England

England

Introduction	3	London Area Map	76
Welcome	44	Windsor Castle	77
London Centre West Map	10	Hampton Court	83
London Eye	11	Excursions South Map	95
Westminster	18	Canterbury	96
Trafalgar Square	26	Dover	100
Buckingham Palace	33	Brighton	112
Kensington Gardens	40	Salisbury	118
Carnaby Street	44	Stonehenge	123
British Museum	46	Bath	127
Covent Garden	49	Excursions North Map	137
London Centre East Map	51	Stratford	138
St. Paul's Area	52	Warwick Castle	144
Tower of London	56	Cambridge	151
Tower Bridge	64	Oxford	164
Docklands	68	Bletchley Park	169
Greenwich	71	Memories	180

Introduction

Here are pictures from a visit to Britain, focused on London and southern England.

I arrived armed with a BritRail pass and a Travelcard for the London underground expecting to make good use of both, and I did.

This visit to England was followed by a week in France as part of Astrid Baur's *French Castles Tour*. Photos from that tour are in a second file.

The pictures here are organized geographically, with a map at the beginning of each section.

You will be able to tell that there were many dull and cloudy days, but I was fortunate that there wasn't any heavy rain.

This is a first-time visitor's quick pass over a great deal of fascinating territory, much of it deserving further investigation.

These pictures are assembled for friends who have varying degrees of familiarity with the areas I visited, so you will probably find there's more detail than interests you in some sections. If so, page through quickly.

Hope you enjoy.



Welcome to London

Here we are in London, a town founded by the Romans over 2,000 years ago that has now grown into a city with a metro population of about 14 million.



My place is centrally located where Tottenham Court Road meets Oxford Street. Soho is to the west of me, and the Covent Garden theatre district is to the east.



I'm on the west side of the "West End" theatre district.

Queen's We Will Rock You is playing a block north of me, and ...



... the *Blood Brothers* musical is at the Phoenix a block south.

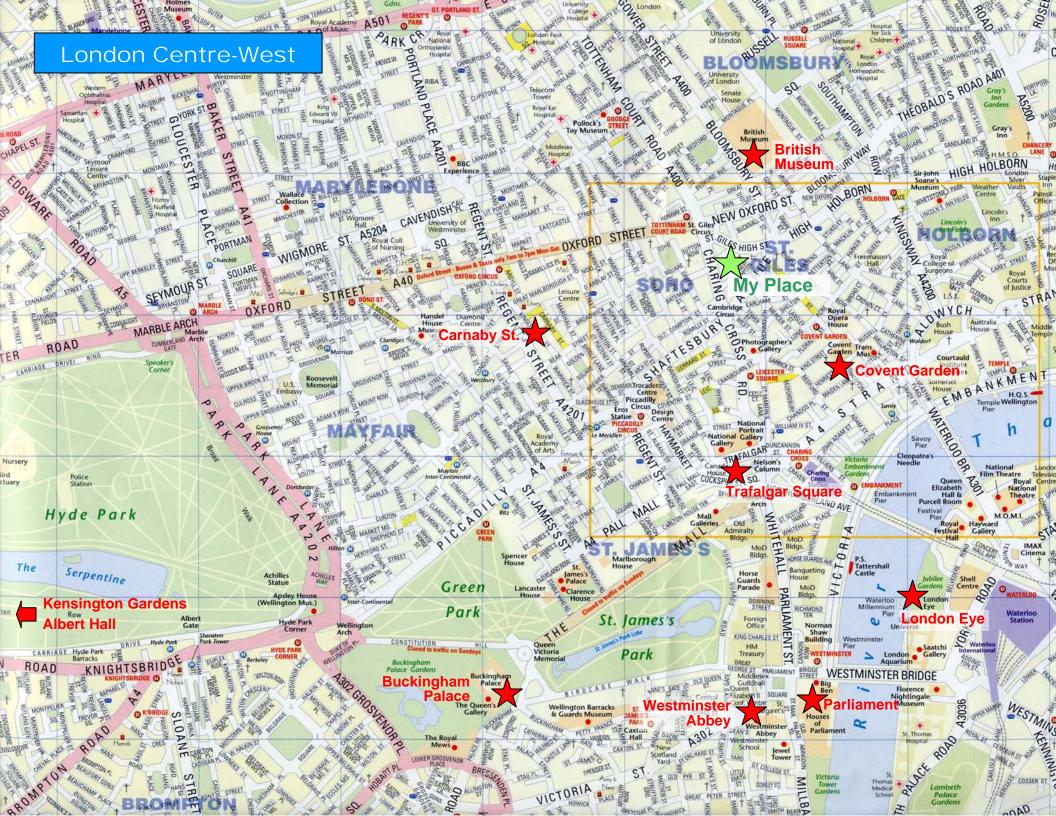


Around the corner is Denmark Street, headquarters for instruments for Britain's enormously successful musical industries, both popular and ...



... more traditional.

But there's a whole other world out there, just at my doorstep.





London Eye

The London Eye towers 443 feet / 135 metres above the Thames River and provides an excellent vantage point for an introduction to the city.



London Eye The Eye's wheel structure carries 32 egg-shaped passenger capsules, each holding up to 25 people. It completes a full rotation in 30 minutes.



London Eye The Eye provides first glimpses of some places to be visited later.



London Eye

Looking south past Great Britain's parliament buildings, properly know as the Palace of Westminster.



London Eye

The Eye provides a clear view of the Westminster clock tower, which houses the famous great bell known as Big Ben.



London Eye The dome of St. Paul's Cathedral dominates the view to the north-east.



London Eye

London has 24 bridges across the Thames, including the Hungerford railway and Golden Jubilee pedestrian bridges (lower), and the Waterloo Bridge (centre).



The Palace of Westminster as seen from across the river: Victoria Tower at the left, the House of Lords and the Commons inside, and the Clock Tower at the right.



Part of the Palace of Westminster as seen from St. Margaret Street. This south-eastern section accommodates the House of Lords.



Westminster's is the largest four-faced chiming clock in the world. The 14-tonne Big Ben bell was hung in 1859.



The Prime Minister's residence at 10 Downing Street was once a must-see stop for tourists, but Downing Street is no longer accessible to the general public.



Westminster Abbey has served as the coronation church for kings and queens for over a thousand years, and as their burial place since the 11th century.



Half national church, half nation museum, the Abbey is crammed with tombs and monuments honouring some of Britain's greatest politicians, poets and artists.



The Abbey incorporates a diverse array of architectural styles. Flying buttresses help redistribute the great weight of the roof.



The quire, a 'church within a church', was where monks once worshipped.



Trafalgar Square is in the heart of London, both physically and spiritually.



Nelson's Column is in the centre of the square, surrounded by four huge bronze lions and memorial fountains.



The column is topped by a statue of Horatio, Viscount Nelson, who successfully commanded the British Fleet at Trafalgar in 1805.



St. Martin-in-the-Fields, on the north-east corner, was erected between 1721 and 1726. Churches have stood on this spot at least since 1222.



The National Gallery flanks the north side of the square.



Canada House, on the west side, was built between 1824 and 1827 to designs by the architect of the British Museum. Canada acquired the building in 1923.



Admiralty Arch, dedicated to the memory of Queen Victoria, separates Trafalgar Square from The Mall, which leads south-west to Buckingham Palace.



Buckingham Palace Buckingham Palace evolved over the centuries from a mansion built for the Duke of Buckingham in 1703.



Buckingham Palace

The Victoria Memorial, featuring a large statue of Queen Victoria, stands at the centre of Queen's Gardens in front of the Palace.



