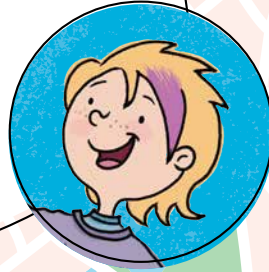




**Hi...we're
Amelia and Marco and
we've created 19 awesome
trails for you to follow.**

The pins on this map mark the starting points, and each trail is guaranteed to let you in to some of the city's secrets, and blow your mind with loads of cool facts. So whether you are a foodie, a sports fanatic or a movie expert, this book has got something for you!



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SPECIAL STREETS

To qualify for a cabbie's badge, London cab drivers have to learn the names of over 60,000 roads in central London. Not surprisingly it takes them years, but you can take a shortcut and discover some of the capital city's most interesting streets right here.

ST. MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS CHURCH PATH WC2

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

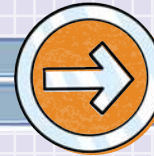
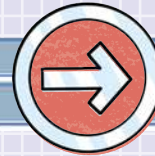
THE LONGEST STREET NAME IN LONDON IS IN THE BOROUGH OF WESTMINSTER.



A PIECE OF THE PAST

LITTLE COMPTON STREET

Since London is thousands of years old, there is a lot of past life buried under its streets. Who knows what long-gone secrets lurk deep beneath the feet of today's Londoners? A little glimpse of the past can be seen hidden beneath a street grate in the Soho area of London. Here lies Little Compton Street, an old lane where Londoners once walked. It was covered over by new buildings in 1896, but it remains in the shadows along with its street sign.



DOOR OF POWER

10 DOWNING STREET



NUMBER 10 IS ONE OF THE MOST HEAVILY GUARDED BUILDINGS IN BRITAIN, AND IT'S EVEN PROTECTED FROM MICE. IT HAS ITS OWN CAT, WITH THE OFFICIAL TITLE CHIEF MOUSER.

Britain's prime minister (PM) lives at Number 10 Downing Street. Here, for nearly three centuries PMs have eaten, drunk, snoozed and run the country (not necessarily all at once!). PMs are never given the keys to their home, though. Armed guards have to let them in and out.

SNAP STREET

ABBEY ROAD PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Cameras at the ready, everyone! Visitors from across the globe stride across the Abbey Road pedestrian crossing all day long, while their friends take photos – and all because of a world-famous supergroup.



The Beatles posed here for the cover of their *Abbey Road* album, released in 1969. It sold millions, and music fans have been recreating the cover shot ever since.

Check out the webcam online – the 'Abbey Road crossing cam' – and watch people holding up traffic on Abbey Road in real time. Then search for the album cover itself and spot American tourist Paul Cole. He was photographed standing in the background of the iconic cover and became accidentally famous.



STINKY SWITCH-ON

CARTING LANE

Walk this way for whiffiness. Carting Lane was once nicknamed Farting Lane because, until the 1950s, its street lamps were partly powered by waste gas from London's sewage. Locals used to joke that guests at the nearby super-posh Savoy Hotel caused the lamps to flicker when they broke wind. These days the lamps are powered by gas from the mains, but the nickname has hung around like a bad smell.



ST. BRIDE'S CHURCH



OXO TOWER



THE MONUMENT

FINANCIAL DISTRICT



SNEAKY SPELLING

OXO TOWER

When this lofty spot on London's South Bank was bought by a company that made OXO stock cubes, they wanted to put their name up in lights. Banned from putting up a flashy advert, they had a cunning back-up plan. They built the windows of the tower in shapes that just so happened to resemble an O, an X and another O. Everybody still calls it the OXO Tower, even though the original cleverclogs company has left and it's now full of shops and restaurants.

UP IN FLAMES

THE MONUMENT

In 1666, the Great Fire of London started in a bakery in Pudding Lane and soon swept through the whole city, destroying thousands of homes. The fire is commemorated by the Monument - the world's tallest individual stone column. Its height is the exact distance from the column to the place where the fire began, and the gleaming golden urn on top symbolizes flames. Anyone who climbs the 311 stairs gets a certificate for reaching the top.

