

lonely planet

NEW FOR  
2012

# Stratford & East London

STRATFORD

# Welcome to Stratford & East London

*East London: a vibrant and fascinating part of the capital. If there was ever a time to visit, it's 2012.*

## Olympic City

This year, all eyes are firmly fixed eastwards as London hosts the 2012 Olympic Summer Games from 27 July to 12 August, and the Paralympic Games from 29 August to 9 September. A vast area of East London has been transformed into a stunning landscape combining state-of-the-art sporting facilities, world-class architecture, the latest sustainable technology and acres of sculpted parkland. For those not so excited by lycra-clad larks, the London 2012 Festival, providing a truly impressive array of cultural events, will see the city pulling out all the stops for a once-in-a-lifetime summer.

## Cultural Mix

East London is a patchwork of culture, history, class and ethnicity. Settled by waves of immigrants over the years, East London boasts authentic Asian cuisine, colourful markets selling all manner of exotic ingredients and a real sense of London's multiculturalism. Cheap rents have long pulled in artistic communities, and there are scores of hidden galleries and art exhibitions in unexpected venues. Across the area, you'll also find reminders of the poverty that it was once famous for, and a grittier side to London life. But alongside this are some historical gems, such as the finely restored 16th-century Sutton House, set incongruously amid a sea of high-rises.

## Off-the-Wall East

Home to some of the more quirky attractions the city has to offer, East London is full of lovely surprises. Take part in a Victorian school class, complete with the strictest teacher you never had, or for something more grisly, seek out Execution Dock, where they hanged Captain Kidd. Memorable dining experiences are served up in a disused power station, a completely alfresco terrace overlooking the Thames, a fish smokery and a former town hall. Have an ale in boozers where notorious gangsters once supped, or catch a show at the beautifully decrepit Wilton's, hilariously outspoken Bistrottheque, or the gloriously madcap Bethnal Green Working Men's Club.

## Hip Neighbourhoods

With its fusion of cultures, East London has an easy-going atmosphere and an appetite for the new and unusual. Gritty Whitechapel offers up ever-changing art in its renowned gallery and venues hosting eclectic gigs and DJ nights. Bethnal Green's Cheshire St and Columbia Rd and Hackney's Broadway Market are full of cute boutiques, excellent pubs and trendy cafes, while Hackney Wick hides a slightly more ramshackle and altogether arty collection of eateries with new ventures emerging (sometimes all too briefly) all the time. An assortment of top-quality music festivals are held annually in Victoria Park and London Fields – but look out for original and exciting pop-up venues and restaurants of all kinds.



HELENA SMITH



## Why I Love Stratford & East London

By Sally Schafer, Author

Nowhere else in London do you get such a richness and variety of experience as in the east. I love its cutting-edge galleries and start-up fashion boutiques, eclectic pubs and bars, trendy cafes and diverse restaurants. But also the clash of history and modernity at every turn, from perfectly preserved Victorian streets and imposing riverside warehouses to the soaring towers of the Docklands and the striking architecture of the Olympic Park. It's constantly interesting to live in this tangle of cultures – a riot of colour, music and cuisine, and a cacophony of languages from all over the globe.

# East London Maps

## Map Legend

### Sights

- Beach
- Buddhist
- Castle
- Christian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery
- Ruin
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo
- Other Sight

### Eating

- Eating

### Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

### Entertainment

- Entertainment

### Shopping

- Shopping

### Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

### Sports & Activities

- Diving/Snorkelling
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Skiing
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Sports & Activities

### Information

- Post Office
- Tourist Information

### Transport

- Airport
- Border Crossing
- Bus
- Cable Car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro
- Monorail
- Parking
- S-Bahn
- Taxi
- Train/Railway
- Tram
- Tube Station
- U-Bahn
- Other Transport

### Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed Road
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian Overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour Detour
- Path

### Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

### Geographic

- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

### Hydrography

- River/Creek
- Intermittent River
- Swamp/Mangrove
- Reef
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Glacier

### Areas

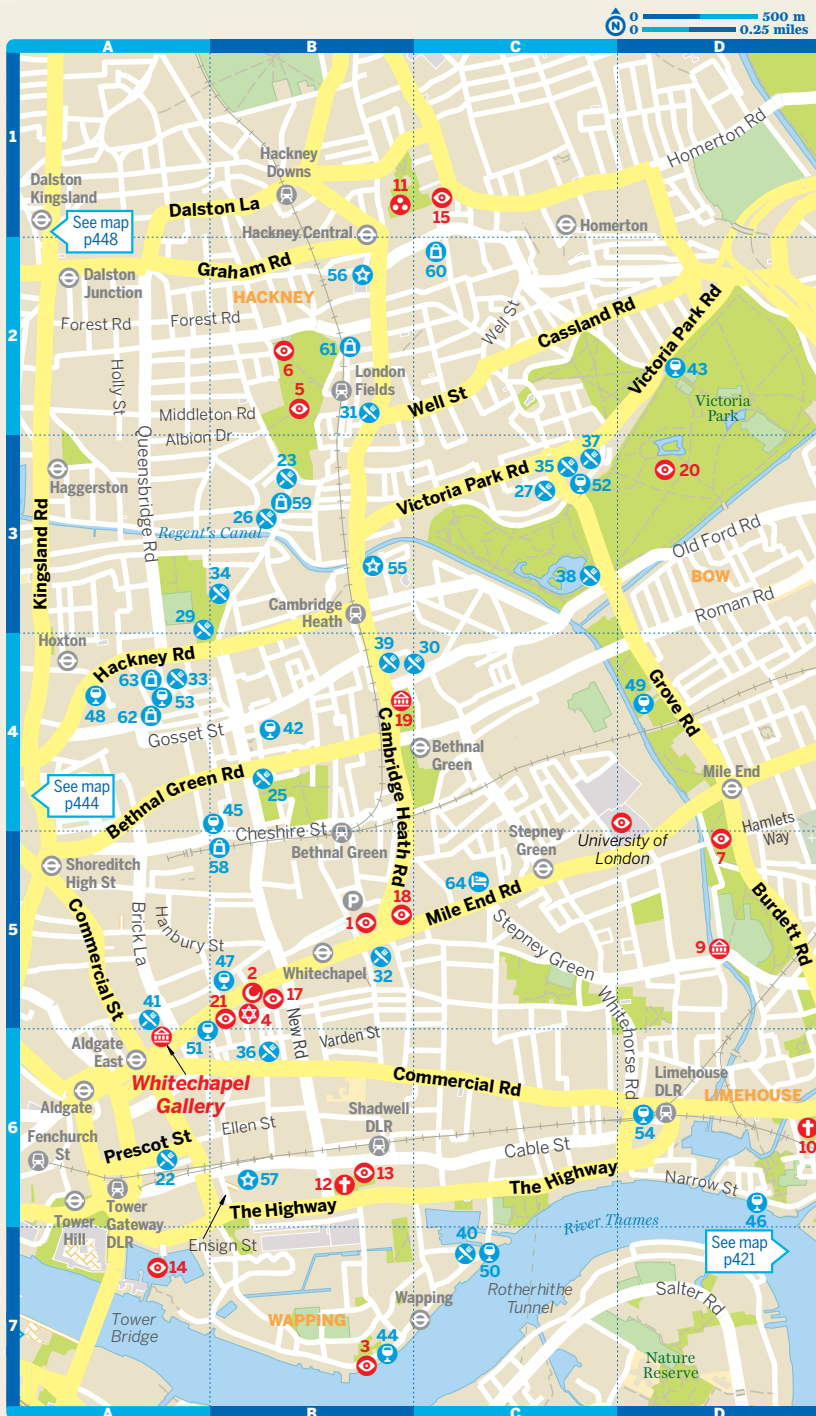
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Park/Forest
- Sportsground
- Sight (Building)
- Top Sight (Building)



DOCKLANDS

|  |                                   |               |  |                                  |               |
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|  | <b>Top Sights</b>                 | <b>(p224)</b> |  | <b>Eating</b>                    | <b>(p229)</b> |
|  | <b>Sights</b>                     | <b>(p223)</b> |  |                                  |               |
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|  | 2 Canary Wharf Tower .....        | B2            |  | 4 Billingsgate Fish Market ..... | B2            |
|  | 3 Mudchute Park & Farm.....       | C4            |  | 5 Gun.....                       | C2            |
|  | 02 .....                          | D2            |  |                                  |               |

