

AUTUMN 2024

TOP TABLES
New places to eat in Victoria

IN THE FRAME
100 years of royal photography

FLYING HIGH
Meet explorer Oli France

Victoria

LONDON STARTS HERE



THE SECRET GARDEN
New developments at the Onion Garden



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AUTUMN

Cover: Jens Jakobsen in 'The Onion Garden'
Right: LHQ Hub
Far right: Afternoon tea in Westminster
Abbey's 'College Garden'

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Victoria LONDON STARTS HERE
is produced on behalf of the Victoria
BID and the Victoria Westminster BID

Publishing Business

Berkeley Square House,
Berkeley Square, London, W1J 6BD
020 7259 1050 www.pubbiz.com

Editor Alice Cairns 020 7259 1058
alice@pubbiz.com

Editor at large Jonathan Whiley
020 7259 1057
jonathan@pubbiz.com

Writers Corrie Bond-French,
Sophia Charalambous

Subeditor Kate White

Designer Katie Stafford

Circulation manager

Julie Ward

Advertisement managers

Bridget Rodricks
bridget@pubbiz.com 020 7259 1059

Richard Taylor
richard@pubbiz.com 020 7259 1051

Publisher Adrian Day
day@pubbiz.com 020 7259 1053

Printed in the UK
© Publishing Business Ltd 2024

Victoria BID

54 Wilton Road
London
SW1V 1DE
020 3872 7183
www.victoriabid.co.uk

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Publishing Business is a member of the Professional Publishers' Association and observes the PPA Code of Publishing Practice.



▶ Break a sweat
 A new reformer pilates studio is opening on Eccleston Place this autumn. At Sentiré Pilates, class sizes are limited to just four people per session, meaning that your instructor will be able to work closely with you to ensure that you get the most out of your class.
 23 Eccleston Place



▶ Defying gravity
 Wicked is launching free anti-bullying workshops as part of its active learning programme. The 30-minute workshop was filmed on stage at the Apollo Victoria Theatre, and uses the beloved musical as a starting point to discuss themes of discrimination, identity and self-acceptance. Wicked fans should also have November 27 marked in their diaries for the official release of the Wicked movie in the UK.
 17 Wilton Road

IMAGE: MATT CROCKETT

▶ New beginnings
 Throughout September you can donate your preloved clothes to the reception desk at 55 Broadway. The Central London Alliance is partnering with Blue Orchid Hospitality to collect people's secondhand clothes and sell them in a pop-up shop in St James's Park. Proceeds from the initiative will go to support the charity Integrity International Trust, which works to build positive futures for vulnerable people through health and welfare services, job opportunities and skills training.





Chess champion

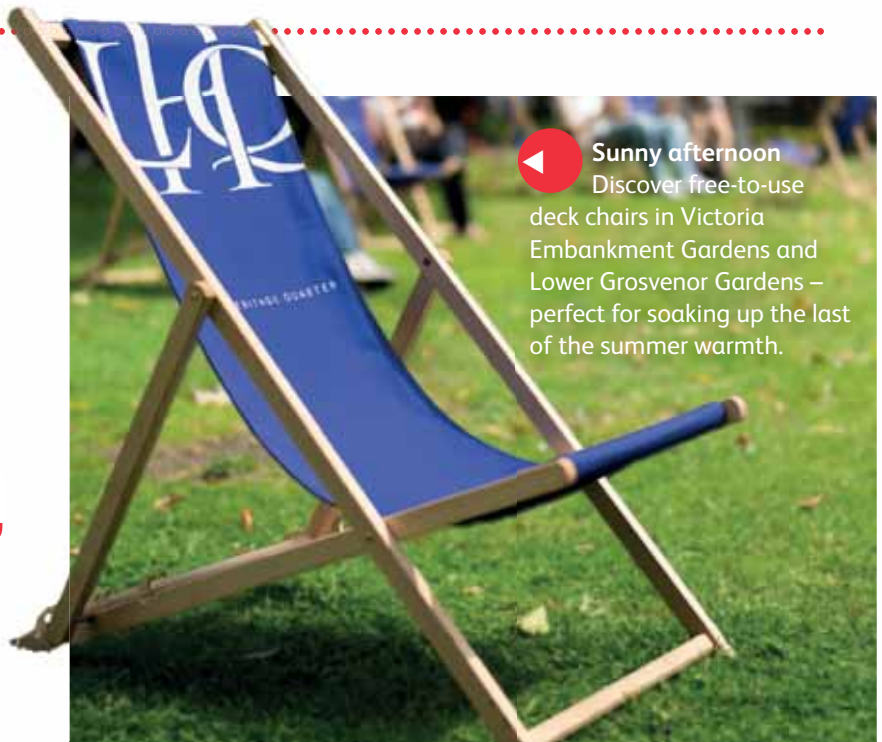
A nine-year-old student from a Westminster school has become the youngest person in the world to achieve a FIDE chess rating of 2,200. Ethan Pang, who attends Westminster Under School in Vincent Square, began playing chess at the age of five to entertain himself during the pandemic. A supportive chess coach at his school then encouraged him to take the game more seriously, and by 2022 Ethan was representing England at the European Youth Chess Championship, which is held annually for players aged under 18. After drawing against an international master, Ethan was given his record-breaking ranking.



IMAGE: BRENDAN O GORMAN

What's new in Victoria

BY ALICE CAIRNS



Sunny afternoon

Discover free-to-use deck chairs in Victoria Embankment Gardens and Lower Grosvenor Gardens – perfect for soaking up the last of the summer warmth.



The big clean

Volunteers including the lord mayor of Westminster, Robert Rigby, took part in Smarten & Sparkle Victoria, a 60-minute deep clean of our streets. Teams of helpers took part in litter picking, planting and sweeping to ensure that the local area was looking bright and clean. Keep an eye on the London Heritage Quarter website for details of the next seasonal Smarten & Sparkle event.



