



Dear Travel Friends,

Give your Christmas season a magical start this year in London, England! Our TravelFriends group will enjoy eight days in early December to see the British capital decked out in trees and lights. We'll stroll through shops, pubs and a castle or two that make London the perfect place to welcome the holidays. Our group will meet in London on Saturday, December 6, and we'll explore all the city has to offer, from the Houses of Parliament to the British Museum, the Tower of London, Big Ben and the lights at Trafalgar Square. We'll visit Westminster Abbey to hear some Advent music and we'll tour a royal palace, either Buckingham or Windsor Castle, both decorated with holiday trees and lights. Our lodging will be in the central area of London, close to public bus and underground metro service that can take us to all parts of the city with ease.

Cost for the eight-night program is \$3200 per person for a double-occupancy room, or \$4100 for a single-occupancy room, with a deposit of \$500 due on October 1. Fees include all local transportation and entrances as described in the attached itinerary, such as subway and metro passes and transportation to the hotel at the start of the trip and back to the airport at the end. International airfare and meals are not included. There is no one flight that our group will take heading to England, but we put folks in touch with one another if someone prefers not to travel alone. As always, our group will be small, with no more than 15 people, allowing us to move around easily and to stop whenever we wish to take a break and enjoy the city around us.

Karl and I look forward to you joining us this December. Please let us know if you have any questions about the program.

Mark McMeley  
Karl Atkinson

[www.TravelFriends.info](http://www.TravelFriends.info)

e-mail: [travelfriends@icloud.com](mailto:travelfriends@icloud.com)

# Holiday Cheer in London Tour, 2025

December 6 – 14, 2025



## **Friday, December 5**

Program participants depart the United States today.

## **Saturday, December 6**

Flights arrive at the Heathrow and Gatwick airports. The program conductor will meet participants as they arrive at the airport and escort everyone to the hotel in the central part of London. Transportation to the hotel is included in the program cost. England is five hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Time.

We'll spend the rest of the day relaxing and walking along the River Thames, taking in the sights, including the new Shard and the Gherkin skyscrapers that adorn the London skyline. Dinner this evening will be in one of the many eateries we pass on our walk.



## **Sunday, December 7**

After breakfast, we'll meet downstairs at 10 a.m. and use our public transportation and Hop-On/Hop-Off bus passes to get an overview of the places to visit this week. Of special interest, if you choose, are the Advent services at the Westminster Abbey church, with the beautiful pipe organ and world-renowned choir, at 11 a.m. and again for the Evensong service at 3:00 p.m. In the evening, join us for some mulled wine and a stroll through the festive Christmas market and the lights on Regent and Oxford streets.



## **Monday, December 8**

This morning we'll visit the [Tower of London](#), the former fortress, royal palace and prison that now safeguards the crown jewels, including St. Edward's Crown, used in coronations from 1661 to Charles III's in 2023. We'll join one of the tours led by the Yeomen Wardens, the colorful "Beefeaters," and will take time to explore the grounds and surrounding buildings. We'll use the second day of our Hop On/Hop-Off passes to sightsee on one of the open-air, double-decker buses and on a 40-minute cruise on the Thames. This evening, we'll enjoy the Christmas lights, live entertainment and shops at Marylebone Village, including the popular VV Rouleaux shop, selling ribbons, millinery and bows.



## **Tuesday, December 9**

Today we'll visit the [British Museum](#) and see some of its 13 million artefacts that cover all of human history, featured in exhibits on ancient Egypt and the Assyrians (including the Rosetta Stone, used to decipher ancient hieroglyphics), and Britain's Celtic and Roman past. The museum is free and can be visited at any time during our stay in London, although a reserved ticket (with timed entry) is required. We'll enjoy afternoon tea at The Dilly, a five-star hotel near Piccadilly Circus, and stroll through one of the city's best Christmas markets at Leicester Square.

