

Cultural Daily

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Off the Beaten Path: Hidden Architectural Treasures in London

Our Friends · Thursday, November 14th, 2019

From Big Ben to London Bridge, there is so much to soak in when it comes to London's architectural wonders. While the mainstream sites of Trafalgar Square might be fun, the true London experience comes from a number of hidden architectural gems in and around the city. Some of these are hidden in plain sight while others require a fun day trip out of the city.

Nunhead Cemetery

This quick trip out of the city will bring you to a site with beautiful Gothic style architecture. Nunhead Cemetery was part of the Magnificent Seven, a series of ornate graveyards. It is on the edge of London so consider a [cheap car hire UK](#) to visit this site. The drive will be lovely and worth it.

Highgate, a site of famous burials, is part of this Magnificent Seven as well. Nunhead has a leg-up on Highgate not only with the architecture but also with the amazing view of London all the way to St. Pauls.

St. Pancras Clock Tower

Big Ben might be the first thought when it comes to telling time in London, but St. Pancras is also worth checking out. Plus, you can sleep in this clock tower! It is a gorgeous Victorian Gothic design that started construction in 1866 under the direction of George Gilbert Scott.

Today, you can explore the inside, spend the night in the tower, soak in the views, and even see where the clock used to be wound by hand. Right outside is an added bonus of King's Cross Station, a quick connection to anywhere in London.

St. Dunstan's in the East

Stumbling upon Gothic style ruins in a public garden is just one of the delights on hidden gems in London. This parish church survived the Great Fire of London in 1666 and is actually over 900 years old. It was bombed in the 1941 Blitz during World War II, but still remains standing. It is a testament to the history of the area and effect wartime devastation had on millions of homes within London.

The Smallest Police Station

If you do find yourself drawn towards a tourist destination like Trafalgar Square, you can still connect with a hidden architectural delight. Tucked away in the southeast corner is the smallest police station in London. It was built in the 1930's to keep the drunk crowd in check and can only fit one person. It is currently used as a cupboard so you won't find a bobby here.

Masonic Temple at the Andaz London

Just a short walk from historic St. Pauls is the St. Andaz Hotel. It has a secret Masonic temple located inside! This hotel is one of the first hotels in London and was originally known as the Great Eastern Hotel. During renovations in a marble covered room, a fake wall discovery led to the Masonic temple. This temple is a great example of the secrets of London and has a blue and gold domed ceiling with esoteric and zodiac signs.

Roman Amphitheatre in the City Centre

It is no secret that London has a long and complicated history. From kings and queens to Roman rulers, there is a lot that has happened in this city. Some of that history still exists in the form of a 2,000 year old Roman amphitheatre located below Guildhall Yard. This discovery happened in 1988 and is now open to tourists to explore the architectural wonder.

Travel More to Discover More

The architectural treasures of the United Kingdom are not just limited to London. You can also find more in the countryside and by exploring other cities. For example, a cheap car hire can get you to the Leeds Library, believed to be the oldest library in the UK with doors opening in 1768. Explore more to discover more and dive into all London – and the UK – is hiding.

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