



Seeing the Capital Differently

Stairs as an Architectural Feature

Welcome to *CityThemes*

By printing this leaflet you have decided to discover, or rediscover, the sights and delights of **London** in a different way. We hope that you enjoy your explorations of our fascinating and historical capital city.

This leaflet has been designed to allow you to explore as the mood takes you. Both well-known and lesser-known attractions are included and they are randomly listed so that you plan your own itinerary and visit as many or as few as you wish.

Please note:- some places restrict entry and ask for prior application either in writing or by telephone. This is indicated where known. Others may change opening days and hours with little warning – it may be worth checking by phone if they are off the beaten track.

A very brief description of the reason for the choice of site is given but because of space it is not possible to include much detail. Again a telephone call to the site may help you to decide on whether a visit is worthwhile. Remember there may be other items that interest you at the same site.

Themes are constantly being updated and new titles added so please keep looking at our website or get in touch with us by e-mail or letter. We welcome your comments especially if you feel that some site should be included or details are incorrect/inaccurate. Contact details are

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Enjoy Your Explorations

Foundling Museum

40 Brunswick Square, WC1N
020 7841 3600

transport: Russell Square u/g, King's Cross, St Pancras & Euston u/g & rail; buses 45,59,68,91,168,188

facilities: disabled access; parking for disabled; sales desk

opening: by prior arrangement

1937 neo-Georgian building with original features of the Court Room and grand oak staircase saved from original Coram Foundation for Children building of 1745

Sir John Soane's Museum

13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2A
020 7405 2107 www.soane.org

transport: Holborn u/g; buses 1,8,25,38,59,68,91,98,168,171,188,242

facilities: library; sales desk; tours (Sats 14.30)

opening: Tue-Sat 10.00-17.00

admission free

the home of the architect Sir John Soane (1753-1837) the house was designed to be lived in as well as to provide a setting for his extraordinary collection of antiquities and works of art. The cantilevered staircase suits the style of the house

HQS Wellington

Embankment - near Temple, WC2

transport: Temple & Embankment u/g; buses 1,11,15,26,59,68,76,168,171,172,176,188,341

this ship is the floating livery hall of the Honorary Company of Master Mariners and was purchased in 1947. The staircase leading down to the hall (the former engine room) was part of the Isle of Man trading ship 'Viper'

St Pancras Chambers

Euston Road, NW1

transport: King's Cross/St Pancras & Euston u/g & rail; buses 10,17,30,45,46,63,73,91,214,259

facilities: no disabled access at present or working lifts; coffee lounge (Mon-Fri 11.30-15.30); guided tours (Sat-Sun 11.00,13.30 - no booking, small charge; ring enquiries on 020 7304 3921)

opening: guided tours only except for entrance hall & coffee lounge

this Victorian Gothic former Midland Grand Hotel closed in 1935 and was then used as railway offices. At the moment it is being converted into a Marriott Hotel with the upper rooms as loft apartments. The grand central staircase winds from ground to upper floors and is one of the finest in the country. It was originally lit by gas and the metal columns housed the gas pipes

the back stairs are an intricate design of ironwork

London School of Economics & Political Science Library

10 Portugal Street, WC2

transport: Temple, Embankment & Covent Garden u/g, Charing Cross & Waterloo u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,15,23,26,59,68,76,77A,91,168,171,172,176,188,341; boat Savoy & Embankment Piers

opening: Mon-Fri 09.00-17.00

modern 2001 architecture by Foster and Partners has a central atrium, spiral staircase and partially-glazed dome

Somerset House

Strand & Embankment, WC2
020 7845 4600 www.somerset-house.org.uk

transport: Temple, Embankment & Covent Garden u/g, Charing Cross & Waterloo u/g & rail; buses 1,6,9,11,13,15,23,26,59,68,76,77A,91,168,171,172,176,188,341; boat Savoy & Embankment Piers

opening: daily to Courtyard, Seamen's Waiting Hall & River Terrace 07.30-23.00 (19.00 in winter); collections 10.00-18.00

admission free to Courtyard and River Terrace. There is a charge for exhibitions

the Stamp Stair, cantilevered through six floors, has decorative balustrades; the Nelson Stair leads to the Navy Board Room. Each flight of stairs is different

