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London & Beyond

The Role of Chance



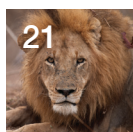
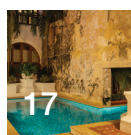
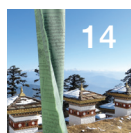
I have long believed that the best moments in travel are those that are unscripted, the chance encounters or sudden disruptions that send you on an unexpected course and allow for the most memorable discoveries. On our recent Insider Trip to Burma, or Myanmar, that is exactly what occurred. Myanmar has the lure of the forbidden: the country was cut off and off-limits for decades. The generals running Myanmar didn't want foreign influences coming in or reports of their human rights abuses getting out. And for years, to protest their appalling human rights record, many humanitarians called for a tourist boycott. Now the country is open, and everyone wants to rush in to see the land that Kipling immortalized in poetry before it becomes too westernized.

If I had to choose one word to describe Myanmar it would be subtle. Its people are deeply spiritual; 89 percent are Buddhists. Its beauty unfolds gently and serenely. You have to slow down and pay attention to let it reveal itself. Those who are rushing and want something orchestrated or served up on command will be disappointed. Our trip included time in Yangon, the former capital. We visited the legendary Shwegadon Pagoda, where young and old come to pour water over the Buddhas at stations, to pray, or just to take strolls with their lovers or children. We were among the only Westerners in the vast complex, and around us daily

Burmese moments played out. We also visited Bagan, whose title of land of a thousand temples understates the many thousands that actually dot its fields. Like Luxor or Angkor Wat, this place cannot be comprehended until you see it in person. During our cruise up the Irrawaddy River, we stopped in remote villages, where families invited us into their homes. When a sleepy toddler in a market pointed at me and said, "Ma ma," the women in the stalls laughed with me, as this was clearly his only word for a woman, even one who looked so foreign.

Visiting Myanmar was subtle, personal and enlarging—precisely the type of experience that we work tirelessly to create for our members, no matter where their journeys take them. In this issue, we celebrate such exotic destinations as Bhutan, Chilean Patagonia and Bora Bora, as well as return to perennial favorite London, where the Indagare Team can organize countless behind-the-scenes experiences. And don't miss our Photo Portfolio, showcasing the far-flung travels of our staff who scout the best, most relevant recommendations for you. As for Myanmar, my tip is to go now. Not to check it off a list or be among the first visitors, but to see the country unfold and be returned to wonder and simplicity.

Melissa Bagg



- 2** **On My Mind**
Sharing Travel Tales
- 4-5** **Escape**
Milan Magnifica
- 6-7** **Far Flung**
Bora Bora Rising
- 8-11** **Family**
Scotland Itinerary
- 12-13** **Style**
Worldly Gems
- 14-16** **Escape**
Seeking Serenity in Bhutan
- 17** **Member Postcard**
Cartagena Getaway
- 18-20** **Spotlight**
Chilean Patagonia
- 21** **Member Postcard**
South African Romance
- 22-25** **Photo Portfolio**
Where in the World?
- 28-52** **Destination Report**
London & Beyond

The World of Indagare



About Indagare

Indagare comes from the Latin word that means to seek, scout, discover. Indagare Travel is a high-end travel company with robust online editorial content and a boutique in-house travel agency. We travel, we write, and we plan memorable journeys for our members. To learn about our travel community, visit www.indagare.com or call 212-988-2611. Annual membership rates begin at \$325.



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At Indagare you can research ideas for a trip on our site and consult with a specialist on the phone or by email to create, refine or expand your itinerary. Our Bookings Team can help you with something as simple as a hotel room or as complex as a multi-stop itinerary. We also have special rates and amenities at hundreds of properties. Email bookings@indagare.com or call 212-988-2611.



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Insider Trips are special journeys designed exclusively for Indagare members. With their insider access, mapped-out itineraries and exciting immersion in far-flung destinations, the trips offer members a rich and rewarding way to explore the world. Upcoming destinations include India, Cuba and Myanmar. For more information, call 646-963-2242 or email insidertrips@indagare.com.



Indagare Plus Members who book through Indagare receive preferential rates and/or special amenities at the properties with the Indagare Plus symbol.

Milan Magnifica

The northern Italian city is often treated as a fly-through. Indagare's **Barkley Hickox** stayed for a visit, discovering the best hotels, restaurants and shops.



Milan gets a bad rap. Despite being the wealthiest, most industrious and fashionable city in Italy, it is often considered a port of entry to a region studded with spectacular landscapes. Two hours after touchdown at Malpensa International Airport, you can be boating on Lake Como, skiing in the Dolomites or sunbathing on the Italian Riviera. Lacking the vaunted attractions of other Italian staples— Venice’s romance, Florence’s art, Rome’s history—Milan is often overlooked by well-heeled travelers. This is, in part, because the city caters more to the perfectly coiffed and clad Milanese than it does to tourists. While seeming somewhat inaccessible to outsiders, Milan entices with discretion and sophistication. During my recent trip, I was able to appreciate the city’s less obvious attributes, thanks to the help of locals. Although primarily recognized as a center of commerce and fashion,

Milan has a softer side. Those willing to dig in will find layers of allure and enchantment in this Italian city. Here’s what travelers should know:

WHERE TO STAY

Conveniently, the handful of true five stars in Milan offers something for every high-end traveler, whatever type of accommodation he or she favors. The sexy newcomer would be the **Armani Hotel Milano**. Located at the intersection of Via Manzoni and Via Montenapoleone, this displays the sleek contemporary design that is the signature of its eponymous style icon. The traditional choice is the tried and true **Four Seasons Milan**, which offers classically designed rooms and suites and is a favorite with families and sophisticates seeking impeccable service. The **Bulgari** is a scenic hideaway, tucked away in a picturesque garden. Juxtaposed to the Zen-like

accommodations, many of which overlook the garden, are lively public spaces full of attractive locals. Pomp and circumstance have always pervaded the city's venerable Principe di Savoia, which recently underwent extensive renovations that updated its gilt to contemporary glam.

