

Discovering London with the London Pass

UK Travel Planning podcast features expert advice on planning your perfect UK vacation

intro: Welcome to the UK Travel Planning Podcast. Your host is the founder of the UK travel planning website, Tracy Collins. In this podcast, Tracy shares destination guides, travel tips and itinerary ideas, as well as interviews with a variety of guests who share their knowledge and experience of UK travel to help you plan your perfect UK vacation. Join us as we explore the UK from m cosmopolitan cities to quaint villages, from historic castles to beautiful islands, and from the picturesque countryside to seaside towns.

Tracy: Hi, and welcome to episode 126 of the UK Travel Planner podcast. So, this week I'm here to chat all about the London Pass itinerary Challenge, which I did in October, which was given to me by Daryl Bennett of the London Pass. Now, Daryl Bennett is, from Go City and he is the senior Regional Director for London and Dublin. So he's basically in charge of the London Pass. Now, if you go back and listen to episode 106, which I have to say is an extremely popular episode, Daryl was fabulous to chat to. he will give you all the background information that you need to know about the London Pass. So he talks about what it is, how to get it, how to use it, what you can use it on, and shares lots and lots of tips. obviously he is the expert on the London Pass, but what I want to do after I chatted to Daryl and realised that was such a popular episode and just chatting to people in our Facebook group as well, is I suggested to go City and the London Pass, that they give me a London Pass for three days and an itinerary designed

by Daryl, and I go and do it when I was in London and then I could share that on my Facebook group. We could share that on social media, on Instagram Stories, which is what I did last week. So if you're a member of our Facebook group and if you aren't, please pop over and join if you're on Facebook. That's UK Travel Planning. And we also have a London Travel Planning Facebook group. And Doug will not forgive me if I don't mention that we also have a UK train travel tips group as well. So I shared what was happening and what I did in real time, but I also felt this would be a great opportunity to chat through on a podcast episode. So I asked Doug to read me the questions because I thought you don't want to just listen to me chat about my experiences. It's actually better to do it Kaler, in a more structured way, with questions. So Doug's here this week to ask more questions, aren't you?

Daryl provided you with an itinerary for three days

Tracy: I'M here. Hello. Okay, so Daryl provided you with an itinerary for three days. Can you give an overview please of each day?

Tracy: Okay, so I'm going to just say quickly that, there are, there are 96 at the moment, 96 experiences, destinations, attractions that you can book through the London Pass. So obviously Daryl had a huge amount to choose from. But what I did ask him to do was obviously include some of the big hitters that everybody wants to go and see, but also maybe some of the lesser known, attractions and newer things as well that had come up on London Pass. So that's exactly what he did. So to give you a kind of brief overview, we included each of the days included at least one of the big hitters. So I know what you're thinking. You're kind of thinking, well, that's got to be. Yeah. Charles. London. Yes. Westminster Abbey. Yes. St. Paul's Cathedral. Yes. The London Eye. Yes.

but we also included and incorporated some of the kind of lesser known, potentially lesser known places that you might not have considered visiting, but are, ah, actually 100% worth going to see. So what Daryl did is he actually gave me four days and he gave me a choice for day three, which was one was Greenwich and one was a royal focused day. So I did ask in the Facebook group, in both groups actually, and we had a tie. One group wanted me to do the Royal Day and one group wanted me to do the Greenwich Day. And, because the weather was absolutely beautiful that week, I had to go to Greenwich. So I chose to go to Greenwich, which was fantastic. So basically on each day there was at least four or five attractions included. So as I said, we did the big hitters like St. Paul's Westminster Abbey, Tower of London, but we also included frameless, the, Florence Night Again Museum, Apsley House, the Greenwich Meridian, lots of other places as well. So that's kind of a brief overview. I will go into more detail about what I did. But it was designed very well by Daryl, which you would expect. And also it did include some transportation as well, which made it easy to get between places because obviously he tried to group attractions by area.

Tracy: Oh, thank you. So do those days have to be done in that order?