See map p463



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- Sights (p219)**
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  - 2 East London Mosque.....B5
  - 3 Execution Dock.....B7
  - 4 Great Synagogue.....B5
  - 5 London Fields.....B2
  - 6 London Fields Lido.....B2
  - 7 Mile End Park.....D5
  - 8 Olympic Park.....E2
  - 9 Ragged School Museum.....D5
  - 10 St Anne's, Limehouse.....D6
  - 11 St Augustine's Tower.....B1
  - 12 St George-in-the-East.....B6
  - 13 St George's Town Hall Building.....B6
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  - 15 Sutton House.....C1
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  - 17 Tower House.....B5
  - 18 Trinity Green Almshouses...B5
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  - 21 Whitechapel Bell Foundry....B5  
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- 22 Café Spice Namasté.....A6
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  - 25 E Pellici.....B4
  - 26 F. Cooke.....B3
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  - 28 Formans.....E2
  - 29 Frizzante@City Farm.....A3
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  - 31 Green Papaya.....B2
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- 58 Beyond Retro.....B5
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  - 62 Columbia Road Flower Market.....A4
  - 63 Jones Dairy.....A4
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- 42 Bethnal Green Working Men's Club.....B4
  - 43 Britannia.....D2
  - 44 Captain Kidd.....B7
  - 45 Carpenter's Arms.....B4  
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  - 48 Joiners Arms.....A4  
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  - 49 Palm Tree.....D4
  - 50 Prospect of Whitby.....C7
  - 51 Rhythm Factory.....A6
  - 52 Royal Inn on the Park.....C3
  - 53 Royal Oak.....A4
  - 54 White Swan.....D6
- Entertainment (p231)**
- 55 Bistrottheque.....B3
  - 56 Hackney Empire.....B2
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- 64 40 Winks.....C5  
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Town Hall Hotel & Apartments.....(see 39)
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  - 39 Viajante.....B4
  - 40 Wapping Food.....C7
  - 41 Whitechapel Gallery Dining Room.....A5



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- 1. Cable Street Mural
- 2. Columbia Road Flower Market
- 3. Regent's Canal
- 4. Wilton's Music Hall
- 5. The Gun
- 6. At the Counter Café (see next page)



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HELENA SMITH



5

HELENA SMITH



HELENA SMITH

6

# The East End & Docklands

WHITECHAPEL | BETHNAL GREEN | HACKNEY | MILE END | VICTORIA PARK | HACKNEY WICK | STRATFORD | WAPPING | LIMEHOUSE | DOCKLANDS

## Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Taking in the landscaped majesty, incredible architecture and fauna-filled wetlands of East London's mighty **Olympic Park** (p16).
- 2 Stopping to smell the roses at London's most fragrant market, **Columbia Rd** (p25).
- 3 Investigating the fascinating history and contrasting landscapes of the **Docklands** (p17).
- 4 Imagining life as a 17th-century sailor on a swagger through **Wapping** (p17).
- 5 Heading to **Whitechapel** (p13) for a burst of multicultural London and authentic Bangladeshi cuisine.

### LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

#### LOVED BY LOCALS

Author Sally Schafer has lived in East London for over a decade and often looks out from her home in wonder at the brand-new Olympic Park, shimmering on her doorstep. We asked her to give us the lowdown on the local area.

#### What would you say are the highlights of the area?

The Olympic Park is the obvious headliner – its grandeur is so striking and it's fantastic that this development has regenerated what was once such a derelict and forgotten area of the capital. On a Sunday, one of my favourite things to do is head to Columbia Rd for the flower market. And then up to Broadway Market and London Fields for some shopping, top-notch coffee or a dip in the lido. I'm also a big fan of Victoria Park and the Regent's Canal – perfect for a long walk or a bicycle ride, topped off with a bite to eat in Hackney Village.

#### Where are your favourite haunts?

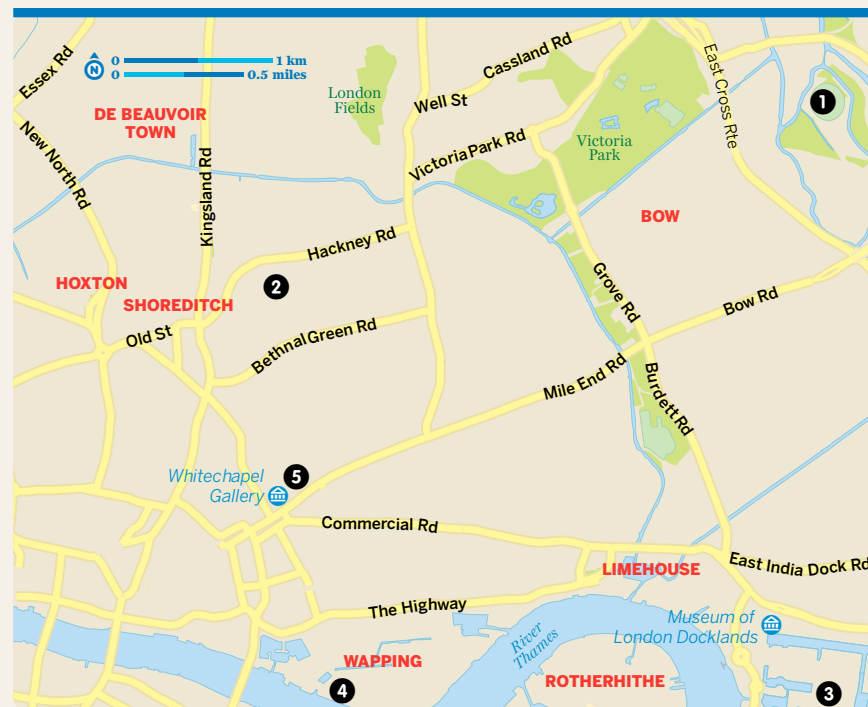
The Counter Cafe does great coffee, is really relaxed and has a stunning view of the Olympic Stadium. Down by the river, Wapping Food is a truly unusual restaurant serving excellent, seasonal dishes. And if you're after an eclectic line-up of entertainment and real atmosphere, Wilton's is an absolute gem.

#### Any tips for places that won't blow the budget?

Many of the East's top attractions are free – the Whitechapel Gallery, the V&A Museum of Childhood, Museum of London Docklands and Mudchute Park & Farm to name a few – and there are plenty of good-value restaurants and cafes to choose from. Keep an eye out for free gigs and club nights, or just spend your time wandering the diverse neighbourhoods and open spaces. During the Olympics, London Live in Victoria Park (<http://www.londonlive.uk.com/victoria-park>), offers up all the sporting action for free on two massive screens, plus live music, a sports park, cafe and food stalls.

#### As well as all the sport, is there anything else going on this summer?

Absolutely. The Cultural Olympiad, running since the Beijing Games in 2008, will culminate in the London 2012 Festival (<http://festival.london2012.com>) from 21 June to 9 September. There's a real feast of cultural activities, such as Radio 1's Hackney Weekend and the BT River of Music all along the Thames, as well as scores of theatre, art, dance and film events throughout the capital.



For more detail of this area, see Map p6 →

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

The most genial way to get around the East End is along the water. Cyclists and pedestrians can drop down to Regent's Canal at the bottom of Broadway Market and follow the waterway to Limehouse. Branching east of this at Victoria Park, the Hertford Union Canal will deliver you to Hackney Wick and the Olympic Park. From Limehouse Basin you can also pick up the Thames Path and follow it along the river to St Katharine Docks.

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Wapping Food (p23)
- ➔ Formans (p22)
- ➔ Tayyabs (p18)
- ➔ E Pellici (p19)
- ➔ Gun (p23)

For reviews, see p18 ➔

## Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Dove Freehouse (p23)
- ➔ Grapes (p24)
- ➔ Carpenter's Arms (p24)
- ➔ Royal Inn on the Park (p24)
- ➔ Palm Tree (p24)

For reviews, see p23 ➔

## Best Places for East End History

- ➔ Museum of London Docklands (p18)
- ➔ Sutton House (p14)
- ➔ Ragged School Museum (p15)
- ➔ House Mill (p15)

For reviews, see p13 ➔

## Explore: The East End & Docklands

A vast area, the East End and Docklands has a few standout sights but will really repay those happy to wander and soak up the unique character of each of its neighbourhoods. Handily, the recent opening of the overground lines has made East London much easier to traverse. The three main areas to head for are the all-new Olympic Park (and neighbouring Hackney) the Docklands (and adjoining waterside Limehouse and Wapping) and Whitechapel (from which Bethnal Green is just a short hop away). Each of these has a few don't-miss attractions but also plenty of places to linger over a coffee, lazy lunch or a few jars of ale.

## Local Life

- ➔ **London Fields** On a sunny Saturday, East Enders of all ages grab some goodies from Broadway Market (p25) and head to London Fields (p14) for a picnic and a dip in the lido.
- ➔ **Whitechapel Gallery** With no permanent collection, there's always something new to check out here (p13), before heading to Tayyabs (p18) for the daily special.
- ➔ **Cabaret** From lip-synching trannies to trashy burlesque, Bistrottheque (p25) and the Bethnal Green Working Men's Club (p24) always provide a hugely fun reason to get your glad rags on.

## Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Underground** Central Line runs from the West End and the City to Bethnal Green, Mile End and Stratford.
- ➔ **Overground** From Camden and Highbury, the overground affords a quick link to Hackney, Hackney Wick and Stratford. A separate branch connects Dalston and the southerly stops of Whitechapel and Wapping.
- ➔ **DLR** Starting at Tower Gateway or Bank, the DLR provides a scenic link to Limehouse and Docklands, as well as joining the dots with Stratford Domestic and International stations further north.
- ➔ **Bus** The 55 from Oxford St is a handy route to Hackney, as is the 38 from Victoria via Islington. The 277 runs from Hackney to the Docklands, via Victoria Park.
- ➔ **Rail** A quick ride to London Fields, Cambridge Heath or Stratford from Liverpool St. The high-speed link from St Pancras (to be known as the Javelin during the Olympics) whisks you to Stratford International in just seven minutes.
- ➔ **Boat** During the Games you can catch a barge from Limehouse to the Olympic Park.

## SIGHTS

### Whitechapel

#### WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY

HISTORIC BUILDING

Map p6 (www.whitechapelbellfoundry.co.uk; 32-34 Whitechapel Rd E1; tours per person £11; ☉tours 10am & 1.30pm selected Wed & Sat, shop 9.30am-4.15pm Mon-Fri; 📍Aldgate East or Whitechapel) The Whitechapel Bell Foundry has been standing on this site since 1738, although an earlier foundry nearby is known to have been in business in 1570. Both Big Ben (1858) and the Liberty Bell (1752) in Philadelphia were cast here, and the foundry also cast a new bell for New York City's Trinity Church, damaged in the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. The 1½-hour guided tours (maximum 25 people) are conducted on particular Saturdays and Wednesdays (check the website) but are often booked out a year in advance. During weekday trading hours you can view a few small but informative exhibits in the foyer and buy bell-related items from the shop.

#### WHITECHAPEL ROAD

STREET

Map p6 (📍Whitechapel) The East End's main thoroughfare, Whitechapel Rd hums with a cacophony of Asian, African and Middle Eastern languages, its busy shops and market stalls selling everything from Indian snacks to Nigerian fabrics and Turkish jewellery, as the East End's multitudinous ethnic groupings rub up against each other more or less comfortably. It's a chaotic and poor place, but it's full of life. Within a few minutes' walk of Whitechapel tube station you'll find the large **East London Mosque** (www.eastlondonmosque.org.uk; 46-92 Whitechapel Rd E1) and, behind it, the **Great Synagogue** (41 Fieldgate St E1), built in 1899. Further down Fieldgate St, the enormous **Tower House** (81 Fieldgate St E1) was once a hostel and then a dosshouse but is now a redeveloped apartment block. Past residents include Joseph Stalin and authors Jack London and George Orwell. The latter describes it in detail in *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933).

North along Whitechapel Rd itself sits the **Blind Beggar** (337 Whitechapel Rd E1), where the notorious gangster Ronnie Kray shot George Cornell dead in 1966, in a turf



## TOP SIGHTS WHITECHAPEL GALLERY

This ground-breaking gallery, which moved into its main art nouveau building in 1899, extended into the library next door in 2009, doubling its exhibition space to 10 galleries. Founded by the Victorian philanthropist Canon Samuel Barnett at the end of the 19th century to bring art to the people of East London, it has made its name by putting on exhibitions by both established and emerging artists, cartoonists and architects, including Jackson Pollock (his first UK show), Gary Hume, Robert Crumb, Mies van der Rohe and Picasso (whose *Guernica* was exhibited here in 1939). The gallery's ambitiously themed shows change every couple of months – check the program online – and there's also live music, poetry readings, talks and films till late on Thursday. Don't miss the phenomenal 'social sculptures' in various (and ephemeral) spaces throughout – there's even one on the roof of the building. Ask at the front desk about Janet Cardiff's *The Missing Voice (Case Study B)*, an audio walk that takes you into the surrounding streets – a surreal but exciting interaction of art and context (you need to leave a bank card as security). Other features are an excellent bookshop, the Whitechapel Gallery Dining Room (p19) and an uberdesigned cafe on the mezzanine level.

### DON'T MISS...

- ➔ Social sculptures
- ➔ Bookshop
- ➔ A meal in the Dining Room

### PRACTICALITIES

- ➔ Map p6
- ➔ www.whitechapelgallery.org
- ➔ 77-82 Whitechapel High St E1
- ➔ admission free
- ➔ ☉11am-6pm Tue-Sun, to 9pm Thu
- ➔ 📍Aldgate East

## CABLE STREET

Cable St, just south of Commercial Rd, takes its name from the use of the length of the thoroughfare to twist hemp rope into ships' cables. Similarly named, but shorter and narrower, Twine Ct runs south from here. Cable St is most famous for the Battle of Cable St (1936), in which the British fascist Oswald Mosley led a bunch of his blackshirts into the area, supposedly as a celebration of the fourth anniversary of the British Union of Fascists. Although pockets of fascist supporters existed in the East End, the march was ferociously repelled by local people – thousands of Jews, communists, dockers, trade unionists and other East Enders turned out in solidarity against them. At No 236 you'll find St George's Town Hall building, its west wall sporting a large mural commemorating the riots. The church just behind this building is **St George-in-the-East** ([www.stgite.org.uk](http://www.stgite.org.uk); 16 Cannon St Rd E1), erected by Nicholas Hawksmoor in 1729 and badly damaged in the Blitz of WWII; all that now remains is a shell enclosing a smaller modern core.

war over control of the East End's organised crime. He was jailed for life and died in 1995. After the intersection with Cambridge Heath Rd, this traditionally poor area's history takes a more philanthropic turn, with a statue of **William Booth** (1829–1912), who established his Salvation Army Christian Mission here in 1865, and the **Trinity Green Almshouses**, poorhouses built for injured or retired sailors in 1695. The two rows of almshouses run at right angles away from the street, facing a village-type green and a chapel with a clock tower.

## Bethnal Green & Hackney

### FREE V&A MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD

MUSEUM

Map p6 ([www.vam.ac.uk/moc](http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc); cnr Cambridge Heath & Old Ford Rds E2; ☎10am–5.45pm; 📍; 📍Bethnal Green) Housed in a renovated Victorian-era building moved from South Kensington in 1866, this branch of the Victoria & Albert Museum is aimed at both kids (with activity rooms and interactive exhibits, including a dressing-up box and sandpit) and nostalgic grown-ups who come to admire the antique toys. From teddies, doll's houses and dolls (one dating from 1300 BC) to Meccano, Lego and computer games, it's a wonderful toy-cupboard trip down memory lane. There's a good cafe on the ground floor too.

### SUTTON HOUSE

HISTORIC BUILDING

Map p6 ([www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sutton-house](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sutton-house); 2 & 4 Homerton High St E9; adult/child £3/1; ☎10am–5pm Thu & Fri, noon–5pm Sat & Sun, closed Jan; 📍Hackney Central, 📍394

Abandoned and taken over by squatters in the 1980s, what was originally known as Bryk Place when built in 1535 by a prominent courtier of Henry VIII, Sir Ralph Sadleir, could have been tragically lost to history, but it's since been put under the care of the National Trust and magnificently restored. The first historic room you enter, the Linenfold Parlour, is the highlight, where the Tudor oak panelling on the walls has been carved to resemble draped cloth. Other notable rooms include the panelled Great Chamber, the Victorian study, the Georgian parlour and the intriguing mock-up of a Tudor kitchen. There's a shop and pleasant cafe on site.

West of Sutton House, in the restored St John's Churchyard Gardens, is 13th-century **St Augustine's Tower** ([www.hhbt.org.uk](http://www.hhbt.org.uk); Mare St E8), all that remains of a church that was demolished in 1798. On the last Sunday of the month (2.30pm to 4.30pm) you can climb the tower's 135 steps for fantastic views across Hackney (free).

### LONDON FIELDS

PARK

Map p6 ([www.hackney.gov.uk/cp-londonfields](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/cp-londonfields); 📍London Fields, 📍55 or 277) A strip of green amid a popular residential area of Hackney, London Fields was historically a place for the grazing of animals. A well-frequented public space at any time, it can be thronged with crowds on sunny weekend days as locals hang out after a meander up Broadway Market (see p25). Built in the 1930s, and abandoned by the '80s, **London Fields Lido** ([www.hackney.gov.uk/c-london-fields-lido](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/c-london-fields-lido); London Fields Westside E8; adult/child £4.10/2.45; ☎usually 6.30am–8pm) reopened to local delight in 2006. It gets packed with

swimmers and sunbathers during the summer months. The park also has two children's play areas and a decent pub.