WHERE TO EAT

The saying "you can't have a bad meal in Italy" could not ring truer than in Lombardy's culinary mecca. For a big night out in a sleek setting, reserve a table at **Trussardi Alla Scala**, where chef Andrea Berton puts a modern twist on traditional Italian fare. **Ristorante Solferino** is an ideal neighborhood spot for a casual dinner among locals. Duck into **Il Salumaio**, off Via Montenapoleone, for a quick lunch and people watching at its best. Dine alfresco or in its wood-paneled dining room, and be sure to stop by the adjacent shop to take away artisanal charcuterie and homemade pasta. Popular newcomer **Unico** offers a refreshingly contemporary setting, including vistas of the city, and cooking lessons with Chef Fabio Baldassarre. For a break from Italian fare, **Finger's** offers Japanese and fusion food, plus a great atmosphere.

WHERE TO SHOP

Although mega fashion brands like Prada and Versace are synonymous with Milan, the city is full of unique concept boutiques and exclusive showrooms known to few of even the savviest shoppers. Some of my favorites include **10 Corso Como**, the legendary concept store in a charming courtyard selling everything from clothing and accessories to design objects. A quiet alley off the Via Montenapoleone houses **Jacente** (#23), another concept store, offering stylish leather goods, cashmere and jewelry. In-the-know shoppers will find the tucked-away showrooms of **Thetwos**, **Michela Bruni Reichlin** and **Anna Sammarone** just upstairs, offering chic handbags, exquisite fine jewelry and custom couture, respectively. Finally, for superbly crafted leather goods, head to the **Giosa**



workshop at 6 Via Ciovasso and choose from purses, belts and watches in an array of skins.

WHAT TO SEE & DO

Most of Milan's major attractions—the **Castello Sforzesco**, **Pinacoteca di Brera Museum**, **Teatro alla Scala** and **Santa Maria della Grazie** (home of Leonardo's *The Last Supper*)—can be seen in a couple of days, but make sure not to miss the city's lesser-known gems. Often overlooked are the churches **San Maurizio al Monastero Maggiore** and **Santa Maria Presso San Satiro**, both within walking distance of the Piazza del Duomo. Full of striking 16th-century frescoes by Bernardino Luini and Antonio Campi, San Maurizio is attached to what was the city's most important Benedictine convent. San Satiro also contains one of the earliest examples of trompe l'oeil, by Bramante. Get your design fix at **La Triennale di Milano**, a museum and events venue that highlights contemporary Italian design, architecture and media. Or spend a day wandering around the canals of the **Navigli**, an idyllic neighborhood with many quaint shops, restaurants and markets.

[Read the complete Milan report on Indagare.com.](#)



Strategies

Who Should Go: Anyone looking for an exotic far-flung destination that is postcard perfect in every way. It suits every kind of traveler, from adventure seekers to flop and droppers, families and honeymooners.

Ideal Stay: 5-8 days.



Bora Bora Rising

Indagare's **Monique Brendel** travels to the South Pacific and discovers that the Technicolor vistas and unspoiled waterscapes are worth the long trip.

Some destinations epitomize the word remote, and Bora Bora—an eight-hour flight from Los Angeles followed by a trip by puddle jumper or boat—certainly qualifies. Much as for the Seychelles or the Maldives, if you're going to travel this far, it's crucial to choose the resort that's right for you. The large reef surrounding the main island of Bora Bora is scattered with resorts, but the stunning Four Seasons is the clear selection for the choosy traveler. Here's what you need to know about it.



Indagare Plus

Members who book through Indagare receive preferential rates and/or special amenities at the properties with the Indagare Plus symbol, including Four Seasons Bora Bora.

At a Glance: Impeccably maintained property that opened in 2008 and feels fresh and new, especially compared with some of the more established resorts (like the St. Regis).

Vibe: Over the water, private, picture perfect.

Review: In terms of setting, atmosphere and amenities, the Four Season is simply unmatched. With 100 overwater bungalows and 7 villas on land, clearly the resort's focus is on the lagoon. Many of the bungalows come with towering views of Mount Otemanu. The rest of the Four Seasons is sprawling, with four restaurants and two bars, a kids club, a massive spa and a large infinity pool (in case you need more water). Getting from one side of the island to the other can be a bit of a walk (contact Indagare's Bookings Team to figure out the best accommodations to book).

Couples, especially honeymooners, are drawn to the spacious and private overwater bungalows, strewn along two long pontoons, but the two- and three-bedroom villas are also stun-

ning, offering an enormous amount of space and privacy, and with a large terrace and pool overlooking the secluded beach just steps away (villas have the added bonus of being close to the main hub of the resort). Each bungalow, regardless of category, has large teak terraces with easy access to the water below and oversized marble tubs in their own room and commanding views of the ocean through large sliding glass windows. There are genuine Polynesian touches throughout, including floor-to-ceiling windows, polished teak, vaulted thatched roofs and views of the marine life below through glass-bottom floors.