Buckingham Palace

Because it is the official London residence of the British monarch, the Palace is guarded by Queen's Guard units of the British Army.



Buckingham Palace

The Changing of the Guard ceremony draws huge crowds to Buckingham Palace.



Buckingham Palace

The ceremony of handing over of the keys to the Palace takes place to the accompaniment of a full Military Band of about 35 musicians.



Buckingham Palace

Guard units march to and from the Buckingham Palace ceremony from Wellington Barracks and St. James Palace.



Buckingham Palace

The ceremony takes place in the forecourt of the Palace, behind the fence, and is clearly visible to only those who have waited at the fence for hours.



Kensington Gardens

Kensington Palace was the royal residence from the 1690s until 1760. It was the residence of Diana, Princess of Wales, until her death in 1997.



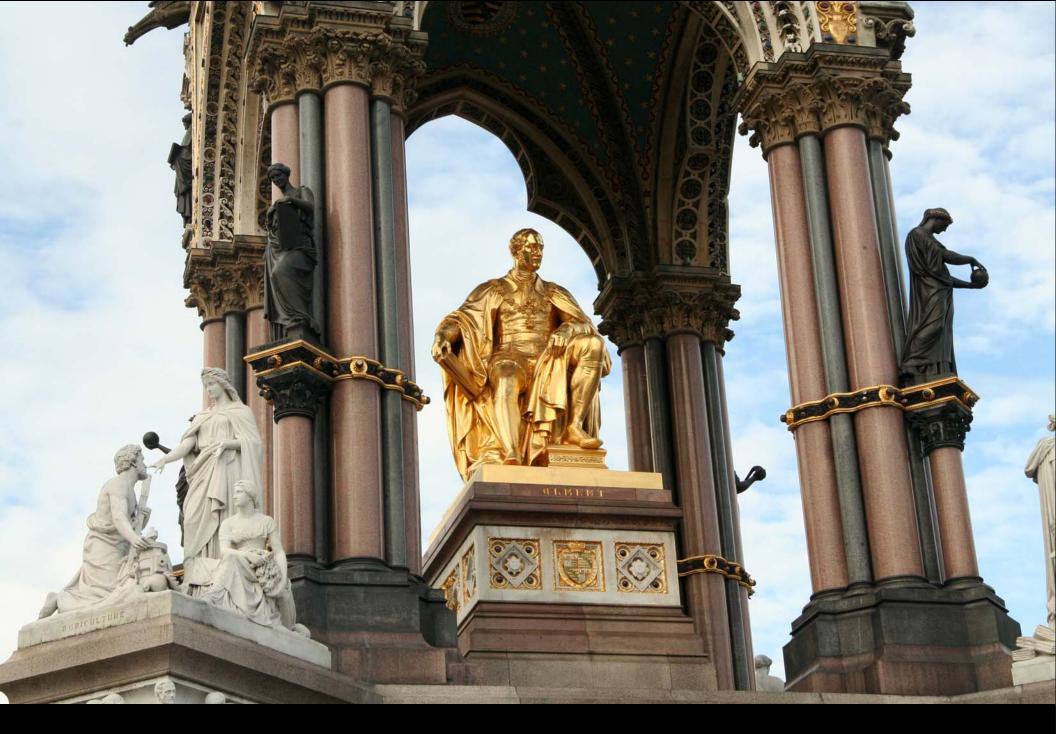
Kensington Gardens

Royal Albert Hall, dedicated to Queen Victoria's husband, hosts over 350 classical, rock, pop, ballet, and opera performances a year, as well as other cultural events.



Kensington Gardens

The Albert Memorial is situated at the south edge of Kensington Gardens, directly north of Royal Albert Hall.



Kensington Gardens

The Albert Memorial was commissioned by Queen Victoria in memory of her beloved husband, Prince Albert, who died of typhoid in 1861.



Carnaby Street

Carnaby Street became famous in the 1960s for its independent fashion boutiques and its underground music scene with bands like The Beatles, The Who, and The Stones.



Carnaby Street

Today Carnaby Street is home to multi-national clothing corporations and welcomes tourists looking for a hip scene that is long gone.

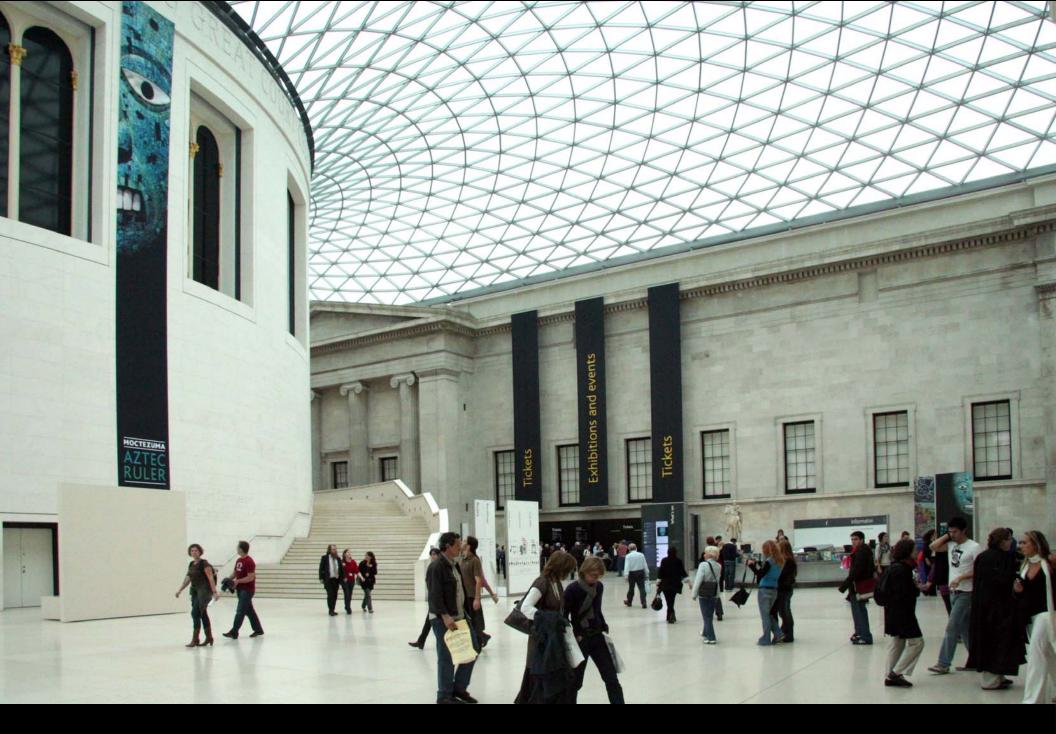


British Museum

The British Museum was established in 1753 and is the oldest public museum in the world. Admission is free.



British Museum The Museum's collections span thousands of years and include 7 million objects. Over 6 million people visit each year.



British Museum

Sir Norman Foster's 2000 re-design created the largest covered square in Europe, solved circulation problems, and provided a large and bright new public space.



