



# London's top 10s

The choice of things to do, eat and see in London can be overwhelming, so we've made it easier for you by asking friends of the magazine for their favourite things

## Top 10 pieces of public art *Zeb Soanes*



**1. *Master of Suspense* (Alfred Hitchcock) by Antony Donaldson, Gainsborough Studios, Hackney**

An 18-ton, solid-steel head on the site of the former Gainsborough Film Studios, where Alfred Hitchcock made 12 films, including *The Lady Vanishes*

**2. *Statue of the Dead Christ* by unknown, Mercers' Hall (by appointment)**

Buried beneath the floor of the Mercers' Chapel by bomb damage and found in 1954, this is one of the most important pieces of sculpture to survive the Reformation

**3. *Opening the Lock Gate* by Ian Rank-Broadley, City Road, Islington**

This commemorates the bicentenary of the

Regent's Canal and the toil of the canal workers responsible for the movement of goods around the country, who have largely been forgotten. The artist wanted to depict the men shirtless, but this was considered too racy

**4. *Sir John Betjeman* by Martin Jennings, St Pancras station**

A joyous piece of public art that invites you to gaze aloft with Sir John at the magnificent Victorian station he campaigned to save

**5. *Hodge the Cat* by Jon Bickley, Gough Square**

Samuel Johnson's black cat sits on top of the *Dictionary* and next to empty oyster shells, with the inscription 'a very fine cat indeed'

**6. *Peter Pan* by Sir George Frampton, Kensington Gardens**

J. M. Barrie erected this statue one night, advertising its arrival in *The Times*, so it appeared to children as if fairies had put it in place

**7. *George Orwell* by Martin Jennings, BBC Broadcasting House, Oxford Circus**

I remember this being unveiled, mainly for its timely inscription from Orwell: 'If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear'

**8. *Queen Victoria* by Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, near Kensington Palace**

Sculpted by Victoria's fourth daughter, the white marble statue depicts the sovereign aged 18 in her coronation robes

**9. *David* by Michelangelo (cast made by Clemente Papi in 1856), V&A Museum**

Being made of plaster not marble in no way reduces the impact of Michelangelo's artistry and skill. Marvel, too, at Papi's skill in making a copy using the ancient 'lost-wax' technique

**10. *Jeté* by Enzo Plazzotta, Millbank**

Noteworthy for the deceptive lightness its artist achieves in bronze, it depicts English

ballet dancer David Wall, who, aged 21, became the youngest male principal dancer in the history of the Royal Ballet. Encore! *Zeb Soanes is an author and broadcaster*

## Top 10 pieces of art

*Rose Balston*



**1. A Woman Bathing in a Stream by Rembrandt, National Gallery**

No Baroque artist depicted women better than Rembrandt. Here, he has tenderly shown us a private moment of complete absorption.

**2. Sarcophagus of Seti I, the Sir John Soane Museum**

An ancient Egyptian marvel, the sarcophagus of Pharaoh Seti I, father to Ramesses II

**3. Ascension with Christ Giving the Keys to Peter by Donatello, V&A**

Donatello was arguably the most important sculptor of the western world and this painting reveals his innovative *rilievo schiacciato*

## 'He throws the rule book out of the window, capturing the spirit of the rambunctious Coram'

**4. Arab Hall at Leighton House**

Escape into a world of gold gilded domes, Iznik and Damascene tiles, a tinkling fountain, *mashrabiya* screens from Cairo and a treasure trove of designs from Victorian artists

**5. Single Form (Memorial) by Barbara Hepworth, Battersea Park**

Beautiful to see amid Nature, deepening the connection her abstracts have to the landscape

**6. Allegory of Painting by Artemisia Gentileschi, National Gallery**

A shout of passion that tells us Gentileschi was a sophisticated, talented and clever artist willing to take her rightful place in a man's world

**7. Portrait of Thomas Coram by William Hogarth, Foundling Museum**

A fantastically progressive portrait, where—true to form—Hogarth throws the rule book out of the window, capturing the spirit of the determined and rambunctious Capt Coram

**9. Yinka Shonibare Library, Tate Modern**

More than 6,000 books all covered in Nigerian-born Shonibare's distinctive Dutch wax printed cotton textile

**10. The Great Model by Sir Christopher Wren, St Paul's Cathedral**

An immaculate, large-scale wooden creation made as part of Wren's pitch for the new St Paul's Cathedral, after the 1666 Great Fire