Although Bora Bora is a renowned honeymoon destination, the Four Seasons does a fantastic job catering to families with children as well, thanks to myriad activities on and off the property. There's snorkeling (ranging from basic swims to more intense exploration focusing on sharks and rays), kite and paddle boarding and sunset cruises. Back on land, you can take 4x4 excursions through the jungle, arrange for a barbecue lunch on a secluded beach and book a traditional Polynesian massage. The Kid's Club (for ages five and up) is terrific as well. One area in which the resort shows its quiet, romantic side is the dining scene: the four restaurants usually clear out by 10 P.M., so don't expect a party scene here. The resort is perfect for couples and families who like being active during the day and prefer their evenings low-key.

Guests booked in the secluded bungalows at the end of the pontoon have a ten-minute walk to dinner. In-bungalow dining is very popular, as is taking the five-minute boat ride to the St. Regis home to Lagoon by Jean-Georges.

Read more about Bora Bora and other warm-weather getaways on [Indagare.com](https://www.indagare.com).

Scotland Itinerary

Family vacations can be equal parts learning and leisure, **Cabel Belk** finds, in a place that balances an ancient culture with genteel outdoor pursuits.



In places that, like Scotland, have centuries of history to explore, one can easily feel overwhelmed. One's itinerary is often dictated by a roster of obligatory sites and museums, and the logistics of seeing them all can erode the simple pleasure of new surroundings. Part of Scotland's appeal, especially for families, is that although it is full of substance, it is not a checklist destination. Those who can't help but plan their sightseeing down to the millisecond will find an abundance of monuments and museums: in Edinburgh, there seems to be an ancient cathedral or a cutting-edge

exhibit around every cobbled corner. But the air is so fraught with history that much of it seeps in by osmosis. You can almost breathe it in with the fog.

This is especially true of the Highlands, whose immensity and variety make it impossible to cover the whole of the destination in a single trip. A grueling circuit would be at odds with the spirit of the place, and it should come as a relief that one need not try to be comprehensive. The region reveals itself not in a particular constellation of castles or battlefields but in its quiet, its weather and its heroic land-

scapes. It is best for those who appreciate an experience of which leisure is a more essential component than any single historic site. The best strategy may actually be to let go of strategy altogether—to stay in one place long enough to unpack, develop an indulgent breakfast routine, hone a new skill, nap on drizzly afternoons and see as many or as few castles as each day seems to call for.

For a weeklong introduction to Scotland that will still feel very much like a vacation, families should spend a couple of days taking in Edinburgh before decamping to the



Scottish countryside for fun, freedom and fresh air.

DAY 1

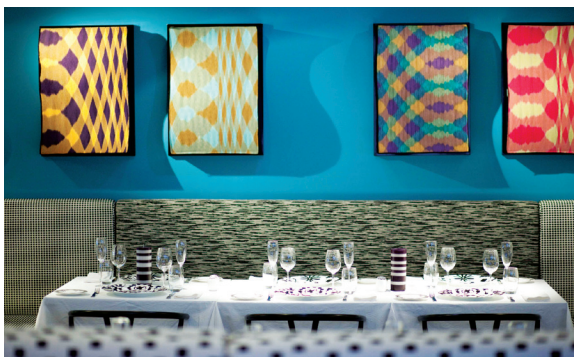
Arrive in Edinburgh. Scotland's capital city is in many ways a curious blend of erudition and mythos. According to local lore, part of the reason that the university's medical school rose to such prestige during the 19th century was the regular supply of cadavers available for dissection. In 1828, Irish grave robbers Burke and Hare notoriously murdered sixteen people to sell their corpses to a well-known university anatomist. Their trial inspired a series of grisly

legends and fictional portrayals, including one of Robert Louis Stevenson's most sinister tales. In other respects as well, Edinburgh is no stranger to the macabre. The city that was home to the creators of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles* has become the epicenter of Tartan Noir, a contemporary genre typified by the crime novels of Ian Rankin. It seems no wonder that so many literary imaginations have flourished in the Old Town, where charming antique bookshops and ancient dormitories are strewn beneath a dreamlike canopy

of steeples, spires, towers and turrets and cobblestoned streets wind uphill to a magnificent medieval fortress. To ascend these streets is to feel oneself in a profoundly lettered and richly storied city.

After freshening up and settling in, climb to the summit of Castle Rock to savor the panoramic views of the city from Edinburgh Castle. On the way back down, descend slowly to admire the medieval architecture along the scenic upper stretches of the Royal Mile. Toast your first day with scones and Champagne at the Balmoral's classic afternoon tea.

Clockwise, from left: Edinburgh Castle; the restaurant at the Hotel Missoni.



DAY 2

In the morning head to the opposite end of the Royal Mile to visit Holyrood. After exploring the royal palace and the abbey ruins, repair to neighboring Holyrood Park, where kids can blow off a little steam. Arthur's Seat, a muscular bald knob that presides over the city, extends an invitation to partake in the Scottish pastime of hill walking and enjoy yet another overlook with sweeping vistas of greater Edinburgh. End with dinner at the Gardener's Cottage, situated on a lonely hillside and equipped with candlelit communal tables and an open kitchen. The menu is earnest and uncomplicated, with culinary exhibitionism

ceding the spotlight to Scotland's seasonal bounty.

DAY 3

Depart to and drive north. Either check in at Gleneagles, only an hour from Edinburgh—a pastoral playground ideal for families seeking to balance a variety of interests and schedules—or continue to Glen Affric (see next page), which is about three and a half hours away, deep in the Scottish Highlands. Pause en route to visit Stirling Castle and the nearby Wallace Monument, which houses a number of artifacts associated with William Wallace, the legendary 13th-century Scottish patriot. Among the relics is a

sword he allegedly used during the Battle of Stirling Bridge, fought less than a mile away from the site where the monument now stands.