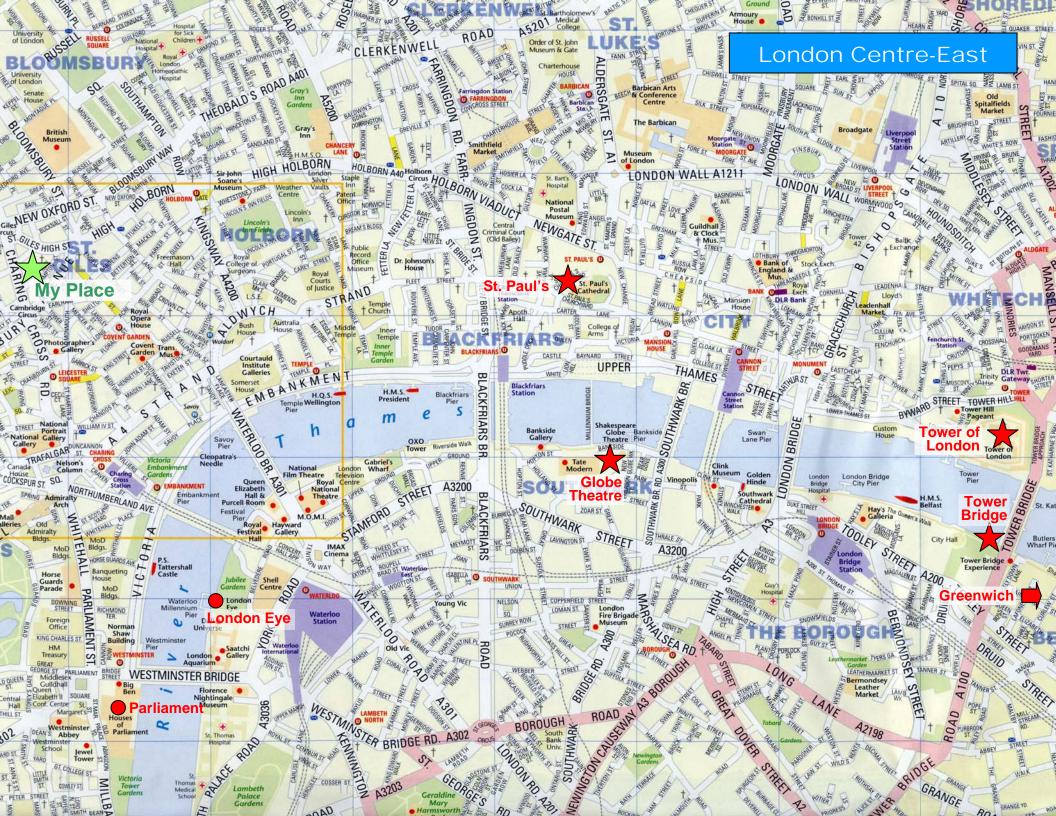
Covent Garden

Covent Garden was the site of a flower and produce market from the 1500s until 1974. Over the years the area had a colourful history, from fashionable to seedy and sinful.



Covent Garden

Today's Covent Garden "Market" is home to stylish shops and cafés that Eliza Doolittle of *Pygmalion* and *My Fair Lady* fame would never recognize.





St. Paul's St. Paul's Cathedral was designed by Sir Christopher Wren to replace a cathedral destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. The dome was inspired by Italian cathedrals.



St. Paul's St. Paul's was built between 1675 and 1710. Wren's design integrated concepts of Renaissance harmony into the Gothic style still preferred at the time.



St. Paul's Area

The Millennium Bridge for pedestrians was aligned so that a clear and scenic view of St. Paul's Cathedral's south facade is presented from across the river.



St. Paul's Area

Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, on the south bank, is a reconstruction opened in 1997. The original was closed by Puritan pressure in 1642 and demolished in 1644.



Soon after William the Conqueror became King in 1066, he built a fortress to guard the entrance to London from the Thames River Estuary.



Over the centuries the Tower of London has served as a royal residence, armoury, treasury, zoo, mint, and most famously as a prison.



Thirty-six live-in Yeoman Warders or "Beefeaters" guard the Tower, conduct tours for visitors, and are an attraction in their own right.



The White Tower was completed in 1097. Other buildings were added later. Tower Green was the site of seven executions, including two of Henry VIII's six wives.



Today Henry himself is out and about, trying to drum up business for his "Henry VIII: Dressed To Kill" exhibition of armour in the White Tower.



Many important figures in history suffered imprisonment or death in the Bloody Tower. Richard III had two princes in line for the throne before him murdered here in 1483.



The Jewel House is the latest addition to the tower, and incorporates advanced technology to ensure the security of the Crown Jewels.



Jewel House exhibits include the crowns, robes, and ceremonial regalia of the kings and queens of England stretching from the 17th century to the present.



Tower Bridge The Tower Bridge, completed in 1894 to accommodate increasing road and foot traffic, is one of the most recognizable symbols of London.



Tower Bridge

The two Gothic towers contain mechanisms for raising the roadway to permit large ships to pass through. The towers are linked by two high level pedestrian walkways.



Tower Bridge

Access to the high level walkways is via 300 steps, but the walkways provide great views up and down the Thames.



Tower Bridge

I was lucky to see the bridge open while on a Thames cruise. It opens only a few times a week, and not every day.



Docklands

The high speed Thames Clipper catamarans are convenient for longer trips further down the Thames.



Docklands

The 1980s Canary Wharf project redeveloped part of the east end Docklands. One Canada Square, at 50 storeys, remains the U.K.'s tallest building.



Docklands

The O₂, originally the Millennium Dome, is now an entertainment complex including a 23,000 seat arena, cinemas, an exhibition centre, bars, and restaurants.



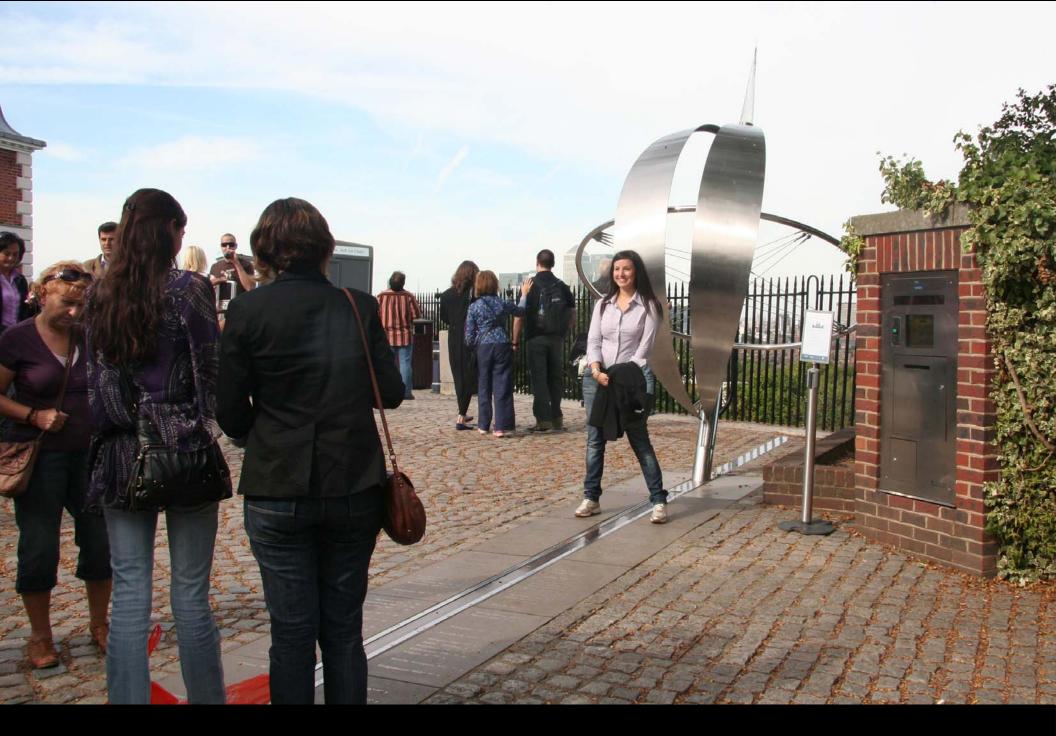
Greenwich

Greenwich was the home of the Royal Naval College from 1873 until 1998, occupying buildings designed by Christopher Wren that had first served as a hospital for sailors.