Palace Theatre

Cambridge Circus, WC2
020 7434 0904

transport: Leicester Square & Tottenham Court Road u/g; buses 14,19,22,24,38,40,176

built in 1890 by Thomas Colcutt, the theatre has marble foyer, stalls & staircase. Pillars extend three storeys from the ground floor to the top of the staircase

Buckingham Palace

Buckingham Palace Road, SW1A
020 7930 4832 www.royalresidences.com

transport: Victoria, Green Park & St James's u/g; buses 2,8,9,10,11,14,16,19,22,24,36,38,52,73,74,82,137,185,211,239,507,C1,C10

facilities: disabled access but prior application needed for wheelchairs; shop

opening: daily Aug-Sept 09.30-16.15

admission charge

the London home of British monarchs since 1837, the Palace has an impressive curving, marble Grand Staircase with glass dome dating from the 1820s. The balustrade is of scrolling acanthus and acorns surmounted by laurel rope

Handel House Museum

25 Brook Street, W1Y
020 7435 2482

transport: Bond Street & Oxford Circus u/g; buses 3,6,7,8,10,12,13,15,23,25,53,55,73,94,98,113,137,139,159,176,189

opening: Tue-Wed, Fri-Sat 10.00-18.00, Thur 10.00-20.00, Sun nonn-18.00

an example of a dog-leg staircase

Houses of Parliament

Old Palace Yard, Abingdon Street, Westminster, SW1
020 7219 4272 (Commons), 020 7219 3107 (Lords)
www.explore.parliament.uk

transport: Westminster u/g; buses 3,11,12,24,53,77A,88,159,211; boat Westminster Pier

facilities: Aug/Sept tours to be booked 5 days in advance (020 7344 9966)

opening: debates in House of Commons Mon-Wed 14.30-22.00, Thur 11.30-19.30, Fri 09.30-15.00; debates in House of Lords Mon-Wed from 14.30, Thurs from 15.00, Fri from 11.00

the interior was designed by Augustus Pugin with 1000 rooms, 100 staircases and two miles of corridors

Red Lion pub

2 Duke of York Street, Piccadilly, SW1
020 7930 2030

transport: Piccadilly Circus u/g; buses 3,6,9,12,13,14,15,19,22,23,38,53,88,139,159

opening: Mon-Sat 11.30-23.00

an example of a Victorian gin palace with mirrored walls and a cast-iron spiral staircase

London Palladium Theatre

Argyll Street, W1 020 7404 5454

transport: Oxford Circus u/g; buses 3,6,10,12,13,15,23,25,53,55,73,78,88,94,98,139,159,176

an example of 1910 theatre architecture with marble columns, arches, staircases and mosaic floors; by Frank Matcham

Crown Estate Offices

13-16 Carlton House Terrace, SW1Y
020 7210 4377 www.crownestate.co.uk

transport: Piccadilly Circus u/g, Charing Cross u/g & rail; buses 3,6,9,12,13,15,23,53,88,139,159; boat Embankment Pier

opening: by prior appointment

stone spiral staircase of 1828 with a wooden handrail added by Aston Webb in 1890

Overseas House

Park Place, St James's Street, SW1
020 7408 0214

transport: Piccadilly Circus u/g; buses 3,6,9,12,13,14,15,19,22,23,38,53,88,139,159

home of the Royal Overseas League that was founded in 1910 for the people of the Commonwealth, it has an 18th century staircase by the architect James Gibbs (1682-1754)

Seaford House

37 Belgrave Square, SW1
020 7915 4800

transport: Hyde Park Corner u/g, Victoria u/g & rail; buses 2,8,9,10,14,16,19,22,36,38,52,73,74,82,137,C1

1842 town house with marble staircase, friezes and panelling, by the architect and sculptor Philip Hardwick. Now the home of the Royal College of Defence Studies