DAYS 4–6

Kick back and enjoy the picturesque Scottish countryside. At Gleneagles, there are outdoor activities to suit all ages, from off-roading to photography workshops. Days are readily filled with golf, hunting, fishing and horseback riding, and of course there is always another castle to explore. However, it would be just as appropriate—and just as advisable—to curl up with a cup of tea and indulge in hours of fireside reading.

Scottish Retreat: Glen Affric Estate

At a Glance: Set within a protected Caledonian pine reserve not far from Loch Ness, this luminous 10,000-acre estate, with its renovated Victorian-era hunting lodge, lives up to the most romanticized visions of Highland splendor.

Vibe: Secluded, poetic, historic, authentic.

Indagare Loves:

- A 10,000-acre forest all to oneself
- Deer-stalking, horseback-riding and fly-fishing at one's whim
- Log fires, cashmere blankets and whisky nightcaps at bedtime

Review: Glen Affric is set dramatically on a knob of land that juts into Loch Affric, so that even indoors, the glimmer of water is never far outside one's field of vision. Lovingly and painstakingly refurbished by David and Jane Matthews, the owners of Eden Rock St. Barth's, the handsome old house is now as splendidly comfortable as it is beau-

tiful. Its sitting rooms and reading nooks are warmed by log fires and subtle traces of tartan, and its hallways are liberally adorned with art from the Matthews' enviable collection. Eight cozy bedrooms, outfitted with butter-soft sheets and the most luxurious of duvets, seem to have been specially designed for lazy mornings and afternoon naps. The lodge's natural setting is the stuff of any sportsman's fantasy; its forests are thick with red deer, its lochs with trout and its moorlands teeming with partridges and pheasants. Life at Glen Affric oscillates between two most primal pleasures: the thrill of nature and the solace of hearth. The estate may have been artfully restored and stylishly redecorated, but the spirit of the place, like its transcendent beauty, is masculine and raw.

Glen Affric Estate is available for exclusive use and is not open to the public. For rates and availability, contact our Bookings Team at bookings@indagare.com or 212-988-2611



Worldly Gems

London contributor **Elena Bowes** meets jeweler Pippa Small, who works with craftspeople all over the world for her sparkling creations.



English jeweler Pippa Small has always found treasures wherever her wanderlust takes her. As a child, she collected buttons, beads and sea glass, and by the time she was a teenager, her arms, ears and fingers were covered in jangling trinkets. Studying anthropology sparked a fascination with the world's cultures, and about a decade ago, Small merged her two interests by working with local craftspeople in indigenous communities in such places as Afghanistan, Rwanda, India and Kenya. In Kabul, for example, Small works with Turquoise Mountain Charity, an organization that trains young people in jewelry making as part of the charity's broader efforts to battle unemployment and heroin addiction. Small has a shop in London and another in Los Angeles (at the Brentwood Country Mart).

Can you tell us about your first trip to Afghanistan?

I had been working with the Turquoise Mountain Foundation, a very special organization

in Afghanistan, and was asked to visit in 2007 to design a collection and do some teaching at their newly opened jewelry school. I instantly said yes, as it had always been a dream of mine to see Afghanistan. I was a little nervous, traveling as a woman and a British citizen.

The first time I walked through the bazaar, I hurried, keeping my covered head down. The next day, I had more courage and looked up and met some people's eyes. The third day, I started smiling at some people, and suddenly all the bearded faces opened and beamed back. From that day on I felt very comfortable. The men and women in the workshop have become friends, and I love talking with them about our lives.

There has been quite a bit of violence while I've been there; twice the workshop was destroyed by a bomb and had to move. It has been a humbling experience to be in a place where women fight for basic rights, the young work toward democracy, and the country is begging for freedom.

Where do you think does your sense for adventure come from?

When my father died, when I was eight, my mother—who loved to travel—decided to discover the world with her kids as companions. We went all over: North Africa, East Africa, Turkey, Mexico and India. It was an incredible experience for a young person to get glimpses of other parts of the world, see the realities of life and learn history and culture firsthand.

Of course, travel can also bring lonely or frightening moments, and I know I sacrificed a conventional marriage by being on the road so much. But I just gave birth to my twins, Mac and Madu, and although I am an older mother, at age forty-three, I have a huge excitement about showing my children the world. I can't wait to introduce them to all the people and beautiful places I have been so lucky to know.

What was your first project abroad?

Consulting for Gucci during Tom Ford's reign was an incredible opportunity for me to learn about design and to create different kinds of pieces. It also allowed me to earn the money to start my first project, in Botswana. We designed and made bags with imaginative beadwork, jewelry, embroidery and painting, which I brought back to London and showed at Rebecca Hossack Gallery. Along with the bags, we displayed photos and a short film about the creators. It was important that visitors could see the faces and hands of the people and the landscapes where this work came from. The pieces were very popular; it was just at the time when the consumer was becoming interested in where things were produced and how. I realized that the tide was changing and there was a new openness to high-quality pieces created by skilled craftspeople around the world.



Where in the world do you love to travel most?

My second home would have to be India, a country I've been visiting since I was seventeen. Rajasthan is a wild and beautiful landscape, especially the Thar Desert, which stretches to Pakistan. Tribes living off the land and maharajas still living in their palaces coexist. My favorite thing to do is to go horseback riding in the countryside, past nomads with their herds, farmers working the land, herds of camels.

Where are you traveling next?

On my next trip to India, I will be working on a new collection with the craftspeople I have been collaborating with for more than a decade. I am taking my children there, and they will get to meet all the people I've grown so close to over the years. This year I am also planning to go to Chile to do a project with the Mapuche Indians. These people make beautiful traditional silver jewelry in very stylized forms. It would be amazing to have the chance to work with them.