Greenwich

Looking toward the Thames (centre) from the Royal Greenwich Observatory in Greenwich Park. The Observatory gave the world Greenwich Mean Time.



Greenwich

The Prime Meridian, Longitude 0°, runs through the Royal Greenwich Observatory. Visitors can be photographed standing with one foot in the east and one in the west.



Greenwich

The National Maritime Museum encompasses the Royal Observatory and portions of the former Naval College. Maritime Greenwich is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Greenwich

Other parts of the former Naval College are now home to the University of Greenwich and the Trinity College of Music.

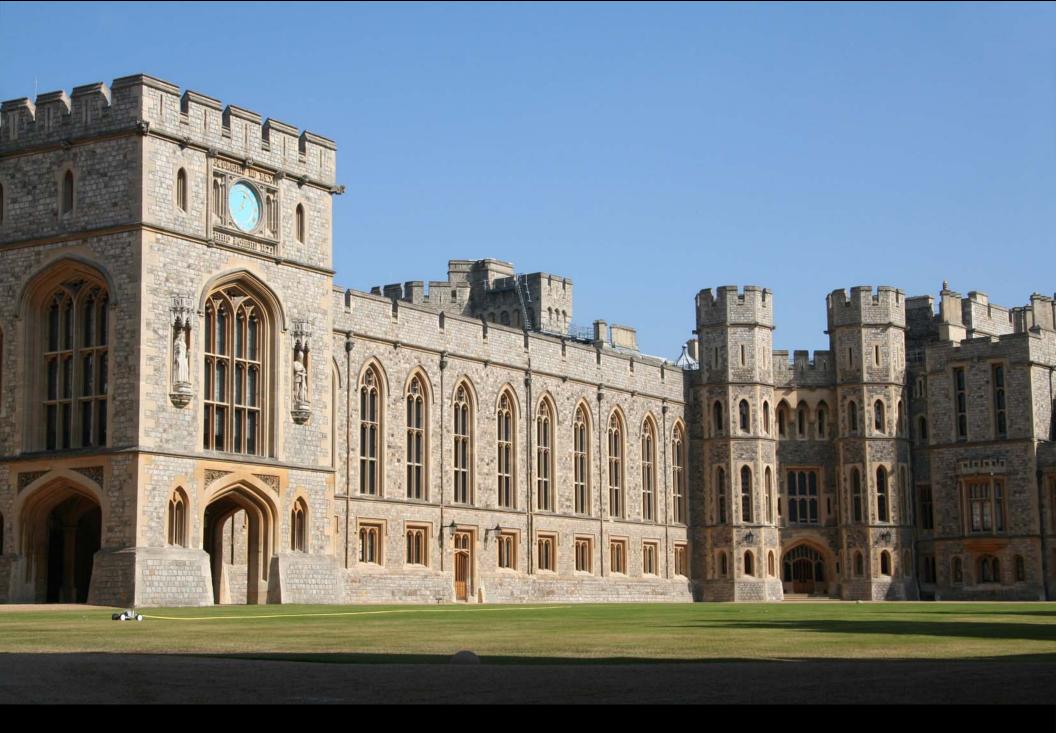




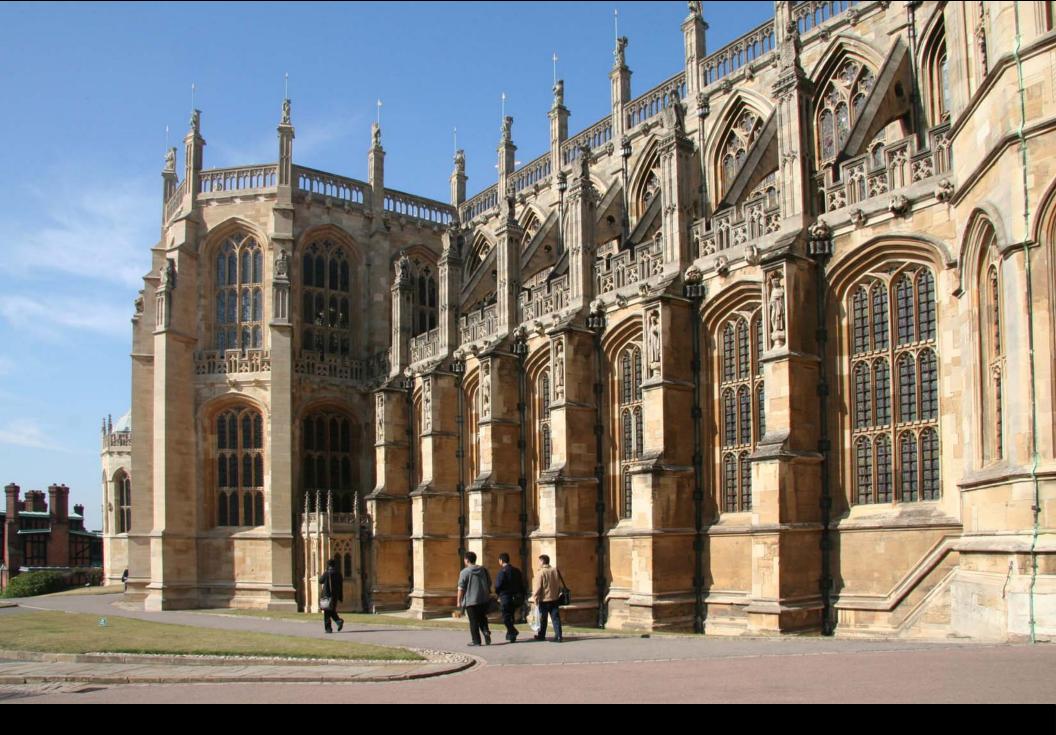
Windsor Castle is the oldest and largest continuously occupied castle in the world, and an official residence of Her Majesty the Queen.



The original castle was built by William the Conqueror in the 11th century to guard the western approaches to London.



Successive monarchs have added and rebuilt the castle, creating a monument to royalty's changing tastes.



St. George's Chapel was built between 1475 and 1528 and is one of England's most outstanding Perpendicular Gothic churches.



The East Terrace Garden was created for King George IV in the 1820s.



The Queen's Ballroom was remodelled in the 1830s. The glass chandeliers and the portraits, all by Van Dyck, were hung during the reign of Queen Victoria.



Hampton Court Palace is a royal palace located upstream on the Thames 12 miles / 19 km south-west of central London.



The Palace was originally built for Cardinal Wolsey around 1514 but Wolsey, sensing his coming downfall, passed the palace to the King as a gift in 1528.



King Henry VIII immediately began rebuilding and expansion to accommodate his court, which numbered over 1,000 people.



Henry added the Great Hall between 1532 and 1535.



Henry also added vast kitchens, quadrupling their capacity to entertain his guests. These are the largest surviving 16th century Tudor kitchens in Europe.



Hampton Court's gardens extend over the property's 60 acres / 24 hectares. The Knot Garden is laid out in its original 16th century style.



One of the Pond Gardens on the Thames side of the original Palace, with the Banqueting House, for small informal picnics, in the rear.



In 1689, shortly after Louis XIV had moved to Versailles, King William III and Queen Mary II embarked on a massive rebuilding project at Hampton Court.



Sir Christopher Wren's own architectural instincts were tempered by the monarchs' preference for a design more imitative of Versailles.