TAKE IT EASY

Did you know that Gymbox doesn't just offer workouts for your body? Its new range of classes for your mind aims to help you improve your mental health in order to contribute to your all round wellbeing. The "cocoon" class is a 45-minute session that's perfect after a stressful day – simply settle into a hammock for some aerial relaxation and try out some meditative stretching, gently guided by the on-hand expert. You may not break a sweat, but you'll leave feeling restored.

*Various dates and times,
123 Victoria Street*



TAKE ME TO CHURCH

A free exhibition at St Peter's Church – as part of the Heritage Open Days festival – will focus on the history of the Eaton Square church, which has been consumed by fire twice. You'll be able to see stunning Victorian and modern mosaics, some of which are generally not on show. There will be activities for children too, and with light refreshments, the event will have something for the whole family.

Valerie Smith, the PCC secretary who is organising the event, said the church is interested in strengthening relationships with local communities, explaining St Peter's historic and artistic importance to the area.
September 14

Autumn events

There's plenty to enjoy this autumn, from Italian art to gym classes in hammocks

BY ALICE CAIRNS

A WOMAN'S WORLD

Now You See Us spans 400 years of work by female artists. Often dismissed as amateurs or denied access to art training, women were forced to overcome numerous obstacles in order to forge careers as commercial artists.

This exhibition will allow you to discover work from more than 100 trailblazing women, created between 1520 and 1920.

*Until October 13,
Tate Britain, Millbank*



RENAISSANCE REVELATIONS

Drawing the Italian Renaissance showcases the work of more than 80 Italian artists from the revolutionary Renaissance period of 1450 to 1600 – including towering figures such as Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Titian and Raphael. Three artists in residence will be drawing in the King's Gallery at Buckingham Palace on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, reflecting the influence of Renaissance techniques on modern practice, and there will be paper and pencils on hand for any visitors who feel inspired to start drawing. *From November 1*



FEMINIST FAIRYTALES

After enjoying a sold-out run at the Edinburgh Fringe, *Tink* is arriving at The Other Palace. It's a fairytale with a feminist twist, using empowering songs to reflect on the trials and tribulations of growing up. Kat Kleve stars as Tink, a bubbly and brilliant fairy who begins to shrink as her confidence is chipped away. *October 8-20, 12 Palace Street*

TEA WITH CHURCHILL

Enjoy afternoon tea in the Churchill War Rooms. Your day will start with an introductory talk, explaining the history of this underground bunker that was at the heart of the war effort. You'll then proceed to Plant Room 7, which was once used to regulate the airflow of the bunker – here, you'll enjoy an afternoon tea inspired by Churchill's career, including fruit cake made to the recipe used by his own chef. *September 27, King Charles Street*



Appy days

London HQ has launched a brand new app designed to help you get the most out of your local area

BY ALICE CAIRNS



Rich in culture and overflowing with galleries, theatres, shops and restaurants, there's so much to do and see in this very special part of London.

That's where a new app from London Heritage Quarter comes in. London Heritage Quarter is the new name for the bustling heritage quarter made up of Victoria, Westminster, Whitehall and the Northbank. The LHQ Hub app is designed to help local people get the most out of the area, giving them access to deals, discounts and other exciting insider benefits. App developer Henry Jinman from Vicinity tells us more...

What's the purpose of the LHQ Hub app?

It's all about promoting this amazing and historic area. We want the app to help London Heritage Quarter to be thriving and vibrant, and to encourage people to visit and explore the businesses there. It's a way to bring people together in a positive way.

What benefits does it have for local people?

If you live, work or study in the area, then you can access these exclusive, privileged deals from the businesses in the area. There are over 300 different deals available on the app: some of them are open to the general public, and

some are open only to that exclusive audience of locals. You can get things like free coffees, free ice cream, discounts on transport – the list goes on.

The app is also a great platform to share events, so if you're looking for something to do in your area – somewhere to watch a sporting tournament or a fun activity for a Friday evening, you'll be able to find all kinds of options.

What about local businesses?

The app encourages people to explore the area, and by doing so to spend time at local businesses. One aspect of the app is trails, or "wayfinding", which means helping people to navigate around this bustling part of London. The summer sculpture trail themed around a Journey Through Time is one example of that – it encourages people to travel through the area, and as a result, those people will visit local businesses for coffee or lunch or a shop. The deals and competitions will also keep people engaged with their local businesses, giving them plenty of incentives to keep coming back.

What else should I know?

The app also has an amazing draw, which is competitions. Many of these competitions can be entered once a day, and there are great prizes like a bottomless brunch for two on the terrace at the Royal Horseguards Hotel. It's an amazing area, so there will always be fun prizes on offer!

Download LHQ Hub from the app store; london-hq.co.uk



Launch day
 The London Heritage Quarter app was launched with a summer drinks event at IET London. Drinks and canapés were followed by networking on the terrace with panoramic views across London.



Bowl up, bowl up

Lane7 on Victoria Street is the new party kid on the block, with an eight-lane alley in a building that is home to an 18-hole mini golf course, shuffleboard, beer pong and more. But lesser known is the private bowling alley within The Westminster London hotel on John Islip Street. Available for exclusive hire for up to 25 guests, it also comes with its own private bar.



From pottery classes to learning the art of sabrage, we pick some of the best experiences to enjoy in Victoria and Westminster

BY JONATHAN WHILEY

Fun and games

Sing along

From Mariah Carey to Tom Jones, sing your heart out at Bam Karaoke on Victoria Street, with 22 private karaoke rooms and a catalogue of more than 40,000 songs. The largest karaoke venue in Europe, there is a cocktail bar, outdoor terrace and late-night licence until 1.30am on four of the six nights it's open. Styled to evoke a Parisian townhouse, each karaoke room – from the Seduction Room to the Speakeasy – has its own distinct identity and drinks. Food by the culinary director, Sabrina Gidda, can be ordered from an in-room menu and delivered directly. Don't miss the bottomless karaoke brunch every Saturday.



