A DAY AT GREENWICH



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Greenwich is London with the smell of the sea. Little more than four miles from St. Paul's, the Thames washes against wharves from which, only a century ago, fishing boats sailed regularly to the North Sea. It is the home of the National Maritime Museum, the Old Royal Observatory, which is part of the Museum, and the Royal Naval College. You will return many times before you know all that this ancient seafaring borough has to offer.

Getting there Go to Greenwich by Underground to Surrey Docks, then bus 1A (Sundays), 70 (Mondays to Fridays), 108B (Monday to Friday peak hours), 188 (Monday to Friday peak hours, Saturdays and Sundays); or to New Cross then bus 177, 180A (Sundays). Green Line Coach 701 runs to Blackheath. The nearest British Rail Station is Maze Hill. Bus 188 (Monday to Friday peak hours, Saturdays and Sundays) runs direct from central London, or go by bus 177 direct from Elephant & Castle Underground Station.

Looking around Greenwich Church was built during the early 18th century by Hawksmoor, Wren's pupil; it is well worth a visit. If you find the church locked, ask for the key at the Church Cottage (about 25 yards away, adjoining the Church Hall). From the church, walk forward along Greenwich Church Street towards the river.

Much of Greenwich's history is linked with the Thames, so your sightseeing should start from the riverside promenade from which most of the important

buildings of the town can be seen. At the end of Church Street the masts and yards of the 'Cutty Sark' tower unexpectedly over the rooftops ahead. This famous clipper was built for the Far East tea trade when speed was essential, for there were rich rewards to the first ship home with the new season's crop. From a platform below the stern you can gaze upward at her graceful lines. There is a museum on board and you can explore the crew quarters, by our standards notably exposed to the elements. The clipper's figurehead is Burns's witch 'Nannie' wearing her short chemise after which the ship is named. 'Cutty Sark' carried 32,000 square feet of sail. Nearby stands 'Gipsy Moth IV', which also rounded Cape Horn. It carried the late Francis Chichester around the world in 1967, a journey marked by his knighthood by the Queen at Greenwich.

Barges, tugs, dredgers and other river traffic parade for you along the Thames reaches. Watch them in comfort from the riverside walk that starts beside the Greenwich Pier entrance and runs in front of the impressive Royal Naval College. When the old Tudor Greenwich Palace fell into disrepair, Charles II planned to rebuild in the baroque style of the day. Work went ahead after 1694, but was not finally completed until 1760, when the buildings were used for disabled seamen. The Royal Naval College was transferred here in 1873. The magnificent Painted Hall, open to the public, was designed by Wren, and decorated, riotously, by Thornhill. Hawksmoor and Vanbrugh are among other famous architects who worked on the college. Whitebait, caught at low tide and cooked at once, were a great delicacy at special dinners given by Victoria's Ministers in the picturesque waterfront inns here. One, the 'Trafalgar', with its fine cast iron balconies over the water, stands at the far side of the Naval College.

Crane Street, a small alley beside the 'Trafalgar', leads to Trinity Hospital, a tiny building built as an almshouse in 1613. Behind stands the vast Power Station.

★ TIMES AND PRICES OF ADMISSION ★

CUTTY SARK (GREENWICH PIER): Mons to Sats including Sat at Easter 11 00 to 18 00, (17 00 in winter) Suns including Easter Sun 14 30 to 18 00 (to 17 00 in winter). Easter Mon, Spring & Late Summer Hol Mons 11 00 to 18 00, Good Fri, Boxing Day 14 30 to 17 00. Closed Christmas Eve & Day. 15p, children 14 & under (must be accompanied) 8p.

GIPSY MOTH IV: Hours as Cutty Sark. 10p, children (must be accompanied) 5p.

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, INCORPORATING QUEEN'S HOUSE, ROMNEY ROAD: Mons to Sats including Sat & Mon at Easter, Spring & Late Summer Hol Mons 10 00 to 18 00 (17 00 in winter), Suns including Easter Sun 14 30 to 18 00. Closed Good Fri, Christmas Eve & Day, Boxing Day. Entry fee (admitting also to Old Royal Observatory) 10p (July & Aug 20p), children 15 & under 5p; season ticket £1, children 50p.

OLD ROYAL OBSERVATORY (FLAMSTEED HOUSE), GREENWICH PARK: Times as for rest of National Maritime Museum but closing 17 30 in winter. Museum entry fee will admit also to Observatory.

PLANETARIUM: Public programme during school hols on Mons, Tues, Thurs, Fris (not Good Fri or Christmas Day) also on 1st & 3rd Sats of month in summer, 14 30. 15p, children 5p.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, PARK ROW: Painted Hall and Chapel: Daily except Thurs 14 30 to 17 00. Closed Good Fri, Christmas Eve & Day, Boxing Day. Open Sat, Sun & Mon at Easter, Spring & Late Summer Hol Mons. Free.

★ GETTING BACK ★

From Greenwich Park or Blackheath: Bus 53 to New Cross or New Cross Gate, then Underground; or Green Line Coach 701 or bus 53 to central London. British Rail from Maze Hill or Blackheath.

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