LEADENHALL BUILDING
224M (728FT)

30 ST. MARY AXE
180M (591FT)

20 FENCHURCH STREET
160M (525FT)



TOP TOWERS

THE CHEESEGRATER, GHERKIN AND WALKIE-TALKIE

Locals have a habit of giving London skyscrapers nicknames. There's the Cheesegrater (actually the Leadenhall Building), London's second-tallest building, which has an angled edge. There's the Gherkin (30 St. Mary Axe), which is cucumber-shaped with enough glass panels to cover three football pitches. Then there's the Walkie-Talkie (20 Fenchurch Street). It got renamed the Walkie Scorchie or the Fryscraper when light reflecting off its mirrored surface caused beams hot enough to melt holes in cars on the street below. The architects had to cover the windows with non-reflective film to stop its destructive rays!

WEDDING WONDER

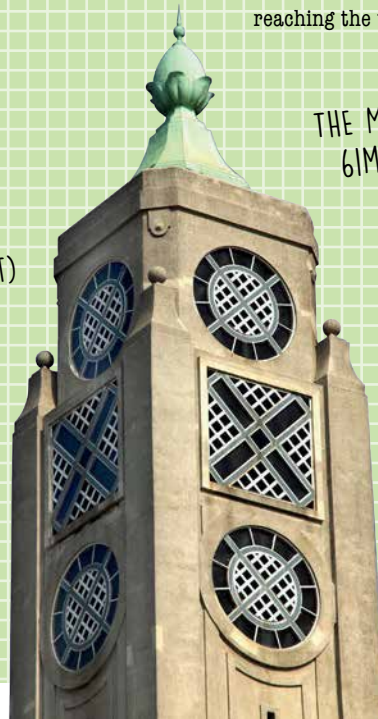
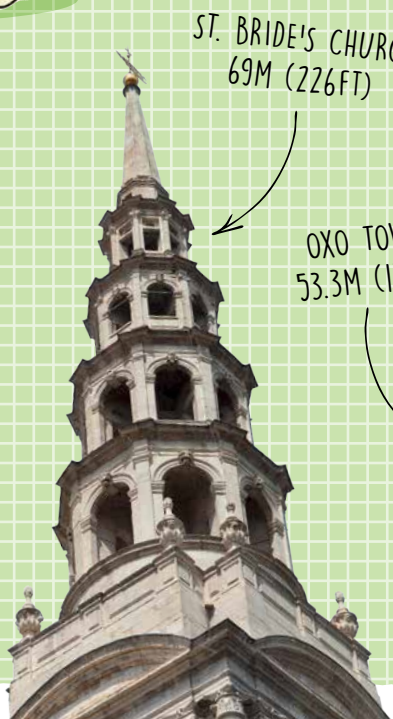
ST. BRIDE'S CHURCH

Churches have graced this spot for thousands of years but today's church was built after the Great Fire of London, when famed architect Sir Christopher Wren agreed to give the ruined building a majestic makeover. The steeple has five white sections on top of each other, and it's said to have inspired the design of wedding cakes.

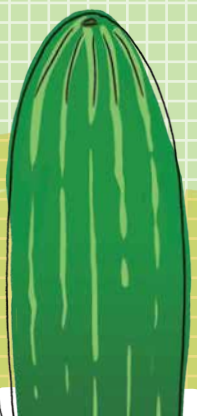
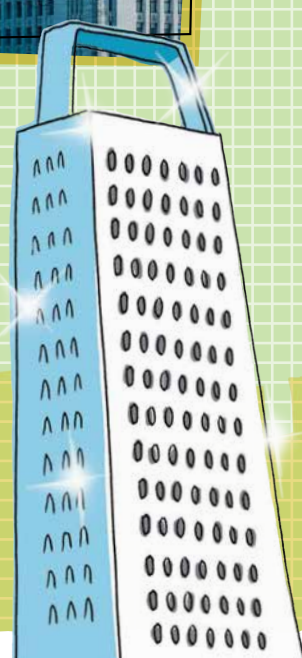
ST. BRIDE'S CHURCH
69M (226FT)

OXO TOWER
53.3M (175FT)

THE MONUMENT
61M (202FT)



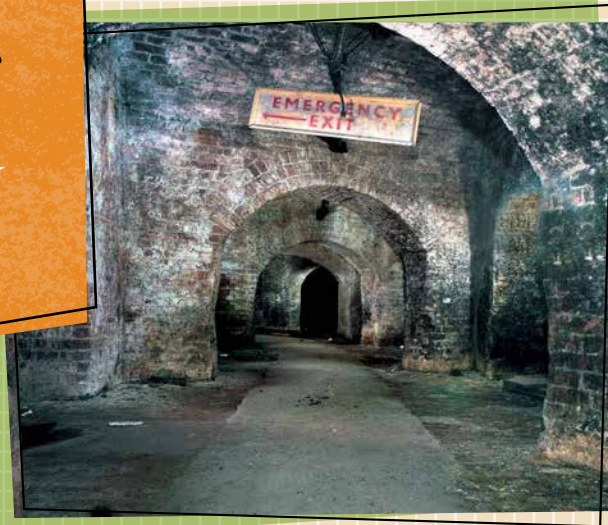
LONDON'S HIGHEST GARDEN, THE SKY GARDEN, GROWS UNDER A GIANT GLASS DOME ON TOP OF THE WALKIE-TALKIE BUILDING.