Take the biscuit

Try your hand at informal DIY icing sessions or sign up for icing sessions with top tips from the professionals at Biscuiteers' London flagship. Located in Eccleston Yards, there is a shop (with a full range of hand-iced biscuits), prosecco bar and icing cafe. There is also an on-site icing studio where visitors can watch Biscuiteers' expert icers working by hand on their intricate designs from behind a glass wall. Each biscuit is a mini work of art and makes the perfect gift.





MARY SUMNER HOUSE

Venue space that transforms lives

In the heart of bustling Westminster, nestled among the historic grandeur, towering offices and relentless pace, lies a hidden gem: Mary Sumner House, a Grade-II listed venue, where history meets purpose, and your meeting room booking becomes a catalyst for global change.

Offering a total of 8 meeting rooms and Conference Hall, ranging in size from 6 people in a Boardroom Layout to 120 people in a Theatre-style Layout, Mary Sumner House is ideal for meetings, small conferences, media briefings, interviews, training sessions and workshops.

Flexible catering options are offered, giving you the freedom to use caterers of your choosing.

By booking a room at Mary Sumner House, you are helping to empower women and transform their lives.

For more information, or to book a meeting room, contact us at:

0207 222 5533

www.mothersunion.org/conference-rooms/



Time to potter

Master the art of clay with a class at Studio Pottery London. Open to beginners and more experienced potters, the Eccleston Place workshop has a classroom of 14 wheels. A resident potter has a private studio for one-to-one throwing and mentoring sessions and there is a kiln and glazing room monitored by an in-house technician. A window display of historic and contemporary ceramics offers plenty of inspiration to makers, and items are also available for sale.



3

MORE EXPERIENCES TO TRY



ART OF SABRAGE

A one-hour champagne experience where you will witness the art of sabrage – the ceremonial technique of opening a bottle with a sabre. The experience in The New York Bar at The Rubens at the Palace hotel includes a bottle of champagne and four small plates.



FRAGRANCE TAPAS

Take a seat at Jo Loves' fragrance brasserie bar at the boutique on Elizabeth Street and select your fragrances to create a personal plate of scented tapas. Bath cologne is warmed in a tagine, cleanser is shaken over ice and lotion whipped into a foam.



TEA TIME

Hop on board an afternoon tea tour by Brigit's Bakery, departing from Victoria Coach Station to see London's most iconic sights. As well as a classic tour, it also operates Peppa Pig and Paddington-themed tours and a Bombay Sapphire one for gin-lovers.



PROUD WINNERS OF
Best Croissant
UK 2023



Chestnut
Bakery



Nestled in the beautiful Elizabeth Street of Belgravia, Chestnut Bakery offers a global array of flavours with quality on every plate. Crowned Best Croissant UK 2023, our menu ranges from croissants to flatbreads, hummus to grilled avocados.

Enjoy our special deal with Victoria Loyalty Cards: **coffee + plain croissant for £5**, Monday to Friday. Belgravia residents get a **15% discount!** No need to book, just walk in, quality on a plate awaits you.

FIND US:

Chestnutbakery.com
@chestnut.bakery

17-21 Elizabeth Street,
Belgravia, SW1W 9RP





East meets west

One of the capital's most anticipated openings, Kioku by Endo, is defined by the memories and influences of Michelin-starred chef and culinary director Endo Kazutoshi. Located on the rooftop of The OWO, it sees Japanese-born Endo, a third-generation sushi master, combine his Japanese heritage with the Mediterranean influences of his time in Spain. Dishes include his signature nigiri and sashimi alongside plates such as cuttlefish nori pesto and elderflower, native lobster with fregola and shiso oil and a chashu pork ramen ravioli. The restaurant features a main dining room, outdoor terrace, eight-seat chef's table and an eight-seat private dining room in one of the building's iconic turrets. There is also the Kioku Bar, located on the ground floor of The OWO and offering the largest sake selection in Europe.

Whitehall

Foodie heaven

With new openings aplenty, there are lots of places to eat, drink and be merry in Victoria this autumn

BY ALICE CAIRNS AND JONATHAN WHILEY



IMAGE CHARLIE MCKAY

Venetian charm

Channelling Italy's glamorous 1950s heyday, Harry's Victoria has opened on the corner of Grosvenor Gardens. The 184-seat venue, with two terraces, is a stone's throw from Victoria station and is the largest offering from the Harry's group, which also has restaurants in Knightsbridge and Marylebone. Venetian-inspired, it offers all-day dining from breakfast to dinner, with a separate bar area for a new aperitivo selection – exclusive to the Victoria site. Dishes include Harry's favourites such as lobster ravioli, truffled chicken and frutti di mare, alongside pasta and pizza and signature dishes such as Harry's Toadstool dessert.

52 Grosvenor Gardens

Theatrical feasts

A new restaurant has opened at The Other Palace. The Other Bites is located on the first floor of the theatre, and is the perfect spot for a pre-show meal. Take your pick from a crowd-pleasing menu including burgers, chilli, banana bread, brownies and even vegan fish and chips. No time for dessert? No problem – you can have it boxed up to enjoy during act one.

12 Palace Street



wagamama

become a founding member here

soul
club



loyalty has loaded

whether it's a fresh bowl on your lunch break or a long awaited catch up on the bench.
join the soul club community for an edamame on us at wagamama victoria*

*redeem your welcome edamame when you spend £12 or more





Vegan vision

Plant-based restaurant chain Mildreds has opened its latest location in Victoria. Known for its delicious meat-free menus, Mildreds Victoria has a 30-cover outdoor terrace and a countertop bar serving smoothies, cold brew tea infusions and cocktails. The Taste of Mildreds tasting menu for two or more people features veggie goodies such as charred aubergine bharta, rainbow pickles and chocolate peanut butter fudge. There's also a pre-theatre dinner menu available on weekdays from 3-7pm.

128 Wilton Road

Parisian getaway

TH@51 has launched a Parisian-themed weekend brunch, available every Saturday and Sunday from 12.30-4pm as a one-course, two-course, three-course or bottomless option. Enjoy food including ratatouille crepes, a miniature cheese platter, chocolate passionfruit petit gateaux and a pain perdu – a traditional French toast with Baileys Crème Anglaise, berries and jam. For drinks you can opt for bottomless bellinis or sample the Iced 51 cocktail, which comes served in a glass handbag.