[Read more Style interviews on Indagare.com.](#)

just back from

Seeking Serenity in Bhutan

In today's ever-connected world, the destinations that feel truly remote are increasingly precious. **Brooke Pearson** reports from Bhutan.



About the size of Switzerland, the landlocked kingdom of Bhutan, at the foot of the Himalayas, has remained isolated and protected from the outside world for centuries. Although outside influences are slowly beginning to come in, Bhutan's strict rules curbing tourism and its serious commitment to maintaining the pristine landscapes ensure that a trip here still feels truly special.

Bhutan purports to be home to the happiest people on earth, according to the Gross National Happiness metric, which was invented here. Television was introduced only in 1999, and whole regions of the country fall into complete darkness after sunset. As I read these facts about the Himalayan kingdom before my arrival, I assumed that the Bhutanese were happy because they don't know what they're missing. (Once *Homeland* and *House of Cards* are in the

picture, how can anyone be happy who isn't up to date?) But after spending ten days exploring the country's peaks and valleys, listening to monks chant, eating spicy *ema datshi*, taking long walks through farmers' fields, receiving a phallic blessing by a monk at the fertility temple and watching masked dancers at the Punakha festival perform for eager locals cloaked in bright silk brocades, I realized how wrong I was.

These are not people who are happy because of ignorance or isolation. The Bhutanese don't tie happiness to their accomplishments—it's not related to achieving goals, amassing wealth or sophistication or beauty. Happiness in Bhutan isn't contingent—happiness is being. And I must say, it rubs off.

During my ten days, I completely surrendered to the rugged mountains, the soft rice paddies, the hilltop dzongs and the simple Buddhist

devotion to kindness. I took long walks through villages and pastures, watched the topography change with the altitude during our drives from valley to valley. I laughed at silly jokes told by our guides and watched the sun set from an herb-filled wooden bathtub heated with red-hot stones. I asked questions and learned over and over how accepting and open the Bhutanese culture is. I witnessed a sense of community that transcends family. The fact that in Bhutan the line between neighbors and siblings is nearly indiscernible made me realize that back home in Manhattan I don't even know the names of the people who share my walls.

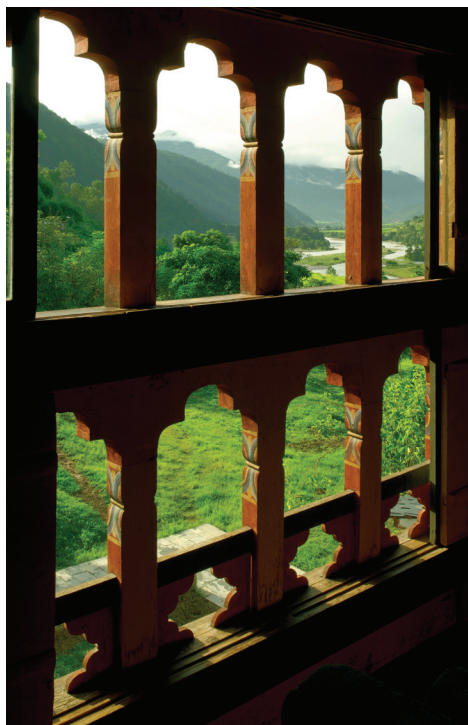
Bhutan is a magical, secret world where the mountains, religion, community, history and humor are woven together like the thick, strong

yak rope I bought from a nomadic woman in a field as a souvenir. The country, wedged between the superpowers India and China, has fewer than 800,000 citizens but landscapes whose grandeur is hard to describe, with the snowcapped Himalayas reaching more than 7,500 meters into the sky. The king is loved, and although the monarchy has made a stringent effort to stave off the “Western tsunami” (as one monk put it), the modern outside world is seeping through. Monks have cell phones, and the “city” boys of Thimphu, the nation's capital, have embraced the hairstyles of Korean pop stars.

Visitors come to Bhutan for the alpine hiking and pristine natural beauty, for a spiritual journey and summertime monsoon hikes through the Haa Valley in search of the mystical fields of six-foot-tall poppies. They come to Bhutan to spend their precious vacation days living in another world and maybe to experience the Bhutanese brand of happiness. Over the course of my ten days, I crossed paths with exactly twelve other Western tourists. Considering that Angkor Wat is attracting more than 8,000 tourists every day, it's easy to understand why Bhutan feels so enchanted. For a country that is—on paper, at least—so behind the times, it sure has a lot to teach the rest of us. I returned home without the requisite bag of souvenirs but with a firm plan to invite my neighbors over for dinner.

Who Should Go: In comparison with its more frenetic Asian neighbors, Bhutan is calm and gentle. People who love being outside and exploring with a sense of curiosity and adventure will enjoy this special destination. Families with children will be greeted with extra warmth, and kids have room to roam.

When to Go: There are good times and better times. The high seasons are mid-September to



mid-November, and mid-March to May. The shoulder seasons are also wonderful: December and January daytime temperatures are brisk but not cold, and during our February trip it was sunny and short-sleeve weather on several days. Evenings are chilly. Summertime brings the rains but also the vibrant flora.

Getting There: The only way in is via Bhutan's national carrier, Druk Air. It has direct flights from Bangkok, Delhi and Singapore. (The arrival into Paro is absolutely thrilling. Sit on the left side of the plane for the best views.)

What To Know: Bhutan has made a concerted effort to create a tourism industry focused on high end and low impact. Visitors from all nations except India must obtain a visa and have to spend a minimum of \$250 per person per day, \$65 of which goes to the government. You must have a guide—there is no doing Bhutan solo. A great guide becomes so much more in the course of your journey.

