

Best Place for Afternoon Tea in London (21 Fabulous Options)

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by Tracy Collins

Looking for the best place for afternoon tea in London? Discover 21 of the best traditional, themed and quirky afternoon teas in our guide.

You may well have had the best afternoon tea outside London, but you can't really say you've had a proper afternoon tea experience until you've tried it in the UK capital. The finest tea places in London range from quirky, off-beat options like a magical-themed afternoon tea to the top city hotels.

Whether you prefer the idea of afternoon tea at Fortnum and Mason in Piccadilly or a creative Soho bakery, this guide will help you find the best place to have afternoon tea in London. Whichever you pick, a special afternoon tea in London is guaranteed!

These are the best tea rooms in London – the creme de la creme of places in which to savour crumbly scones topped with fruity jam and clotted cream, cakes that look like works of art and cute finger sandwiches. All washed down with tea, of course – although some venues do offer the option of upgrading to champagne or other drinks.










Where possible, we've also added whether each venue serves a gluten-free option. If you want to go for this, do state this at the time of booking so they can cater accordingly. You can also contact the venue in advance to inquire about whether or not a gluten-free option is available.







Most venues cater for vegetarians, and some for vegans too. If in doubt, do ask the venue directly, as they can often cater for special diets as long as they have advance notice and thus time to prepare your special treats. This is a good idea for those seeking the best halal afternoon tea in London too.

Read on to find the best traditional afternoon tea in London – or even a more affordable or out-there option!

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Afternoon Tea in London – Quick Picks

	Type	Gluten-Free Options*	Vegetarian Vegan Options*	More information
 <u>The Ritz afternoon tea</u>	Traditional	On Request	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Fortnum and Mason afternoon tea</u>	Traditional	Yes	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>The Wolseley afternoon tea</u>	Traditional	On Request	Vegetarian	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Claridge's afternoon tea</u>	Traditional	On Request	Advise +24 hours before	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>The Savoy afternoon tea</u>	Traditional	On Request	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>The Langham afternoon tea</u>	Traditional	On Request	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Kensington Palace Royal high tea</u>	Traditional	Not stated	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory afternoon tea</u>	Themed	On Request	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Peter Pan afternoon tea</u>	Themed	No	Advise +24 hours before	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Prêt-à-Portea afternoon tea</u>	Themed	On Request	Advise +24 hours before	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>The English Tea Bus</u>	+ Tour	No	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Brigit's Bakery Bus</u>	+ Tour	Yes	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Afternoon tea cruise on the Thames</u>	+ Cruise	Not stated	Not stated	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Sketch afternoon tea</u>	Traditional	Advise +24 hours before	Advise +24 hours before	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>London Landmarks afternoon tea</u>	Themed	Not stated	Not stated	<u>Click here</u>

	Type	Gluten-Free Options*	Vegetarian Vegan Options*	More information
 <u>The British Museum afternoon tea</u>	Traditional	No Gluten Free, Dairy Free, Lactose Free, Halal, or Vegan Afternoon Tea options	Yes to Vegetarian, Pescatarian. and Nut Free	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Science afternoon tea at The Ampersand</u>	Themed	Yes	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Wizard Exploratorium afternoon tea</u>	Themed	Yes	Both	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Enchanted afternoon tea at the Georgian House Hotel</u>	Themed	Not stated	Vegan	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Zetter Townhouse afternoon tea</u>	Traditional	Not stated	Vegetarian	<u>Click here</u>
 <u>Cutter and Squidge afternoon tea</u>	Themed	Yes	Both	<u>Click here</u>

** Please check before booking*

☐ **The Best Place for Afternoon Tea in London: 21 Top Options**

[The Ritz afternoon tea](#)

150 Piccadilly, St. James's, London W1J 9BR

Nearest tube: Green Park

Gluten-free option: Available on request

The Ritz is one of London's swankiest hotels, so it stands to reason that the afternoon tea experience offered there is going to be pretty special. And it is, not least due to the surroundings: the space was once the Mayfair hotel's ballroom.