St James' Court London, A Taj Hotel



Breaking bread

Lebanese bakery Common Breads has opened on Buckingham Palace Road, serving up the flavours of Beirut. The made-to-order menu showcases two of Lebanon's most beloved bakes: the purse-shaped ka'ak, which is cooled on hooks in the kitchen window; and manouche flatbreads, which can be garnished with your choice of toppings including halloumi and chilli honey. There is also a range of snacks, salads, pastries and desserts, all cooked up in the glass-walled kitchen.

110 Buckingham Palace Road

Eat & drink Directory out & in



MILDREDS

The latest addition to Wilton Road's food scene, Mildreds has been serving vibrant, internationally inspired plant-based cuisine in London for over 35 years. Known for its flavourful ingredients and welcoming atmosphere, Mildreds offers superb service in a lively, inclusive setting. The spacious 100-cover restaurant features a large outdoor terrace and areas for groups, perfect for after-work drinks or celebrations.

Mildreds is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8am – 11pm, and weekends from 9am.

Heading to the theatre? Enjoy 2 courses for £24 or 3 for £32, weekdays 3-7pm.

IRIS & JUNE

Celebrating their ten year anniversary this year, Iris & June is a beloved independent neighbourhood cafe located on Howick Place in the heart of Victoria. Open Monday-Friday 7.30am-4.30pm, come for the coffee roasted by long term partners Ozone Coffee and an ever changing guest roaster line up. Also serving up delicious breakfast, lunches and baking prepared by their kitchen team fresh, on site, every day.

1 Howick Place

London SW1P 1WG

Tel: 020 7828 3130

<https://www.irisandjune.com/>



BOISDALE OF BELGRAVIA

Boisdale of Belgravia has been delighting guests since 1989 with its vibrant blend of tradition, live entertainment, and exceptional cuisine. Experience live music Monday to Saturday nights and a jazz-filled Sunday lunch. Boisdale offers a Negroni bar with complimentary Aperitivo hour (Monday-Saturday, 6-7pm), an extensive whisky selection, a hidden cigar terrace, and elegant private dining rooms. The Scottish-inspired interior features leather chairs, plush tartan carpets, and original artwork. Specializing in British cuisine with a focus on Scottish flavors, highlights include dry-aged Aberdeenshire steaks, Hebridean seafood, and traditional haggis—all in a relaxed yet sophisticated setting.

13-15 Eccleston Street, London, SW1W 9LX

020 7730 6922

<https://www.boisdale.co.uk/>

THE PEM

Led by one of London's most esteemed chefs, Sally Abé, The Pem is all about fine dining with a difference. The menu showcases the best of British food, with a focus on seasonal flavours that brings a modern twist to classics. Served in the sophisticated surrounds of the Conrad London St. James, the spectacular 70-pax dining room is enhanced by a 20-seat private dining room. The décor is bold with crimson reds, pale pinks, art deco details and expressive art. The Pem is Westminster's most spectacular dining destination.

Conrad London St James.

22-28 Broadway, London SW1H 0BH

0203 301 8080

**Nearest stations: St James's Park,
Victoria and Westminster**

Thepemrestaurant.com



Looking for an alfresco meal or a cocktail with a view? Try our pick of the best rooftops and terraces

BY ALICE CAIRNS
AND
JONATHAN WHILEY



RAISE THE ROOF Market Halls

This food hall has its own rooftop gardens with sweeping views across Victoria (and a retractable roof, just in case the weather doesn't cooperate with your alfresco plans!) You can order your meal to your table so that you don't lose that coveted terrace spot, choosing from one of nine street-food vendors serving up everything from artisan New York-style cheesecakes to all-day eggs. Visit the rooftop bar for frozen margaritas, spritzes, mocktails and more.
191 Victoria Street



LA DOLCE VITA Corinthia London

Kicking off summer in style, the five-star hotel unveiled a slice of la dolce vita in June with the launch of Velvet Alfresco with Campari. The hidden terrace above the central courtyard of The Garden restaurant – on the first floor of the hotel – has been transformed in partnership with the iconic Italian red spirit brand. The pop-up space runs until at least mid-September, with a cocktail list that includes a Mediterranean negroni, “Shaken Campari with No Hands” and Velvet peach bellini alongside a short aperitivo menu of Sicilian olives, salami Milano and grissini. The alfresco spot was created by Campari alongside the team behind the hotel's bar, Velvet by Salvatore Calabrese, a collaboration with one of the world's leading bartenders. Open daily from 4-8pm.
Whitehall Place

LIFE

GREEN OASIS Cardinal Place garden

The rooftop garden in Cardinal Place is free to use and open to anyone seven days a week, making it the perfect place to enjoy an alfresco drink or an impromptu picnic. You'll find plenty of seating, free wifi and regular live music performances and seasonal events.

Cardinal Place



Eat & drink Directory out & in



WESLEY'S CAFE

Serving up a range of healthy and hearty breakfast and lunch options, as well as afternoon sweet treats, the talented chefs and in-house baker at Wesley's work hard to provide exciting offerings for all taste buds. Tucked away on the lower ground of Central Hall Westminster in the heart of London, this bright, independent café is the perfect setting to catch up with friends, meet colleagues, relax and unwind.

Open: Tuesday – Saturday | 9am – 4pm

Victoria magazine readers receive a signature baked treat and a hot drink for £6 between 2pm and 4pm daily, when they quote 'Victoria 6' at the till.

CASA DO FRANGO

Set in the heart of the buzzing Nova development- just across from Victoria Station and London's Theatreland Casa do Frango Victoria brings the sunny spirit of Portugal to SW1. Everything on the Portuguese inspired menu is made fresh, in-house using locally sourced ingredients from independent producers. In keeping with Portuguese tradition, many of the small and large plates are grilled over wood charcoal.