What to Read: Before a trip, read more about the country, its people and culture. Here are some recommended titles: *Beyond the Sky and the Earth: A Journey into Bhutan*, Jamie Zeppa,

1999—The true story of a young Canadian who moved to Bhutan's wilderness to teach children in one of earth's most remote countries.

The Circle of Karma, A Novel, Kunzang Choden, 2005—The first book to be published by a Bhutanese woman, this coming-of-age story follows a young woman's journey through Bhutan and into India.

Radio Shangri-La: What I learned on my Accidental Journey to the Happiest Kingdom on Earth, Lisa Napoli, 2012—A radio journalist from Los Angeles moves to Bhutan and examines why the country is considered the happiest in the world.

The Raven Crown, Michael Aris, 2005—A former Himalayan Studies Research Fellow at Oxford University, Aris details the history of the Bhutanese kingdom and brings us several newly found historic photographs.

So Close to Heaven, The Vanishing Buddhist Kingdoms of the Himalayas, Barbara Crossette, 1996—*New York Times* correspondent Crossette visits the remaining areas where Tantric Buddhism remains strong, including Bhutan.





Cartagena Getaway

An **Indagare member** reports on her impressions of the Colombian city, that is bursting with cool hotels and restaurants.

We had a wonderful time on our trip. Although not empty, the city is definitely not filled with tourists, and we found that tables at all the good restaurants were readily available. The city feels like it is setting itself up to be an increasingly popular destination. I loved our hotel, the **Casablanca** (I would recommend one of the ten junior suites). The hotel staff was fabulous and seemed delighted to accommodate us with “language lessons” along with packed lunches when we wanted to head to the beach. We did have the opportunity to see the fantastic rooms at the new **Casa San Augustin**. The public areas and pool are also beautiful, and some of the

higher-level rooms have their own pools and terraces.

In terms of other discoveries: **El Santisimo**, a restaurant and bar, was very good and lively, and **La Vitrola** should not be missed (this is probably the one place that reservations would be necessary). **Club de Pesca** is in a lot of guidebooks, but I’m not sure I would recommend it. It’s on the water, so it got windy, and it seemed to be geared toward tourists—there was a band that performed Nat King Cole songs. We were much more interested in Latin music and finding someplace to fake our salsa moves, so were happy to discover **Donde Fidel**, between De los Coches Square and Aduana Square. It’s a dive but

fun and very popular. **Hotel Club Havana**, at Calle de la Media Luna, and Calle del Guerrero is also a hit, but the band doesn’t start until after midnight, so pace yourselves. For the local beach scene, I recommend hiring a boat to take the ten-minute ride across bay from Castillo Grande to the island of **Tierra Bomba** for the afternoon. We also took a cab to the Boca Grande beach, rented a beach chair and swam in calm water. Seven days was perhaps too long for our visit (four to five days would be ideal), but we are pretty good at doing nothing. Cartagena was a perfect and easy getaway.

[Read many more member reviews and dispatches on Indagare.com.](#)

Tierra Patagonia



Spotlight: Patagonia

Indagare's **Alex Erdman** travels to Chile and discovers that sometimes we have to go the edge of the world to find ourselves.

Most of us are lucky to meet people in life who inspire us so greatly that they mold the people we are and/or hope to become. I believe there are destinations that have the same powerful effect—places that we connect with on such a deep and unexpected level that their mere existence in the world changes us. For me, Chilean Patagonia was one of those destinations.

While neighboring Argentinian Patagonia has been a travel hot spot for years, its Chilean counterpart has only recently arrived on the traveler's must-see list, thanks in part to two glorious new lodges. (Tierra Patagonia is already open; the other, Awasi, is still in the works.) But as spectacular as these newcomers are, it's the landscapes and otherworldly nature that enchant a visitor.

As a country, Chile is as long as the United States is wide, with Patagonia in the southern tip and the Atacama Desert in the north, near Bolivia and Peru. The country's capital, Santiago, is located in the middle and is a two-hour flight from Puerto Mont and a four-hour flight from Punta Arenas, both part of Chilean Patagonia. My itinerary kicked off with a few days in the north, hiking and



biking in the Atacama desert, before my group embarked on the 12-hour journey to arrive what we came to think of (fondly) as, The End of the World, namely the Torres del Paine National Park. Two plane rides and a four-hour drive later, we arrived at Tierra Patagonia just after dark. I knew that the property, which opened in December of 2011, had views of the Paine Massif, but the reality of waking up to the bright pink sunrise was indescribable. I was already sold. That first morning, we mapped out an itinerary for

the next four days. The hotel offers a long list of excursions to its guests, ranging from boat rides up to Glacier Grey and long walks to view the area's fauna to more challenging hikes to the Base las Torres. There's also a host of activities for younger children. My goal was to be outside and hike as much as possible but there were other guests who seemed less keen on non-stop activity, and they seemed equally happy and entertained at the end of the days.

Tierra Patagonia is located just outside the gates of the

National Park, on a private concession (while the Explora is located within), but the setting actually had its benefits. The surrounding area is only accessible to guests of the property, making the experience more special (and exclusive), and we were also able to visit some privately owned estancias. In comparison, during our hike on part of the popular W circuit inside the park, I encountered hundreds of other hikers en route.

Each of my days in Patagonia was packed. I hiked to see the Condors, horseback rode



Patagonia Insider

WHO SHOULD GO

Patagonia tops the list for most outdoor enthusiasts but can also be enjoyed by both those who are younger or a bit older. Most days are focused around 2 short activities or a longer full day hike. We found that both the adventurous as well as the more sedentary members of our party were pleased.