Chiswick House

Burlington Lane, Hogarth Road, W4
020 8995 0508 www.english-heritage.org.uk

transport: Turnham Green u/g ¾ mile, Chiswick rail ½ mile; buses 190, 290,E3

facilities: audio tour in French & German, hearing loop for video; disabled access with two steps at entrance & a chairlift to upper floors; snacks; giftshop; group tours during winter months

opening: house Apr-Sept 10.00-18.00, Oct 10.00-17.00 (Sats 10.00-noon only); gardens: daily dawn-dusk admission charge to house; gardens free

externally there are two elaborate stone staircases, one decorated with urns. Inside, the central octagonal room has small spiral staircases placed in the angles

Lancaster House

Stable Yard Road, Green Park, SW1

transport: Green Park & Hyde Park Corner u/g; buses 2, 8,9,10,14,16,19,22,36,38,52,73,74,82,137

opening: usually by invitation only as this lovely house is used by the government and diplomatic service for conferences and entertaining heads of state, politicians and other celebrities. If you do have the chance to see inside you will find very beautiful, richly decorated historic rooms - make the most of the opportunity!

a sweeping staircase with Rococo balustrade and skylight above, rises the full height of the building

Queen's House

Greenwich Park, Romney Road, Greenwich, SE10
020 8858 4422

transport: Greenwich DLR & rail, Cutty Sark DLR; buses 177,180,188,199,286,386; boat Greenwich Pier

opening: daily 10.00-17.00

admission charge

the Tulip Staircase is one of the earliest cantilevered spiral staircases. Its name comes from the floral patterning in the wrought-iron balustrade

House of St-Barnabas-in-Soho

Greek Street, Soho, W1 020 7437 1894

transport: Leicester Square & Tottenham Court Road u/g, Charing Cross u/g & rail: buses 14,19,24,29,38,176

opening: Wed 14.30-16.30, Thur 11.00-12.30

admission - small donation welcome

the main staircase has fine-plasterwork Rococo ceilings and walls. There is also an unusual crinoline staircase

St John the Evangelist Smith Square, SW1

020 7222 2168 (admin), 020 7222 1061 (box office)
www.sjss.org.uk

transport: Westminster & St James's Park u/g; buses 3, 11,12,24,53,77A,88,159,211 boat: Westminster Millennium Pier

the north and south exteriors are dominated by giant Corinthian columns supporting broken pediments and grand flights of stairs

Albert pub

52 Victoria Street, corner of Palmer Street & Buckingham Gate, SW1H

020 7222 7606

transport: St James's Park u/g; buses 11,24,211
facilities: bar food (11.00-22.30), Restaurant (noon-22.00), sells T-shirts, ceramic mugs and ashtrays

opening: Mon-Sat 11.00-23.00, Sun noon-22.30

this interesting pub has a very ornate staircase up to the restaurant

City Hall, Greater London Authority Headquarters

Potters Field, SE1
020 7983 4100

transport: Tower Hill u/g, Tower Gateway DLR, Fenchurch Street rail; buses 15,42,78,100; boat Tower Millennium & St Katharines Piers

facilities: disabled access; lifts; café; information desk (09.30-17.00)

opening: Mon-Fri 08.00-20.00 for exhibition space & view of Assembly Chamber

this 2002 building by Foster and Partners is a 147ft (45m) tall glass globe with a shape derived from a geometrically modified sphere (although some Londoners have described it rather differently!!). The spiral ramp and stairs are a striking feature

Mount Clare

Minstead Gardens, Roehampton, SW15

transport: Barnes rail; buses 72,74,170,265

this 1772 Palladian house has exterior twin curved staircases and a balustraded portico

Strawberry Hill House

Waldegrave Road, Twickenham, Middlesex
020 8240 4114

transport: Strawberry Hill rail; buses 33,R68

opening: Easter-Oct Sun noon-16.30,;rest of year by appointment

this elegant balustraded staircase is made of wood from the library staircase of Rouen cathedral in France