## Mile End & Victoria Park

### VICTORIA PARK

PARK

Map p6 ([www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk); ☎dawn–dusk; 📍Mile End, 📍277 or 425) The 'Regent's Park of the East End', Victoria Park is an 86-hectare leafy expanse opened in 1845 – the first public park in the East End that came about after a local MP presented Queen Victoria with a petition of 30,000 signatures. In the early 20th century it was known as the Speaker's Corner of the East End, and during WWII the park was largely closed to the public and was used as an anti-aircraft shelling site as well as an internment camp for Italian and then German prisoners of war. At the time of writing, the park was undergoing a £12-million revamp, which will improve both the lakes, introduce a skate park and create a hub building housing a cafe, community room and park offices in the eastern section of the park.

### FREE RAGGED SCHOOL MUSEUM

MUSEUM

Map p6 ([www.raggedschoolmuseum.org.uk](http://www.raggedschoolmuseum.org.uk); 46–50 Copperfield Rd E3; ☎10am–5pm Wed & Thu, 2–5pm 1st Sun of month; 📍Mile End) Both

adults and children are inevitably charmed by this combination of mock Victorian schoolroom – with hard wooden benches and desks, slates, chalk, inkwells and abacuses – re-created East End kitchen and social history museum below. 'Ragged' was a Victorian term used to refer to pupils' usually torn, dirty and dishevelled clothes, and the museum celebrates the legacy of Dr Thomas Barnardo, who founded this school for destitute East End children in the 1870s. The school closed in 1908 but you can experience what it would have been like on the first Sunday of the month, when a Victorian lesson in which 'pupils' (adults and children alike) are taught reading, writing and 'rithmetic by a strict school ma'am in full Victorian regalia called Miss Perkins. It takes place at 2.15pm and 3.30pm (suggested donation £2). There's also a tiny towpath cafe and shop where you can pick up your own slate and chalk. Friendly staff are on hand to pass on plenty of local information and background.

### HOUSE MILL

HISTORIC BUILDING

Map p6 ([www.housemill.org.uk](http://www.housemill.org.uk); Three Mill Lane E3; adult/concession £3/1.50; ☎11am–4pm Sun May–Oct, 1st Sun only Mar, Apr & Dec; 📍Bromley-by-Bow) The House Mill (1776) operated as a sluice tidal mill, grinding grain for a nearby distillery until 1941, and is one of two remaining mills from a trio that once stood

## A HERO RISES IN THE EAST

Daniel Mendoza (1764–1836), the father of 'scientific boxing' who billed himself as 'Mendoza the Jew', was the first bare-knuckle boxer to employ strategy and speed in the ring. Mendoza was born in Aldgate and left school at age 13, taking odd jobs as a porter, being taunted as an 'outsider' and getting into scrapes. He was eventually discovered by 'gentleman boxer' Richard Humphreys, 20 years his senior, who took him under his wing and started him training. Mendoza developed a style of fighting in direct opposition to the norm of the day, where two fighters would stand face to face and slug it out until one collapsed.

Mendoza began a highly successful career in the ring, but eventually fell out with his mentor. His most infamous fight came during a grudge match in 1788 with Humphreys. Just as Mendoza was about to administer the coup de grâce, Humphreys' second grabbed Mendoza's arm, a moment caught in a contemporary print called *Foul Play* on display in the National Portrait Gallery. Mendoza went on to fight Humphreys fairly two more times, emerging the victor and moral superior.

Mendoza was the first sportsman in Britain to achieve cult status – a veritable David Beckham of 18th-century London. He made (and lost) a fortune, wrote his memoirs and a how-to book called *The Art of Boxing*, mixed with the high and mighty (including royalty) and sold branded trinkets and images of himself. Most importantly he advanced the cause of Jews in a country that had only allowed them back the century before. People learned for the first time that a Jew could and would fight back – and win.



## COCKNEY RHYMING SLANG

Traditionally cockneys were people born within earshot of the Bow Bells – the church bells of St Mary-le-Bow on Cheapside. Since few people actually live in the City, this definition has broadened to take in those living further east. The term cockney is often used to describe anyone speaking what is also called estuarine English (in which ‘t’ and ‘h’ are routinely dropped and glottal stops – what the two ‘t’s sound like in ‘bottle’ – abound). In fact the true cockney language also uses something called rhyming slang, which may have developed among London’s costermongers (street traders) as a code to avoid police attention. This code replaced common nouns and verbs with rhyming phrases. So ‘going up the apples and pears’ meant going up the stairs, the ‘trouble and strife’ was the wife, ‘telling porky pies’ was telling lies and ‘would you Adam and Eve it?’ was would you believe it? Over time the second of the two words tended to be dropped so the rhyme vanished. Few, if any, people still use pure cockney but a good many still understand it. You’re more likely to come across it in residual phrases like ‘use your loaf’ (‘loaf of bread’ for head), ‘ooh, me plates of meat’ (feet) or ‘e’s me best china’ (‘china plate’ for mate).

on this small island in the River Lea (the Clock Mill opposite has been converted into offices). Tours, which run according to demand and last about 45 minutes, take visitors to all four floors of the mill and offer a fascinating look at traditional East End industry. There’s a small cafe and shop on site. To get to House Mill, exit the tube and head down the steps to the left. Continue into the underpass and at the top of the stairs turn right, down the hill. Take a right towards Tesco and right again into Three Mill Lane.

## TOWER HAMLETS CEMETERY PARK

CEMETERY

Map p6 ([www.towerhamletsceemetery.org](http://www.towerhamletsceemetery.org); Southern Grove E3; ☀8am-dusk; 📍Mile End or Bow Rd) Opened in 1841 this 13-hectare cemetery was the last of the ‘Magnificent Seven’, then-suburban cemeteries – including Highgate and Stoke Newington’s Abney Park – created by an act of Parliament in response to London’s rapid population growth and overcrowded burial grounds. Some 270,000 souls were laid to rest here until the cemetery was closed for burials in 1966 and turned into a park and local nature reserve in 2001. Today it is a quiet, restful site, its Victorian monuments slowly being consumed by vines. There are usually two-hour guided tours at 2pm on the third Sunday of the month.

## MILE END PARK

PARK

Map p6 ([www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk); 📍Mile End) The 36-hectare Mile End Park is a long, narrow series of interconnected green

spaces wedged between Burdett and Grove Rds and Regent’s Canal. Landscaped to great effect during the millennium year, it incorporates a go-kart track, a children’s centre, areas for public art, an ecology area, an indoor climbing wall and a sports stadium. The centrepiece, though, is architect Piers Gough’s ‘green bridge’ linking the northern and southern sections of the park over busy Mile End Rd and planted with trees and shrubs.

## Hackney Wick & Stratford



### OLYMPIC PARK

PARK

Map p6 ([www.london2012.com/olympic-park](http://www.london2012.com/olympic-park); 📍Stratford or Hackney Wick) From the mills of Cistercian monks in the 1st century, to the railway hub of the 1880s (from which goods from the Thames were transported all over Britain), the tidal Lower Lea Valley had long been the source of what Londoners required to fuel their industries. But until building work on the Olympic Park began in 2008, this vast area of East London had become derelict, polluted and largely ignored. Creating world-class sporting facilities for the 2012 Games was, of course, at the forefront of the development, but this was well balanced with the aim of regenerating this area for generations to come. More than 30 new bridges were built to criss-cross the Lea, its tributaries and the railway lines that divide up the parkland, and waterways in and around the park were upgraded, with waste cleared and contaminated soil cleaned on a massive scale.

The main focal point of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, as it will be known from 2013, is the **Olympic Stadium**, with a Games capacity of 80,000, scaling back to approximately 60,000 seats post-Games. The striking **Aquatics Centre**, which will greet park visitors entering from Stratford, is the work of Clerkenwell-based architect Zaha Hadid and houses two 50m swimming pools and a diving pool. The equally impressive and award-winning **Velodrome** (aka the ‘Pringle’) has been praised for its aesthetic qualities, as well as its sustainable credentials and functional appeal. The 114m, spiralling red structure is Anish Kapoor’s **ArcelorMittal Orbit**, or the ‘Hubble Bubble Pipe’, offering a vast panorama from its viewing platform.

The north of the park has been given over to wetlands, which provide a much wilder environment than the gardens and landscaping of the southern half of the park, which is home to the main venues. Set to open to the public in phases from 2013, the developments to transform the park into its promised legacy will take at least another 25 years to complete.

## Wapping & Limehouse

### WAPPING

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Map p6 (📍Wapping) Once notorious for slave traders, drunk sailors and prostitutes, Wapping’s towering warehouses, built at the beginning of the 19th century, still give an atmospheric picture of the area’s previous existence. Although there’s nothing to actually mark it, down on the riverside below Wapping New Stairs (near the marine police station) was **Execution Dock**, where convicted pirates were hanged and their bodies chained to a post at low tide, to be left until three tides had washed over their heads. Among the more famous people who died this way was Captain William Kidd, hanged here in 1701, and whose grisly tale you can read about in the nearby Captain Kidd pub (p25).

