour (yes, the boys still visit).

Your Airline

Sign up online for your airline(s) email or text flight notifications as your flight could be delayed (the plane might be flying in). CATSA notes “*Travellers should arrive at the airport earlier than usual, exercise patience and contact their airline for further information on their flight(s).*” Airline staff are on duty some 3hrs prior: due to staffing and security, check-in closes 1hr before departure. If late, you’re not entitled to board (or a refund). Unless booked ahead, seats are first-come first-served. **For check-in and carry-on baggage** check with your airline as size/weight restrictions vary. **Entry & Departure:** no visa needed for stays of up to 6 months. UK departure taxes are included in your airline ticket. Keep a separate photocopy or cell phone picture of your passport’s ID page with other records.



Get Packing Checklist and General Planning & Packing Tips

at www.maritimetravel.ca/inside-scoops

- Your sense of adventure & humour!

Coming Home

Travellers come home with more than great memories, but there’s a few things you can’t bring home: plants, meat/animal products and endangered species parts. Don’t accept anything from any person whom you do not know or trust; note customs limits, including alcohol and tobacco. Know your limits and exemptions, www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/bgb-rmf-eng.html. **Shops and Souvenirs:** Covent Garden Market is central with artsy offerings. Camden Market, reached by bus or the tube, open 7 days a week (not Christmas Day) has open air/indoor markets; avoid Sundays (the busiest day). Whether Oxford Street, Marks & Spencer (great foodstuffs that make great gifts), Selfridges or Bond Street, shopping is an art form. New styles and the latest labels will make you a stand-out (hopefully not at customs).



Websites and emails in blue are hyperlinked; just click!

Canadians: In an emergency or if you want to read a Canadian newspaper, The High Commission is Canada House in London by Trafalgar Square, tel 020 7004 6000. www.canadainternational.gc.ca/united_kingdom-royaume_uni/index.aspx. Or call Global Affairs, 613-996-8885 (collect if needed), sos@international.gc.ca.

What to Do...What to Do...

There’s lots to do from watching The Changing of the Guard, wandering The Tower of London or Westminster Abbey, maybe an evening visit to Buckingham Palace (The Queen’s official residence: the flag is flying if she’s there). Plan ahead by putting attractions in priority; you can’t see everything so think geographically—if going to one part of London, schedule visits to other sites in the same area. If you get weary, jump on a double-decker bus and head up top for a great round-trip view (ask the driver to call your stop). When you’re weary, head to any local café for a “cuppa,” cup of hot tea, English style. London is packed with thousands of attractions, many with free admission, so soak it up. A few of the most popular and ones we love:

Terrific theatres: pre-buy tickets from us for the major shows. No need to sit behind a pole or tip your concierge handsomely—it’s part of our booking service!

London Eye www.londoneye.com: the world’s tallest observation wheel is a fantastic way to see the city and famous landmarks. With a 40km panoramic view, the half hour “flight” offers stunning views from within a capsule (with seating, air-conditioned in summer). Special flights are available—such as at night or with champagne.

Fabulous food: Dining out takes on a whole new tone in this town...there’s great diversity with every possible kind of restaurant available. Room service is one of the great pleasures of life but don’t hesitate to walk around and explore as from curry houses to Michelin-starred spots, As in Canada, tipping is between 15-20%.

Royal tours: Tradition, pageantry, history and really really cool hats: Windsor Castle offers tours of one of the largest inhabited castles in the world. Imposing towers and a stunning skyline are seen while wandering about the charming town. Besides St. George’s Chapel, visitors can usually see 4 areas: the State Apartments, Queen Mary’s Doll House, the Castle Exhibition and Drawings Gallery. Semi-State Rooms are open October to March. In Windsor, for kids AND adults—Legoland!

Marvellous museums: There’s no better city to indulge in history and museums—all are top-notch. The British Museum showcases objects from around the world from prehistoric to modern times. The Wellcome Collection www.wellcomecollection.org offers a unique mix of art, science and medical galleries to “consider what it means to be human.” The Science Museum showcases 300 years of science with more than 2,000 hands-on exhibits. At the Natural History Museum, see the permanent dinosaur collection, a life-size blue whale and an earthquake simulator. The Victoria and Albert celebrates all things artistic with an unequalled collection. **Gorgeous galleries:** Tate Britain and Tate Modern hold distinct collections, the National Gallery houses one of the world’s greatest European collections and The National Portrait Gallery features all mediums in historical and contemporary art more.

Now to those tea biscuits (scones): High tea is a lovely experience. Many hotels and, well, tea rooms, offer different versions. Dainty sandwiches with crusts cut off, delicate cakes and tiny tarts abound. Of course, pots of tea are consumed (some serve champagne or punch). Most always, the dress code is more formal, men to wear jacket and ties (be gone jeans and sneakers!) and one must be ever so polite, a great introduction to train the kids...reserve in advance for popular ones. Before you visit, surf www.visitlondon.com as they say in Britain — “brilliant!”

Being There

The overall climate is mild, temperatures not much lower than 32F/0C in winter and not much higher than 90F/32C in summer. It also means damp, often rainy and frequent changes. The seasons are the same in Canada; hotter in July/August, colder in January/February/March. The UK is on Greenwich Mean Time and follows British Summer Time (Daylight Saving Time) of 1hr ahead. **Tip:** you don’t need an International Driver’s Licence (take your provincial driver’s licence); most cars are standard so you pay more for automatics. Since they drive on the left and have many roundabouts, first get comfortable with the differences first.

Our 24/7 Emergency Service

We constantly survey airlines, local tour companies and hotels to ensure they meet our customer service standards, so don’t let a problem ruin your holiday. Nearly all issues can be handled quickly on site—first seek help from the venue’s local staff. Otherwise, call our Emergency Travel Service at **1-888-551-1181**. Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable. Schedule changes can occur and airlines and tour operators have the right to change flight and/or tour times, alter, combine services or substitute accommodations. Your counsellor will work with you to ensure you receive information as soon as possible and ensure satisfaction. See your brochure and ticket terms and conditions.

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