TUNNEL UNDER LONDON

There's a whole world of tunnels, underground rivers and secret spaces under London. Let's switch on our torches, crawl down there and take a look!



DEEPLY TASTY

30M (98FT)
UNDERGROUND

CLAPHAM NORTH DEEP AIR-RAID SHELTERS

A group of old World War Two air-raid shelters, hidden deep under Clapham, are being reused in interesting new ways. Documents and film archives are stored down there, and one area has even become an underground farm. LED lights plus water gathered from underground help shelves of mini vegetables, herbs and salad crops to grow all year round, ready for use in London restaurants.



LONDON LABYRINTHS

CAMDEN & CLERKENWELL CATACOMBS

Beneath the busy streets of Camden Town there is a labyrinth of abandoned catacombs (tunnels), which were once used as horse stables and underground warehouses 200 years ago. The risk of flooding (and general spookiness) mean they're off-limits to visitors. Further to the east, a set of tunnels called the Clerkenwell Catacombs has a horrible history as a prison, The House of Detention, dating back to 1617.



NOT SURPRISINGLY, CLERKENWELL'S PRISON CAVERNS ARE SAID TO BE HAUNTED. VISITORS HAVE REPORTED SHADOWY FIGURES STALKING THEM, PLUS GHOSTLY SOBBING. EEK! LET'S MOVE ON QUICKLY!



THE LONDON UNDERGROUND TUBE SYSTEM

402

 KM

The Underground System covers about 402km (250 miles) around London.

About 45 per cent of it is actually in tunnels.



58M (190FT)

Hampstead (left) is the deepest station at 58m (190ft).

1.03 BILLION

Around 1.03 billion passengers travel on the Tube every year.



TOP-SECRET SPOT

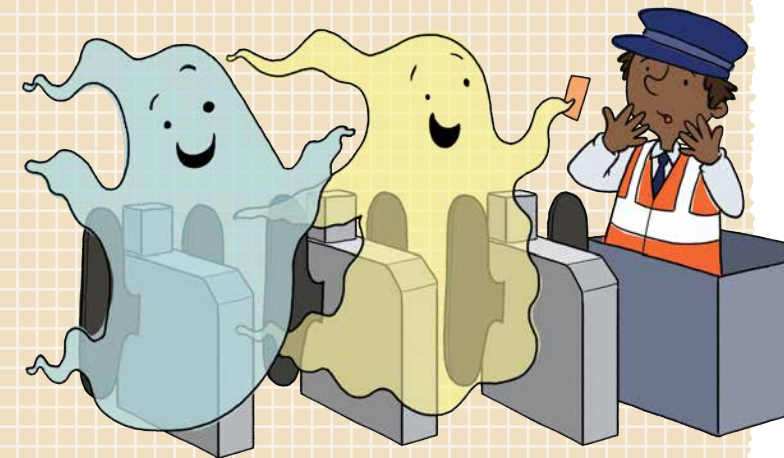
CABINET WAR ROOMS

Winston Churchill led Britain through World War II in a top-secret subterranean hideout right in the middle of London. This underground control centre would once have been buzzing with military types poring over maps and having vital meetings as German planes rained bombs down above. It was locked shut in 1945, at the end of the war, and not reopened until 1975, when the world learnt about it for the very first time. The rooms are kept as they were left, with wartime maps scattered around and lifelike models of people carrying out their jobs.

UNDERGROUND GHOSTS

ALDWYCH UNDERGROUND STATION

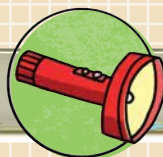
Over 40 Underground stations are 'ghost stations'. That doesn't mean they're special stops for spooks. It means they're left empty and unused. One of these ghost stations, Aldwych, is kept as a museum piece and is often used as a set by film and TV companies.