The restaurant is set over two sun-soaked floors, decorated with abundant greenery and traditional tile friezes. Upstairs is a spacious Mezzanine, with its own bar, perfect for group dining and semi-private events of up to 65 guests seated or 80 guests standing.

Casa do Frango

2 Sir Simon Milton Square, London, SW1E 5DJ

Tel: 020 3943 7777

casadofrango.co.uk

Groups & event enquiries: events@casadofrango.co.uk



MAISON GIGI OFFICE CATERING

Maison Gigi now offers catering! Treat your team and clients to delicious handmade morning bakes, breakfast bowls, sandwiches, and salads. Available for pick-up or delivery to your office in the Victoria Street area. Email us at Bonjour@maisongigi.co.uk to place an order.

Open Monday to Friday 7AM to 5PM

143 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 5NH

Bonjour@maisongigi.co.uk

THE JONES FAMILY KITCHEN

The award-winning Jones Family Kitchen is one of London's leading steakhouses, serving grass fed dry-aged steak from Yorkshire alongside that from its own farm in Devon. The large menu doesn't just cater to the steak lover however, with fish arriving daily from Cornwall and the South Coast from small day boats. Situated in lovely Eccleston Yards, its large and peaceful outdoor terrace is the perfect place to while away a spring / summer afternoon. Jones also serves breakfast 5 days a week and runs a pre-theatre set menu till till 6pm.

The Jones Family Kitchen

Restaurant & Bar

7-8 Eccleston Yards

London

SW1W 9AZ

020 3929 6000

www.jonesfamilykitchen.co.uk



ON TOP OF THE WORLD The Trafalgar St James

The Rooftop is open every day for cocktails and small-plate dining, with spectacular skyline views across Covent Garden, Trafalgar Square and the London Eye. The menu changes seasonally and the cocktail list is extensive – take your pick and sip your drink while you watch the sunset, with plenty of cushions and blankets on hand to keep things comfy. The Rooftop hosts regular events, DJ nights and parties, and the entire space can be booked privately for your own celebrations. You can also visit The Rooftop for a buffet breakfast including freshly brewed tea and coffee, pastries, omelettes and porridge.

2 Spring Gardens



Alfresco afternoon teas...



The secret garden

Enjoy an afternoon tea in the ancient cloisters of one of Westminster Abbey's hidden gardens. The 900-year-old College Garden was once used by monks for growing medicinal herbs and food. It's now the setting for a three-course tea with a celebration of nature theme.

Dean's Yard



Life's a picnic

Great Scotland Yard Hotel has joined with Veuve Clicquot to offer guests an afternoon tea picnic in St James's Park. Available until September 14, you'll receive a wicker basket with sandwiches, cakes, a chilled bottle of Veuve Clicquot, homemade lemonade, blankets, cutlery and condiments.

3-5 Great Scotland Yard



Takeaway tea

Gail's offers a takeaway afternoon tea sharing box that serves four – perfect for eating alfresco. The box contains everything you would expect from a traditional afternoon tea: scones, clotted cream, jam, honey, loose-leaf tea, mini sandwiches and cakes. It can also be delivered locally.

22-24 Buckingham Palace Road

Eat & drink Directory out & in



THE PARLOUR AT GREAT SCOTLAND YARD

Discover a unique Afternoon Tea at Great Scotland Yard Hotel, where history and culinary artistry converge. Once the first home of the Metropolitan Police, this iconic building now hosts an afternoon tea inspired by its storied past with creations that pay homage to literary legends like Arthur Conan Doyle, who found inspiration for Sherlock Holmes within these walls, as well as Charles Dickens and Lewis Carroll. Each dish reflects the building's rich history, offering guests a taste of nostalgia and storytelling. Join us Monday to Sunday 12-8:30pm.

The Parlour at Great Scotland Yard Hotel
3-5 Great Scotland Yard | London SW1A 2HN
Direct Line: +44 (0) 207 925 4760
www.greatscotlandyard.com

CHOPSTIX NOODLE BAR

Chopstix is a lean, mean wokking machine and you'll love the sheer simplicity of our menu. Nourishing noodles, wholesome chicken, beautiful beef, and perfect prawns, cooked with fresh vegetables and superb sauces make us the 'go to guys' for boxed fresh flavours.

Chopstix Noodle Bar
Victoria Place Shopping Centre,
115 Buckingham Palace Rd, London SW1W 9SJ
Opening times: 11am – 10pm
www.chopstixnoodles.co.uk/stores/london-victoria



UNI RESTAURANT

UNI Restaurant, nestled in Belgravia's Tophams Hotel, boasts a vibrant and modern atmosphere, ideal for social outings, dates, or meetings. Its elegant, welcoming interior complements the impressive Japanese-Peruvian fusion cuisine. Customers love the tantalising sushi and dishes like ceviche, tiraditos, and miso black cod. With friendly staff, a comprehensive wine list, and various cocktails, UNI provides a distinctive dining experience in Belgravia.

T: 020 7730 9267
E: reservations@restaurantuni.com
www.restaurantuni.com & www.thetophamshotel.com



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Victoria magazine every issue.**

**A very conservative estimate is
that between four and eight
people will look at each magazine.**

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Directory please email Julie@pubbiz.com**

Crowning glory

The Royal Portraits exhibition at the King's Gallery celebrates a century of photography. Take a look at some of the star exhibits

Is there a family more photographed than the Windsors? This exhibition at Buckingham Palace celebrates a century of royal portrait photography, including the role it has played in shaping public perception of the royal family.