**8. Riesner Desk of comte d'Orsay, the Wallace Collection**

A simplified version of a desk made for Louis XV that was delivered to Versailles in 1769 *Rose Balston is an art historian and the founder of Artsclapes (www.artsclapesuk.com)*

## Top 10 pubs

*Charles Baker*



**1. The Albion, Islington**

The back garden is one of the loveliest living rooms in the capital, packed with a youngish Islington crowd

**2. Bulls Head, Chiswick**

As the River Thames laps by your side, you feel as if you could be in Hogarth's London

**3. The Southampton Arms, Kentish Town/Gospel Oak**

London's best pub? Many think so. Despite its city-wide reputation, it's still a locals' inn

**4. The King and Queen, Fitzrovia**

I can always find a table here at this old-fashioned Fitzrovia pub, which is invaluable

**5. Hermits Cave, Camberwell**

A timewarp where the crowd hasn't changed for 30 years. An enjoyably edgy ambience

**6. Prince Edward, Holloway**

Beautiful Victorian pub off the Holloway Road with an original interior and pints at less than a fiver. Don't tell anyone about it

**7. St John's Tavern, Archway**

Simply the best gastropub around. A beautiful dining room, too

**8. Blue Posts, Chinatown**

Interior unchanged since the Lady Chatterley trial, but, nonetheless, it's where the cool boys and girls come. Very, very trendy



**An icon among hostelries: The Holly Bush in Hampstead is eternally popular**

### Did you know?

In Room 36 at the National Gallery, two paintings by Turner hang alongside two by 17th-century French landscape painter Claude Lorrain. *Dido building Carthage* by the former is the first in which he set out to match the latter. In his will, Turner specified that he would bequeath it and *Sun Rising through Vapour* to the nation, on the understanding that they should be displayed alongside two of Lorrain's paintings

**9. The Holly Bush, Hampstead**

This Hampstead icon is too packed out on the weekends, but is simply unbeatable on a Tuesday or Wednesday afternoon

**10. The Hemingford, Islington**

Top-tier Irish pub, with some of the best Guinness this side of Dublin and more than decent Thai food

*Charles Baker is editor of 'The Fence'*

## Top 10 shops

*Ginnie Chadwyck-Healey*



**1. Dar Leone, Islington**

A jewellery, textiles, homeware haven, known for bold and vibrant prints. The pieces are all chosen by Sierra Leonean-American Isatu Funna

**2. Pentreath & Hall, Bloomsbury**

Inside Ben Pentreath and Bridie Hall's treasure trove, there is a trinket for everyone. The design duo's talents span architecture, interiors and the decorative arts, bringing a beautifully eclectic 360°-approach to their work

**3. Algerian Coffee Stores, Soho**

The only place to buy coffee in London: there really is a coffee bean for every occasion and every set of taste buds

**4. Liberty London, Soho**

Go for the building alone. The buyers go above and beyond with their selections each season. It's simply heaven

**5. John Bell & Croyden, Marylebone**

This pharmacist is an impressive 200 years old and boasts a Royal Warrant. This is where I go to marvel at the world of health, beauty and wellbeing under one roof

**6. Ainsworths, Marylebone**

Reputation precedes this small, but savvy business; the team is superb, friendly, informative and always on hand to offer advice over the phone if you cannot make it in person. I've used the shop for children's teething, eczema, anxiety, coughs—all those moments when homoeopathy can help →



Stocked full of the only shirts you'll ever need: With Nothing Underneath, Belgravia

#### 7. Lisa Redman, Notting Hill

My hidden secret for sustainable and bespoke garments, as well as perfectly tweaked-and-tailored items that you want to update. Lisa and her on-site seamstress team are magicians

#### 8. KJ's Laundry, Marylebone

One of the best places for clothing that none of your friends will have—and if you love an Ulla Johnson blouse

#### 9. Dinosaur Designs, Soho

Colour... and more colour! Chunky, brave jewellery and homeware designs, made of resin

#### 10. With Nothing Underneath, Belgravia

Pip Durell excels at excellently priced and tailored shirts for women. One is not enough *Ginnie Chadwyck-Healey is a writer, stylist and sustainable-fashion advocate*

## Top 10 hotels

*Rosie Paterson*



#### 1. Claridge's, Mayfair

If I could persuade Claridge's to let me move in, I'd be there in a shot, bags in hand. 'But it's so English,' a Swiss hotelier said to me. 'Exactly,' I replied.