Guests booked in for this famous afternoon tea in London are served dainty sandwiches, freshly baked scones with jam and clotted cream and a selection of pretty seasonal cakes. The piano or harp serenades you as you eat and there are 18 teas to choose from, including the exclusive Ritz Royal Blend.

Fortnum and Mason afternoon tea

Pancras Rd, London N1C 4QP

Closest tube: Piccadilly Circus

Gluten-free option: Yes

Fortnum and Mason's grand Diamond Jubilee Tea Salon was opened in 2012 by the Queen herself, flanked by The Duchesses of Cambridge and Cornwall. The repast comprises precision-cut finger sandwiches, scones and a selection of cakes. On the menu there are gluten-free, vegetarian and savoury options – plus possibly the best high tea in London.

The venue has a rich history: it has, in the past, served as Fortnum family accommodation, the famous store's interior decor or antiques departments and St James's restaurant.

The Wolseley afternoon tea

160 Piccadilly, St. James's, London W1J 9EB

Closest tube: Green Park

Gluten-free option: Available on request

As compared to other top London hotels, the afternoon tea at The Wolseley is a steal. You can also opt for a simpler cream tea or upgrade to a champagne afternoon tea. If you want a stylish yet affordable afternoon tea in London, this is where to go.

It's also a great bet if you make last-minute plans, as the venue keeps back a few tables for walk-ins each day. Whether you feast on cream-filled eclairs, intricate millefeuille or pastel-coloured Battenberg or macarons, all treats are handmade daily on the premises.

Claridge's afternoon tea

Brook Street, London W1K 4HR

Closest tube: Bond Street

Gluten-free option: Available on request

Bond Street is known as one of London's most upmarket shopping districts and Claridge's hotel is equally refined. Covetable peppermint and white striped china and culinary creativity serve to make this a serious contender as best afternoon tea in London.

Claridges offers children's, champagne and traditional afternoon teas, as well as a range of seasonal themed events including the likes of Easter, Mother's Day and Chelsea Flower Show afternoon teas.

The Savoy afternoon tea

The Strand, London WC2R 0EZ

Closest tube: Charing Cross

Gluten-free option: Available on request

The Savoy is located on The Strand between London's Theatreland and the river – right at the very heart of London. It offers high tea in London as well as the traditional afternoon tea, and the savoury courses served as part of the former make a welcome change from all the sweetness. You can also order a vegan afternoon tea here.

At the centre of the Thames Foyer is a black grand piano, which is played as diners enjoy sumptuous treats and attentive service in an elegant setting.

The Langham afternoon tea

1C Portland Pl, London W1B 1JA

Closest tube: Oxford Circus

Gluten-free option: Available on request

The light, airy Palm Court at The Langham is an outstanding venue for a posh afternoon tea in London – with food and service to match.

Here the focus is on contemporary British fare with imaginative and colourful twists. A kids' afternoon tea is offered, and this one's all about having some fun. Elements inspired by the UK's favourite biscuits feature on the menu created by famous TV chef Michel Roux Junior.

Kensington Palace Royal High tea

Meeting point: Queensway tube station, London

Gluten-free option: Not stated

For an afternoon tea with a royal theme, Kensington Palace is surely the best place for high tea in London. With this ticket you also get to tour the Palace Gardens before settling down for a sumptuous feast.

This royal palace was once home to Princess Diana and now her son and heir to the throne Prince William lives there with his family. Your tour of the beautiful gardens includes the famous Sunken Garden.

★ **[Click to book Royal High Tea at Kensington Palace](#)**

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory afternoon tea

1 Aldwych, London WC2B 4BZ

Closest tube: Covent Garden

Gluten-free option: Not stated

If you want a really fun afternoon tea in London, why not go somewhere you can slather snozzberry jam on your scones and sample a waterfall-mixed chocolate shake?

Roald Dahl's classic children's tale provides the inspiration for this *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* afternoon tea where things might not quite be as they seem. Adults can opt for an afternoon tea with champagne or a cocktail too.

Peter Pan afternoon tea

Level 31, The Shard, 31 St Thomas St, London SE1 9RY

Closest tube: London Bridge

Gluten-free option: Available on request

Another contender as best tea in London for kids is served at the Aqua Shard restaurant within the iconic riverside skyscraper. It's all based on J. M. Barrie's imaginary Neverland, complete with a tea stand that's all shipshape.