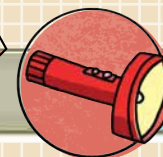
CLAPHAM NORTH



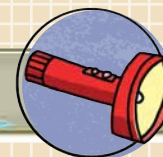
CAMDEN TOWN



KING CHARLES STREET



ALDWYCH STATION



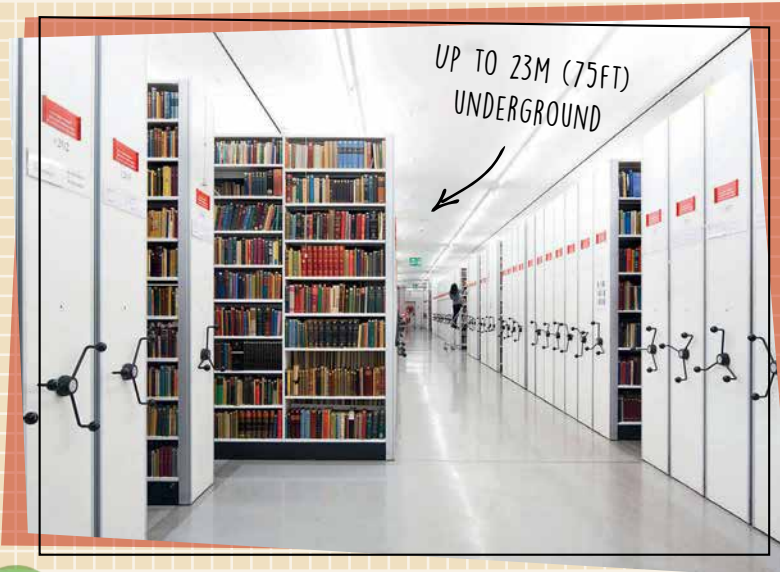
*Drown'd puppies, stinking
sprats, all drench'd in mud,
dead cats, and turnip-tops, come
tumbling down the flood*

Author Jonathan Swift wrote a poem (above) in 1710 describing the festering Fleet after a rain shower.

BOOKS BELOW

BRITISH LIBRARY

London's British Library contains around 150 million items, so it's not surprising that it needs plenty of space. Beneath the library building there are four big underground levels, mostly filled with shelves, in a temperature-controlled environment that helps preserve paper. Some of the most valuable books and manuscripts are in special chambers filled with inergen, a harmless mixture of gases that helps to prevent fire breaking out.



 A GIANT ELECTRONIC CONVEYOR BELT SNAKES AROUND THE BRITISH LIBRARY, BRINGING UP BOOKS FROM BELOW.

SECRET RIVERS

THE RIVER FLEET


London has lots of hidden river tributaries flowing beneath its streets towards the Thames. Gradually they've been built over, until most of them now flow entirely underground. The biggest is the River Fleet, and you can spot its mouth under Blackfriars Bridge. Centuries ago it was a major city river, but it was horribly polluted.




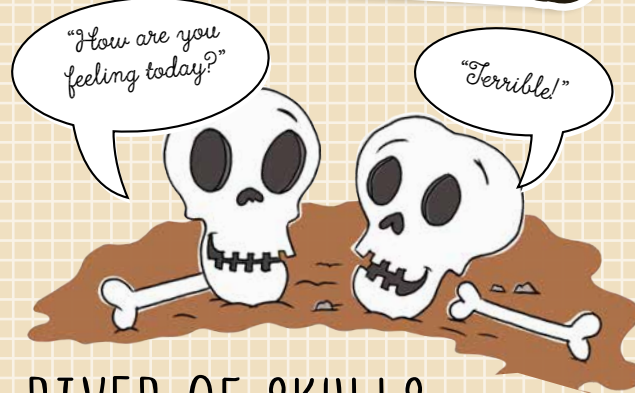
 BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE

 BRITISH LIBRARY

search: DISEASE FACTS

 Before London's sewers were constructed, lack of sanitation in the city meant that diseases, such as cholera, were common.

 **10,000+**
The number of people killed in 1853 by one of London's worst cholera outbreaks.



RIVER OF SKULLS

THE WALBROOK

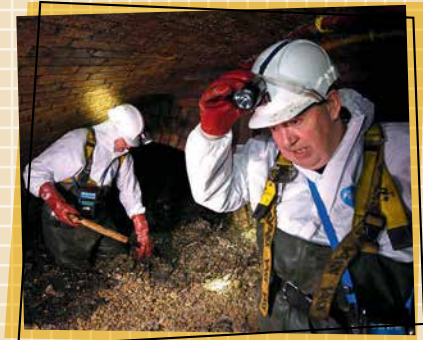
The Walbrook is another of London's hidden underground streams, running close to the Bank of England under the City of London. In Roman times it flowed above ground, and during modern building works lots of ancient human skulls have been discovered on the riverbed. It's possible that some of them were thrown in by local people to please river gods, or perhaps they washed into the river from burial sites. Some of the skulls show violent injuries, and might even be the heads of Roman gladiators.

