



London WITH Kids



While London – as a sprawling metropolis – may initially not seem like the ideal destination for a family holiday the city does have a lot for young children to do.

Not only does London offer a wealth of cultural activities including museums, art galleries and historic buildings there are also leafy parks, waterways, woodlands and city farms to explore. Another benefit is that many of the attractions are free.

Rather than not offering enough child-friendly activities the problem is really deciding what to choose. One way to approach the task is to divide the city into sections and choose a theme for a day or a half day's activity. The centre of London is smaller than you might expect and with the help of a travel pass it is quick and easy to get around.

Museums

Kensington is home to three of London's major museums: the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), the Science Museum and the Natural History Museum, all of which are child-friendly. The V&A offers lots of activities for children of all ages

LINKS

Offers

www.kidslowlondon.com
www.visitlondon.com

Accommodation

www.visitlondon.com/city_guide/accommodation
www.lastminute.com
www.premiertravelinn.com
www.travelodge.com
www.novotel.com

FOOD

The Original Rainforest Cafe – a tropical jungle themed restaurant replete with cascading waterfalls and beautiful giant aquariums.

ADDRESS: 20-24 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W1D 7EU
TEL: 020 7434 3111

Blue Kangaroo – features a playzone, slides, a maze and a ball pond as well as a 'Yummy Kids Menu', weekly activities and fancy dress parties.

ADDRESS: 555 Kings Road, London, SW6 2EB
TEL: 020 73717622

Giraffe Restaurants – a small chain of family-friendly restaurants with great food and branches in Marylebone, Fulham, Hampstead and the City.

TOURS

London Ducktours – a bus and a boat in one that allows you to see all the sites of London without crossing any bridges.

ADDRESS: 55 York Road London, SE1 7NJ
TEL: (020) 7928 3132
EMAIL: enquiries@londonducktours.co.uk
WEBSITE: www.londonducktours.co.uk



Big Bus Company – double-decker open-air buses that allow you to learn about the history of London while you travel. If you want to

explore something, just hop off the bus at one of the stops and get back on later.

ADDRESS: Grosvenor Gardens House, 35-37 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0BS
TEL: (020) 7233 9533

EMAIL: info@bigbustours.com
WEBSITE: www.bigbustours.com

River Tours – an idyllic and relaxing way to explore London. Operators include City Cruises, Bateaux, Transport for London and Catamaran Cruisers.

TRANSPORT

www.tfl.gov.uk
www.thetrainline.com
www.eurostar.com

SHOPPING

Hamleys – iconic toy store with an international reputation for its magical atmosphere and spectacular window displays.

ADDRESS: 188-196 Regent Street, LONDON, W1B 5BT
Website: www.hamleys.com

Children's Book Centre – wide selection of children's books, CDs, videos and story tapes.
ADDRESS: 237 Kensington High Street, W8 6SA

SHOWS

The Lion King – Tim Rice and Elton John's Tony Award-winning musical based on Disney's hit film.

VENUE: Lyceum Theatre, 21 Wellington Street, London, WC2E 7DN
TEL: (0870) 243 9000

Mary Poppins – stage production of the classic film musical fable by Richard M Sherman and Robert B Sherman.

VENUE: Prince Edward Theatre, 28 Old Compton Street, London, W1D 4HS
TEL: (0870) 850 9191

Billy Elliot - The Musical – stage adaptation of the acclaimed British film.

VENUE: Victoria Palace, Victoria Street, London, SW1E 5EA
TEL: (0870) 895 5577



including back-pack tours and activity carts which are filled with hands-on activities including stories, puzzles and games. The Science Museum's interactive area is always popular with children as is the Natural History Museum's new tyrannosaurus rex, which moves, roars and even smells.

There are wash rooms and cafes in all of the museums and Hyde Park is a short walk to the north if you want to combine culture with a little fresh air and physical activity.

Galleries

The National Gallery and Portrait Gallery are conveniently located close to each other on Trafalgar Square. Both galleries offer kids trails so the whole family can enjoy the visit.

Close-by on the Strand is Somerset House. This beautiful building, once a Venetian-style river-side palace, is home to three art collections: The Courtauld Institute of Art, Gilbert Collection and Hermitage Rooms but is worth a visit in its own right just to see the elegant Nelson Stair. Originally called the Navy Staircase and later renamed after Lord Nelson, this is one of the most dramatic spaces within Somerset House.