Some of the pre-eminent artists and photographers of their age have taken the royal family as their subject. Cecil Beaton infused his photos with a romantic, painterly quality that recalled more traditional royal portraits, using lavish costume design, fresh flowers and painted backdrops to create fairytale images.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
PRINCESS MARGARET, 1967
IMAGE: CECIL BEATON

THE ROYAL FAMILY AT ROYAL
LODGE, 1943
IMAGE: CECIL BEATON

THE PRINCESS OF WALES,
THEN THE DUCHESS OF
CAMBRIDGE, 2021
IMAGE: PAOLO ROVERSI

ALEXANDRA, PRINCESS OF
WALES, 1864
IMAGE: FRANZ XAVER
WINTERHALTER





Elizabeth R Philip 1953.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: QUEEN ELIZABETH II AND PRINCE PHILIP ON CORONATION DAY, 1953 (SIGNED COPY SENT TO QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER) IMAGE: CECIL BEATON

PRINCE CHARLES AND PRINCESS ANNE, 1956 IMAGE: ANTONY ARMSTRONG-JONES

REIGNING QUEENS (ROYAL EDITION): QUEEN ELIZABETH II OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1985 IMAGE: 2024 THE ANDY WARHOL FOUNDATION FOR THE VISUAL ARTS, INC/ LICENSED BY DACS, LONDON

GROUP OF ROYAL MOTHERS WITH THEIR BABIES, 1964 IMAGE: SNOWDON



By contrast, Andy Warhol's pop-art take on Queen Elizabeth II used a photo taken for her silver jubilee to create a print in bold primary colours, a comment on the nature of celebrity and consumerism.

The exhibition also features work by Antony Armstrong-Jones (Lord Snowdon), the former husband of Princess Margaret. In one striking image, she stares boldly back at the viewer rather than turning her gaze demurely aside. Even after their divorce, Armstrong-Jones continued to photograph the royal family for the rest of his life.

You'll also be able to see portraits of the current royal family alongside the earlier works that inspired them – a contemporary photo of Catherine, Princess of Wales with flowing hair can be compared to an 1864 portrait of Alexandra, Princess of Wales.

Until October 6

Westminster Abbey is the final resting place of many literary luminaries. We take a closer look at its rich history

BY CORRIE BOND-FRENCH

Cornerstones of culture

In 1400, when Geoffrey Chaucer was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, this was no interment enacted in recognition of his literary achievements. Rather, it was simply because he worked as clerk of works to the Palace of Westminster, living within the abbey's precinct at the time.

It would be another 156 years before a now-Tudor administration decided to formally celebrate Chaucer's literary contributions. In 1556, during the short reign of Mary I, the bones of the former diplomat and soldier responsible for the development of the iambic pentameter, the translation of Petrarchan sonnets and, of course, *The Canterbury Tales*, were ceremonially exhumed and reburied.

Now lying in peace in a grand new tomb in the southern transept, Chaucer became the founding member of what we now know as Poets' Corner.

It didn't take long for this nascent celebration of literary achievement to flourish further. Renaissance men were keen to lie in close eternal proximity to the father of English literature.

Edmund Spenser, author of the ode to his monarch, *The Faerie Queene*, was the first to request burial there, and a tradition was born. His 1599 burial was well attended by his contemporaries – including Shakespeare – who all apparently threw elegies into his grave.

Soon, 6ft by 2ft plots in this southern corner were highly sought after, except for playwright Ben Jonson, who is the only man to be buried standing upright in the abbey. Apparently too poor to pay for a larger horizontal grave, his 2ft by 2ft plot was disturbed when former poet laureate John Dryden's was being dug in 1700, the vertical position confirmed when the still red hair of his skull and leg bones were exposed.

Now visited by thousands of visitors every year, the bodies of more than 70 men and women, primarily writers, poets and playwrights, are interred here, and many more are memorialised here too.



Shakespeare, of course, was buried in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1616, his marble memorial not constructed until 1741. Milton, a former Westminster parishioner, was buried next to his father in Cripplegate, eventually memorialised in 1737.

Christopher Marlowe, buried at Deptford in 1593, was only memorialised in the abbey as recently as 2002, courtesy of the Marlowe Society, who ensured that a question mark preceded the date of his death. But it is Caedmon, born in 657, who waited the longest; his plaque was finally unveiled in 1966.

Keats and Shelley, both buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome in the 1820s, were commemorated in a joint tablet,



unveiled by the then poet laureate John Masefield in 1954. Masefield would himself become the last poet to be interred in Poets' Corner in 1967, owing to a lack of space.

And then there are the women to consider. There are just eight female writers commemorated here, and three of them are the Brontës. Charlotte, Emily and Anne are joined by Fanny Burney, Elizabeth Barrett-Browning, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell and Jane Austen. Aphra Behn, friend of John Dryden and the first woman recognised as having made a living as a writer, was buried elsewhere in the abbey.

Poets' Corner has not been immune to controversy over the years, the prominence of literature weighed and judged against an ever changing political and cultural landscape. Lord Byron, famously mad, bad and dangerous to know, was considered too morally challenging for burial there at the time of his death. Over the years, prominent actors and musicians have broadened the sphere of people celebrated there.

And not all writers aspired to burial or commemoration in Westminster. While Irish-born Oscar Wilde and Seamus Heaney are commemorated, their fellow countryman Yeats is not. Dylan Thomas, buried in Laugharne, is memorialised, as is Scottish poet Robert Burns, close to the grave of Charles Dickens, who himself was buried here contrary to his express wish for burial at Rochester Cathedral "in an inexpensive, unostentatious, and strictly private manner".

Again, in 1928, when Thomas Hardy's dying wish was to be buried in his native Dorset, the establishment had other ideas, and intervened. It was agreed with his family that his ashes would be interred in Poets' Corner, while his heart would be buried in his beloved home county. The ensuing rural myth of the cat and Hardy's heart notwithstanding, it was a rather delicate discussion that was had to secure the outcome.

Three of the latest poets to be memorialised were John Betjeman, Philip Larkin and Ted Hughes, all of whom courted controversy – albeit for different reasons. But whatever the irregularities of the processes used through the centuries for Britain to consecrate its poets and writers, Poets' Corner remains a unique monument to literary fame, and a fascinating destination for poetry pilgrims and tourists alike.



