



London

London is the capital of Great Britain, its political, economic and cultural centre. It's one of the largest cities in the world. Its population is more than million people. London is situated on the river Thames. The city is very old and beautiful. It was founded more than two thousand years ago. Traditionally London is divided into several parts: the City, the West End, the East End and Westminster. The City is the oldest part of London, its financial and business centre. The heart of the City is the Stock Exchange. Westminster is the most important part of the capital. It's the administrative centre. The Houses of Parliament, the seat of the British Government, are there. It's a very beautiful building with two towers and a very big clock called Big Ben. Big Ben is really the bell which strikes every quarter of an hour. Opposite the Houses of Parliament is Westminster Abbey. It's a very beautiful church built over 900 years ago. The tombs of many great statesmen, scientists and writers are there.



London



Big Ben

BIG BEN The name "Big Ben" is generally known to describe the clock tower as a whole. However, "Big Ben" is actually the principal bell within the tower.

There are two theories of how the bell got its name. The first suggests that it was taken from the nickname of a champion heavyweight boxer of the time called Ben Caunt. The second and more probable explanation, is that it was named after the bulky Welshman Sir Benjamin Hall, who was First Commissioner of Works from 1855 to 1858 and whose name was inscribed on the bell.

The Clock Tower is 96.3m (316 ft) tall and the Bell weighs 13.8 tonnes. Big Ben is not open to the public.



Big Ben



Buckingham Palace

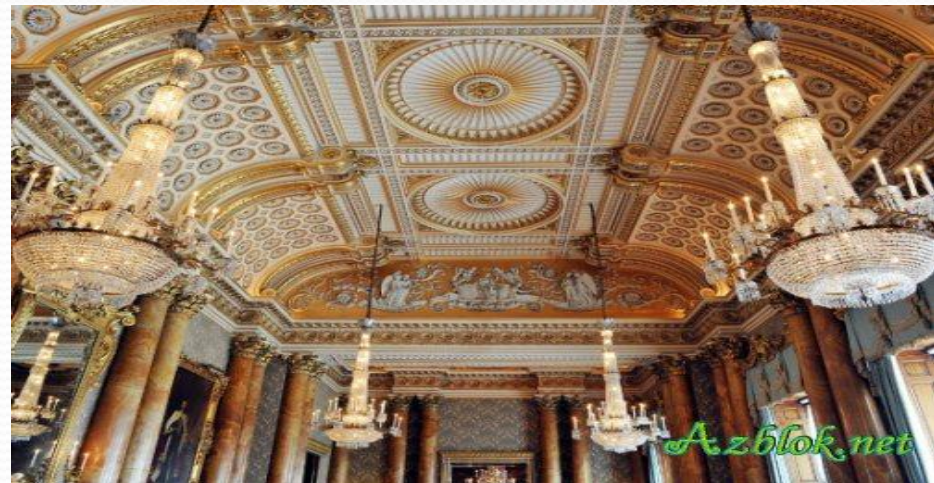
This is the official London residence of HM Queen Elizabeth II. The palace became the official royal palace of the British monarch in 1837 and is now the world's largest "working" royal palace.

It is also a venue for state occasions and royal entertaining, as well as a base for all Heads of State who are officially visiting London. The palace consists of 19 state rooms, 52 principal bedrooms, 188 staff bedrooms, 92 offices and 78 bathrooms, and the state rooms were made open to the public in the 1990s.

Other public attractions include the Royal Collection (priceless furnishings, paintings, fittings and other artifacts, which can be viewed at certain times of year), the Queen's Gallery (open all year round) and the daily Changing of the Guard ceremony.



Buckingham Palace



TOWER BRIDGE

Tower Bridge has stood over the River Thames in London since 1894. One of the most iconic landmarks of London, it is not to be confused with London Bridge upstream. It is 143 feet above the river at high tide.

The towers themselves are 213 feet tall, and sit on piers in the river. The Victorian Gothic architecture was designed to "harmonize" with the Tower of London. It is called Tower Bridge because of its location near the Tower.

Approximately 380,000 tourists visit the bridge annually to view the walkway exhibits and take in the panoramic vistas on each side.



TOWER BRIDGE



The Tower of London

More formally known as Her Majesty's Palace and Fortress, the Tower of London is most famously known as a prison and execution site for high-profile criminals, usually accused of high treason. Enemies of the state were brought to it along the Thames, entering through 'Traitor's Gate'.

Key people to be executed here included William Hastings, Anne Boleyn, Catherine Howard, Lady Jane Grey and Robert Devereux.

William the Conqueror ordered it to be built from stone. King John then decided to use it as a Royal Menagerie to house animals from home and abroad. The menagerie was opened to the public in 1804 and thus became London's first zoo.

Apart from being a tourist attraction, the Tower is used to guard the priceless Crown Jewels, used to crown sovereigns on their Coronation Day. The guardians of the Tower wear red tunics and black stockings and are known as the 'Beefeaters'.

The Tower is also the home to 7 black ravens which must be fed at the expense of the government. If no ravens reside at the Tower, then the country is believed to be under threat of invasion!



The Tower of London



ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

The current Cathedral – the fourth to occupy this site – was designed by the court architect Sir Christopher Wren and built between 1675 and 1710 after its predecessor was destroyed in the Great Fire of London. In the crypt are effigies and fragments of stone that pre-date the Cathedral, relics of a medieval world. Here one can see beautiful wrought iron gates of 1700; children still test the acoustics in the Whispering Gallery; and the 1695 organ which Mendelssohn once played is still in use.