Claridge's magical concoction of equal amounts glamour and quirk is yet to be replicated to the same effect anywhere else in the world

#### 2. NoMad, Covent Garden

There are myriad reasons to stay at NoMad, but the primary one is surely its Royal Opera House package, which includes an overnight stay, tickets to a performance, a backstage tour and the opportunity to watch a rehearsal

#### 3. Lime Tree Hotel, Belgravia

The Lime Tree is a unicorn on the London hotel scene, affordable and stylish. Ask for Room 42 (the Georgian townhouse has 26 in total)



A home from home, if only: Claridge's hotel, Mayfair, is the epitome of style and comfort

#### 4. Ham Yard Hotel, Soho

A glamorous cornucopia of colour and print, with a popular bar and one of London's best and most inventive afternoon teas

#### 5. Beaverbrook Town House, Chelsea

Guests staying in one of the hotel's 14 suites enjoy access to the Grade II-listed Cadogan Gardens. Said suites are named after London theatres and more than 500 posters, vintage illustrations and photographs cover their walls

#### 6. The Lost Poet, Notting Hill

This four-bedroom, guesthouse-style hotel is perfect for multi-generational travellers and groups. There's an automated check-in and check-out system, too, which means you can come and go as you please

#### 7. Artist Residence London, Pimlico

This shabby-chic, 10-bedroom bolthole is only a 20-minute walk away from Buckingham Palace and Chelsea's Saatchi Gallery. Dogs are welcome in several of the rooms

#### 8. Henrietta Hotel, Covent Garden

Even the cosiest rooms at the Henrietta, which occupies two adjoining Victorian townhouses, have two-person showers and his-and-her sinks

#### 9. The Rookery, Clerkenwell

Blink and you'll miss the door to The Rookery, a short pitter-patter from St Paul's Cathedral. The attention to Georgian detail is so great that the three-storey hotel could easily double as a period-drama backdrop, but it's worth noting that this means there is no lift

#### 10. The Stafford, St James's

What makes The Stafford special is that you can only find it if you know it's there; the building hums with a sense of a shared secret. The American Bar martinis are the best in the city *Rosie Paterson is Travel and Lifestyle Editor of COUNTRY LIFE*

## Top 10 restaurants

*Tom Parker Bowles*



#### 1. The Cow, Notting Hill

There's a reason this has been going strong for more than 25 years. Perfect Guinness, cool, briny oysters and lovely service. A west London classic

#### 2. The River Cafe, Hammersmith

Not exactly cheap, but can you put a price on unfiltered joy? Day or night, inside or out, the food—simple, yet sensational Italian—is wonderful; the service as warm as a Siena dusk

#### 3. Bouchon Racine, Farringdon

After 10 long years, Henry Harris is back. And this time, he's gone East. Expect bistro classics (snails, *tete de veau*, steak *au poivre*), immaculately done. Hell of a wine list, too

#### 4. 101 Thai Kitchen, Stamford Brook

Small and reassuringly laid back, this west London Thai serves up the real thing, often eye-searingly hot, but never less than thrilling. Isaan and South Thai dishes are a speciality



**Carnivore heaven: succulent, juicy bone marrow on toast at St John, Farringdon**

**5. Gymkhana, St James's/Mayfair**

Excellent Indian food, in mahogany-panelled surroundings. A trail blazer, still one of the best

**6. A Wong, Pimlico**

Some of the most inventive and downright brilliant modern regional Chinese cooking I've eaten anywhere. Andrew Wong is a genius

**7. Wilton's, St James's**

Smart, serious and timeless. Ask for a booth, 12 native oysters, jellied beef consommé. And Dover sole, on the bone. Classic, but peerless

**8. St John, Farringdon**

Bone marrow on toast is Fergus Henderson's great gift to the gastronomic world. But there's so much more. Trotter pies, white cabbage with brown shrimp, the best rarebit in town

**9. Quo Vadis, Soho**

Start with a smoked-eel sandwich or two, before moving onto a pie, perhaps, or asparagus rolled in brik pastry. Like its executive chef, Jeremy Lee, Quo Vadis is eternally divine

**10. Bentley's Oyster Bar & Grill, Mayfair**

Come for the oysters, beautifully shucked. Stay for the fish pie, baked scallops, and langoustines. A London temple to seafood  
*Tom Parker Bowles is a writer and food critic*

**Top 10 small museums**

*Charlotte Mullins*



**1. The Courtauld, Strand**

The Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings are world class (Édouard Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*; Paul Cézanne's *Mont Saint-Victoire with Large Pine*; Vincent van Gogh's *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear*)