### LIMEHOUSE

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Map p6 (DLR Limehouse or Westferry) There isn’t much to Limehouse, although it became the centre of London’s Chinese community – its first Chinatown – after some 300 sailors settled here in 1890. It gets a mention in Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), when the protagonist

passes by this way in search of opium. The most notable attraction here is **St Anne’s, Limehouse** ([www.stanneslimehouse.org](http://www.stanneslimehouse.org); cnr Commercial Rd & Three Colt St E1). This was Nicholas Hawksmoor’s earliest church (1725) and still boasts the highest church clock in the city. In fact the 60m-high tower is still a ‘Trinity House mark’ for identifying shipping lanes on the Thames (thus it flies the Royal Navy’s white ensign).

### ST KATHARINE DOCKS

HARBOUR

Map p6 ([www.skdocks.co.uk](http://www.skdocks.co.uk); 📍Tower Hill) The gateway to the warehouse district of Wapping, built in 1828 after 1250 ‘insanitary’ houses were razed and 11,300 people made homeless, the dock’s current incarnation – a marina for luxury yachts surrounded by cafes, restaurants and twee shops – dates from the 1980s. It’s the perfect starting point for exploring Wapping and Limehouse.

## Docklands

### ISLE OF DOGS

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Map p5 (DLR Westferry, West India Quay, Canary Wharf) Pundits can’t really agree on whether this is really an island; strictly speaking it’s a peninsula of land on the northern shore of the Thames, though without modern road and transport links it would *almost* be separated from the mainland at West India Docks. And etymologists are still out to lunch over the origin of the island’s name. Some believe it’s because the royal kennels were located here during the reign of Henry VIII. Others maintain it’s a corruption of the Flemish word *dijk* (dyke), recalling the Flemish engineers who shored up the area’s muddy banks.



## THE EAST BY BARGE

A great way to see a different side of the East End is to climb aboard a barge and tour the canals and waterways. **Water Chariots** ([www.waterchariots.co.uk](http://www.waterchariots.co.uk); ☀approx Apr-Oct) offer a program of pleasure cruises and, during the Olympic Games, a shuttle service for passengers travelling up the canal from Limehouse.



## TOP SIGHTS MUSEUM OF LONDON DOCKLANDS

Housed in a converted warehouse dating from 1802, this museum offers a comprehensive overview of the entire history of the Thames from the arrival of the Romans in AD 43. Well-organised with knowledgeable and helpful staff, it's at its best when dealing with specifics such as the docks during WWII, as well as their controversial transformation into the Docklands during the 1980s.

The tour begins on the 3rd floor (take the lift to the top) with the Roman settlement of Londinium and works its way downwards through the ages. Keep an eye out for the scale model of old London Bridge. Other highlights include Sailortown, a re-creation of the cobbled streets, bars and lodging houses of a mid-19th-century dockside community and nearby Chinatown, and more detailed galleries such as London, Sugar & Slavery, which examines the capital's role in the transatlantic slave trade.

There's lots for kids here, including the hands-on Mudlarks gallery, where children can explore the history of the Thames, tipping the clipper, trying on old-fashioned diving helmets and even constructing a simple model of Canary Wharf. The museum has special exhibitions every few months, for which there is usually a charge. There's also a great cafe on site.

### DON'T MISS...

- ➔ Sailortown
- ➔ London, Sugar & Slavery
- ➔ Docklands at War
- ➔ New Port New City
- ➔ Scale model of London Bridge

### PRACTICALITIES

- ➔ Map p5
- ➔ www.museumindocklands.org.uk
- ➔ No 1 Warehouse, West India Quay E14
- ➔ admission free
- ➔ ☀10am-6pm
- ➔ ☑Canary Wharf or DLR West India Quay

The centrepiece of the Isle of Dogs is Cesar Pelli's 244m-high **Canary Wharf Tower**, which was built in 1991. It's surrounded by more recent towers housing HSBC and Citigroup, and offices for Bank of America, Barclays, Morgan Stanley, Credit Suisse and more. Londoners are divided on their appreciation of this area, and although it is often thought of as soulless, there's certainly something impressive and noteworthy in the way that this 'isle' has been so radically developed.

### FREE MUDCHUTE PARK & FARM

FARM

Map p5 (www.mudchute.org; ☀farm 9am-5pm Tue-Sun; DLR Mudchute) Entering Mudchute Park from Eastferry Rd through the canopy of trees, you're greeted by a delightfully surprising sight of cows and sheep, roaming freely in this grassy 13 hectares of parkland. Looking back to the skyscrapers of Canary Wharf gives you a clear sense of the contrasts of this area of London. The lovely city farm has an array of animals, well kept, in spacious surrounds. Kids will love it, especially the llamas. There's also a neat cafe, serving excellent breakfasts and wholesome lunch options.



## EATING

The East End's multiculturalism has ensured that its ethnic cuisine stretches far and wide, with some fantastic low-key eateries serving authentic and value-for-money fare. But the area's gentrification has introduced a slew of gastropubs and more upmarket eateries – the latest even earning a Michelin star. Trendy and excellent coffee shops have sprouted up all over the East End, but there are still plenty of places to get a decent fry up and a cup of tea, or a traditional pie with mash and liquor. Places to head if you want to sniff out your own favourites include Columbia Rd, Broadway Market and the streets just to the north of Victoria Park (known to some as Hackney Village).



## Whitechapel

### TOP CHOICE TAYYABS

INDIAN, PAKISTANI

Map p6 (☎7247 9543; www.tayyabs.co.uk; 83-89 Fieldgate St E1; mains £6.50-10; ☀noon-midnight; ☑Whitechapel) This buzzing (OK, crowded) Punjabi restaurant is in another league to its Brick Lane equivalents. *Seekh*

kebabs, masala fish and other starters served on sizzling hot plates are delicious, as are accompaniments such as dhal, naan and raita. Daily specials are also available. Tayyabs is hugely popular and queues often snake around the restaurant and out of the door.

### CAFÉ SPICE NAMASTÉ

INDIAN

Map p6 (☎7488 9242; www.cafespice.co.uk; 16 Prescott St E1; mains £14-19, 2-course set lunch £15.95; ☀closed lunch Sat & all day Sun; ☑Tower Hill or DLR Tower Gateway) Chef Cyrus Todiwala has taken an old magistrates court just a 10-minute walk from Tower Hill and decorated it in carnival colours; the service and atmosphere are as bright as the walls. The Parsee and Goan menu is famous for its superlative *dhanasaak* (lamb stew with rice and lentils; £14.95) but just as good are the tandoori dishes and the Goan king-prawn curry. Bonuses: it makes its own chutneys and there's a little garden behind the dining room open in the warmer months.

### WHITECHAPEL GALLERY

#### DINING ROOM

MODERN EUROPEAN

Map p6 (☎7522 7896; www.whitechapelgallery.org; 77-82 Whitechapel High St E1; mains £12-15; ☀lunch Tue-Sun, dinner Wed-Sat; ☑Aldgate East) Housed in a small but perfectly formed dining room in the Passmore Edwards Library extension of the Whitechapel Gallery (p13), with high-profile chef Angela Hartnett acting as consultant. The menu offers small or large plates, to suit your appetite. Booking advised.

### MIRCH MASALA

INDIAN, PAKISTANI

Map p6 (www.mirchmasalarestaurant.co.uk; 111-113 Commercial Rd E1; mains £4.50-11; ☑Whitechapel) 'Chilli and Spice', part of a small chain based in the epicentre of London sub-continental food, Southall, is a less hectic alternative to Tayyabs and the food is almost up to the same level. Order the prawn

tikka (£9) as a 'warmer' followed by the *masala karella* (£5), a curry-like dish made from bitter melon, and a *karahi* (stewed) meat dish.

### KOLAPATA

BANGLADESHI

Map p6 (www.kolapata.co.uk; 222 Whitechapel Rd E1; mains £4.50-9.95; ☑Whitechapel) This modest restaurant serves up excellent Bangladeshi cuisine. Try the *haleem* (lamb with lentils and spices) and the *sarisha el-ish* (fish cooked with mustard seed, onion and green chilli).



## Bethnal Green & Hackney

### TOP CHOICE PELLICI

CAFE

Map p6 (332 Bethnal Green Rd E2; dishes £5-7.80; ☀7am-4pm Mon-Sat; ☑Bethnal Green, ☑8) There aren't many reasons to recommend a stroll down Bethnal Green Rd, but stepping into this diminutive, but larger-than-life, Anglo-Italian cafe is one of them. You're likely to be met by a warmer-than-average greeting as you squeeze onto a table among an amiable collection of East Enders. Opened in 1900 the wood-panelled caff is bedecked with museum-quality original fittings. Breakfasts are large and sustaining and the traditional English and Italian dishes are certain to satisfy the heartiest of appetites.