Tracy: no, no. When I got the itinerary from Daryl, Darrell's like, just do it in whichever order you want to do it

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Tracy: in. So obviously I looked at the weather because for Greenwich I really wanted. Because you're outdoors a lot in Greenwich, you've got to walk up the hill to the observatory, you know, it was just better to have a nice day. and I was lucky actually that every single day was beautiful weather. So it didn't really matter which order I did it

in. So I actually ended up doing it in each day as Daryl had designed it. But as he said it could be flexible.

Tracy: Oh, perfect.

Using the London Pass is easy because you just add the app on your phone

So did you have to book any of those places before the actual day?

Tracy: Yes, the one that I did book was the London Eye, so I had to choose a time for that slot. But that was really, really easy because when you get the London Pass, you just add the app on your phone and then when you access the app you have a QR code which basically is what you use when you go to each of the attractions. But you also have the app's excellent. Honestly, it's really, really good way to organise your itinerary. But you can go through to information about each of the different attractions and it had a link to the London Eye. So then I just chose the slot that I wanted. So I chose 1:30 because I decided to do that on day one. so I chose 130. So I had to think carefully about what I was doing before that and after so that I could make sure that everything could fit in and actually it worked out perfectly.

Tracy: Okay, that's brilliant.

Doug had a three day pass for London and explored each attraction

individually

So can you elaborate a bit more so and go through each day in more detail. So on day one, the first day you activated the pass, what did you do? How did you do that?

Tracy: Okay, so I had a three day pass. So once I activated the pass, so as in use the pass at the first attraction, which happened to be St Paul's Cathedral, then it is activated from that point. So it's really important on day one that you start the day as early as possible. So don't start it. I mean if you started at four, go to your first attraction of four, then that is your day one over with. So you really need to plan like Daryl did for me, an early start. So the first start on, on that day was at St. Paul's Cathedral, which opens at 8:30am so that lent basically plenty of time to explore St. Paul's and then from St. Paul's it was a walk across the bridge to the Globe Theatre. So I walked across the Millennium Bridge. So I had a few hours in St Paul's Cathedral which is wonderful. It's absolutely worth going to highly recommend it. I actually did join a free tour on, that was on at St. Paul's as well. So got a bit more information about the There is a, there's an audio guide you could use as well. But to me it's always, you can't be talking to a real person. So I did that and then afterwards walked across the Millennium Bridge to the Globe Theatre, which I had not been to before. And I have to say I absolutely loved it. It was so interesting. It was, honestly, it really opened my eyes just what it was like in, you know, have the theatre in the 1600s in Shakespeare, day. And yeah. What an interesting place to visit. Really interesting place to visit. And yeah, so I really enjoyed that. That was a really good show. I think the tour was about 45 minutes. So that's, I think the times of that are between 10 and 12. So I reckon I got there about half past 11 now. What. It's also part of the time as well because there's a show on at the minute that the actors can come in and start warming up. So that was quite interesting to see. So, you're not allowed to take photos at that point but before that you can, which is

great. So I had a look around there, thoroughly enjoyed that. I really, really highly recommend that. And then I walked from the Globe Theatre down to the London Eye. So again, it was a lovely day. That is a gorgeous stroll along the Thames and got to the London Eye and plenty of time showed them my pass. So I'm going to say as well, once you've got the pass, it's really easy. You just, when you go into any of the attractions, just show them your QR code and you'll notice that, the people at the entrance or who are sorting out tickets, they have two little scanners and one is specifically for the London pass. So you'll see them kind of go get the London Pass one. So they're all 100% aware of it. You just have to say, I have a London Pass. It was so easy. So, so easy. so yeah, when on the London Eye I had maybe a 10 minute wait in the queue, but that's kind of normal for the London Eye. I enjoy the London Eye. I know there are some, some influencers and YouTubers and whatever who kind of don't like the lungs. I just say m. You know, it's, it's too, I don't know, touristy or whatever. But you know what, you get a fantastic view of Big Ben and the House of Parliament all the way down the Thames. So to me it's just, I always love going on the London Eye, so. And yeah, she can go on some Free things like, Sky Garden, which is great to go on, but you get a different view. So it depends what you want. But I thoroughly enjoyed that. Then after that I went to. And this is one for you, Doug, because I know you would really enjoy this, but I went to the Florence Nightingale

