

# LITTLE VENICE CIRCULAR WALK

VIA CAMDEN AND PRIMROSE HILL



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## LITTLE VENICE TO CAMDEN CIRCULAR WALK

This 4 1/2 mile walk starts and finishes at the picturesque Little Venice and takes in the scenic Regent's Canal, Primrose Hill and St John's Wood. An area rich in history, this corner of London has played a significant part in the capital's development both economically and culturally. Boasting former residents of writers, artists and inventors this area has always been somewhat avant-garde and is now home to some of London's most desirable addresses.



### HISTORY

The Regent's Canal was completed and opened in 1820 linking the River Thames at Limehouse to the Grand Union Canal junction at Paddington. Passing through Hackney, Islington, Camden and Little Venice it now provides an attractive and uniquely peaceful green corridor for London.

#### Little Venice to Lisson Grove

Take the left exit out of Warwick Avenue tube. Walk straight ahead and take the first road on the right, Warwick Place. At the end of the road turn left and walk over Westbourne Terrace Road Bridge. On the left hand side is the Pool of Little Venice, so named by the poet Robert Browning who lived overlooking the canal.

Cross the road and follow the blue footbridge crossing back over canal onto the towpath opposite the Waterside Café and sign-posted to Camden and Regent's Park. Follow the towpath under Warwick Avenue Bridge. Here you will find the pretty residential moorings of Blomfield Road, one of the most prestigious canal mooring sites in London.

Turn off the towpath onto Blomfield Road for a hundred metres. At the end of Blomfield Road the canal disappears into the Maida Hill Tunnel and underneath the delightful Café Laville. Cross Edgware Road into Aberdeen Place, continue until you reach the (now closed) Crocker's Folly pub on your left. Straight ahead a pathway sign-posted Regent's Canal leads you to a steep flight of steps and back onto the canal towpath.

#### Lisson Grove to London Zoo

You have now reached Lisson Grove. Continue along the canal towpath, underneath the Lisson Grove Tunnel and pass the moorings with the brightly coloured narrowboats. Follow the towpath and you will shortly reach

the northern edges of Regent's Park. Originally Nash intended to have the Regent's Canal running through the middle of the park although he was persuaded that the bad language of the Navvies would offend the refined residents of the area so altered his plans. Nash had plans to build 56 villas in Regent's Park, however only eight were completed. The beautiful white villas on the right were built to Nash's original designs during the late 1980s and early 1990s and drew inspiration from the architecture of ancient Greece, Rome the Renaissance period. Following the towpath you will pass under two bridges. The first is an aqueduct carrying the forgotten River Tyburn over the canal. The second is the notorious Macclesfield Bridge or 'Blow up Bridge'. Here, in 1874, a barge carrying gunpowder exploded and destroyed the bridge. Evidence of the explosion can be found on a nearby plane tree which survived the blast. Underneath the bridge the famous Snowdon aviary of London Zoo will come into view.

#### London Zoo to Primrose Hill

Ahead you will see the Feng Shang Chinese floating restaurant moored in Cumberland Basin. Turn left and pass the moorings. Camden Lock and the market are a five minute walk along the towpath for those that want to make a stop however this circular walk leaves the towpath on the left immediately after the rail and road bridge. Up the slope you emerge onto Gloucester Avenue.

For those who detoured to Camden, retrace your footsteps back past the Pirate Castle to the rail and road bridge and take the exit on the right immediately before the bridge. At the top of the pathway continue forward. Take the third exit on the left - Fitzroy Road, cross Chalcot Road. Number 23 Fitzroy Road (on the left) is the former home of the Irish poet William Yeats. The poet and writer Sylvia Plath also lived in the upstairs maisonette around 90 years later until February 1963

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Every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of all information given in this guide and British Waterways London does not accept responsibility for any changes that may have occurred since going to press. Walking alone in isolated areas is not recommended.

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**Start:** Little Venice  
**Finish:** Little Venice  
**Distance:** 4 1/2 miles  
**Time:** 2 1/2 hours  
**Transport:** Bakerloo line  
Warwick Avenue  
**Parking:** Meter parking in  
Little Venice  
**Conditions:** Flat, although some areas  
unsuitable for wheelchairs

when she ended her life. Return to Chalcot Road and turn left. Number three Chalcot Square is another former residence of Sylvia Plath where she lived with Ted Hughes.

At the end of Chalcot Road bear left into Chalcot Crescent. At the end turn right into Regent's Park Road, cross the road and enter Primrose Hill. Follow the path through the park to the top of the hill and admire the panoramic views across the capital.

### Primrose Hill to St John's Wood Road

Over the hill, take the left path and head down the other side. At the T-junction in the path, turn left and exit the park on St Edmunds Terrace. Walk down St Edmunds Terrace and over Avenue Road into Allitsen Road. Continue straight on Allitsen Road to the end where it meets St John's Wood High Street. Turn left. On your right you will pass 45a, the former home of composer Benjamin Britten. Britten worked

on his first opera, 'Peter Grimes' whilst living here. Turn right into Wellington Place. At the end cross Wellington Road and turn left. At the roundabout turn right into St John's Wood Road. Continue down this road passing, on the right, the world famous Lord's Cricket Ground home of England's cricket since 1813.

### St John's Wood Road to Warwick Avenue

Continue down St John's Wood Road (look out for the quaint Hamilton Close on your right) before arriving at Hamilton Terrace. A Blue Plaque at Number 17, signifies the former home of Sir Joseph Bazalgette, the great Victorian civil engineer best known for designing and building the hundreds of miles of underground sewers in London. It is claimed that Bazalgette saved more lives than any other single Victorian public official. Number 20, on the opposite side of the road, was home to William Strang artist and founder member of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers.

Another former resident of number 20 was Sir George Alexander Macfarren, a prolific Victorian composer, who lived and died here in 1887. Return to St John's Wood road and turn right. At the junction with Maida Vale cross the road and into Clifton Gardens. Number nine Clifton Gardens was home to Professor Sir John Ambrose Fleming, the pioneering electrical engineer. Continue down Clifton Gardens and you will arrive at your starting point of Warwick Avenue tube station. For those with a little energy left to spare cross the road into Clifton Villas where you will find Clifton Nurseries, an oasis of green in the form of a Victorian plant and garden centre.

### Other walks available in this series

- [Walking the East Ends Canals](#)
- [Islington to Limehouse Walk](#)
- [Walking around Hanwell](#)
- [Walking in the Lea Valley](#)
- [Walking in Harlow](#)
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