## **Wednesday, December 10**

We'll explore St. James Park and nearby attractions, including Trafalgar Square, and will watch the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace (weather permitting), at 11:00 a.m. In the afternoon, we'll walk through Hyde Park and admire the window displays and holiday lights at Harrods, the world's largest department store. (Shopping is optional!). In the evening, walk with us through the Christmas light tunnels and the dazzling light display at the [Kew Royal Botanic Gardens](#), ending your visit with a cup of spiced cider or hot chocolate. (Take your ID for a Senior discount on entry to the Garden.)



## **Thursday, December 11**

If we can snag a reservation for one of the few December tours, we'll spend part of the day at Buckingham Palace seeing the opulent State Rooms, including the Throne Room, the Ballroom and the White Drawing Room. The Palace will be dressed up with trees and lights for the Christmas season. Otherwise, we'll take the train to the town of Windsor, west of London, and do a guided tour of Windsor Castle, home to English monarchs for over 1000 years and festooned with Christmas trees and lights. St. George's chapel at Windsor is the final resting place of eleven English and British



monarchs, including Henry VIII and Elizabeth II. We'll take in the lights this evening at Trafalgar Square, and see the 80-foot high spruce donated each year by Norway in appreciation for Britain's aid during World War II.

### **Friday, December 12**

We'll reserve today for some personal time to visit the sites that most interest you. That might include Shakespeare's [Globe Theater](#) (still offering daily performances), the [London Eye](#) (the large observation wheel), the [National Gallery](#) (art museum), the [Borough Market](#) (one of the city's oldest, largest and most picturesque food markets), the [Churchill War Rooms](#) (where the British Government directed the Empire's war efforts), the [Kew Royal Botanic Gardens](#), [St. Paul's Cathedral](#) and the many small parks, cafés and pubs scattered throughout the city. We'll stroll through Chelsea this evening and enjoy the lights across storefronts and restaurants around Sloane Square and Duke of York Square, and sip some cider or a Christmas cocktail in a local pub.



### **Saturday, December 13**

This morning we'll take a guided visit of the grand neo-gothic Houses of Parliament along the Thames and take in the sites nearby, including the Clock Tower, with its thirteen-ton bell known as "Big Ben." The afternoon will be free for more exploring or getting ready for a performance at one of the many venues for music, theater and dance across the city (Click [here](#) or [here](#) for shows.). Afterwards, take a stroll with us down Bond Street and Mayfair, and enjoy a drink with us in the cafés and bars around The Ever After Garden, a charity supporting research into childhood cancer.

### **Sunday, December 14**

At the conclusion of our stay, the tour conductor will accompany you this morning to the Heathrow or Gatwick airport to catch your flight to the United States or to continue your holiday travels elsewhere in Europe.



### **Fees and payments**

Fee for the eight-night Holiday Cheer in London 2025 program is \$3200.00 per person, in a double-occupancy room. The fee includes:

--Eight nights tourist-class, double-occupancy lodging in central London.

--All local land transportation, including incoming and outgoing transportation between Heathrow or Gatwick airport and the hotel, local metro and public transportation, except where specified as not included.

--Entrances for Tower of London, Houses of Parliament tour, Westminster Abbey tour, 48-hour London Hop-On/Hop-Off bus pass, and entrance to either the Buckingham Palace or Windsor Castle group tour.

--Gratuities to drivers and hotel staff.

Fee does not include airfare, meals, museum entrances not specified in the program, or travel insurance.

Supplement for a single room is \$900.00.

This fee is based on a minimum of six paying passengers.

Payments are due on the following schedule:

October 1, 2025:     \$ 500.00 due

November 1, 2025:   \$2700.00 due (plus \$900 single-room supplement if applicable)

Payments should be made to River Plate Seminars by check at this address: Mark McMeley, 1001 Brynlor Lane, Orlando, Florida 32818, or through Venmo at Mark-McMeley-1, or through Zelle at phone number 321-977-1389, or by wire transfer to the following account:

Chase Bank  
7674 Dr. Phillips Blvd., Orlando, Florida 32819  
account: 105 987 770  
routing number: 021000021  
attn: Mark McMeley