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Tracy: Museum. yes. And learned a whole load. Yeah, yeah. And I know the Florence Nightingale Museum has come before when we've done itinerary consultations, particularly with nurses visiting London who have an interest in going that. And I actually met my friend there, and who is a midwife and had a, you know, good hour at least actually I think were there really exploring and having a look at, learning about

Florence Nightingale. So that was the first day which sounds, you know, there was four activities there, but that was a full day. That was absolutely a full day. And I think I did 14,000 steps, 14,000 steps that day. So obviously I kind of had worked out that I could have lunch between or just after the Globe Theatre and the London Eye. I think that's when I kind of grabbed a sandwich. So that worked really well. So that was day one.

Day two again was an early start at Westminster Abbey for the Verger tour

Day two again was an early start. I went to Westminster Abbey for 10 when it opens 10am and I've been to Westminster Abbey. I have to say that I've done many of these big hitters, many, many times. but I always enjoy going in. Honestly, they're just fabulous, fabulous places to visit. Westminster Abbey was good. I did meet a lovely lady called Geraldine, so massive shout out Geraldine, who tried desperately to get me into do the Verger tour, but unfortunately the numbers were a bit too high that day. I actually, if you're going to do the Verger chair, I recommend that you get there as early as possible. I didn't get there till 10:30, so that was probably my mistake. And you put your name down as you go in. On the right hand side there's a desk, your name down because they only allow 20 in at the Verger. and unfortunately there's no wriggle room with that. There was no flexibility. But thank you so much to Geraldine for trying to get me in on that too. I really appreciated it.

Doug went to Frameless, which is an immersive art gallery experience

so then Westminster Abbey, I took the tube, actually. I went to Marble Arch to see Frameless, which is an immersive art gallery experience. And it's wonderful. And I know Daryl talked about it in episode 106 and he was there an hour and a bit and I think I was there a good hour and a half. So you've got five different rooms, and it really is immersive. You're immersed in art. The music is fantastic. It's just a wonderful place to just go and, literally immerse yourself in the art. And I don't know how it would describe it in any other way, but you're in this room and you're just surrounded by it, the arts on the walls. It's a moving kind of show exhibition experience that, was really good. And then from there I went next door to the Moco Museum, which is modern art, which was interesting. I'm not a big modern art fan, but it was still good to go and see. There was some stuff by Tracy Emin, There was some, art by Banksy. there was lots of art by artists that I didn't know or hadn't heard of, which I'm sure are hugely famous. But that was really interesting. It's just next door to Frameless, so that seemed like a great, great, addition. So thanks very much, to Daryl, for including those two, because, again, getting something different, having a different experience. And then from there I went to Apsley House, which is the house that, the Duke of Wellington lived in. And again, this was a place that Daryl had recommended in podcast 106, and it was great. Again, I think this is one that you'd really enjoy, Doug, and learning a little bit more about the Duke of Wellington, his background, the history around, you know, the battle of, Waterloo. And just, it was actually amazing to see his collection of gifts that he received from all these countries across Europe. He's got a whole. He, he had a whole room, and that room's still there. I think they moved it after his, his death into a different room in the house. But there's just this room which is just full of all this porcelain and all these gifts that are received from, from different countries in Europe. so that was really good. So I was there quite a while, and then I ended the day, went over to the Wellington Arch to get views, which is really good. You can get a lift up. I was a bit concerned. I walked in the. And the, the guy who was there, he was so lovely. I wish I'd got his name

because he was so, so friendly and so lovely. And he said, oh, there's a lift, don't worry. So I got the lift up to, I think, well, the top of the Wellington Arch, and then you get great views. So I just enjoyed the views. Yeah. And so that was really good. And that was a nice end to the day. And then I came down and he was actually, there was a bit of a wine tasting going on, so I was trying out some different wines. But, you know, and that day again I ended up near a tube so it was easy to get home. So that again was a full day. Okay. I'd started a little bit late at 10:30 instead of 10 and I would recommend, you know, to do at 10. But I've been doing a lot of days in London, so I kind of was a little bit, little bit later for Westminster Abbey. And also I knew I probably wasn't going to be spending the amount of time in that you potentially would be because I've been there quite a few times before. So that was day two and then day three was, Greenwich. But I started out at the Tower of London again. Got there for 10am for when it opened. I've been at the Tower of London I don't know how many times. I literally can't count