Apothecaries Company of London

Blackfriars Lane, EC4

020 7236 1189 www.apothecaries.org.uk

transport: Blackfriars u/g & rail, City Thameslink rail; buses 11,15,26,45,63,76,100,172

facilities: steps to entrance, otherwise wheelchair access throughout; gift and publications shop; tours by prior arrangement

opening: courtyard Mon-Fri; Hall by appointment
small admission charge for tours of the Hall

the banisters of the stairs in this City of London Livery Company hall date from 1671

Fenton House

Windmill Hill, Hampstead Grove, Hampstead, NW3
020 7435 3471(office), 01494 755563 (information line)
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

transport: Hampstead u/g, Hampstead Heath rail; buses 46,210,268

facilities: disabled access to ground floor only

opening: Apr-Oct Wed-Fri 14.00-17.00, Sat-Sun 11.00-17.00; Sept-Mar Sat-Sun 14.00-17.00 (last admission 30 mins before closing)
admission charge

an original staircase of 1693 of pine with twisted balusters and a wide handrail

Vintners Company

Upper Thames Street (corner of Queen Street), EC4
020 7236 1863

transport: Mansion House u/g, Cannon Street u/g & rail; buses 11,15,26,76,344

opening: by prior application

this 1673 staircase is panelled

Goldsmiths Company

Foster Lane, EC2V
020 7606 7010 www.thegoldsmiths.co.uk

transport: St Paul's & Mansion House u/g, City Thameslink, Farringdon rail; buses 8,56,100,172,242

opening: by prior application

a 1830s marble staircase with pedestals holding statues of children representing the Four Seasons

The Gun

27 Coldharbour, Poplar, E14
020 7987 1692

transport: South Quay & Blackwall DLR; buses D6,D7

this pub has an enclosed staircase with smugglers' spy hole

Monument

Monument Street, EC3
020 7626 2717

transport: Monument & Bank u/g, Fenchurch Street rail; buses 15,35,40,43,47,48,133,149

opening: daily 09.30-17.00

admission charge; a joint ticket for the Monument and the Tower Bridge Experience is available

designed by Christopher Wren to commemorate the Great Fire of London of 1666, this Doric column has 311 spiral stairs to the top for a panoramic view over London. The fire reputedly began in a baker's shop in nearby Pudding Lane

St Paul's Cathedral

St Paul's Churchyard, EC4

020 7263 4128 www.stpauls.co.uk

transport: St Pauls & Mansion House u/g, Blackfriars & Cannon Street u/g & rail, City Thameslink rail; buses 8,11,15,26,56,76,172,100,172,242; boat Blackfriars Millennium Pier

facilities: café in crypt (09.00-17.30 Mon-Sat, 10.30-17.00 Sun); shop in crypt (09.00-17.30 Mon-Sat, 10.30-17.00 Sun)

opening: Mon-Sat 08.30-16.00 (restricted during services); Crypt 10.00-16.15 Mon-Fri, 11.00-16.15 Sat
admission charge includes entry to galleries

there are 250 stairs up to the Whispering Gallery, 119 up to the Stone Gallery and 152 steep spiralling steps inside the dome's structure to the Golden Gallery. You need to be energetic!

Wapping Underground Station

Wapping High Street, Wapping, E1

transport: Wapping u/g; buses 100,D3

original cylinder staircase with 84 stairs as built by Marc Isambard Brunel in 1843

Vintners Place

Upper Thames Street, EC4

020 7236 1863

transport: Mansion House u/g, Cannon Street u/g & rail; buses 11,15,26,76,344

opening: by prior application or ask at security desk

shallow marble stairs are flanked with columns in this attractive modern building built in classical Greco-Roman style

Old Sessions House (now Clerkenwell Conference & Banqueting Centre)

Clerkenwell Green, EC1

transport: Farringdon u/g & rail; buses 55,63

opening: office hours

until 1923 this was the Middlesex Sessions House and main Court of Justice. It was built in Pantheon style between 1792 and 1806 by Roland Gilbert. and has a domed entrance hall and staircase and two ghosts!