Interesting twists include the use of coconut clotted cream and sweet apricot marmalade in place of the usual jam and cream, while menu items include the Tinkerbell cookie, a Tick-Tock the Croc dessert and a Codfish Captain Hook croquette.

Prêt-à-Portea afternoon tea

The Berkeley, Wilton Pl, London SW1X 7RL

Closest tube: Knightsbridge

Gluten-free option: Available on request

The Prêt-à-Portea afternoon tea at The Berkeley takes place close to fashionable Knightsbridge, and indeed has a hot couture theme. Cakes are designer-inspired by brands like Balenciaga, Stella McCartney and Gucci.

The catwalk combines with fresh seasonal flavours to create a taste and visual sensation that's quite unlike your average afternoon tea in central London.

The English Tea Bus

Departure point varies

Gluten-free option: No

The English Tea Bus is a double-decker London bus that will whisk you around the capital for a 90-minute tour of the sights while tucking into an array of sweet and savoury treats. A veggie option is available for those seeking the best vegetarian afternoon tea in London.

You can buy a ticket for the upper or lower deck and will see sights like the London Eye, St. Paul's Cathedral and the Tower of London as you tour. The ticket includes a glass of prosecco or a soft drink.

★ [***Click to book the English Tea Bus***](#)

Brigit's Bakery Bus

Departs from Victoria Coach Station, London

Closest tube: Victoria

Gluten-free option: Yes

Brigit's surely offers one of the best places for tea in London – aboard a red double decker bus. You will also get to tour the sights as you feast, taking in the likes of Westminster Abbey, Hyde Park, Marble Arch, Nelson's Column and many more.

The tour lasts for around 90 minutes, during which time you'll be served a range of delectable sweet and savoury treats.

★ [***Click to book Brigit's Bakery Bus***](#)

Afternoon tea cruise on the Thames

Departs from: Tower Pier, Lower Thames Street, London EC3N 4DT

Closest tube: Tower Hill

Gluten-free option: Not stated

An alternative to touring the city by bus is to take a river cruise along the Thames – and this one includes afternoon tea too. It's also a 90 minute trip, and as well as bottomless tea or coffee there is a bar from which you can buy alcoholic drinks if you like.

The iconic sights you'll glimpse include Shakespeare's Globe, The Shard and the Tate Modern art gallery. If you want the best afternoon tea in London with a view, this could be the one to book.

★ [***Click to book an afternoon tea cruise on the Thames***](#)

Sketch afternoon tea

9 Conduit St, London W1S 2XG

Closest tube: Oxford Circus

Gluten-free option: Not stated

Sketch is an eatery that's always dared to be different, and their take on the traditional makes for a colourful and super cute afternoon tea in London.

This takes place in The Gallery, and is nothing like the afternoon tea served at the top London hotels. If you like the idea of a fun-filled and creative two hours, this could be the one for you. Stuffy and dull it most certainly is not.

London Landmarks afternoon tea

The Kensington Hotel, 109-113 Queen's Gate, South Kensington, London SW7 5LP

Closest tube: Gloucester Road or South Kensington

Gluten-free option: Not stated

The London Landmarks afternoon tea served at The Kensington Hotel is surely the most Instagrammable option. This top afternoon tea in London is served on a stand resembling the London Eye, and some of the goodies do look just like miniature versions of local icons.

A plush Kensington pad provides the setting for what is bound to be the most unique afternoon tea you'll ever experience. As well as the most photogenic.

The British Museum afternoon tea

The Great Court Restaurant, The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG

Closest tube: Russell Square

Gluten-free option: No

The surroundings of the British Museum's Great Court restaurant in genteel Bloomsbury are surely among the best places to have tea in London, while you'll sit beneath the stunning domed glass roof.

As well as a selection of delicate pastries and cakes, fluffy scones and little sandwiches, you'll be served your choice of loose leaf tea. The options include organic brews and flowering blends such as Jasmine Fairies. You can also add fizz if you want to.

