THE SIGHTS OF LONDON

The capital of Great Britain is full of popular and world-famous tourist attractions, both educational and entertaining. Most of them are located close to the river Thames, others are in different parts of London and in its suburbs. The city was founded about 2 000 years ago, so there are a lot of interesting historic and architectural sights.

Big Ben is the most famous iconic clock tower of the Houses of Parliament. Behind this long and beautiful building stands medieval Westminster Abbey where many historic weddings, coronations and burials took place. The Tower of London has rich history as a royal palace, a fortress, a prison and a place of execution.  Not far from the Tower guests can see the magnificent architecture of St Paul’s Cathedral, originally designed by Sir Christopher Wren. In the middle of Trafalgar Square tourists stop to admire a 52-metre Nelson’s column dedicated to Admiral Lord Nelson. Buckingham Palace has been the official residence of British monarchs since the reign of Queen Victoria.

London is famous for its wonderful museums and art galleries. In British Museum one can see ancient paintings, sculptures and even Egyptian mummies. London’s National Gallery has the greatest collection of paintings of Van Gogh, Leonardo da Vinci, Renoir and many others. The Natural History Museum boasts its fabulous dinosaur exhibition. Tate Modern is a unique museum with the works of Picasso, Dali and other modern artists. The Science Museum is a technology thought-provoking museum with interactive galleries devoted to many fields of science: from space travel to psychology.

It is impossible to get bored in London. The best places for quiet relaxation are traditional English parks and gardens. The tourists’ favorite are Kew Gardens, Hyde Park, St. James’s Park, Green Park and Kensington Gardens. Right in the heart of the capital we can find London Zoo and London Aquarium. In Madame Tussauds Museum visitors will meet face to face with hundreds of celebrities: from Shakespeare to Lady Gaga because it’s an amazing collection of wax figures. Warner Bros. Studio Tour is an unbelievable behind-the-scenes tour where we can enjoy the magic of the Harry Potter films. The London Eye is a giant wheel that carries its visitors in one of its capsules for breathtaking experience above the city and its attractions.

 TRAFALGAR SQUARE

The largest and busiest square of the capital of Foggy Albion, located in its very center. It is here that the three main streets of Westminster converge: May, Strand and Whitehall. From the thirteenth century there were rooms in which royal hawks were kept, later royal stables were built. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the square was redeveloped, the National Gallery was built. The central architectural element is the 56-meter Nelson Column, erected in honor of the famous admiral and crowned with his monument. At the corners of the square there are also four different sculptures. Initially, Trafalgar Square was named after William the Fourth, and the honor of the victory of England in 1805 over the Franco-Spanish flotilla in the iconic Battle of Trafalgar.

 MADAME TUSSAUD’S LONDON

The largest and most famous museum of wax sculptures, founded in 1835 by the French Maria Tussauds, who moved to London in the early nineteenth century. More than a thousand wax copies of various people are collected here: from maniacs and serial killers to royalty and show business stars. This is one of the most popular attractions in London, past which no tourist coming to the city passes. During the existence of the museum, more than 500 million people have visited here. The museum is located on Marylebone Road, near the Baker Street subway station. Visitors are received daily. Tickets start at £15.

 TOWER OF LONDON

One of the main symbols and attractions not only of London, but of the whole of Britain. During its existence (since 1066), this building was used as a defensive fortress, prison, mint, royal treasury, weapons arsenal, observatory and zoo.

To this day, the Tower of London has managed to survive almost in its original form, and its main buildings are a museum with an armory, where the famous treasures of the British Empire are located. In addition to ancient buildings and artifacts, this london landmark attracts tourists with its inhabitants – crows, who remained here to live after the transfer of the zoo to Regent’sPark in 1831. There is a legend that the foundations of Britain will remain unshakable as long as the crows remain in the Tower. The castle is guarded by 37 yeomani – royal guards. The fortress is located in the historic center of London, on the north bank of the Thames. Tickets cost between £10-£25.

 BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The building was built in 1703 for the Duke of Buckingham, and 59 years later it was purchased by King George III and began to be used as a private residence. The status of the official residence of the monarchs of the palace received only in 1837, when Queen Victoria was crowned, whose monument now stands in front of the palace entrance. During the reign of Victoria, Buckingham Palace was put in order and acquired a familiar look to everyone today. Also, with her, many traditions appeared, which continue to be observed to this day. One of them is the mandatory raising of the royal standard, if the monarch is in residence. But visitors from all over the world are attracted here primarily by another ritual – the solemn changing of the guard, which takes place daily half an hour before noon in the summer.