Museum of the Order of St John

St John's Gate, St John's Lane, Clerkenwell, EC1M

020 7324 4070 www.sja.org.uk/history

transport: Farringdon u/g & rail; buses 55,56,153

facilities: disabled access by appointment to ground floor only; giftshop; tours of gatehouse & crypt (Tue, Fri, Sat 11.00 & 14.30)

opening: Mon-Fri 10.00-17.00, Sat 10.00-16.00
admission free but a donation for the tour of the Gatehouse & Crypt is welcome

there is a rare 16th century spiral staircase with wooden treads

Mansion House

Walbrook, EC4

transport: Bank & Mansion House u/g, London Bridge u/g & rail; buses 8,11,15,25,26,76,242

opening: free tours by arrangement only. Please telephone 020 7626 2500

the exterior of this neo-classical Palladian building (built 1739-53) has staircases on two sides leading to a raised portico of six Corinthian columns surmounted by a pediment

Islington Town Hall

Upper Street, Islington, N1

transport: Highbury & Islington u/g, Essex Road rail; buses 4,19,30,43

opening: Mon-Fri office hours

this Grade 2 listed building has a marble staircase and wood panelled Council chambers

Skinner's Company

8 Dowgate Hill, EC4
020 7236 5629

transport: Mansion House u/g, Cannon Street u/g & rail; buses 11,15,26,76,344

opening: by prior application only

this City of London Livery Company has an 18th century wooden staircase

Gordon House, Brunel University

300 St Margaret's Road, Twickenham, Middlesex,

transport: Richmond u/g & rail, St Margarets rail; bus H37

this building retains an 18th century room with original fireplace, coved ceiling and staircase by Nicholas Dubois

Ranger's House

Chesterfield Walk, Blackheath, SE10
020 8853 0035

www.greenwichletting.co.uk/rangershouse.html

transport: Cutty Sark DLR, Blackheath & Maze Hill rail; buses 53,54,202,380

facilities: disabled access with chairlift to 1st floor; disabled wcs; limited parking; shop; tours by appointment

opening: daily Apr-Sept 10.00-18.00 or dusk; Wed-Sun Oct-Mar 10.00-16.00
admission charge

the Architectural Study Centre housed in the Coach House has a display of architectural features taken from 17th-19th century London dwellings. Included among the plaques, mantels, fireplaces and chimneys is a cast-iron spiral staircase taken from old Covent Garden

Old Royal Naval College

King William Walk, Greenwich, SE10
020 8331 7897

transport: Greenwich DLR & rail, Cutty Sark DLR; buses 177,180,188,199,286,386; boat Greenwich Pier

facilities: disabled access

opening: Mon-Sat 10.00-16.15, Sun 12.30-17.00
admission free

one of the staircases (Queen Anne Court) spans 4 floors while the other, in Queen Mary Court, is a stone cantilever

Whiteley's Shopping Centre

Queensway, W2
020 7229 8844

transport: Bayswater & Queensway u/g; buses 7,23,27,36,70

opening: centre Mon-Sun 08.00-midnight; shops Mon-Sat 10.00-20.00, Sun noon-18.00

the 1930s marble central staircase is modelled on one at La Scala, Milan, Italy

Warrington Hotel pub

93 Warrington Crescent, W9
020 8519 3029

transport: Maida Vale & Warwick Road u/g; buses 6,16,46,98,187

opening: Mon-Sat 11.00-23.00, Sun noon-22.30

portico, columns with tilework, staircase, highly decorated ceiling, iron lamps, sculptures and art nouveau glasswork

Maida Vale Underground Station, W9

transport: Maida Vale u/g; buses 16,46,98,187

this 1915 underground station has a Grade 2 listed staircase, criss-cross ironwork and tiling in white and brown with green check borders. The Ticket Office has wood-framed windows and criss-cross tiling

Woolwich Town Hall

Wellington Street, SE18
020 8854 8888

transport: Woolwich Arsenal rail; buses 51,53,54,96,99,122,161,178,244,291,380,386

a domed entrance hall with a grand Edwardian baroque marble staircase of 1906, by Alfred Brumwell Thomas