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the number of times been the Tower of London. I did join in for a bit of time on the free Yeoman water be feet that, which is good. Just a lot of people just be aware. Also, it was, I have to say, a school holiday week in the UK last week. So, or one of the weeks because this week's also a holiday week because I'm recording this at the end of October. Yeah. So it was more busy than it would be potentially at that time of year. So you have to consider if you're visiting kind of, you know, school, holiday time, even if it's kind of shoulder low season, that it's still busy for things like the. Yeah. So I was there for a little while, went and had a nice cup of tea in the, in their cafe, had a look around and then I jumped on the Uber boat down to Greenwich. So which again was really easy because I was thinking, right, I've got to use the London Pass. How is this going to work on the Uber boat? But again, they are 100%. They know exactly what they're

doing. You just say them, I've got a London Pass. You actually have a day, hop, hop on, hop off on the Uber boat. Which is great, honestly, 100% recommend that you get on the Thames. You go on a ride on the Thames when you are in London because you do get a different view of the city. So we zoomed off down to Greenwich, got off at Greenwich and then I had a look around the Cutty Sark, which is a tea clipper, which I've been to again, I Had been to before, but then had another look around the Cutissark and then had some lunch there. Then I went to the Royal Naval College, the Painted hall, which I absolutely love. I know it's a place that you enjoy also going to, Doug.

Tracy: It's really good. It's fantastic.

Tracy: Yeah, yeah. And then I walked up the hill to the Greenwich meridian. So I went to the Observatory, which is at the top of the hill. Beautiful day, blue sky, not a cloud in the sky. Went up, stood on the meridian line, of course, because you have to do that and I know that's a popular choice with a lot of, people.

Do go to Greenwich - it's one of my favourite destinations in London

Want me to talk to you guys about visiting. You want to go and stand on the Meridian line. You want to go into. You want to go to Greenwich. So do go to Greenwich. 100% go to Greenwich. And, you know, if you know me, you'll know it's one of my favourite destinations in London. I didn't go to the Queen's House, but you can. I could have fitted that in if I wanted to. For the Tulip Staircase. If you're not sure that is, cheque out our website. We've got a whole itinerary for Greenwich for a day. And then I jumped onto the Uber boat, so it was probably about 4:00 by this time. Jumped onto the Uber boat

and took the Uber boat all the way back down to Westminster, because I was jumping on the Tube down there. and at this point, it was sunset. It was lovely. It was a really lovely journey down the Thames and just a lovely end to the day. So I had got three full days out of the London pass, thanks to Daryl and his itinerary. and it was great.

Tracy: Yeah, it sounds like an absolutely fantastic time you had.

So how easy did you find using the pass itself? Uh, really, really easy

So how easy did you find using the pass itself?

Tracy: honestly, really, really easy. You just have to show the QR code. You know, when you go into an attraction or, you know, whichever place that you're going to, you just show and they're all totally away. You just say, I've got a London pass. Show it. They scan your QR code. It's really, really easy, you know? Yeah, yeah. As I say, even the Uber boat, which I was a bit. I was a bit, oh, how is this going to work on the Uber boat? They're like, totally 100 took. They just have a different scanner for that QR code for the London path.

Tracy: Sounds very smooth.

Daryl says the pass is a great way to budget for London trips

So what was your favourite part of having the pass?

Tracy: Oh, I just think it's so easy, you know, you know what you're it. I knew what kind of, what the itinerary was, obviously because Daryl gave it to me, but I just didn't have to think about it. You don't have to. If you're budgeting for London, it's a great way as well. But because you're not paying anything extra out, you know, you've got those attractions and they're covered and paid for through the pass. So you don't have to even think about it. And it was just really easy. Just make sure this is, I'm going to say this. Make sure that if you are using your phone that you have enough charge on your phone. So have a spare battery. I always carry a spare battery, with me. Because you don't want your phone to conk out because you need your QR code.

