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## Visit London What's New Travel Trade

April 2008

Welcome to the April Travel Trade newsletter. Keep up to date with all that's happening in London by reading the latest travel trade updates.

If you need any further information about the news below or have a specific enquiry please email [trade@visitlondon.com](mailto:trade@visitlondon.com) or dial the travel trade helpline: +44 (0)20 7234 5821.



## Visit London News

### Visit London introduces new websites

Visit London has launched two new websites; a revamp of [www.visitlondon.com/business](http://www.visitlondon.com/business) and a brand new London Heathrow Gateway website on [www.londonheathrowgateway.com](http://www.londonheathrowgateway.com). New enhancements on Visit London's official event organisers' website include: an advanced venue and service search, a London events calendar, an enhanced planning toolkit, improved supplier listings, up-to-the minute news and a three-way proposal submitting process. It also has plenty of useful tips and recommendations for business travellers. The London Heathrow Gateway website has been produced to promote the amazing pool of affordable and flexible meeting space and accommodation at London Heathrow. The website also shows some of the unlimited incentive and post-conference opportunities around the area.

### Partner Offers and News

#### Fat Tire Bike Tours launches afternoon bike tour as warm weather approaches

From the 1st of May to the 15th of August cycle tour company Fat Tire Bike Tours will add a 3 pm cycling tour to their existing product offer. The company provides an active, educational, and entertaining way to experience London. Hop on a "beach cruiser" style bicycle and leisurely spend four hours with an experienced guide exploring London and learning the stories behind the city's famous landmarks (from Kensington Palace and Trafalgar Square to St. James Park and Parliament). The bike rental is included in the price of the tour. For prices and more information e-mail [info@fattirebiketourslondon.com](mailto:info@fattirebiketourslondon.com) or click [here](#)

#### New Maritime Greenwich Observation Wheel

For the first time this summer there will be a new addition to the landscape of Greenwich – an Observation Wheel that stands taller than Nelson's Column! At 180ft (55m) from the ground visitors will take in panoramic views beyond St Paul's Cathedral and the Tower of London to the west, across the river and past Canary Wharf to the heights of Hampstead Heath, and east to the Olympic site in the Lea Valley. In the foreground, the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site will be laid out in a rare perspective. The wheel will be situated within the grounds of the Old Royal Naval College in front of the Pepy's Building Visitor Centre and will be open to the public from Saturday 21 June to Sunday 28 September 2008. For more information visit [www.greenwichwheel.com](http://www.greenwichwheel.com) (live from the 1st May) or [www.greenwichwhs.org.uk](http://www.greenwichwhs.org.uk)

#### Dot2Dot expands service

Dot2Dot, London's innovative, new airport transfer solution now picks up and drops off to any hotel, business or residential address in central London or Canary Wharf. Dot2Dot is also fully operational at Heathrow's new Terminal 5 and will now meet and deliver in time for all flights in and out of Heathrow and Gatwick. For further information or details on how to become an agent, please contact Davina Bajorek at [davina.bajorek@dot2.com](mailto:davina.bajorek@dot2.com)

#### Regent Street: A Taste of Spain 2008 – "Sign up and dance"

Spanish dancers from all over the UK are being invited to Regent Street, London W1 to take part in the Guinness™ World Record-Breaking attempt for the largest Sevillanas\* dance on Sunday 25 May 2008. On this day there will be dancing in the street with Regent Street closed to traffic from

12pm - 4pm. Shoppers and dancers will be entertained by three bands from Andalusia who will provide music for the dance lessons leading up to the record breaking attempt. Regent Street store will also be included in this free event bringing 'interactive' dance demonstrations, food and drink samplings and various giveaways throughout the day. The record attempt is open to all dancers who log on to [www.tastepain.info](http://www.tastepain.info) for the registration details.

#### **BBC Tours**

Discover the inside story of BBC Broadcasting House with a fascinating tour of the first ever purpose-built broadcast centre in Britain. Built in glorious art-deco style in 1932, the building has been undergoing sympathetic restoration and modernisation. The tours, conducted by the BBC's award-winning guides, are likely to include art-deco highlights, such as the famous main reception with its original mosaic floor; visits to the newly restored Radio Theatre, the Council Chamber and the new digital radio studios, where Radio 3 and 4 are recorded; and a chance to hear the history of the famous Eric Gill sculptures that decorate the front of the building. From summer 2008, the tours will also offer the chance to take part in a fully interactive Radio Drama Experience. For information on tour and opening hours, contact BBC Tours on +44 (0)20 8225 8833.