The funerals of Lord Nelson, the Duke of Wellington and Sir Winston Churchill have taken place here and the wedding of Charles, Prince of Wales, to Lady Diana Spencer.

Today, St Paul's is still a busy, working church where millions come to worship.



ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL



Trafalgar Square & Nelson's Column

Trafalgar Square was built to commemorate Admiral Nelson on his victory in the Battle of Trafalgar (1805). The present architecture of the square, completed in 1845, is by Sir Charles Barry.

The square is the site of Nelson's Column, which has four giant lions at its base. The square also boasts two water fountains. At the corners of the square are four plinths, of which three of them hold statues of George IV, Henry Havelock, and Sir Charles James Napier. The fourth plinth has temporary exhibitions.

The square is now a popular site for political demonstrations.

It was also very popular for feeding the pigeons, but Mayor of London Ken Livingston decided to get rid of the feeders and the pigeons in 2000, thus destroying a great tourist attraction. There are still a few pigeons left, but it is now against the law to feed them!!

The pigeons have been replaced with a cafe - now that's just what London needed - something different and original!!



Trafalgar Square & Nelson's Column

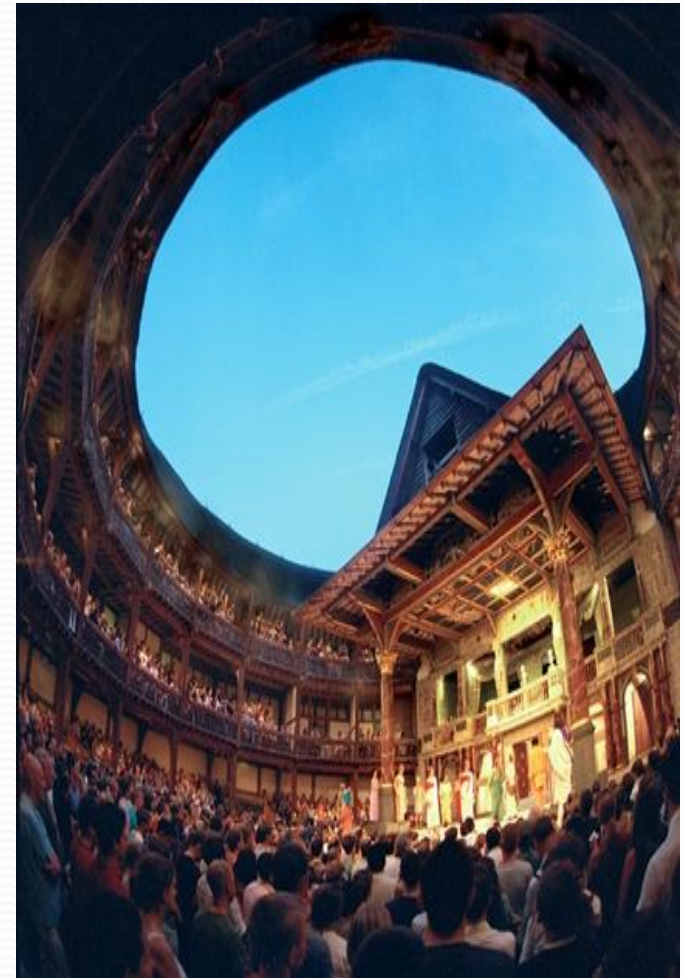


Shakespeare's Globe Theatre

The original Globe Theatre was built in 1599 by the playing company to which William Shakespeare belonged, and destroyed by fire in 1613. It was rebuilt in 1614, closed in 1642, and demolished in 1644. A modern reconstruction of the original Globe, named 'Shakespeare's Globe Theatre', opened in 1997. It was founded by the pioneering American actor/director Sam Wanamaker. Shakespeare's Globe is a unique international resource dedicated to the exploration of Shakespeare's work, and the playhouse for which he wrote.

Open all year round, Shakespeare's Globe Exhibition is the world's largest exhibition devoted to Shakespeare and the London in which he lived and worked.

Plays are performed at the Theatre May to October.



Shakespeare's Globe Theatre



The London Eye

The London Eye is one of London's newest landmarks specially-built to open the 21st century, although it was not open for the New Millennium celebrations as planned.

At 135 metres, it is the tallest wheel of its kind and sits on the South Bank of the River Thames, opposite the Houses of Parliament.

Rotating at a speed of 1 mph, it takes 30 minutes to go through a complete 360°.

People ride the Eye in one of 32 oval-shaped glass bubbles. Famous landmarks visible in the panorama include The Embankment, Charings Cross and Waterloo stations, the Palace of Westminster and Big Ben, Whitehall and many more!

The Eye has provoked other countries to challenge its size. There are plans to build a 175m wheel on the Las Vegas Strip and the Chinese have countered this bid with plans for a 200m wheel in Shanghai.



The London Eye



The London Eye



Madame Tussauds

If you want to hang out with the stars of the celebrity world, why not do it right here in London? Whether you want to mingle with the Beatles or chill out with Liz Hurley, Madame Tussauds has all the best stars all brought together under one roof!

Ok, I must admit, they are made of wax, but the photo opportunities are pretty awesome!

Madame Tussauds has fast become one of London's top attraction, and it's not hard to see why.



Madame Tussauds





Thanks for attention