

Nature Lovers Guide to London

Putting 'Nature' and 'London' in the same sentence may seem like an oxymoron. However, you may be surprised at how green and lush London can be once you know where to look.

As a visitor to the city, there are plenty of great museums and places to visit such as the [British Museum](#), [Tate Modern](#), [Victoria and Albert Museum](#). All super places to visit, however, too many hours indoors can leave you feeling like you've had the life sucked out of you.

Which is when you might want to escape to a park, such as Hyde Park, Regents or Green Park. Be warned that these may be full of all the same people you ran into in the Museum. The solution is to find a few less famous but more fabulous greens spots around the city.

These quiet lush places are the go-to when you start to feel a bit drained. A bit of fresh air and a place to recharge is the perfect natural remedy, and here's a list of my favourites:

[St Dunstan in the East Church](#)

This church is tucked away in the back streets of the financial district, and can feel somewhat clandestine solely by the fact that many people that work nearby don't even know of its existence.

It withstood and was patched up after the great fires of 1666, before being bombed during the blitz in 1941. Many of the structural walls of the old church remain standing although the roof is gone. It's a treat to watch nature reclaim the space. There is a garden and benches to sit and while you enjoy a coffee or lunch.

It's a stone's throw from the [Tower of London](#), so worth a visit before or after your tour.

Cost: Free

Address: St. Dunstan Hill, London



[Hampstead Heath](#)

Hampstead Heath particularly beautiful park thanks to its lakes, easy accessibility and incredible views of the sprawling city that it overlooks. It's the perfect place for a picnic – depending on the weather – or just a stroll to stretch your legs and get some fresh air and exercise. Cost: Free



Inner City Squares

There are so many to list, it is really best to look on google maps and pick one nearby to wherever you might be on the day.

Go grab a takeaway coffee or a sandwich and find a quiet bench to sit on as you watch the seasons float on by.

A few of my favourites are Bloomsbury, Russell and Soho Square. Each with their own history, stories and famous plaques that are plastered on the affluent buildings nearby.

Cost: Free

[Royal Botanic Gardens](#), Kew

Listing themselves as the most famous Botanic Gardens in the world, when you arrive you'll see why.

You can visit for a whole day and still not see it all. There are glass-houses, endless walking paths, treetop walkways, flower gardens as well as libraries of antique plant books, fungi specimens as well as a science, educational and specimen areas. After all this, you might also want to recharge in the cafe, where you can sit and relax, enjoy the fresh food and endlessly green views.

Cost: £13.75 for adults, £3.50 for children

Address: Kew Gardens



[Chelsea Flower Show](#)

This is a big colourful bonanza is held once year in May, and shows of the best of the best of the English flowers and gardens. You'll see where the term an 'English Garden', comes from, as it's certainly no half-baked affair. This is a serious business!

For the those of us that are easily enchanted by the colours, shapes, and smells of all that flowers offer us, it is the perfect way to spend an afternoon.

The [Royal Horticultural Society](#) can be [found here](#) and hosts a range of events throughout the country, so even if you are not in London in May, you can visit their calendar to find other events that may be of interest. Website: [Chelsea Flower Show](#)

There is an incredibly beautiful movie based on the real-life story of Mary Reynolds. Who was the youngest winner of the Chelsea Flower Show. She works to bring elements of the wild back into our parks and gardens.

The [Dare to be Wild Movie](#) can be found on Amazon.

[Hackney City Farm](#)

There aren't just lush green gardens to visit, in some places you can also pitch in and get your hands dirty. You can even visit and pet the animals on the farm, stop in at the shop and buy produce that is grown here on the farm.

Whether you have kids or if you just feel like doing something completely different while in town by visiting and supporting a local initiative, then head over to [Hackney City Farm](#). The cost to visit: Free

Haringey Parkland Walk and Bat Project

There is a lovely Parkland walk in North London. It will take you along an old railway line, which is so incredibly rich in foliage you may be mistaken for thinking that you are in the countryside. You'll come across an old unused station that nature has reclaimed, and at the end of the walk you can visit the local Bat Project.

The bats are sleeping, undisturbed during the day, which is why it's most shut off to the public. However, it still has is a gorgeous spot in an 'Adam's Family kind of way'.

There are always ongoing projects to protect wildlife around London. If you would like to keep an eye on what is going on, or if you live or are visiting for a longer period you can volunteer and participate in the projects by going to [Wild London website](#).

Cost: Free

Address: Parkland Walk, Haringey

[Map and information here](#)



Visiting these Lush Green Foreign worlds without having to step outside:

For those that would love some inspired reading, either while you are on the tube (underground) or have a long-haul destination.

Or perhaps you are an armchair traveller, you can still enjoy it all from the comfort of your own home.

I highly recommend these books to put you in the mood, or to inspire your love of nature, travel and endless green gardens:

- [The Signature of Things](#) by Elizabeth Gilbert.
- [Gathering Moss, A Natural and Cultural History of Moss](#), by Robin Wall Kimmerer.
- [Earthy joys by Philippa Gregory](#), Historical, Fictional and Green.
- [The Secret Life of Plants](#) & [The Hidden Life Of Trees](#) will have you looking at plants and trees in a whole new way. Did you know

they're telepathic? That they faint before you even think of ripping a leaf off... so much fascinating reading.

Greenery is always is worth visiting:

Wherever you go, even in the biggest cities in the world finding a bit of time to enjoy the greenery around us is beneficial to us, our health and beneficial to the plants and trees. It's our appreciation and involvement that keeps local councils aware of the importance of these spaces in our lives. Whether we live there or we are just a visitor passing by, we all need a little bit of greenery and fresh air in our lives.

Other articles/ resources that may interest you:

[Stunning green Spaces in London via Secret London](#)

[Tours by locals](#)

[25 Stunning Green Space in London](#) by Timeout

Stunning photos, thanks to:

Hampstead Heath Photo by [Amadeusz Misiak](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Kew Gardens: Photo by [Jack Young](#) on [Unsplash](#)