WHEN TO GO

The best time to visit Patagonia is in the Southern Hemisphere summer. Spring begins in October and fall ends at the end of April. The holidays can be quite crowded however and both the spring and fall are wonderful times to visit.

GETTING THERE

Getting to Torres del Paine requires a journey and most often includes a flight as well as a drive. Flights into Puntas Arenas depart daily from Santiago and take approximately four hours. Torres del Paine National Park is located an additional four-hour drive from the airport. Another option is to visit the Argentine side first, flying from Buenos Aires into El Calafate (a 3-hour flight). After a few nights there, visitors can head to Torres del Paine by car (a 4-hour drive).

ITINERARY TIPS

Since Torres del Paine is quite hard to reach it's a great opportunity to pair time there with another Patagonian property, like Cliffs Preserve in Chile or Eolo in Argentina. Visitors can also plan longer trips in either country with stops in destinations like the Atacama Desert, Easter Island, Bariloche or Puerto Mont.

to fresh water springs and took an exhilarating, two-hour hike to one of most incredible vistas of the entire park. The most challenging was the Base las Torres hike, an 11-mile extravaganza that takes about eight hours to complete and rises more than 2,500 feet to the base of the Torres (towers). Arriving on the peak, post a final ascent across mounds of boulders, I felt totally at peace.

The energy and power of Patagonia's landscapes was palpable every step of the way, and it resonated deep within many of us who visited. After climbing up the last boulder to catch a glimpse of the Torres and the glacial pool beneath, I felt connected to the earth in a way I've never experienced.

When the van pulled away from the hotel on my final day, the immensity of the journey came crashing in around me. Minutes after leaving, I was heartbroken to leave this setting. But at the same time, I also felt reset and focused.

The trip to Chile made me realize how important spending time in the great outdoors is for my mental health. Patagonia gave me a chance to remove myself from my day-to-day and to see what is important. Obviously the region has had this effect on others. Watching the terrific documentary *180° South*, I was struck by this quote, by Jeff Johnson, which sums up the experience beautifully: "I'm drawn to open country. It's where everything becomes clear, where the world makes the most sense. When I put myself out there, I always return with something new."

For help planning an itinerary to Chile and Argentina, contact our Bookings Team: 212-988-2611.

South African Romance

Indagare members DFC and ES recently returned from their South African honeymoon. Here are their impressions of the special journey.



As I mentioned, the honeymoon was absolutely amazing. I would be thrilled to have a vacation that nice ever again.

First Stop: La Residence. This was the biggest surprise of the trip. We couldn't have enjoyed the area or hotel any more than we did. The service was through the roof; it redefined for me what a hotel can do for its guests. The food in Franschhoek rivaled or exceeded the best meals we've had in Paris. We loved the pace of each day—extremely relaxing, with just enough activity to keep us from getting bored. I would have happily stayed an extra day or two. It would have been great to see Stellenbosch too. If I had known how much we could enjoy the wine country, I might have skipped Hermanus and allocated the extra days to Franschhoek and Stellenbosch. **Second Stop: Birkenhead House.** Beautiful. Loved that the beach was so vast and empty. The views were incredible. We had a nice routine of drinks on the terrace before dinner each night. Three nights was just about right. **Third Stop: Ellerman House.** What an amazing hotel! One of my mother-in-law's very well-traveled friends insists this is her favorite hotel in the entire world. The

building and the grounds were unbeatable. We really enjoyed the food scene in Cape Town and did a pretty good job of eating at a variety of restaurants. One day I think we had twenty-two individual courses. **Fourth Stop: Singita Ebony.** We knew this portion of the trip would be amazing, and it was. We saw every animal we hoped to within the first two drives. We still can't get over how close to the animals we were. Lions walked within several feet of my wife's elbow. The cats were our favorites. The warthogs were the underdog surprise. We saw the carcass of an antelope hanging from a tree—incredible stuff. We could have stayed two nights and still seen all the animals, but it might have felt a little short. I would definitely recommend that safaris longer than four nights be split among multiple properties. We've been told that Singita is developing a new lodge in Mozambique that should be ready in two or three years. We're serious about using that as an excuse to get back to Africa. Our guide was terrific; he had a biology degree from a Mexican university. We knew it would be a terrific trip, but I don't think either of us expected to like the country/area so much that it would be a priority for us to go back.

photo portfolio

Where in the World...

Guess the locations of these stunning destinations, visited by the well-traveled Indagare Team in recent months.

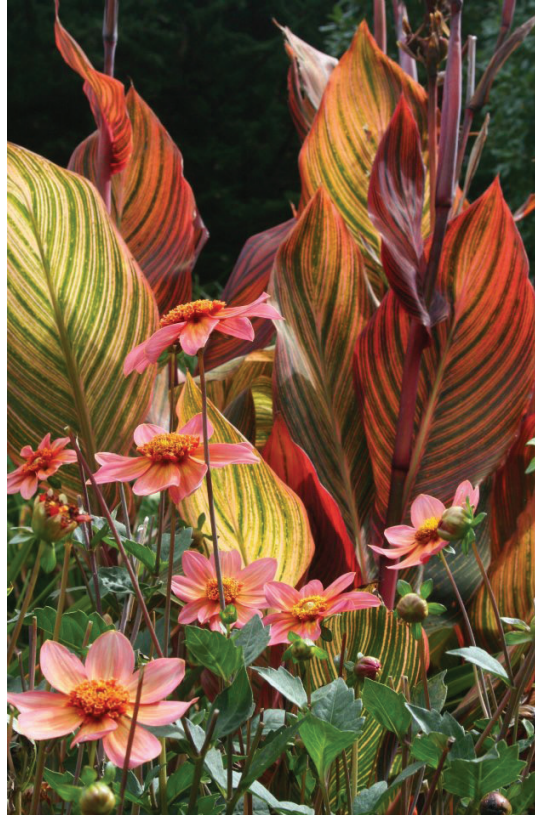


#1: HINT

If had to choose one word to describe this country, it would be subtle. Its people are deeply spiritual. Its landscapes are more poetic than dramatic. Its beauty unfolds gently and serenely. You have to slow down and pay attention to let it reveal itself." -MELISSA BIGGS BRADLEY