The King's Staircase was decorated with frescos by Antonio Verrio.



Bed chamber in William III's apartments.

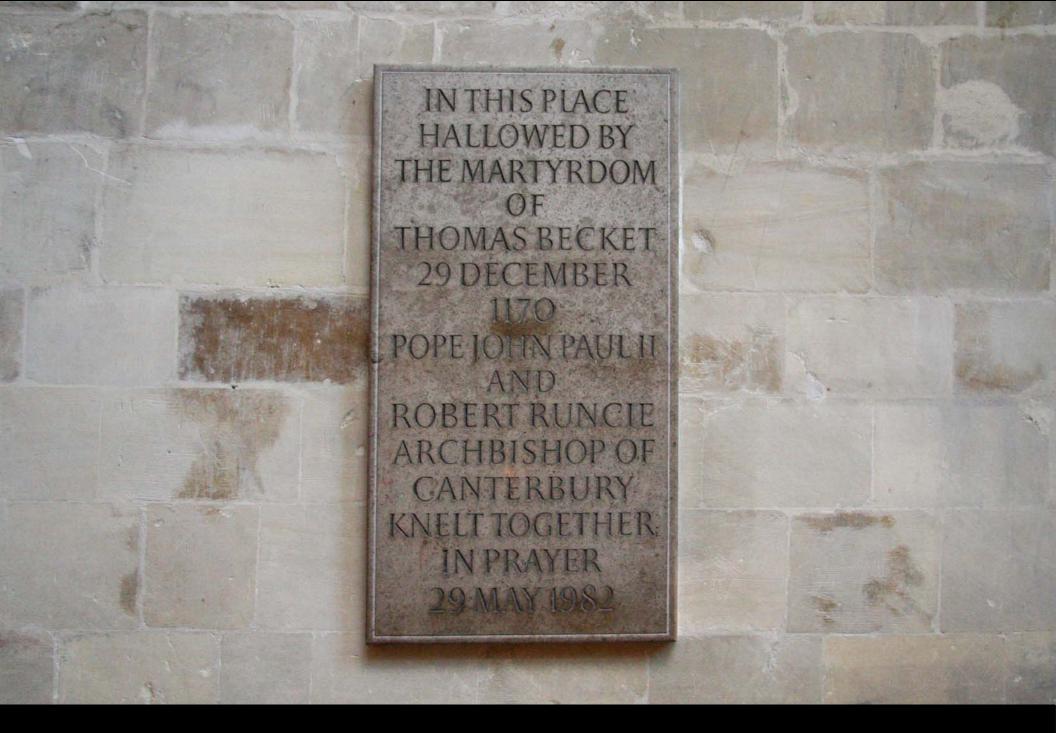


The Privy Garden, on the south side of the Palace, was originally William III's private garden.





Canterbury became important early because it was on the trade route between London and the port of Dover. The origins of the first Cathedral date from 602 AD.



In 1170 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket, was murdered in the Cathedral by four knights of King Henry II over disagreements about state and church powers.



Becket was canonized in 1173, and Canterbury Cathedral became an important religious site and one of Christendom's chief places of pilgrimage.



Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* are stories of pilgrims making their way the 60 miles / 96 km from London to Canterbury.



Dover is Britain's closest point to continental Europe and has a large natural harbour. It has been inhabited since the Stone Age, and the Romans established a port here.



Dover's famous white chalk cliffs.



Dover's port is busy with large-scale cross-channel shipping, but is also home to a huge fleet of smaller vessels.



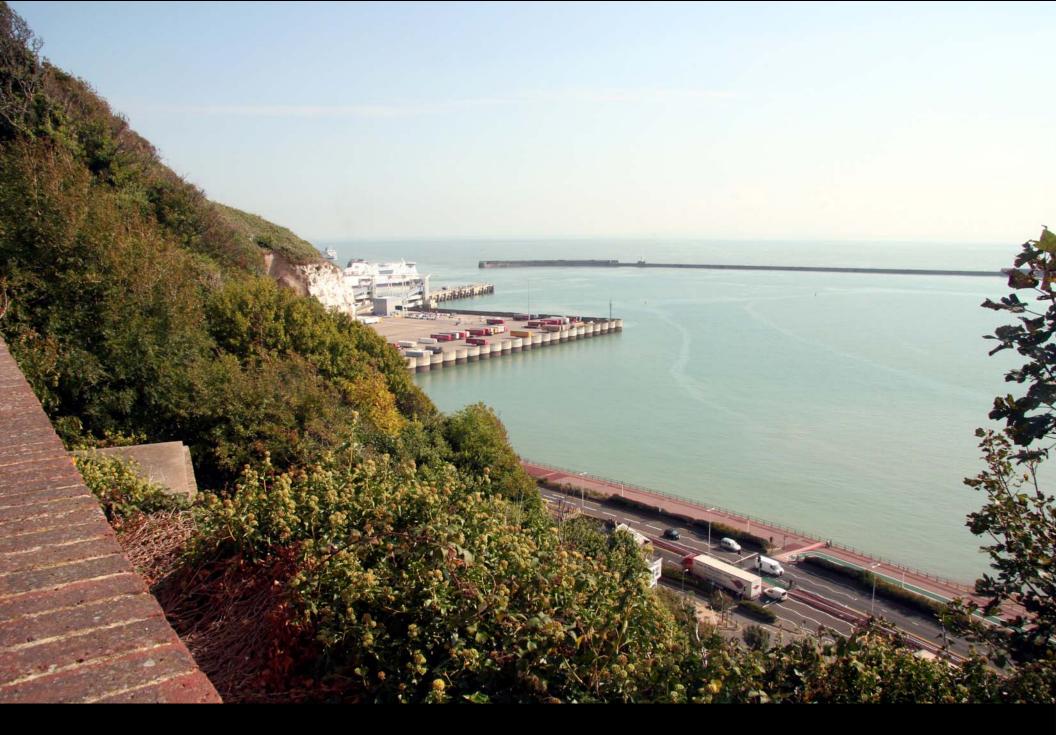
Shops offering marine and fishing supplies line the waterfront.



The massive Dover Castle sprawls across the top of the high cliffs overlooking the town and the harbour. There have been fortifications here for over 2,000 years.



The current castle was begun by Henry II in the 1180s, and over the next 800 years it was adapted to meet the changing demands of weapons and warfare.



The castle's strategic position gives it control over the large harbour.



The Great Tower at the heart of the castle dates from the early years of the castle's construction in the 12th century.



Part of the Great Tower has been outfitted as it would have been when first built.



Dover Castle

At the beginning of WW II the underground tunnels added during the Napoleonic Wars were converted and expanded into a military command centre and hospital.



Dover Castle

The evacuation of French and British soldiers from Dunkirk in May 1940 was directed from the naval operations centre in the cliff tunnels.



Dover Castle

A military telephone exchange was installed in 1941 and communications facilities in the tunnels played a vital relay function during the D-Day invasion.



Brighton is the nearest south coast city to London and Britain's first seaside resort. The introduction of the railway made it easily accessible.



The future King George IV commissioned John Nash to transform his Brighton home into a lavish Oriental palace in 1815. It remains Brighton's major attraction.



As bathing became fashionable for British society Brighton saw the development of luxurious seaside hotels which have remained popular through the years.



