

Kensington & Hyde Park

KNIGHTSBRIDGE & SOUTH KENSINGTON | HYDE PARK & KENSINGTON GARDENS | CHELSEA & BELGRAVIA | VICTORIA & PIMLICO

Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Victoria & Albert Museum** (p178) Thumbing through an encyclopaedic A-Z of decorative and design works from across the globe while admiring the astonishing architecture and making hordes of unexpected discoveries.
- 2 Natural History Museum** (p182) Becoming

hypnotised by the awe-inspiring stonework and inexhaustible collection of this world-leading museum, while putting aside time to delve into its bucolic Wildlife Garden.

- 3 Hyde Park** (p184) Enjoying a picnic in London's green lung and exploring its

many sights and gorgeous scenery.

- 4 Science Museum** (p186) Nurturing a wide-eyed fascination for the complexities of the world and the cosmos in this electrifying museum.

- 5 Harrods** (p199) Big-time shopping – or just window-shopping!



For more detail of this area see Map p456 ➔

Explore Kensington & Hyde Park

You can navigate a serious learning curve or at least catch up on all you forgot since high school at South Kensington's magnificent museums of the arts and sciences. You'll need several days – and considerable caloric reserves – to do them all justice. Museums open at 10am, so you don't have to set your alarm too early, but being near the front of the queue when the doors open means useful elbow room.

Shoppers will make an eager beeline for Knightsbridge, Harrods and Harvey Nichols, but there are also tranquil shopping escapes – such as John Sandoe Books and Peter Harrington – to sidestep the jostling crowds.

For a sight-packed day visit Hyde Park and conjoined Kensington Gardens – crucial for seeing why Londoners love their green spaces. Begin by exploring the opulence of Apsley House before walking across the park, via the Serpentine, to the Albert Memorial, Royal Albert Hall and Kensington Palace.

Outstanding restaurants will be with you every step of the way: Kensington, Knightsbridge and Chelsea take their dining particularly seriously, so some of your fondest memories could well be gastronomic, whether you're grazing, snacking or plain feasting.

Local Life

- **Hang-outs** Rub shoulders with discerning drinkers at the Anglesea Arms (p198) or Queen's Arms (p198) or snap your fingers with local jazz hounds at the swinging 606 Club (p198) and Pheasantry (p199).
- **Museums** Late-night Fridays at the Victoria & Albert (p178) mean fewer crowds (especially children) and locals can get a look-in.
- **Parks** When the sun's out, Londoners dust off their shades, get outdoors to expanses of green like Hyde Park (p184) and lie on the grass reading chunky novels.

Getting There & Away

- **Tube** Kensington and Hyde Park are well connected to the rest of London via South Kensington, Sloane Sq, Victoria, Knightsbridge and Hyde Park Corner stations. The main lines are Circle, District, Piccadilly and Victoria.
- **Bus** Handy routes include 74 from South Kensington to Knightsbridge and Hyde Park Corner; 52 from Victoria to High St Kensington; 360 from South Kensington to Sloane Sq and Pimlico; and 11 from Fulham Broadway to the King's Rd, Sloane Sq and Victoria.
- **Bicycle** Santander Cycles (p415) are very handy for pedal-powering your way into, out of and around the neighbourhood.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Catch the Queen's Life Guard (Household Cavalry) departing for Horse Guards Parade at 10.28am (9.28am Sundays) from Hyde Park Barracks for the daily Changing of the Guard, performing a ritual that dates to 1660. They troop via Hyde Park Corner, Constitution Hill and the Mall. It's not as busy as the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace and you can get closer to the action.

Best Places to Eat

- Tom's Kitchen (p196)
- Five Fields (p197)
- Dinner by Heston Blumenthal (p192)
- Launceston Place (p196)
- Pimlico Fresh (p197)

For reviews, see p192. ➡

Best Places to Drink

- Tomtom Coffee House (p198)
- Phene (p198)
- Queen's Arms (p198)
- Buddha Bar (p198)
- Anglesea Arms (p198)

For reviews, see p197. ➡

Best Shopping

- Harrods (p199)
- Conran Shop (p200)
- John Sandoe Books (p199)
- Peter Harrington (p200)
- Pickett (p200)

For reviews, see p199. ➡