The palace itself, located opposite Pall Mall and Green Park, can only be accessed during August-September, when the monarchs are resting. The ticket price is 12-37 pounds sterling.

 TOWER BRIDGE

An iconic landmark of London, without a visit to which it is impossible to imagine a visit to the British capital. A drawbridge over the Thames was built in 1894 east of London Bridge due to increased traffic intensity. The construction of metal with stone cladding is made in the form of a 244-meter crossing with two towers in the Gothic style. The designers provide for the possibility of pedestrians crossing the bridge through special galleries between the towers located at a 44-meter height, however, now they serve as a museum and an observation deck.

 LONDON EYE

One of the largest Ferris wheels in Europe, having a height of 135 meters and including 32 capsule cabins, each of which can accommodate up to 25 passengers. The number 32 was not chosen by chance – that’s how many suburbs the English capital has. Interestingly, the 13th booth does not exist because of the superstition of the creators. The opening of this attraction was timed to the beginning of the new millennium and took place on the last day of 1999. It was originally planned that London Eye would be a temporary structure that would be dismantled in 2005, however, this Ferris wheel, from which almost the entire city is visible, quickly gained popularity among locals and tourists, entering the top attractions of London. Therefore, it was decided to leave him. The wheel is located opposite the Houses of Parliament on the south bank of the Thames. The attraction is open all year round, except on December 25. Tickets range from 17 to 38 euros

 LONDON’S NATIONAL GALLERY

One of the most famous art museums in the world, the history of which began in 1824 with the acquisition of a collection of 38 paintings belonging to a native of Russia – John Julius Agerstein. The gallery itself was opened later, in 1839. To date, more than two thousand works of art written by Western European painters in the XII-XX centuries have been collected here. All masterpieces are presented in the exposition in accordance with the chronology. In the National Gallery there are several cafes where you can drink coffee and relax, souvenir shops and art shops, where a variety of souvenirs, books and copies of paintings from the gallery are offered. The museum is located in Trafalgar Square. Admission is free, but you can leave a small donation. “A really worthwhile place, a must visit even for those who do not consider themselves to be a great admirer of painting. In one day, I could not get around the entire exposition, so I returned to the second and did not regret the time spent. I was also pleased with the free admission.”

 WESTMINSTER ABBEY

A majestic gothic-style temple built with some interruptions from 1245 to 1745 in the London borough of Westminster. Traditionally used as a place for the coronation and wedding ceremonies of monarchs, as well as their burial. In the abbey, representatives of royal dynasties, clergy, nobles and writers found their peace. Also here are the relics of Edward the Confessor in the hotel chapel, named in his honor. One of the places of attraction for tourists is located between the chapels of Henry the Seventh and St. Edward majestic throne, on which the British kings are crowned. Under the seat there is a special niche in which the so-called stone of destiny is invested, which is stored in EdinburghCastle. The abbey is located in central London, near the Thames Embankment and next to the Palace of Westminster. The ticket price is 9-20 pounds sterling. “Undoubtedly, once to visit here is worth a general understanding of English culture and history, but I did not admire this place. In fact, this abbey is one big cemetery.”

 HYDE PARK AND KENSINGTON GARDENS

Hyde Park is one of the royal parks, united with each other and forming a large-scale green zone in the center of the British capital. The status of The Royal Park was given to it in 1536 after the acquisition of these lands by Henry the Eighth for the purpose of hunting here. The park became accessible to citizens in 1637 after the construction of a kind of ring that separated the park itself from the gardens in the north. The park serves as a place for gathering and discussion of various topics by citizens. In the very center is a large lake Serpentine, in which swimming is allowed.

 Kensington Gardens is another royal park located next to Hyde Park and was part of the latter until 1728. The main attraction is the modest Kensington Palace, where Queen Victoria was born. Also attracting attention is a large 180-foot memorial dedicated to Queen Victoria’s husband, Prince Albert I, and a statue of Peter Pan. In addition, there is a museum of contemporary art Serpentine, which occupies the premises of the former tea pavilion.