#### **Soho Theatre Bar & Restaurant**

Joseph Lloyd, Sales & Marketing Manager of Soho Theatre Bar & fine dining, Lazeez Restaurant has been promoted to Business Development Manager. "The new strategy in place will reposition both brands within the market as a premium destination not only for pre/post theatre dining but as a one stop destination in entertainment suitable for all occasions" says Lloyd. The summer season will feature a number of new competitive group set-menus specifically designed for group bookers offering a number of tiers which are workable to all holiday package levels from £11 to £100 per head promoting the Michelin recommended restaurant. For more information email [joseph.lloyd@lazeezsoho.co.uk](mailto:joseph.lloyd@lazeezsoho.co.uk)

### **Hotels**

#### **Brown's Hotel**

To celebrate Ian Fleming's centenary Rocco Forte's Brown's Hotel has created an exclusive Ian Fleming/James Bond accommodation package. Rooms start at £315+VAT and include tickets to 'For Your Eyes Only' exhibition at the Imperial War Museum, breakfast, two Bond cocktails in The Donovan Bar and a hard-back copy of 'Casino Royale'. For further information call + 44 (0)20 7493 6020 or visit [www.roccofortecollection.com](http://www.roccofortecollection.com)

#### **Sheraton Park Tower Hotel**

The Sheraton Park Tower Hotel on Knightsbridge has launched new Butler Tours packages offering private guided excursions of the Estates which the hotel overlooks. Commencing with a visit from your personal guide, your qualified historian will explain the view from your suite before taking you to explore London's little known sights and sounds. For further information and bookings call Kelly Morgan on +44(0)20 7201 7602 or visit [www.luxurycollection.com/parktowerlondon](http://www.luxurycollection.com/parktowerlondon)

#### **The Cavendish Hotel introduces green meeting rooms**

The Cavendish Hotel is currently working with "Green Tourism in London" to enhance its environmentally friendly credentials by introducing green meeting rooms. This follows the hotel winning the "Considerate Hotelier of the Year 2007" award for the steps it has taken in reducing its impact on the environment. Guests will be encouraged to recycle throughout their meeting using the in-room recycling bins and the three R's – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle will be highlighted to attendees before and during their event. For more information visit [www.thecavendishlondon.com](http://www.thecavendishlondon.com)

#### **Hyatt Regency London**

Melissa Archer has recently joined Hyatt Regency London – The Churchill. Melissa worked previously with the Brisbane Marriott Hotel in Australia for the last six years and held roles in Sales, Event Management and Front Office. Melissa is looking forward to working with the MICE industry in the UK and sharing news of the hotels' newly refurbished banqueting facilities. Should you wish to arrange a site inspection or obtain further information please direct any enquiries to Melissa on +44 (0)207 299 2217 or [melissa.archer@hyatt.com](mailto:melissa.archer@hyatt.com)

#### **The London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square announce major multi-million pound refurbishment**

Situated in the heart of Mayfair and originally built as a large majestic townhouse, The London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square, will this spring undergo the first phase of a major multi-million pound refurbishment which will take the hotel in a new ultra-luxurious and contemporary direction. This first phase, which is due for completion in May 2008, will include the creation of 45 luxury club rooms and suites (12 with a private garden); an exclusive Club Lounge; and a new restaurant – maze Grill – by Gordon Ramsay together with Jason Atherton. United Designers are responsible for the design of both the Marriott and maze Grill. For further information please contact Louisa Monro or Laura Brunt at Sauce Communications on +44 (0)20 8600 3600 or E-mail: [louisa@saucecommunications.com](mailto:louisa@saucecommunications.com)

**Holiday Inn re-launches Europe wide**

Hotel chain Holiday Inn unveiled its new corporate look and hallmark standards to staff, hoteliers and franchise holders recently. Each hotel is being expected to upgrade their signage, service standards and branding. IHG (InterContinental Hotel Group) is undertaking a global re-branding of Holiday Inn, the first major upgrade in a number of years. InterContinental operates 3,125 hotels under the Holiday Inn, Express by Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express names and all are being required to implement the re-brand. For more information, visit [www.ichotels.com](http://www.ichotels.com)

**Exhibitions and Events****Two blockbuster exhibitions at Tate - Autumn 2008**

Tate Modern and Tate Britain have announced two major blockbuster exhibitions for autumn 2008. Francis Bacon at Tate Britain (11 Sept 2008 - 4 Jan 2009) brings together the best paintings from throughout the life of one of the greatest painters of the twentieth century. Rothko at Tate Modern (26 Sept 2008 - 1 Feb 2009) is a major exhibition of one of the world's most famous American abstract painters, Mark Rothko. See [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk) for more details.