★ **[Click to book afternoon tea at the British Museum](#)**

Science afternoon tea at The Ampersand

10 Harrington Rd, South Kensington, London SW7 3ER

Closest tube: South Kensington

Gluten-free option: Yes

The Ampersand Hotel is also located in elegant South Kensington and is known for its more scientific twist on things. Perhaps the best themed afternoon tea in London when there's a gastronomy fan in the family.

Expect lots of magical audio and visual effects at this unique eatery, all inspired by the nearby Science Museum.

Wizard Exploratorium afternoon tea

26 Greek St, London W1D 5DE

Closest tube: Covent Garden

Gluten-free option: Yes

This Soho townhouse is home to what must be the best value afternoon tea in London for any Harry Potter fan. The experience lasts for an hour-and-three-quarters and includes teas you brew by waving a wand plus a selection of sand-'witches' and cakes.

Molecular gastronomy has also been built into the afternoon tea menu at the Wizard Exploratorium.

Enchanted afternoon tea at the Georgian House Hotel

35 – 39 St George's Dr, Pimlico, London SW1V 4DG

Closest tube: Victoria

Gluten-free option: Not stated

Every weekend, fans of the wizarding world can head to Pimlico, just south of Victoria, to sample a pretty cool afternoon tea in London. The hotel website gives you some clue as to their focus, as you click on what you want to read more about with a wand!

The Enchanted afternoon tea includes savoury treats and desserts as well as the usual sandwiches, cakes and scones. You also get a gift to take away and can upgrade to a bottomless fizz if you like.

Find out more about this [magical-themed hotel here](#)

Zetter Townhouse afternoon tea

28-30 Seymour St, London W1H 7JB

Closest tube: Paddington

Gluten-free option: Not stated

This stylish bolthole offers an interesting take on the traditional afternoon tea – the best tea time in London is at the Zetter Townhouse for those with a taste for the zany. There is also a hotel in Clerkenwell.

Options include a vegetarian afternoon tea, and the savoury spread includes the likes of Croque Monsieur plus pastrami and sauerkraut or avocado and cranberry sandwiches. Cakes are unusual too, including bakes such as a sticky orange entremet and chocolate and passionfruit choux. You can even order tea-infused cocktails.

Cutter and Squidge afternoon tea

20 Brewer St, London W1F 0SJ

Closest tube: Piccadilly Circus

Gluten-free option: Yes

Cutter and Squidge is a London bakery and confectioner in Soho. Here afternoon tea also has a Harry Potter theme, and takes place in the Potions Room under the guidance of a Potions master. This venue also serves a halal afternoon tea in London, as well as vegan and wheat-free options.

You'll even don wizarding robes to take part in the Cutter and Squidge tea ceremony. It's an eclectic venue: think exposed brickwork, mismatched vintage china and birdcage-like cake stands.

The Best Place for Afternoon Tea in London – FAQs

What is the best time for afternoon tea in London?

The best time to sit down and enjoy this London institution is between lunch and dinner time, so around 3 to 4pm is ideal. Any earlier and you may want to call it lunch, while a later time slot means it may be classed as dinner.

That said, it's really down to you and what you want to do. A London afternoon tea tends to be very filling, so you may not need either lunch or dinner at all! Venues also vary in the times they offer sittings.

What do you wear to afternoon tea in London?

Anywhere serving a fancy afternoon tea in London may have a dress code, so do check with your chosen venue before you go.

Typically 'smart casual' will be what is stated. This translates as no trainers or baseball caps, but presentable jeans are fine. Ties are not normally required for men.

Can you ask for more sandwiches at afternoon tea?

Yes, you can absolutely request more sandwiches at afternoon tea – but you may well not need to. Servings are generous, and you're more likely to need a doggie bag than to order more!

Afternoon tea or high tea is a complete meal rather than a snack, and you're unlikely to want to eat again for at least several hours afterwards.

Which will be *your* best place for afternoon tea in London?

Which afternoon tea – or teas plural – to go for really depends on your timings, preferences and budget. With options ranging from cakes, sandwiches and scones served as you tour London by red bus to iconic hotels or experiences with a magical theme, there are some fabulous places to have afternoon tea in London. Enjoy!

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