### VIAJANTE

FUSION

Map p6 (www.viajante.co.uk; Patriot Sq E2; tasting menu lunch £28-70, dinner £65-90; ☀lunch Wed-Sun, 6-9.30pm Mon-Sun; ☑; ☑Bethnal Green) Part of the Town Hall Hotel & Apartments (but with a completely separate entrance on Cambridge Heath Rd), this is an unexpected spot to find a Michelin-starred restaurant. The elegant dining room marries contemporary design with the original Edwardian features, and the very open



## LAZY MONDAYS

The East End is peppered with some fascinating and quirky sights, but unfortunately many of them have irregular opening hours, and a lot are closed on Mondays – as are a number of restaurants, cafes and some shops. Despite this there are plenty of parks, waterways and neighbourhoods perfect for exploring, and many a pub in which to rest your feet and grab a bite to eat. Two of the area's best sights, the Museum of Childhood (p14) and the Museum of London Docklands (p18), are luckily both open daily.

START **BETHNAL GREEN TUBE STATION**  
 END **OLYMPIC PARK**  
 DISTANCE **3 MILES**  
 DURATION **TWO HOURS**



## Neighbourhood Walk

### East End Eras

➔ This easy stroll offers an insightful view into the old and new of the East End. Exit the tube station towards the Museum of Childhood and head north. Take the first right and continue until you can take a right into Cyprus Pl. The surrounding area here was heavily bombed during WWII (due to its industry and proximity to the docks) and the tower blocks you can see if you raise your eyes skyward are a product of postwar redevelopment. But beautifully preserved **1 Cyprus St** gives a taste of what Victorian Bethnal Green would have looked like. Continue left down Cyprus St and back onto Old Ford Rd.

Just over Regent's Canal lies **2 Victoria Park**, built in the 1840s to improve the quality of life of East Enders. Take the path down to the road around the lake and head left to the **3 Dogs of Alcibiades** howling on plinths, replicas of the originals that stood here from 1912. Turn right here and then again at the end of the road and continue to the grand Royal Inn on the

Park. Cross the road into the eastern section of the park and take a right towards the recently restored **4 Burdett-Coutts Memorial** (1862), a gift of Angela Burdett-Coutts, once the richest woman in England and a prominent philanthropist.

From here, ramble on to the east lake and exit at the park's southeastern tip. Cross the road and pick up the canal path next to the Top O the Morning pub, crossing the canal at the first bridge you come to. Undergoing extensive redevelopment for the Olympic Games, **5 Hackney Wick** is home to a warren of warehouses and a growing community of artists. Stop off at the Counter Cafe or Formans for views of the stadium, and check out their latest art exhibits. From here you're a mere shot-pot from the **6 Olympic Park**, heralding a whole new era for the East End.

kitchen (where food is 'assembled') offers only blind tasting menus. Chef Nuno Mendes' dishes are inventive, beautifully put together and a well-crafted and exciting fusion of flavours. Service is spot on. For a more relaxed (and cheaper) but similarly creative meal, try the **Corner Room** (mains £10-12), a great little dining room on the first floor of the hotel – it doesn't take reservations.

### CLIMPSON & SONS

CAFE ☹

Map p6 ([www.webcoffeeshop.co.uk](http://www.webcoffeeshop.co.uk); 67 Broadway Market E8; dishes £4-6.50; ☺8am-5pm; ☑London Fields, ☑55 or 277) Small and simply decorated, this deservedly popular cafe is housed in what was once a butchers (and has retained the same name). Coffee is superb – it roasts its own just around the corner – and it also does a fine line in sandwiches, pastries and light meals, such as salads and couscous.

### LAXEIRO

TAPAS ☹☹

Map p6 (☎7729 1147; [www.laxeiro.co.uk](http://www.laxeiro.co.uk); 93 Columbia Rd E2; tapas £4.50-8.95, paella £21.50-24.50; ☺lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, 9am-5pm Sun; ☑Hoxton) A homely yet stylish and buzzing restaurant with friendly staff providing great service. The menu offers up authentic and robust *raciones* – the barbecue lamb is a winner. The handful of more ambitious dishes includes paella to be shared. There are tables outside on the picturesque street in summer.

### LITTLE GEORGIA

GEORGIAN ☹

Map p6 (87 Goldsmith's Row E2; dishes £4-8; ☺closed dinner Mon; ☑Cambridge Heath, ☑55) A charming slice of the Caucasus in East London, this simple eatery on two floors is an excellent introduction to the cuisine of Georgia; try the mixed meze for two or four. The menu includes such classics as *nigziani* (red pepper or aubergine stuffed with walnuts, herbs and roast vegetables) and the staple *hachapuri* (cheese bread). The cafe is a good place for breakfast and has a delicious range of salads and sandwiches.

### GREEN PAPAYA

VIETNAMESE ☹

Map p6 (191 Mare St E8; mains £6.50-8.50; ☺dinner Tue-Sun; ☑London Fields, ☑55 or 277) This simple but friendly neighbourhood restaurant has been serving up high-quality Vietnamese food to Hackney diners

for years. The extensive menu is strong on vegetarian and seafood dishes.

### F. COOKE

BRITISH ☹

Map p6 (9 Broadway Market; mains £3-4; ☺10am-7pm; ☑Cambridge Heath, ☑55) If you want a glimpse of what eating out was like in Broadway Market before the street was gentrified, head to F. Cooke pie & mash shop. This family business has been going strong since 1900, and the shop has the original signage and tiles, along with plenty of family photographs around the walls and sawdust on the floor.

### FRIZZANTE@CITY FARM

CAFE ☹

Map p6 ([www.frizzanteltld.co.uk](http://www.frizzanteltld.co.uk); Hackney City Farm, 1a Goldsmith's Row E2; dishes £4-9; ☺10am-4.30pm Tue, Wed & Fri-Sun, 7-10pm Thu; ☑; ☑Cambridge Heath, ☑55) Award-winning restaurant serving excellent Italian food next door to one of London's half-dozen city farms, with a weekly agroturismo night offering special country dishes.

### GALLERY CAFE

CAFE ☹

Map p6 ([www.stmargaretshouse.org.uk](http://www.stmargaretshouse.org.uk); 21 Old Ford Rd E2; dishes £3.80-5.90; ☺10am-6pm; ☑; ☑Bethnal Green) Tucked around the corner from the Museum of Childhood, the pretty Gallery Cafe is in the basement of a lovely Georgian building. It serves simple but delicious vegan and vegetarian fare to relaxed locals. There's a cute courtyard at the front for sunny days. Check the website for sporadic evening events such as jazz, world and acoustic music, and film nights.

## Mile End & Victoria Park

### FISH HOUSE

FISH & CHIPS ☹

Map p6 ([www.fishhouse.co.uk](http://www.fishhouse.co.uk); 126-128 Lauriston Rd E9; mains £8.50-12.50; ☺noon-10pm ☑Mile End, then ☑277) This combination seafood restaurant and chippy is just the sort of place you wish you had in your own neighbourhood. The freshest of fresh fish and crustaceans are dispensed from both a busy takeaway section (where a blackboard tells you from where your fish has come) and a cheerful sit-down restaurant. The lobster bisque and Colchester oysters are always good, while the generous fish pie bursting with goodies from the briny deep is exceptional.

## DOCKLANDS DEVELOPMENT

You'd probably never guess it while gazing up at the ultramodern skyscrapers that dominate the Isle of Dogs and Canary Wharf, but from the 16th century until the mid-20th century this area was the centre of the world's greatest port, the hub of the British Empire and its enormous global trade. At the docks here, cargo from global trade was landed, bringing jobs to a tight-knit working-class community. Even up to the start of WWII this community still thrived, but that all changed when the docks were badly firebombed during the Blitz.

After the war the docks were in no condition to cope with the postwar technological and political changes as the British Empire evaporated. At the same time enormous new bulk carriers and container ships demanded deep-water ports and new loading and unloading techniques. From the mid-1960s, dock closures followed one another as fast as they had opened, and the number of dock workers dropped from as many as 50,000 in 1960 to about 3000 by 1980.

The financial metropolis that exists today was begun by the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC), a body established by the Thatcher government in the freewheeling 1980s to take pressure for office space off the City. This rather artificial community had a shaky start. The low-rise toytown buildings had trouble attracting tenants, the Docklands Light Railway – the main transport link – had teething troubles and the landmark Canary Wharf Tower itself had to be rescued from bankruptcy twice. Now, however, news media organisations and financial behemoths have moved in – with Citigroup and HSBC boasting their own buildings.

The Docklands today is a world of contrasts, futuristic but rich in history.

### NAMÔ

VIETNAMESE

Map p6 (☎8533 0639; www.namo.co.uk; 178 Victoria Park Rd E9; mains £8.50-9; ☺noon-10.30pm; ☺Mile End, then ☺277) This pretty place serves a carefully chosen selection of punchy Vietnamese dishes in a nicer-than-average setting. There's a lovely garden area with a retractable roof, great for English summers.