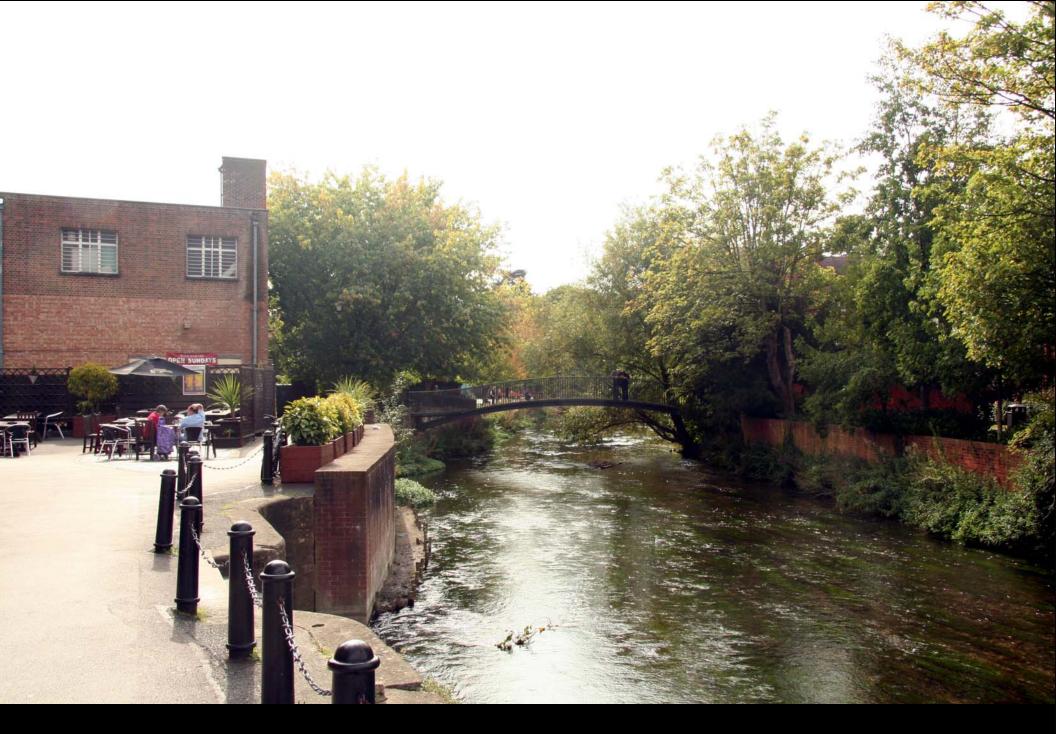
Brighton Brighton's beach plays host to a variety of adventurous water sports.



The current Brighton Pier opened in 1889 and features fairground attractions, a Palace of Fun arcade, and a wide range of cafés and bars.



The Brighton Pier's attractions are geared for family day trips. But it's a bit too cloudy to play today.



Salisbury

Salisbury is about 80 miles / 130 km south-west of London. Tributaries join the Avon River here.



Salisbury Cathedral

Salisbury Cathedral was mostly built between 1220 and 1258. Its spire, added between 1280 and 1310, soars to a height of 404 feet / 123 metres.



Salisbury Cathedral

The West Front of the cathedral is decorated by rows of lavish symbolic figures and saints in niches.



Salisbury Cathedral

Salisbury was never bombed during WW II. It was later learned that German pilots were instructed to spare it so that the Cathedral Tower could be used for navigation.



Salisbury to Stonehenge

Stonehenge is located on the Salisbury Plain, about 10 miles / 16 km north of the city of Salisbury.



Stonehenge Stonehenge is Europe's most famous prehistoric monument.

This massive structure was built in several stages from about 3000 BC.



Stonehenge

We can only guess at the rituals that took place here, but the alignment of the stones indicates that the circle is connected with the sun and the passing of the seasons.



Stonehenge

We don't know how the stones were transported or erected, but the mortise of a mortiseand-tenon joint atop the tallest stone is evidence of ingenious construction techniques.



Stonehenge

Stonehenge's builders clearly possessed a sophisticated understanding of arithmetic and astronomy, but their identity and Stonehenge's purpose remain mysteries.



Bath is located on the Avon River about 110 miles / 175 km west of London. The Pulteney Bridge has interior shops across the full span on both sides.



The present Bath Abbey was begun in 1499, badly ruined in 1539 by order of King Henry VIII, fully repaired by 1611, and then bombed and damaged in 1942.



A major restoration project begun in 1991 was completed in 2000.



Bath was established as a spa resort by the Romans in 43 AD but verbal tradition suggests its natural hot springs were discovered by the Celts as early as 860 BC.



During the 18th century Bath capitalized on its hot springs and cleverly transformed itself into one of Europe's most elegant and popular spa towns.



A hot spring bath complex built around a Great Bath by the Romans in the 1st century AD was excavated in the 1870s, and then restored and enhanced.



The Great Bath, covered during Roman times, sits at the centre of a complex of smaller bathing chambers, saunas, changing rooms, and a temple.



The Terrace overlooks the Great Bath and is lined with statues of Roman leaders carved just before the Baths re-opening in 1897.



The Baths Museum contains extensive displays of excavated artifacts, including from the Temple of Bath, one of only two classical temples known from Roman Britain.



The Pump Room, the social heart of Bath for more than two centuries, is a salon where hot Spa water is drawn for drinking (and is a pricey restaurant).





Stratford-Upon-Avon is a pleasant and pretty city about 100 miles / 160 km north-west of London, famous as Shakespeare's birthplace.



You can have your picture taken standing in front of the house where Shakespeare was born, but you can't take pictures inside.



The town is overrun with tourists, even in late September.



The Royal Shakespeare Theatre is undergoing renovations.



Stratford Holy Trinity Church, where Shakespeare is buried, is closed.





Warwick Castle

Warwick Castle, just north of Stratford, was built in the 14th century and transformed into a grand residence in the 17th and 18th centuries.



Warwick Castle

The original castle was constructed on top of a man-made hill where soldiers would retreat if attackers got past the other defences.



Warwick Castle

In 1978 the owners of Madame Tussaud's bought the castle and began adding features to create a medieval atmosphere for visitors.



Warwick Castle

Replicas of ancient weapons have been introduced ...



Warwick Castle

... and medieval skills are demonstrated.



Warwick Castle

The interiors are furnished with artifacts and displays giving this castle the feel of centuries past.



Warwick Castle

The Madame Tussaud folks have even added some wax figures, like Henry VIII and some of his women.



Cambridge has been an important town since Roman times because it was situated at the first navigable point on the River Cam.



Flat-bottomed "punt" boats, originally used for cargo, now give visitors a pleasant scenic tour of Cambridge. Much less expensive than a gondola in Venice.



