

# London: Best Gardens



2016 is the Year of the English Garden, what a better opportunity to discover the best gardens in London. From World Heritage UNESCO sites to hidden gems, the capital boasts an incredible number of green spaces.

Explore a World Heritage Site at **Kew Gardens**, one of the world's most famous gardens. Stroll a soaring walkway amid tree canopies and wander through extensive gardens under glass with temperatures reaching up to 27°C. Enjoy a day out amidst four cafes and restaurants, art galleries, a serene lake and waterlily ponds. Groups can enjoy themed guided walking tours, fascinating commentary on the hop-on-hop-off explorer bus and special catering options. Groups of 10 or more adults receive a discount at Kew when paid in advance. Don't forget group tours must be booked in advance.



A short walk away from the hustle and bustle of central London and you will find **Chelsea Physic Garden**, this 'hidden gem' is a peaceful green oasis. It was founded in 1673 as an apothecary's garden, in a warm microclimate by the river Thames, to train apprentices in medicinal plants. Groups can enjoy a fascinating tour accompanied by expert guides, followed by a relaxing lunch or afternoon tea at its popular Tangerine Dream café.

Another unmissable green space is **Kensington Gardens**. This Royal Park is home to Kensington Palace, a stunning 18th-century building that serves as royal residence to a number of members of the Royal Family, including The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry. A visit to the peaceful Italian Gardens is a must, a 150-year-old ornamental water garden located on the north side of Kensington Gardens near Lancaster Gate. It is believed to have been created as a gift from Prince Albert to his beloved Queen Victoria. Combine the trip with a visit to Kensington Palace, an elegant afternoon tea at The Orangery or hire a boat on the Serpentine.

Located just four miles from Trafalgar Square, **Hampstead Heath** is one of London's best loved green spaces. The Heath has some of the best views and highest points in London for everyone to enjoy. It includes Parliament Hill, Golders Hill Park (with a zoo and butterfly house), an open air Lido (open 365 days a year), swimming ponds, splash pools, countless sports pitches and facilities, athletics track and playgrounds.

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Devised by Henry VIII as a magnificent display of opulence, the **Hampton Court Palace Gardens** host the famous Hampton Court Palace Maze, created in 1690 as a form of courtly entertainment for William III. Today the Maze covers an impressive one third of an acre and consists of half a mile of winding paths surrounded by towering 7ft-high (2 metres) yew tree walls. On average it takes 20 minutes to reach the centre. Both the Formal Gardens and entry to the Maze are included in palace admission tickets. For non-palace ticket holders, a separate admission charge applies to the Formal Gardens during official summer time. Maze-only admission tickets are available all year around.



## More gardens & parks :

Hyde Park

The Regent's Park and Primrose Hill

Richmond Park

Greenwich Park

## Highlights:

2016: the Year of the English Garden

Themed guided walking tours

Open air lido

## Annual Special Events:

Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park (Dec)

Christmas at Kew (Dec)

Regent's Park Open Air Theatre (Summer)



## Useful addresses and travel trade contacts:

**Kew Gardens:** Kew Gardens | [groups@kew.org](mailto:groups@kew.org)

**Chelsea Physic Garden:** Sloane Square | [Imiddleton@chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk](mailto:Imiddleton@chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk)

**Kensington Gardens:** High Street Kensington | [events@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:events@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk)

**Hampstead Heath:** Hampstead Heath | [hampstead.heath@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:hampstead.heath@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

**Hampton Court Palace Gardens:** Hampton Court | [groupsandtraveltrade@hrp.org.uk](mailto:groupsandtraveltrade@hrp.org.uk)

**Hyde Park:** Hyde Park Corner | [hyde@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:hyde@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk)

**The Regent's Park:** Regent's Park, Baker Street | [regents@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:regents@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk)

**Richmond Park:** East Putney | [richmond@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:richmond@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk)

**Greenwich Park:** Greenwich, Cutty Sark | [greenwich@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:greenwich@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk)

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