 THE WALBROOK

SMELLS AND STINKS

LONDON SEWERS

London's sewage was once dumped into the River Thames, leading to sickening smells and deadly diseases swirling around town. Enter Joseph Bazalgette, who built 132km (82 miles) of brick-lined underground sewers to carry the waste, linked by pumping stations to keep the flow going. His sewers still wend their way beneath London today. Sewage cleaners work to keep the tunnels clean, removing lots of 'fatbergs' - giant lumps of congealed cooking fat that regularly block up the tunnels. One 'fatberg' discovered under Leicester Square was big enough to fill nine double-decker buses!



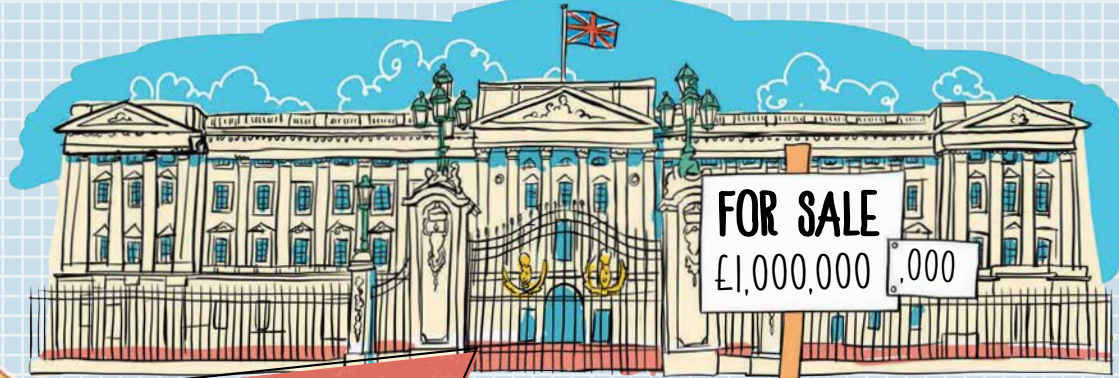
 LEICESTER SQUARE



TREASURE HUNT

Legend has it that a young man called Dick Whittington came to London to seek his fortune because he'd heard the streets were paved with gold. The pavements might not be made of gold exactly, but it's true that London is awash with dosh! Follow the golden pathway to find the capital's most glittering and expensive treasure spots.

THE LEGEND GOES THAT DICK WHITTINGTON EVENTUALLY BECAME ONE OF LONDON'S SUPER-RICH, AND BECAME LORD MAYOR!



775 ROOMS

78 BATHROOMS

350 CLOCKS

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

TOP HOME ON THE PLANET

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The London home of the British monarch is officially the world's most expensive home, worth over £1 billion. Its most dazzling room, the Throne Room, has walls bedecked in scarlet and gold, and velvet chairs with golden sphinx-shaped armrests. However, when Prince William had his wedding party in Buckingham Palace it was turned into a 'chillax' room with its own DJ.



BRITISH MUSEUM

BURIED GOLD

FISHPOOL HOARD

Around 460 years ago someone was on the run and had to bury a fortune fast! That's thought to be the story behind the Fishpool Hoard - 1,237 gold coins plus jewellery - now on display at the British Museum. It was a time of rebellion in Britain, and the person who buried the stash could have been on the losing side of a battle.



THE FISHPOOL HOARD WAS WORTH A GREAT DEAL WHEN IT WAS BURIED - AROUND £300,000 (US\$459,570) IN TODAY'S MONEY.



ROYAL MEWS BUCKINGHAM PALACE

SHINY RIDE

GOLD STATE CARRIAGE

The Gold State Carriage carries British monarchs through London streets on special occasions. It's made of gold-painted wood, and it's so heavy it needs eight horses to pull it along. It's around 200 years old, and riding inside it is apparently so bumpy that it feels like being on a boat in a rough sea. Queen Victoria found it so wobbly that she refused to use it.

"My bottom is not amused!"



VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

BLING BEASTIES

GLOUCESTER CANDLESTICK

The Victoria and Albert Museum looks after thousands of gorgeous glittery treasures from the past, including the Gloucester Candlestick, made for a church around 1,000 years ago. Dragons, monkeys and other busy beasties climb up the candlestick, biting each other or whispering to each other as they grab on to flowers and plants.