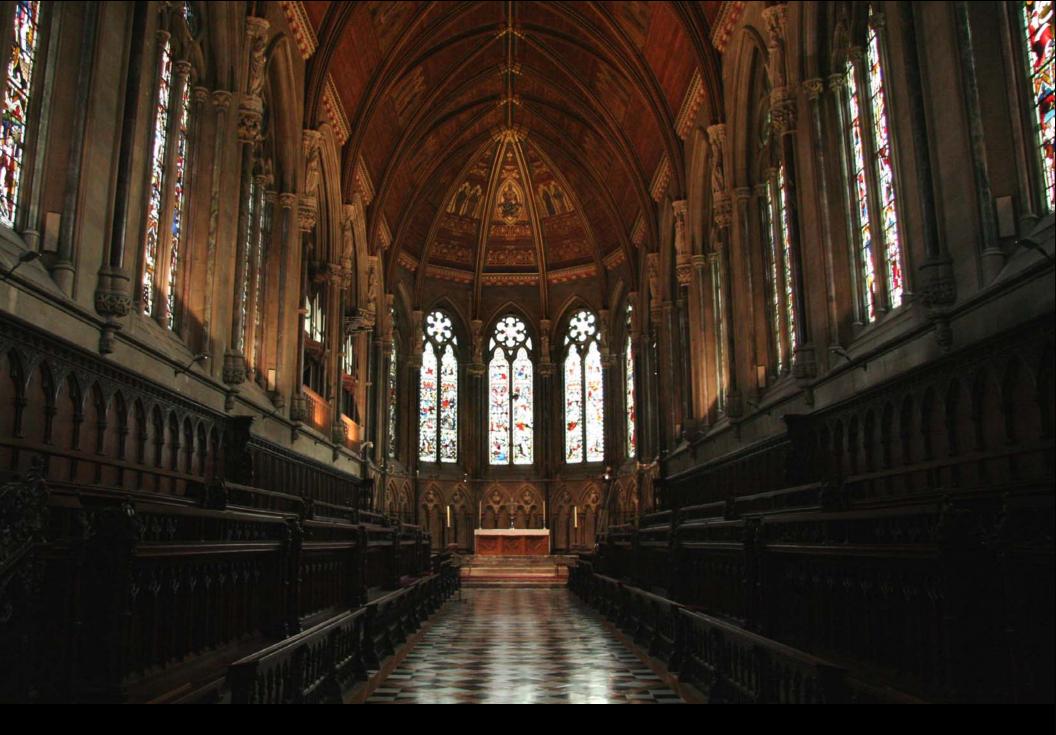
Cambridge University, which now has 31 colleges, originated in the 13th century when a group of religious scholars broke away from Oxford University.



Saint John's College evolved from a monastic house and was chartered in 1511. The Front Gate, bearing the coat of arms of the founder, was completed in 1516.



Saint John's is the second-largest Cambridge college. The present Chapel was completed in 1869, replacing a much smaller 13th century building.



Saint John's College Chapel. Saint John's is one of the many Cambridge colleges making visitors feel welcome.



Saint John's has buildings on both sides of the Cam River, and its own copy of the Bridge of Sighs in Venice to link them.



King's College, Cambridge's largest, was founded by King Henry VI in 1441. Henry went to great lengths to ensure that his college would be without equal.



Henry himself decided that the King's College Chapel should dominate Cambridge and he gave specific instructions about its dimensions.



Construction of the Chapel was begun in 1446 and took 70 years to complete. It is one of the most important examples of medieval English architecture.



The screen which divides the chapel into antechapel and choir is considered a superb example of Tudor woodwork.



Cambridge A bridge over the Cam permits viewing King's College from across the river.



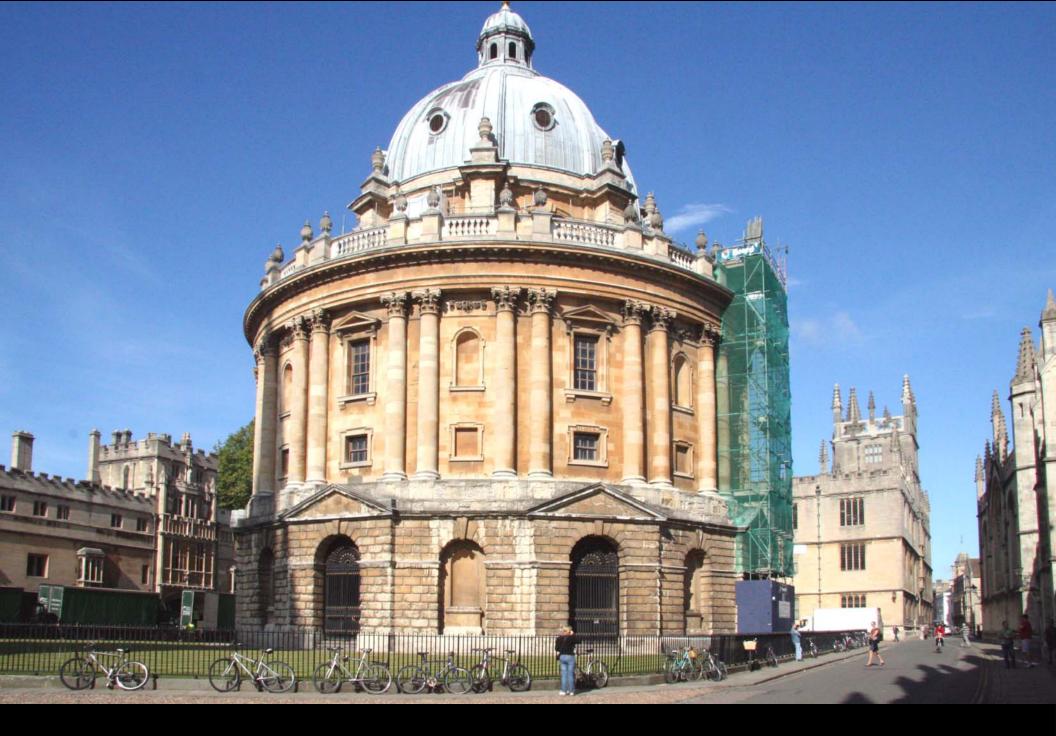
Classic Cambridge In A Nutshell: A punt on the Cam River passing the King's College Chapel.



Oxford University, though older and of equal reputation, is more difficult to visit and photograph.



The Sheldonian Theatre was designed by Sir Christopher Wren and completed in 1669. It is the scene of Oxford's traditional graduation ceremonies.



The Radcliffe Camera was built between 1737 and 1748 and is the earliest example in England of a circular library.



Christ Church College, Oxford's largest, was founded in 1525 by Cardinal Wolsey as an ecclesiastical college to train cardinals.



Christ Church's Great Hall was replicated in film studios to create Hogwart's Hall for the Harry Potter movies, and many scenes were shot in and around the college.



One of Britain's greatest successes during WW II was kept secret after the war so that the Soviet Union would under-estimate British expertise in breaking codes.



In 1938 British intelligence took over a country estate near Milton Keynes, 50 miles / km north-west of London, to establish a code-breaking centre.



The Bletchley Park estate was an innocent-looking location, much safer than London, and it had good road and rail connections.



As the operation grew temporary "huts" were added for the communications, decryption, translation, and analysis sections.



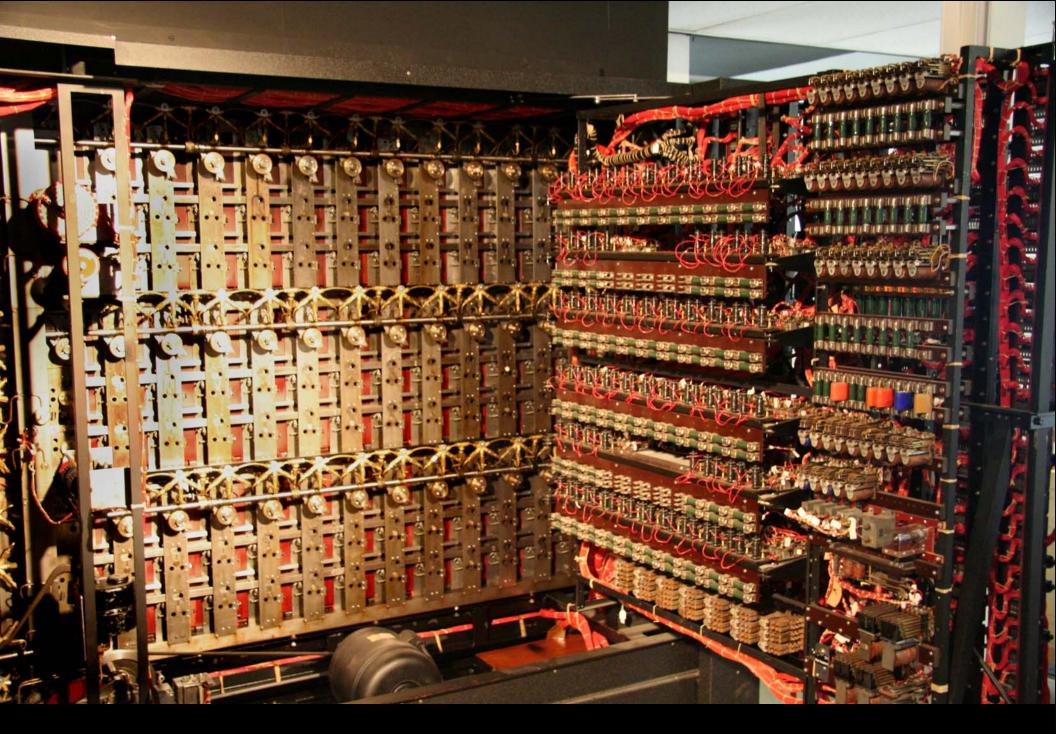
Nazi Germany used sophisticated Enigma machines to encrypt secret military messages, and changed the encryption keys every day.