**2. The Fan Museum, Greenwich**

A hidden gem that looks at the long international history of the fan. Highlights include fans designed by artists Paul Gauguin, Walter Sickert and Salvador Dalí

**3. Foundling Museum, Brunswick Square**

Thomas Coram opened the Foundling Hospital in 1739 to help children in need. With Hogarth and Handel among his supporters, the museum has an exceptional collection

**4. Sir John Soane's Museum, Lincoln's Inn Fields**

Soane's former home, stuffed full of classical sculptures, an ancient Egyptian tomb and models of Soane's own projects (including the Bank of England). His impressive art collection includes all eight paintings of Hogarth's masterpiece 'The Rake's Progress'

**5. Freud Museum, Belsize Park**

Alongside the psychoanalyst's famous couch and personal collection of books and sculptures are temporary exhibitions such as 'Freud's Antiquity: Object, Idea, Desire' (until July 16)

**'It has everything, from an aquarium to galleries of instruments and an overstuffed walrus'**

**6. Hogarth's House, Chiswick**

The country retreat of Hogarth has been open to the public since 1904. His studio at the end of the garden no longer exists, but the house has been restored to its former glory and includes many of his famous print series, such as 'A Harlot's Progress'

**7. William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow**

Victorian designer William Morris lived here as a teenager; now, it tells his story and the rise of the Arts-and-Crafts Movement. It also hosts exhibitions, such as 'Ashish: Fall in Love and Be More Tender' (until September 10)

**8. The Queen's House, Greenwich**

Home to a superb collection of maritime art, as well as the 'Armada' portrait of Elizabeth I and Canaletto's view of Greenwich Hospital. It also hosts temporary exhibitions, such as 'The Van der Velde: Greenwich, Art and the Sea' (until January 14, 2024)

**9. Horniman Museum, Forest Hill**

A bit of everything, from an aquarium and butterfly house to galleries full of instruments and cultural objects from around the world. Its Natural History gallery houses traditional

**Learn the language of fans and woo your love at The Fan Museum in Greenwich**

specimen displays, as well as its most famous taxidermy item, an overstuffed walrus

**10. Strawberry Hill House, Twickenham**

This Gothic crenellated confection was the home of 18th-century collector and novelist Horace Walpole and is full of rare delights  
*Charlotte Mullins is an art historian*

**Top 10 views**

*Simon Jenkins*



**1. The City from Waterloo Bridge**

The definitive 'Canaletto' view of the City floating above the Thames. St Paul's fighting against a backdrop of vulgar modern towers. Most tolerable at night

**2. London from the Monument**

The first view in reverse. Once, it looked out over a forest of church spires. Now, it cowers diminutive amid skyscrapers. The best place to feel enveloped in modern London

**3. Trafalgar Square from Admiralty Arch**

Classic London recalled by exiles the world over. Nelson's Column and its lions, backed by the porticos of St Martin-in-the-Fields and the National Gallery

**4. Waterloo Place, looking up Lower Regent Street at night**

The metropolis at its most Regency and poised, now brilliantly lit

**5. Cumberland Terrace, Regent's Park, seen at an angle**

Never was speculative housing so splendidly on parade than created by John Nash when facing bankruptcy

**6. Borough Market**

Crammed with weekend crowds and stalls piled high, beneath thundering railway bridges and tumbledown roofs →

**Did you know?**

Greater London isn't actually a city, it's a conurbation containing two cities. One is the City of London, a juxtaposition of medieval alleyways and soaring skyscrapers, home to the Bank of England and the Stock Exchange; the other is the City of Westminster, site of the Houses of Parliament and the vast majority of Government buildings

**7. Bond Street**

Boutique banners flying and fashion on parade

**8. St Pancras and King's Cross**

The two old women of London's majestic railway era sit scowling at each other

**9. Greenwich Royal Hospital from the Isle of Dogs**

Wren's palatial London trying to be Paris or Vienna. Preferably with ships in the foreground

**10. The Thames over Petersham meadows**

Curving into the setting sun from Richmond Hill; outer London at its most serene

*Simon Jenkins is an author and commentator*

## Top 10 breakfasts and bakeries

by *Emma Hughes*

**1. Milk Beach, Queens Park**

The original Milk Beach does an unbeatable breakfast—namely the Aussie-style folded eggs on generously buttered St John sourdough (only £6)