AN ALTERNATIVE DAY TRIP AND ONE FOR OLDER CHILDREN WHO CAN WALK A BIT FURTHER, WOULD BE TO START AT THE TOWER OF LONDON AND CROSS THE THAMES VIA TOWER BRIDGE AND THEN HEAD WEST ON THE THAMES FOOTPATH ALONG THE SOUTH BANK OF THE THAMES.

There are washrooms, an indoor café and a terrace café with spectacular views of the Thames. Alternatively you can sit in the magnificent inner courtyard where children can play in the Edmond J. Safra Fountain in summer or ice skate in winter.

A visit to the central-London galleries can be combined with a trip to the London Transport Museum, located in nearby Covent Garden. The museum has a kidzone which features hands-on activities to help children learn about the different aspects of transport and also offers children's craft workshops.

Southbank

An alternative day trip and one for older children who can walk a bit further, would be to start at the Tower of London and cross the Thames via Tower Bridge and then head west on the Thames footpath along the south bank of the Thames.

This area of London has been regenerated in recent years and now offers a fascinating insight into the cultural and historical growth of the city. As you walk west you pass Borough Market (a vibrant farmers market), Southwark Cathedral with its Roman archaeological site and a full scale

GETTING THERE WITH BRITISH AIRWAYS

www.ba.com

Child discounts

British Airways offer discounts to children aged 2-11 years on all longhaul flights. Infants (0-2 years) pay only 10% of the adult ticket price (one infant per adult).

Food can be fun and nutritious

Food and bottle warming is available for those travelling with babies or toddlers. Parents can pre-book children's meals when travelling on international flights of over one hour. A 'feed kids first' policy ensures the little ones are satisfied allowing adults to enjoy their meal in peace.

Seats for babies and toddlers

Specially designed travel cots or infant seats can be requested on longhaul flights.

At the airport

Families with small children can board the aircraft first if they wish.

Advice on Buggies and Strollers

British Airways recommend that the small folding 'umbrella' type buggies are used when travelling to enable you to take your child's buggy/stroller from check-in, through security and to the departure gate/door of the aircraft.



Families board the aircraft before other passengers and you may stow these types of buggy/strollers onboard with you, however if the aircraft is full and there is no stowage space available your buggy/stroller will be placed in the hold.

Large three-wheeler strollers or prams will not fit through luggage chutes at the airport gate and cannot be taken onto the aircraft due to limited stowage space. This type of buggy/stroller will be taken at check-in for hold loading.

Children's entertainment

British Airways offer Skyflyer activity packs to keep children amused during flights. Skyflyer activity packs are available on international flights over three hours - a fun backpack for children aged 3 to 5 years and funky shoulder pack for children aged 6 to 12 years inclusive, which contain a variety of goodies from cuddly Skyflyers toys and sticker books to electronic games and Top Trumps. Skyflyer activity books are available on all international flights over one hour.

Cartoons, family blockbuster movies, a dedicated pop channel and a selection of games help to keep kids occupied. There is also a parental lock to block viewing of any unsuitable material on other channels.



replica of Francis Drake's galleon, the Golden Hinde where you can experience life on the high seas from the safety of the dock. There are even kids' sleepovers for the more adventurous. Continuing west you come to Shakespeare's Globe where you can stand in the pit and watch one of the Bard's plays.

Further along the river bank is the Tate Modern, a large bright child-friendly art gallery with a pleasant café and lots of interactive multimedia exhibits for the more technically minded child. The Thames Footpath passes The South Bank Centre with its river-side book sellers and then goes under Hungerford Bridge to emerge at the British Airways London Eye, Europe's tallest ferris wheel offering spectacular panoramic views of the city.

Just beyond the London Eye, housed in County Hall, the former home of the Greater London Council, are the London Aquarium and Dali Universe, a permanent exhibition dedicated to the Spanish surrealist.

Camden and Regent's Park

If you've had enough of sightseeing and want to get out of the city centre head up to King's Cross and the London Canal Museum in Battlebridge Basin. From the museum follow the towpath west along the edge of the Regent's canal to Camden Lock with its vibrant market with international stalls and cafes.

From the lock you can take a barge and sail west along the canal to Regent's Park Zoo. After a visit to the zoo walk south through Regent's Park where you will find a café with washrooms in the inner circle. Walking further south takes you to Marylebone Road where you can visit Madame Tussaud's Waxwork Museum and the Planetarium. pt

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