Tracy: That makes sense. Yeah.

So is there any sort of tips you can offer anybody considering getting a London pass

So is there any sort of tips you can offer anybody considering getting a London pass?

Tracy: Well, I think the main thing is, you know, work out the value. So you need to make sure that, you know, you, you plan your itinerary or at least have an idea of what you're going to do on each day. You know, you can have some flexibility in it. You know, if you look on the app, you can find out what are the attractions are close to where you are that are included in the pass. So you can have some flexibility. But plan, plan those big hitters. So if you want to go the Shard, for example, make sure you plan that into your day. Look out what else is around on that day. I mean, there's so many options for itineraries. You just have to think, what is it that you're interested in doing? Have a look on the app. They've got 96 at the moment, probably more common, different, attractions

that you can choose from. So just try and keep them in the same area. And they just do need to cheque that if any of the attractions have any particular. What, what days are open. For example, do you need to book before you go? If there's something like the London Eye, you'll have to with a Shard. But, again, it's, it's really straightforward and

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Tracy: really easy. Just make sure that you're getting maximum benefit out of it. So, you know, you have to do a little bit of work, just add up what, what it would have cost, if you, you know, these are the things that I definitely want to see when I'm in London and then add up how much it would cost versus how much it would cost for you to have a London Pass. But yeah, I mean just, I think it's easy to use. It really is very easy to use. You just have to work out for you what you want to do and see and then what the value will be for you.

Tracy: That makes sense. So knowing you how I do, I would guess that you actually know how much the savings were.

Tracy: Well, Daryl did give me a breakdown actually of that and I'm trying to find out where I wrote that down. one more tip I am going to say though, and I already have said it, but it's really important that on day one you start early because you don't want to start your day one later on in the day because that's your whole day gone. So make sure your first day, like Daryl did for me, he organised, you know, St Paul's which was opened at 8:30, so that's a early start for that day and you can, you can fit a lot of things in. So yeah, I think you've got the sheet with actual savings on, but I think. Yeah, you have.

Tracy: I've got it here. So without the London Pass, the total cost would have been a whopping £347 and 20 pence to £360.20. But the three day pass costs £184 or less.

Tracy: Yeah, so, and I'm going to say as well that often if you go onto the website there are, you know, there's offers on, so just always have to check, just to see if that they have got something on. But we do have a code which is UKLP5 which will give you 5% off your London Pass. so we recommend it. That will be in the show notes, which will be at UKtravelplanning.com forward/episode 126. So do use the link but definitely use the code. So UK LP5 will give you 5% off the London Pass. So I think that that kind of just about rounds it up, doesn't it? Honestly? I really enjoyed using it. Thank you so much to Go City. Thank you so much to Daryl for taking the time. Ah, I actually met up with Daryl and Emma from the from Go City who deal with the London Pass. met up with them a few days before Daryl emailed me the itinerary. it was just such a joy to do. I really enjoyed it. It was a lot of fun and you know, as we say, and people will often say to us in the Facebook group, you know, we don't just talk the talk, we walk the walk. So we try out the things that we recommend. We, you know, I, meet all of our, partners, we book things through them, we deal with, you know, we do genuinely make sure that we are there to give you the best value and the best, time that you can have during your trip to London, uk. So, yeah, so it was really good. So thanks again to Daryl and Go City for passing on the London pass to the. To me for this challenge. And also, I'm just going to say again that you can find information and that code in the show notes for this episode, which are, UKtrialplanet.com forward/1, 2, 6. So, thanks, Doug, so much for coming on this episode and ask me the questions.

Tracy: That's right.

Tracy: All right, until next week, we're both safe from us.

Tracy: Happy UK Travel Planning.

Tracy: Thank you for tuning in to this week's episode of the UK Travel Planning Podcast. As always, show notes can be found [@uktravelplanning.com](mailto:uktravelplanning.com) if you've enjoyed the show, why not leave us feedback via text or a review on your favourite podcast app? We love to hear from you. And you never know, you may receive a shout out in a future episode, but as always, that just leaves me to say, until next week, Happy UK Travel Planning.

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