### LOAFING

CAFE

Map p6 (www.loafing.co.uk; 79 Lauriston Rd E9; dishes £4-5; ☺9am-6pm; ☺Mile End, then ☺277) Cute corner cafe with a glorious cake selection, lovingly displayed. Also offers sandwiches, pastries, Monmouth coffee and a great range of teas, served in mismatched fine bone china. The outdoor tables and huge windows make it perfect for people-watching and there's also a tiny garden to relax in out back.

### PAVILION

CAFE

Map p6 (www.the-pavilion-cafe.com; cnr Old Ford & Grove Rds E3; mains £4.50-8; ☺8.30am-5pm; ☺Mile End, then ☺277) Superb cafe overlooking an ornamental lake in Victoria Park, serving breakfasts and lunches made with locally sourced ingredients, and excellent coffee.

## Hackney Wick & Stratford

### FORMANS

SEAFOOD

Map p6 (☎8525 2365; www.formans.co.uk; Stour Rd E3; mains £12-19.50; ☺dinner Thu & Fri, lunch & dinner Sat, noon-5pm Sun; ☺; ☺Hackney Wick) H Forman & Son have been curing fish here since 1905, and are notable for developing the much-celebrated London cure. Obligated to move to make way for the Olympic developments, they're now housed in appropriately salmon-pink premises that comprise their smokery, restaurant, bar and art gallery. The diminutive restaurant, with unrivalled views over the Olympic stadium, serves a fantastic variety of smoked salmon (the wild smoked salmon is exceptional), as well as an interesting range of dishes with ingredients sourced from within the British Isles. It also has a great selection of English wines and, unusually, spirits. Simpler sharing platters are available in the bar. Make sure to take a peek into the smokery next door and the art gallery upstairs.

### COUNTER CAFE

CAFE

Map p6 (www.thecountercafe.co.uk; 7 Roach Rd E3; dishes £4.50-8; ☺7.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat & Sun; ☺; ☺Hackney Wick) Housed within Stour Space (which hosts a variety

of art exhibitions) and directly overlooking the Olympic stadium, this friendly local cafe serves up fantastic coffee and tasty breakfasts, sandwiches and pies. The mismatched, thrift-store furniture, painting-clad walls and relaxed atmosphere make this a firm favourite with the local artist community.

### HACKNEY PEARL

CAFE

(www.thehackneypearl.com; 11 Prince Edward Rd E9; lunch dishes £5-7.50, dinner mains £10-13; ☺10am-11pm Tue-Sat, to 5pm Sun; ☺; ☺Hackney Wick) In an unforgiving area, and on an equally unforgiving site, this cafe has created a cheerful and friendly atmosphere where you can enjoy tasty food and delicious coffee. With large windows, outdoor tables and de rigueur salvaged furniture, it's a relaxed place to have breakfast or lunch but is also open into the evening when there is a short but frequently changing menu that includes some good veggie options.

## Wapping & Limehouse

### WAPPING FOOD

MODERN EUROPEAN

Map p6 (☎7680 2080; www.thewappingproject.com; The Wapping Project, Wapping Hydraulic Power Station, Wapping Wall E1; mains £14-21; ☺; ☺Wapping) Stylish dining room set among the innards of a disused power station, creating a spectacular and unexpectedly romantic atmosphere. The high-quality, seasonal menu changes daily but might include guinea fowl wrapped in pancetta, or onglet with beetroot and horseradish. The owner is Australian, which accounts for the exclusively Australian wine list. The 'Project' (of which the restaurant is a part) also contains a regularly changing exhibition space (noon to 10pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 10pm Saturday), which is well worth popping into.

## Docklands

### GUN

GASTROPUB, PORTUGUESE

Map p5 (☎7515 5222; www.thegundocklands.com; 27 Coldharbour E14; mains £15-27; ☺; ☺Canary Wharf) Set at the end of a pretty, cobbled street, this riverside pub has been seriously dolled up, but still manages to ooze history. Previously a local dockers pub, dating from the early 18th century, it

is claimed that Lord Nelson had secret assignations with Lady Emma Hamilton here (hence the naming of the toilets). Inside, the pub is mostly comprised of a dining area but there is a smaller room at the back as well as a terrace affording expansive views of the Thames. On a separate terrace, during summer months, the pub hosts the completely al fresco **A Greiha** (mains £15-28), grilling up dazzlingly fresh fish from Billingsgate Market, just a few streets away, as well as Portuguese classics such as *cataplana* and *estapada*. Call ahead if the weather's bad.

## DRINKING & NIGHTLIFE

### Whitechapel

#### RHYTHM FACTORY

CLUB

Map p6 (www.rhythmfactory.co.uk; 16-18 Whitechapel Rd E1; ☺Alldgate East) Perennially hip and popular, the Rhythm Factory is a club and venue hosting a variety of bands and DJs of all genres that keep the up-for-it crowd happy until late.

#### INDO

PUB

Map p6 (133 Whitechapel Rd E1; ☺to 1am Sun-Thu, to 3am Fri & Sat; ☺; ☺Whitechapel) Tiny, narrow pub bang opposite the East London Mosque, with battered old tables, pews and a couple of knackered Chesterfields under the only window. Friendly staff work the beautifully tat-cluttered bar, and serve decent pizzas (£5 to £7) to punters with the munchies. There's art for sale on the walls, DJs on weekend nights and interesting bands on an irregular schedule.

### Bethnal Green & Hackney

#### DOVE FREEHOUSE

PUB

Map p6 (www.belgianbars.com; 24-28 Broadway Market E8; ☺; ☺Cambridge Heath, ☺55) This pub attracts at any time with its rambling series of rooms and wide range – 21 on draught – of Belgian Trappist, wheat and fruit-flavoured beers. Drinkers spill out onto the street in warmer weather, or hunker down in the low-lit back room with board games when it's chilly. Decent gastropub fare also on offer.

**CARPENTER'S ARMS**

PUB

Map p6 ([www.carpentersarmsfreehouse.com](http://www.carpentersarmsfreehouse.com); 73 Cheshire St E2; ☎; 📍Shoreditch High St, 📍Bethnal Green) After a browse in the shops along Cheshire St, you'll probably end up outside this gorgeous corner pub. Once notorious – the pub was owned in the '60s by the Kray brothers, who gave it over to their mother – it has been well restored to a trendy, yet cosy and intimate pub combining traditional pub architecture with contemporary touches. A back room and small yard provide a little more space for the convivial drinkers. There's a great range of beers and lagers, as well as a menu offering quality drinking food.

**BETHNAL GREEN WORKING MEN'S CLUB**

CLUB

Map p6 ([www.workersplaytime.net](http://www.workersplaytime.net); 42-44 Poliard Row E2; ☎8pm-2am, days vary; 📍Bethnal Green) As it says on the tin, this is a true working men's club, which has opened its doors and let in all kinds of off-the-wall club nights, including trashy burlesque, vintage nights of all eras, beach parties and bake offs. Expect sticky carpets, a shimmery stage set and a space akin to a school-hall disco.

**ROYAL OAK**

PUB

Map p6 ([www.royaloaklondon.com](http://www.royaloaklondon.com); 73 Columbia Rd E2; ☎from 4pm Mon-Thu, from 12pm Fri-Sun; 📍Hoxton) Lovely wood-panelled pub arranged around a handsome central bar with a good selection of bitter and a better-than-average wine list. There's also a little garden at the back and great food. It really gets into its stride on Sunday when London's famous flower market (p25) is just outside the door.

**NELSONS HEAD**

GAY

Map p6 ([www.nelsonshead.com](http://www.nelsonshead.com); 32 Horatio St E2; ☎from 4pm Mon-Sat, 9am-11pm Sun; 📍Hoxton) Small, down-to-earth locals' pub with quirky decor, a fun and friendly mixed clientele, and plenty of camp tunes.

**JOINERS ARMS**

GAY

Map p6 ([www.joinersshoreditch.com](http://www.joinersshoreditch.com); 116-118 Hackney Rd E2; ☎5pm-3am; 📍Hoxton, 📍55) Determinedly run-down and cheesy, the Joiners is Hoxton's only totally gay pub-club. It's a crowded, funky old boozier where hip gay boys hang out at the bar, dance and watch people play pool all night.

**Mile End & Victoria Park****ROYAL INN ON THE PARK**

PUB

Map p6 (111 Lauriston Rd E9; ☎; 📍Mile End, then 📍277) On the northern border of Victoria Park, this excellent place, once a poster pub for Transport for London, has a half-dozen real ales and Czech lagers on tap, outside seating to the front and a recently made-over garden at the back. It's always lively and attracts a mixed boho/louche Hackney crowd.