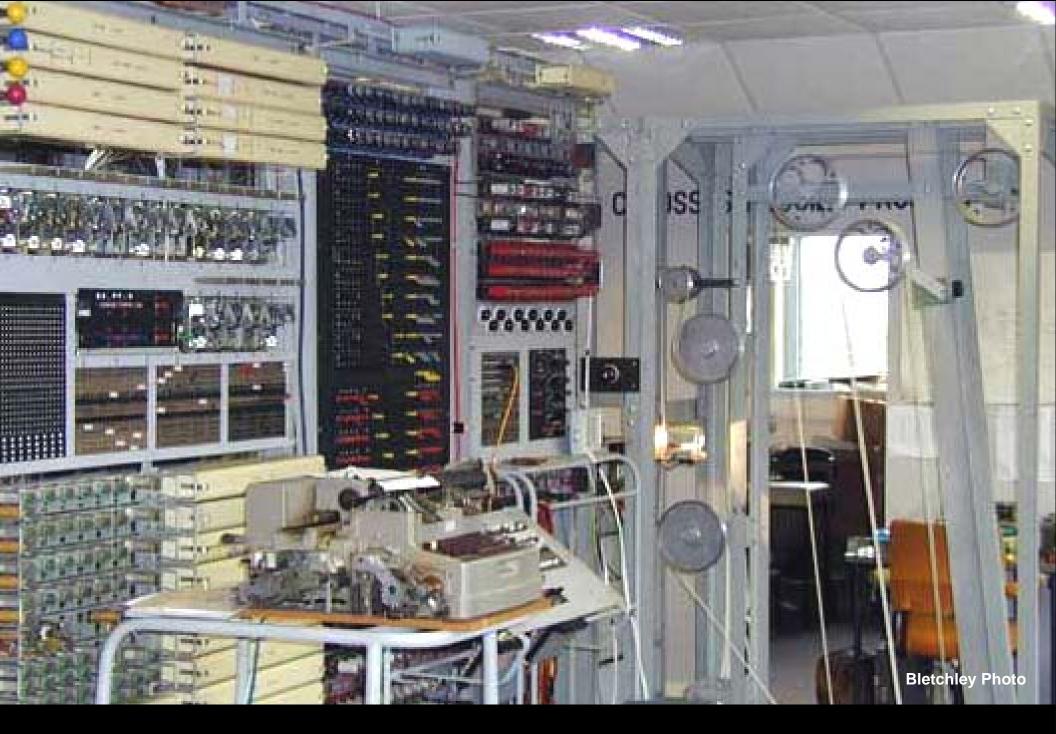
Teams led by mathematician Alan Turing designed an electro-mechanical machine that greatly reduced the time required to break the ever-changing keys.



By the end of the war at least 200 of these "Bombe" machines were in use. Germany and its allies never knew that their messages were being decoded.



About 9,000 people worked in the Park at the height of its activity. It is remarkable that all this remained a secret until the 1970s.



Colossus machines, developed to successfully break a new German "Lorenz" code, were the earliest electronic computers and were in use to support the D-Day invasion.



Historians now estimate that the intelligence contributions from Bletchley Park shortened the war by as much as two years.



I'll always remember my Charing Cross Road neighbourhood. Busy, sometimes frantic, never dull.



Changing tube trains often involves long marches and lots of stairs, but I used the underground a lot and it never let me down.



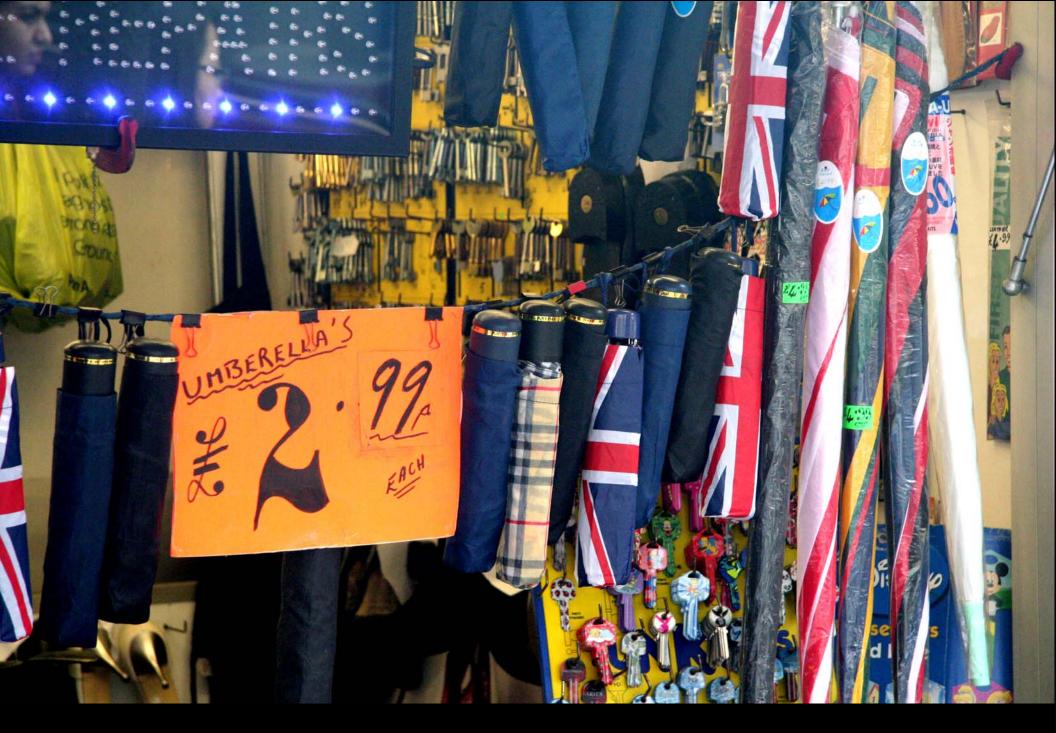
Britain's trains were a welcome surprise. Modern, clean, and always on time for me.



I experienced London traffic mostly just as a spectator, thankfully.



London traffic is at least good for some laughs.



Street stands sell umbrellas where we would expect to find souvenir T-shirts. I was really fortunate to have excellent weather and not need one.



Tomorrow I'm off to France to see palaces. Taking fond memories with me.

< End >

England

This trip continues in France.