**First interactive digital art gallery for travellers at St Pancras International**

Eurostar and the National Gallery unveiled the world's first interactive digital art gallery for international travellers, to be enjoyed by millions of people who pass through the high-speed rail gateway between the UK and mainland Europe. Located within Eurostar's departure lounge at St Pancras International, the interactive gallery gives travellers unprecedented access to some of the nation's best-loved works of art, within the unique setting of the station. The cutting-edge system invites users to explore a database of 100 highlights from the National Gallery's collection of Western European painting, including masterpieces by Leonardo da Vinci, Rubens, Titian, Holbein, Caravaggio, Constable, Van Gogh and Monet. For more information contact The National Gallery: Tom Almeroth-Williams +44 (0)20 7747 2512 or [thomas.almerothwilliams@ng-london.org.uk](mailto:thomas.almerothwilliams@ng-london.org.uk)

**Theatre and Entertainment****THE LORD OF THE RINGS bids farewell to London on 19 July 2008**

With an unforgettable score, heartfelt performances and ground-breaking special effects, The Lord of the Rings is leaving the Theatre Royal this summer. The musical is a dazzling theatrical masterpiece to delight audiences of all ages, and to redefine one's experience of theatre. The last performance will be on Saturday the 19th of July. For a top 10 of London Musical shows visit [our website](#)

**Attractions****London Sightseeing Pass; what visitors say**

Over 5,000 respondents provided feedback to the key questions of what they gained out of exploring London with the London Sightseeing Pass and was great for the pass as well as London as a good value destination as a whole. For details of all responses, click [here](#)

**New audio tour for the Royal Mews, Buckingham Palace**

A new complimentary audio tour of the Royal Mews takes visitors behind the scenes at Buckingham Palace and provides a unique insight into the work of the Royal Household. The Royal Mews is one of the finest working stables in the world and houses the collection of royal coaches and carriages. Available in eight languages, the audio tour explains how the Mews serves The Queen in the performance of her official duties and prepares for major State and ceremonial occasions. Visit [www.royalcollection.org.uk](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk) for more information or call +44 (0)20 7766 7321.

**'Dig for Victory: War on Waste'**

Emerging from its underground bunker, the Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms in partnership with the Royal Parks will present a project in St James's Park celebrating the 'Dig for Victory' campaign in the 1940s from May 22 until September 30th 2008. Local communities and schools will tend a replica of a Second World War allotment set up in the Park, which will be used to teach gardening, healthy eating, history and food science. Now in its second and final year, the allotment's core themes will focus on recycling and wildlife habitation. The Allotment is open from 10am – 17:00 pm. Museum Display 9.30 am to 18.00 with last admission at 17.00 pm. More information: [www.iwm.org.uk/digforvictory](http://www.iwm.org.uk/digforvictory) or [www.royalparks.gov.uk](http://www.royalparks.gov.uk)

**General Information****Important information for coach operators: London-wide Low Emission Zone introduced**

The London-wide Low Emission Zone was introduced in London in February this year. The Zone aims to cut harmful emissions from the most polluting lorries, coaches and buses and is in force 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year.

Operators who drive into London are being urged to make sure their vehicles meet a standard of Euro III for particulate matter to avoid having to pay a high daily charge or risk a substantial penalty charge. From February, vehicles over 12 tonnes are affected and the scheme extends to Lorries over 3.5 tonnes, buses and coaches from 7 July 2008.

Operators of vehicles registered outside of Great Britain that meet the Low Emission Zone standards, or qualify for an exemption or a 100 per cent discount, must register with Transport for London (TfL). Registration is free. Failing to register might cause operators to pay a £200 fee that could increase up to £1,000 per day to drive within the zone.

An information leaflet and registration form can be obtained from [www.tfl.gov.uk/lezlondon](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/lezlondon) or by calling + 44 (0) 207 310 8998.

#### **Transport Disruptions**

The Victoria line will close from 22h00 on Monday to Thursday evenings from Monday 4 February until Thursday 20 November 2008 inclusive for line upgrade works. Two replacement bus services will operate. For more information about tube line closures, go to [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

#### **Changing the Guard**

From April until July the guard change is scheduled to take place daily, however in certain months there are changes to this schedule so we recommend you check before you travel to ensure that the schedule matches your itinerary.

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