From left:
Fanny
Burney,
Geoffrey
Chaucer and
Christopher
Marlowe –
now that
would have
made a
great dinner
party

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LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER

LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT THE
SCHOOL UNIFORM APPEAL WITHIN THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER

The cost-of-living crisis is pushing many families further into poverty. As parents make tough choices to cover the cost of heating and food many are struggling to pay for their children's school uniform which costs an average of £337.

We will be collecting for the School Uniform Bank located at St Andrew's Youth Club.

The items we are seeking are as follows:

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Tights and Socks (Socks: White) 5 – 18 years
Polo shirts White 5 – 18 years
Skirts Grey / Black 5 – 18 years
Trousers Grey 5 – 11 years
Trousers Black 11 – 18 years
Pinafores Grey 5 – 11 years
Cardigans Grey / Green 5 – 18 years
Jumper Grey 5 – 18 years
Shirts White 5 – 18 years
Smart School Shoes Black 5 years – adult sizes
PE Trainers White 5 years – adult sizes
PE Tracksuit Bottoms Black / Navy 5 – 18 years



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Please donate new or good condition second hand uniform to help make sure children don't miss out on their education. New uniform from the above list can be purchased from any major supermarket.

The Uniform Bank is a joint initiative between the following organisations:



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact trish@standrewsclub.com or
ebony.ximines-parke@london-hq.co.uk

Taking Care of Business

Making it easy for men to dress well, Charles Tyrwhitt is smartening up Victoria for the office this autumn. Store Manager, Mark Halliday, tells us more.

For those unfamiliar with Charles Tyrwhitt, what can you tell us about the brand?

We have one main philosophy - to help men look good and feel good. I keep this at the forefront of my mind when speaking to our Victoria customers. Whether you're looking for super sharp tailoring, comfy knitwear or outerwear for cooler weather, we can cover every dress code - from work to the weekend.

How can your store help customers with their outfitting needs this autumn?

I may be biased, but our Cardinal Place store is the dream location for local businessmen to get new looks for the season. We can take the faff out of dressing for work by helping you nail the basics and level up your workwear with clever, adaptable clothing.

What else can customers expect to enjoy at your store?

We offer a bunch of services in-store that make shopping in person a real pleasure. Shopping online is convenient, but nothing beats an in-person chat. You



can book a personal appointment, through our website or by speaking to someone in-store, and we'll help you find the perfect fit. The main thing I find most men are trying to master is how to dress up and dress down the same shirt or pair of trousers - we've got the answers for you! Expect expert styling advice and plenty of Tyrwhitt charm.

What does your store offer local businesses that read this magazine?

We offer exclusive discounts to local businesses, and we can also supply uniform. We create bespoke uniform packages so businesses can ensure their whole team - from front of house

to security and management - looks the part. Plus, we'll also throw in a special offer, so you'll get great value as well as signature Tyrwhitt quality!

With this ad comes an exclusive 15% off discount for local businesses – just quote VICTORIA15 in-store. If you have any questions, please pop in store or contact us at ukshop.Victoria@ctshirts.co.uk / 020 3910 6922.



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appointment



Know your onions

For many years, the paved corridor behind Westminster City Hall was unremarkable – a concrete space between buildings where the tube could be heard regularly rattling by.

Then came Jens Jakobsen – an unapologetically eccentric Danish florist. Jens originally ran a flower business at the Blewcoat School building, but had dreamed for many years of setting up a non-profit.

“The idea for the garden started after an accident I had many years ago, when nature played a big part in my recovery,” Jens says.

“I would lie down in the forest, under the trees, and I would feel my energy coming back. I realised then how important nature is and how it helps us. I want to give that present back to everybody here in Victoria and Westminster.”

After acquiring land on Seaforth Place, Jens set about bringing his vision to life. His



creation is known as the Onion Garden: a narrow corridor of green space where onions dangle from trees, sculptural balls of potatoes sit on plinths, and enormous woven nests are filled with eggshells. Surrounded on all sides by glassy office blocks, it’s one of London’s weird and wonderful anomalies.

Meet Jens Jakobsen, the man who's created an eccentric oasis in the heart of Victoria

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Although he's a trained florist, Jens had no particular gardening expertise when he set up the Onion Garden.

"I have a business degree, which some people find unbelievable as I am now a flower philanthropist," he says. "A lot of people come here to get gardening advice. I say to them, just put a finger in the soil, have a feel, and you will know! Go by your instinct, don't think too much."

And Jens' instincts have proved trustworthy so far. What began as a very small plot of green space has expanded with local funding, including a £24,551 grant from Greening Westminster that has allowed him to build a greenhouse cafe and events space.

"We are ever so grateful for all the support we have had here," Jens says. "This place is only two years old, and what has happened is that TfL and Westminster council have

given us Kingsgate Parade to expand our garden. Here, we will create the hanging gardens of Westminster.

"We have built a pavilion up front so now we can move the coffee bar there, freeing up the greenhouse for business parties, meetings and events. The money we earn supports this non-profit organisation so that we can create happy events and improve the mindfulness of everyone in the area."

The Onion Garden may not be big, but its constant state of development means that there's always something new to see. Jens recently acquired a beehive and has been engrossed in the tricky operation of securing a queen – the bees can now be viewed in an observation beehive while you sip on your coffee, and are tended by the garden's own beekeeper. There's an enormous toy teddy bear that can be used for "free cuddles", a fairy house for children and plenty of benches for quiet contemplation of nature.



But one thing you can be certain will never change are the onions, which can be spotted hanging from trees, concealed in bushes and stacked in pots. Jens himself is known as "the chief onion". Why?

"If you hold an onion, you will feel the power," explains Jens. "When you cut it in half, it's the circle of life – ring by ring, layer by layer. The ancient Egyptians knew their power – they even put onions on the eyeballs of their dead so that they would be protected in the afterlife."

"I'm actually allergic to onions – if I eat them, it's not good – but you have to love what you don't like."

And if there's one thing Jens feels passionately about, it's the importance of nature: its capacity to spark connection, to strengthen communities and to heal any manner of ills.

"We all need nature," he says. "We can see that here, because people relax when they come into the garden. You see their worries fade away as they spend time with us. That's why I say: let the city become green!"