The Canons (Merton Heritage Centre)

Madeira Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4
020 8640 9387

transport: Mitcham Junction rail, Mitcham Tramlink; buses 118,127,264,S1

opening: Tue,Wed,Thur 10.00-16.00, Fri-Sat 10.00-17.00, Sun 13.00-16.00
admission free

a 1680 manor house with original fireplaces, staircases and panelling. The grounds have a medieval carp pond, walled garden and Tudor dovecote/ The house is used for exhibitions of local history

Ealing Town Hall

14 New Broadway, Ealing, W5

transport: Ealing Broadway u/g & rail; buses 65,83,112,207,297,E1,E2,E7,E8,E9,E10,E11,PR1

opening: Sat 13.00-17.00

a Victorian Gothic town hall with an imperial staircase

Marble Hill House

Richmond Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW1
020 8233 7435 (information), 020 7413 1443 (box office)
www.english-heritage.org.uk

transport: Richmond u/g & rail, St Margaret's & Twickenham rail; buses 33,290,490,H22,R68,R70
facilities: audio tape with hearing loop to ground floor; disabled access to ground floor (1 wheelchair available); snacks & meals (200m from house); shop; guided tours by arrangement; group access only during winter months

opening: Wed-Sun Apr-Sept, 10.00-18.00, Oct 10.00-17.00 (last admission 30 mins prior to closing)
admission charge

a striking mahogany staircase

Windsor Castle

Windsor, Berks, SL4
01753 831118 www.the-royal-collection.org.uk

transport: Windsor rail, Green Line coach from Victoria
facilities: *audio guide; disabled visitors should contact visitors' office; shop for books, postcards & gifts; pre-arranged tours for groups*

opening: daily Mar-Oct 09.45-17.15 (last admission 16.00); Nov-Feb 09.45-16.15 (last admission 15.00)
admission charge

a magnificent Grand Staircase lit by a polygonal lamp

No. 44 Berkeley Square, W1

transport: Green Park u/g; buses 8,9,14,19,22,38
built in the 1730s by the architect William Kent this mansion has a notable grand staircase. The building now houses the Clermont Club (gambling) and Annabels night club

Osterley Park House

Jersey Road, Isleworth, Middlesex, TW7
01494 755566 (infoline) www.osterleypark.org.uk

transport: Osterley u/g ½ mile; Syon Lane rail 1½ miles;
buses H28, H91

facilities: *parking; refreshments; shop; tours by arrangement*

opening: house 1 April-end Oct Wed-Sun 13.00-16.00;
park daily 09.00-19.30 or dusk
admission charge to house; park free

this house was transformed in the 18th century into a neo-classical villa with a six-columned portico at the front and a 1770 horseshoe staircase with delicate wrought ironwork and brasswork at the back. This was added by the architect, Robert Adam, who also designed the interior.

this is the best place to see Robert Adam's work. All the rooms are as he designed them - ceilings, walls, doorcases, doors, handles, carpets, mirrors, furniture. The main staircase is of neo-classical design with a fine iron balustrade and delicate stucco decoration. It sits under a replica of the ceiling painting by Rubens - the original had been destroyed in a fire in 1949

Wallington Town Hall

Woodcote Road, Wallington, Surrey

transport: Wallington rail

opening: office hours

the 1930s double flight staircase is in art deco design with black and white marble and 'penny' bronze handrail

St Albans Clock Tower

Market Place, St Albans, Herts, AL1
01727 751810

transport: St Albans City rail

facilities: *no disabled access*

opening: Sat-Sun Apr-Oct 10.30-17.00. To arrange tours at other times telephone 01727 751821
admission charge

built in 1405 this is the only medieval town belfry in England. The top, for fine panoramas of the town and cathedral, is accessible by 93 very small spiral steps

A great deal of care has been taken in collecting the information in this leaflet but *CityThemes* cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of that information. It can cover only a few of the many interesting sites to be found in London and therefore must not be considered a definitive guide.

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