

International Society for Quality of Life Research



17th Annual Conference of the International Society for Quality of Life Research

October 27 - 30, 2010

Hilton Metropole, London, England

About London



London is a vibrant, bustling, multi-cultural city. It is also a city full of history, heritage and culture. Visit some 300 museums and art galleries or enjoy London's 6,000 restaurants.

With over 30,000 shops and stores to choose from, as well as a burgeoning reputation in the fashion world, shoppers will not be disappointed - from designer labels in Bond Street to bustling street markets in Camden, Notting Hill or Brick Lane. The capital also has 400 live music venues, catering for everything from opera to Brit pop and sports fans will not be short of excitement whenever they come. The summer sees the world's largest classical musical festival at the Royal Albert Hall – the Proms.

In the 21st century, London has reinvented itself on a monumental scale. Don't miss the amazing views from the ultra modern British Airways London Eye, the world's most visited modern art gallery, Tate Modern, or the staggering scale of the British Museum Great Court. Newcomers this year include the Firepower artillery museum in Woolwich and the Museum in Docklands which opens in September.

Weather

England has a fairly temperate climate and can sometimes be overcast. However, we enjoy long summer evenings due to our northerly latitude and periods of fine weather can happen in all seasons.

The weather can vary greatly from day to day, but generally summer (June-August) is a hot 14-30 °C (57 to 86°F), and winter (December-February) is a cool 1-5 °C (34 – 41°F). There is quite a difference in temperature between Northern England and Southern England. Generally, the further south, the warmer it is likely to be.



Seasonal variation & what to wear

Whatever the season, the English weather is liable to change from day to day, so if you are wondering what to wear, it is a good idea to bring a selection of items including some light clothes, items you can layer (that way you can add or remove layers depending on temperature), at least one warm pullover and a waterproof coat or umbrella.

Autumn (September - November)

In autumn there can be very warm days, but equally there can be cool ones too. Temperatures fluctuate around the 7 - 18 °C (45 - 64°F) mark, but are likely to be much warmer in September than November.



Money



The unit of currency in Britain is the pound sterling (£), and all London areas are served by ATMs, which accept Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus or Maestro cards. If you have travelers cheques, these can be exchanged at banks, bureaux de change, hotels and post offices; there are a wide range across town.

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You can exchange travelers cheques or foreign currency at their centrally located bureaux around London. Thomas Cook offer 0% commission on more than 80 currencies, go to visitlondon.com/thomascook for offers and savings.

Opening Hours

Shops are generally open Mondays to Saturdays, from 10.00-18.00, although some central stores stay open until 20.00-21.00 and later still on Thursdays. On Sundays many shops open from midday to 16.00. Visitor attractions and museums typically open daily from 10.00-18.00, although most close for a couple of days during the Christmas holidays.



Tipping



Tipping in London

Tipping is appreciated but not always appropriate in London. There are some situations where it is customary, for example in restaurants. Here are a few guidelines, although ultimately tips (or gratuities) are discretionary and depend on the quality of the service you receive.

- **Tipping in London's Restaurants**

It is customary to leave **10-15% of the bill** when **eating out**. However, restaurants often add on a service charge, so check your bill to avoid tipping twice. Sometimes the service charge will be described as "optional", "discretionary" or "suggested", in which case it has not been included in the total bill. It's not customary to pay a tip for fast food, self-service or takeaway meals.

Top tip: Although restaurants (and other businesses) should make their policy clear, it's worth checking with your waiter that he/she will personally receive your tip rather than the company – particularly if you're paying by credit card.

- **Tipping in Bars and Pubs**

People generally do not tip in **pubs in London**, but may offer to buy a drink for the bartender who will either have it then, save it for later or keep the price of the drink as a tip. Tipping in **London bars** is more commonplace with bartenders sometimes handing back change on a tipping tray, although it's still up to you.

- **Tipping in Hotels in London**

Like restaurants, most **London hotel bills** include a **service charge, usually 10-12%**. If there's no service charge added to your bill in a hotel restaurant, it's customary to tip as for any other restaurant – 10-15% of the restaurant bill. For room staff, you can leave an amount of your choosing in the room. Tips for porters, concierges and door staff are also discretionary.

- **Tipping Taxi Drivers**

It is polite to tip **10-15% of the taxi fare** for **black cabs and licensed minicabs** in London. However, most people simply round up the fare to the nearest £1 and tell the driver to "keep the change".

Click here for more London information: <http://www.visitlondon.com/>