**PALM TREE**

PUB

Map p6 (127 Grove Rd E3; ☎to 2am Fri & Sat, to 1am Sun; 📍Mile End, 📍277) The Palm, the quintessential East End pub on the Regent's Canal, is loved by locals, students and trendies alike, with its comforting gold-flock wallpaper, photos of also-ran crooners and a handful of different guest ales every week. There's jazz on Friday and Saturday from around 9.30pm.

**BRITANNIA**

PUB

Map p6 ([www.thebritanniapub.co.uk](http://www.thebritanniapub.co.uk); 360 Victoria Park Rd E9; ☎; 📍Homerton, 📍388) A large, rambling old pub, made-over in 2009, sporting a fabulous beer garden right on the park, with a barbecue running throughout the day on summer weekends. Also serves tasty gastropub dishes and a decent range of drinks.

**Hackney Wick & Stratford****KING EDWARD VII**

PUB

Off Map p6 ([www.kingeddie.co.uk](http://www.kingeddie.co.uk); 47 Broadway E15; 📍Stratford) Built in the 19th century this lovely old boozier is a series of handsome rooms set around a central bar. The front bar and saloon are the most convivial, and there's a little leafy courtyard at the back. A decent selection of ales and wine, and some great pub grub, make this a real highlight of the area.

**Wapping & Limehouse****GRAPES**

PUB

Map p5 ([www.grapeslondon.co.uk](http://www.grapeslondon.co.uk); 76 Narrow St E14; DLR Limehouse) One of Limehouse's renowned historic pubs – there's apparently been a drinking house here since 1583 – the Grapes is tiny, especially the riverside

terrace, which can only really comfortably fit about a half-dozen close friends, but it's cosy inside and exudes plenty of old-world charm.

**PROSPECT OF WHITBY**

PUB

Map p6 (57 Wapping Wall E1; ☎; 📍Wapping) Once known as the Devil's Tavern, the Whitby is said to date from 1520, making it the oldest riverside pub in London. It's firmly on the tourist trail now, but there's a smallish terrace to the front and the side overlooking the Thames, a decent restaurant upstairs and open fires in winter. Check out the wonderful pewter bar – Samuel Pepys once sidled up to it to sup.

**CAPTAIN KIDD**

PUB

Map p6 (108 Wapping High St E1; ☎; 📍Wapping) With its large windows, fine beer garden and displays recalling the hanging nearby of the eponymous pirate in 1701, this is a favourite riverside pub in Wapping. Although cleverly done up, it actually only dates back to the 1980s.

**WHITE SWAN**

GAY

Map p6 ([www.bjswiteswan.com](http://www.bjswiteswan.com); 556 Commercial Rd E14; DLR Limehouse) The White Swan is a fun East End kind of place, with a large dance floor as well as a more relaxed pub area. Its legendary amateur strip night takes place every Wednesday and there are also cabaret and karaoke nights. Club classics and cheesy pop predominate.

**ENTERTAINMENT****WILTON'S**

THEATRE

Map p6 (📍7702 2789; [www.wiltons.org.uk](http://www.wiltons.org.uk); 1 Graces Alley E1; 📍Tower Hill or DLR Tower Gateway) A gloriously atmospheric example of one of London's Victorian public-house music halls, Wilton's hosts a real variety of shows, from comedy and classical music to literary theatre and opera. You can also take a one-hour guided **tour** (£6; ☎3pm & 6pm Mon) of the building to hear more about its fascinating history. The hall's **Mahogany Bar** (☎5-11pm Mon-Fri) is a great way to get a taste of the place if you're not attending a performance.

**BISTROTHERQUE**

BAR/CABARET BAR

Map p6 (📍8983 7900; [www.bistrotheque.com](http://www.bistrotheque.com); 23-27 Wadeston St E2; 📍Bethnal Green, 📍Cam-

bridge Heath) This converted warehouse offers hilarious transvestite lip-synching in its ground-floor Cabaret Room and high-quality dining in its stylish whitewashed restaurant above. It's also worth coming just for the Napoleon bar, a moody, slightly decadent room with dark walls (the oak panels came from a stately home in Northumberland) and plush seating; the drinks are expertly mixed and the bar staff always friendly.

**HACKNEY EMPIRE**

THEATRE

Map p6 (📍8985 2424; [www.hackneyempire.co.uk](http://www.hackneyempire.co.uk); 291 Mare St E8; 📍Hackney Central, 📍38 or 277) The programming at this renovated Edwardian Music Hall (1901) is eclectic to say the least and certainly defines 'something for everyone' – from hard-edged political theatre to opera and comedy. The Empire is definitely one of the best places to catch a pantomime at Christmas.

**SHOPPING**

The boutiques and galleries lining Columbia Rd (which are usually open at the weekend only) and the shops along Broadway Market and Cheshire St are part of London's up-and-coming independent retail scenes. If you're after something a little more mainstream, Westfield Stratford City, currently Europe's largest urban shopping centre, can't fail to satisfy. There's also a shopping mall beneath the Canary Wharf skyscrapers, with similar shops, bars and restaurants.

**COLUMBIA ROAD****FLOWER MARKET**

MARKET

Map p6 ([www.columbiaroad.info](http://www.columbiaroad.info); ☎8am-3pm Sun; 📍Hoxton) A real explosion of colour and life, this weekly market sells a beautiful array of flowers, pot plants, bulbs, seeds and everything you might need for the garden. A lot of fun, even if you don't buy anything, the market gets really packed so go as early as you can, or later on, when the vendors sell off the cut flowers cheaply. It stretches from Gossett St to the Royal Oak pub.

**BROADWAY MARKET**

MARKET

Map p6 ([www.broadwaymarket.co.uk](http://www.broadwaymarket.co.uk); ☎9am-5pm Sat; 📍London Fields, 📍55 or 277) There's been a market down this pretty street since the late 19th century, the focus of which

has these days become artisan food, arty knick-knacks, books, records and vintage clothing.

#### JONES DAIRY

FOOD

Map p6 (www.jonesdairy.co.uk; 23 Ezra St E2; ☎9am-1pm Fri-Sun; ☎Hoxton) This wonderfully preserved shop, set on an atmospheric cobblestoned street, opened in 1902 and was once part of a chain of Welsh dairies across the capital. You can still choose from a quality selection of cheese, alongside bread, coffees, teas, jams and cakes. Perfect for stocking up on picnic food, there's also a cute little cafe round the back.

#### BEYOND RETRO

VINTAGE

Map p6 (www.beyondretro.com; 110-112 Cheshire St; ☎Shoreditch High St, ☒Bethnal Green) Huge selection of vintage clothes, including wigs, shoes, jackets and lin-

gerie, expertly slung together in a lofty warehouse.

#### CARHARTT OUTLET STORE

FASHION

Map p6 (www.thecarharttstore.co.uk; 18 Ellingford Rd E8; ☎Hackney Central, ☒London Fields) You'll find hoodies, sweats and jeans at this outlet of the street-wear label, as well as a small selection of similar brands. It's tucked away on a residential street, under the railway arches just north of London Fields station. Ring the bell to get in.

#### BURBERRY OUTLET SHOP

FASHION

Map p6 (29-31 Chatham Pl E9; ☎Hackney Central, ☒55) This outlet shop stocks seconds from the reborn-as-trendy Brit brand's current and last season's collections. Prices are around 30% lower than those on the high street. Service can be brusque.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

### AUTHOR THANKS

**Sally Schafer:** Thanks to Imogen and Jo for letting me out the door, to Ed for his silvery words, Chantal (and her mum) for extensive knowledge and appreciation of the finer things in life, Ian for his late-night reviews of the facilities, Freya for the walk, Chris 'Bigman' Watkeys for his interview tips, and to James and especially Kate, for still being my anchor after all these years.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Cover photograph: Stratford Station (Photo by Julian Finney/Getty Images). Many of the images in this guide are available for licensing from Lonely Planet Images: www.lonelyplanetimages.com.

### THIS BOOK

This 1st edition of Stratford & East London was researched and written by Sally Schafer. This guidebook commissioned in Lonely Planet's London office, and produced by the following:

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Karyn Noble

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Jolyon Philcox

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Ildiko Bogdanovits, Csanad Csutoros, Katalin Dadi-Racz, Joelene Kowalkski, Peter Shields

#### Internal Image Research

Sabrina Dalbesio

#### Ebook thanks to

Sasha Baskett, Brendan Dempsey, Mark Germanchis, Shona Gold, Imogen Hall, Liz Heynes, Catherine Jaques, Andi Jones, Craig Kilburn, Alison Laming, Corine Liang, Jared O'Loughlin, Helena Smith, Aude Vauconsant

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☎03 8379 8000, fax 03 8379 8111

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☎510 250 6400, toll free 800 275 8555, fax 510 893 8572

**UK** Media Centre, 201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TQ  
☎020 8433 1333, fax 020 8702 0112

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