**2. The Dusty Knuckle, Dalston**

Come in the week for peerless Viennoiserie, linger at the weekend for eggs with pickled green chillies on freshly baked, bubbly focaccia

**3. Little Bread Pedlar, Pimlico**

This bakery's operations base is in Bermondsey, but the pretty-as-a-picture Pimlico branch is amply stocked with hazelnut chocolates, cardamom buns and seasonal Danishes galore. There's no seating, so it's grab and go

### Did you know?

The King is no stranger to the London dining scene and, in recent years, has been spotted inside Scott's and Mount St Restaurant, both in Mayfair, as well as in Brilliant, a Punjabi curry house in Southall

**4. The Baguette Deli, Clapham Junction**

This petite, French-owned bakery punches far above its weight—London embassies have it on speed dial for croissant orders and the caneles and macarons fly off the counter

**5. Fortitude Bakehouse, Bloomsbury**

Blink and you might miss Fortitude, but that would be a terrible shame, because the bakes—baklava *beignets*, celeriac *borek*, chocolate morning buns and Swedish *semla*, to name but four—are technically impressive and lick-your-fingers delicious

**6. Towpath Cafe, Haggerston**

It's only open from Wednesday to Sunday in summer, but London's best-loved canal-side



**She's a beauty, mate: gargantuan gourmet breakfasts Australian style at Milk Beach**

restaurant is worth the wait. Breakfast starts at 9am sharp: get there early to avoid the epic queue for sage-fried eggs, tomato toast and burnished cheese toasts with quince jelly

**7. Kapihan, Battersea**

This stylish Filipino coffee house has mind-blowingly strong, expertly roasted and brewed coffee (try the vanilla latte) and freshly baked Bibingkas. They're so popular that website pre-orders are recommended at weekends

**8. 45 Jermyn Street, St James's**

A cossetting start to the day awaits here, with kedgeree, crumpets with Marmite and a fried duck egg and a truffled scramble on toast. The 'Marys' section of the drinks list is inspired

**9. Allpress Roastery & Cafe, Dalston**

Light, bright and winningly perfumed with the aroma of roasting coffee beans, New Zealand coffee titan Allpress's Dalston Lane headquarters is gorgeous inside and out—pair a perfect flat white with one of its breakfast plates, piled high with avocado, ripe tomatoes, hummus and toasted sourdough

**10. E Pellicci, Bethnal Green**

This family-run Art Deco café plays all the hits: ham, egg and chips, a full English (vegetarian or traditional), pancake stacks and, for the mighty of appetite, a chicken escalope-stuffed ciabatta with mozzarella and ragu  
*Emma Hughes is a writer and food critic*

Instead, go to London Bridge and gaze at it from there. And go at night

**3. HMS Belfast**

It could be said the British spend too much time reminiscing about a war that ended 80 years ago. Do not indulge them further

**4. Leicester Square**

Ask any Londoner why this place is popular and they wouldn't be able to tell you. Who likes M&Ms enough to visit M&M world? Do you not have busy places in your own city? Do you go to them? Of course not

**5. Richmond Park**

A giant park that's too far from the city centre. The landscape is almost totally devoid of anything to actually look at and it's full of giant charging deer being chased by dogs that have been let off the lead by bad owners

**6. The Piccadilly line**

An absurd invention. The trains are too small\*, the stations are too close and the square wheels will shake your teeth loose

**7. The O2 Dome**

Served no purpose when it was built; serves no purpose now

**8. Camden**


A film set full of visions of what your children will look like if you don't hug them enough

**9. The London Aquarium**

Full of fish and false promises

**10. Platform 9¾ at King's Cross**

Having invented the railway network, the UK spent the next two centuries making it as unbearable as possible. What this means is that most of London's stations are full of people in the worst mood conceivable. The only thing that would upset them more is being prevented from entering or leaving the station by large queues of people who want to get their picture taken holding half a trolley glued to a wall. 'Harry Potter' is a series of children's books and you are a grown adult. Act like one

*\*Disclaimer: the writer is 6ft 4in*   
*James Fisher is News and Property Editor of COUNTRY LIFE*

## Ten things to miss

*James Fisher*

**1. Fulham**

Fulham is a place populated almost exclusively by people waiting to inherit vast family fortunes as they work in Fintech. The pubs are bad; the football is bad; the transport links are bad

**2. Tower Bridge**

Tower Bridge is a marvellous piece of architecture and engineering that can only be properly appreciated by not being on it.