5 Seaforth Place, theoniongarden.org

From his office in Westminster, explorer Oli France dreams up record-breaking expeditions to some of the most remote and hostile corners of the globe. His most recent project has involved cycling 3,500 miles from Death Valley to Alaska, before summiting Mount Denali

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Moving on up

Tell us about your latest expedition?

The Ultimate Seven Project is my world-first project to journey from the lowest point in every continent to the highest by human power.

Why did you embark on this expedition?

It's been a decade-long dream. The reason it took me so long to commit to it is because I knew that it would be very hard – and it did prove to be the hardest physical and mental challenge I've ever taken on. There were a million and one moments where I thought that it might not be possible. There was this sense of escalating risk the further and deeper I got into the expedition – and no matter how far I got, even 100 metres from the summit of Mount Denali, success wasn't certain. It was a constant daily battle of overcoming these doubts, managing risks. At the same time, it was an immensely fulfilling journey and a real privilege to experience the wildest corners of North America.



What keeps you motivated?

I have two young children, a one-year-old and a three-year-old. I had this image of one day being able to tell them about this journey, and hopefully giving them something to be proud of and inspired by.

Whenever I pictured that, the thought of explaining that I'd given up was unthinkable to me. Of course, we can quit – but if there is a way to keep going, I want to do everything in my power to find it.

Why is exploring so important?

I believe that exploration is what makes us human. If we as humans didn't have a desire to explore, we'd still be living in the jungle. Everything that humans have done is about a desire to peer into the unknown and to take uncertain steps, right from those early days of venturing out across continents. Even now you can see that spirit of exploration play out as we seek to understand deep space, or make breakthroughs in technology.





But I also think that we need to remind ourselves that we come from nature. It's important for us all to spend true, genuine time out in nature, in the elements, perhaps even experiencing a bit of hardship.

Do you worry about the loss of wild spaces?

The population is only increasing globally and things are becoming more industrialised, more heavily farmed. You've got immense deforestation in various parts of the globe, pristine landscapes being stripped away. We're losing something of ourselves in that process. I do think we need to fight to protect wildness.

What are your favourite places you've visited?

I've had the privilege of visiting over 75 countries now, including some of the most hostile and remote regions in the world. One place that really stands out is called Socotra Island, off the coast of Yemen. It's an absolute hidden gem, with trees that aren't found anywhere else on Earth, incredible beaches, reefs that

haven't been dived by humans, caves which haven't been explored.

And your worst experiences?

I've been detained in Uzbekistan for five days. I was caught in a magnitude seven earthquake in Indonesia, held at gunpoint in Iraq. I caught meningitis in Somalia and spent a week in hospital. In my latest expedition there was one particular moment when I spent the morning messaging on my satellite device with my wife and young daughter, and



then later that day, we saw climbers being flown off the mountain who'd unfortunately died in a fall just ahead of us. That was a real moment when we had to refocus as a team to make sure we weren't taking unnecessary risks, because it's a fine line. But in spite of that, I still find this life very addictive and exciting.

Is it an addiction?

It is, I think. As much as I love being at home with friends and family, once you've experienced the excitement, the adrenaline, the extreme highs and the extreme lows, somehow normal life can just feel a little flat. On an expedition everything is consequential, and you have a very, very direct link with the effects of your decisions. It's no exaggeration to say that on the mountain, every choice we made could mean life or death. You make the wrong call, then you pay the biggest



price. When you get back to normal life, and you see social media posts or emails, it just feels a bit trivial in comparison. In a way you are chasing those moments. Even now, I've been at home a week enjoying some comforts, but I'm already starting to think about the next one.



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LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER

Danny Barnes is the founder of Shop & Donate on Vauxhall Bridge Road, a social supermarket that supports vulnerable people. From September it is opening a new community space at 10 Strutton Ground



Tell us about your new location?

We've signed a five-year lease, and with funding from the council we're going to create a community hub, cafe, kitchen and garden. It will be all about giving back to the community.

Why is Strutton Ground the right fit?

It's a really, really busy and bustling part of Victoria. It's near to the abbey and the cathedral, so we're expecting lots of footfall, tourists and office workers as well as locals. We want to get through to as many people as possible, so that's perfect for us.

Your favourite...

... local pub?

I go to the Queens Arms [11 Warwick Way]. Everyone there is so friendly and you can sit outside and watch the world go by.

... spot for lunch?

I like Tachbrook Street Market – there are lots of different stalls selling food from around the world.

... green space?

You just can't beat St James's Park.

.. local charity?

We're close to The Passage [Carlisle Place], which tackles homelessness. We give them food every week, and have done for about four years. I've been through a lot myself, and have had some struggles as part of my own story, so I understand the work they're doing. I've come out

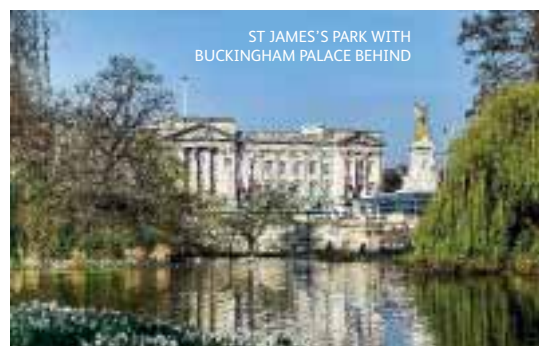
the other side and now I want to give back.

... celebrity sighting?

DJ Fat Tony walked past one day and then popped in to say hello. After talking about the work we're doing, he said he wanted to write about us in the *Evening Standard*. I thought he was just chatting rubbish or might give us two lines, but he wrote a big piece about us and how we'd warmed his heart!



DJ FAT TONY
IMAGE: NIKITA ANDRIANOVA



ST JAMES'S PARK WITH
BUCKINGHAM PALACE BEHIND

What's next for Shop & Donate?

We need a van to help us work more efficiently, especially now that we'll be travelling between new locations. We'd be grateful for any support or donations.

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