#2: HINT

“For the past ten days, I have reveled in exploring this land of otherworldly beauty. The foodie culture was one happy surprise, another was the overall sense of safety and wholesomeness. In some ways, a trip here feels like going back to a more innocent time.” ~ELIZA HARRIS



#3: HINT

“Even though this place is as remote as it gets, I have never felt more connected to the world—to life. Something about the landscapes and expanses resonated deep within. The natural beauty is simply otherworldly.” ~ALEX ERDMAN





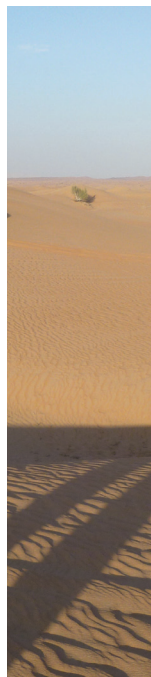
#4: HINT

"I had the unique experience of visiting during a time of political, economic and religious uncertainty (including a deadlocked parliamentary election). Despite the upheaval, however, the incredible combination of history, culture and food continues to cast its spell." -LIZZIE MCGIRR



#6: HINT

"It feels surreal to visit this metropolis with its gleaming skyscrapers, some of the world's most opulent hotels and massive malls (one with indoor skiing). Then, in just over thirty minutes, you can be in the open desert, surrounded by barren land for miles and watching the sunset from the back of a camel." -TARA TUNNEY



#5: HINT

"Around we go...this famous bar in the American West is far from ordinary. Saddle stools, a secret escape tunnel through the basement and a big neon sign out front—it's a must visit. A picture is worth a million dollars." -MONIQUE BRENDEL





#7: HINT:

"I was breathless throughout most of this journey. Some of that was due to strenuous exercise in extremely high altitude, but mostly I was rendered dumbstruck by my proximity to the world's highest mountains, unbelievably clear vistas and the kindness of the region's Buddhist culture."
 ~AMELIA OSBORNE



#8: HINT

"This oasis of impeccable service and contemporary design, a three-hour flight from New York City, feels like a piece of Asia was transported to the Caribbean" ~BARKLEY HICKOX



#9: HINT:

"Locals don't tie happiness to accomplishments—it's not from achieving goals, amassing wealth or beauty. Happiness isn't dependent, happiness is being." ~BROOKE PEARSON



ANSWERS:

1: Myanmar. 2: New Zealand. 3: Chilean Patagonia. 4: Florence. 5: Million Dollar Cowboy Bar, Jackson Hole. 6: Dubai. 7: Everest Base Camp Trek, Nepal. 8: Amanyara, Turks & Caicos. 9: Bhutan.



metropolitan
BY COMO

LONDON BY COMO

IS ABOUT EXPERIENCING THE CITY'S GLAMOUR, COCOONED IN LUXURY





The Halkin, and its new Basque restaurant Ametsa with Arzak Instruction, offers a discreet neighbourhood address in Georgian Belgravia with some of the most elegant suites in town. On nearby Park Lane, the Metropolitan hotel with its iconic Met Bar and Michelin-starred nobu restaurant, promises cool Mayfair glamour and a spectacular penthouse overlooking Hyde Park. Add to this our new COMO Shambhala Urban Escape, offering COMO's signature holistic treatments in the city's heart, and London is no longer just a world capital bursting with energy, but a private place to relax. www.comohotels.com



THE HALKIN
BY COMO



London & Beyond

Elena Bowes, Amelia Osborne and **Simone Girner** visit the British capital, covering its best hotels, restaurants and rich cultural offerings.

On first glance, London had its moment in the spotlight—last year. The joyful Summer Olympics, bookended by spectacular opening and closing ceremonies (Spice Girls reunion, anyone?); the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee, celebrated in abysmal weather but with high spirits; and a general national euphoria over newly wedded, extremely popular, first couple Kate and William. But a packed social calendar always brings with it the prerequisite crowds (many London natives fled the city in droves during the Olympics), making this year a much better time to visit. Now the infrastructure and updates that preceded 2012 can be enjoyed without battling for Black Cabs and dinner reservations.

This issue of Indagare’s Black Book magazine celebrates the best of the British capital, including restaurant hot spots, quintessential British shops and historic homes and gardens beyond the city. Perhaps more so than any other city in the world, London excels at blending a stoic belief in traditionalism with an uncanny

sense of trend-setting. This is the city that loves the uniform spectacle of a changing guard as much as it does the bellbottomed brilliance of a David Bowie. A city that cherishes history and a stiff upper lip (Bette Midler once quipped: “When it’s three o’clock in New York, it’s still 1938 in London.”). But it’s also a place that fully embraces the cutting-edge more than any other European capital. (Can you picture the gleaming new Shard tower popping up in the Parisian skyline?) Best of all, London is a city that invites even first-time visitors to play along.

Indagare’s Bookings Team can arrange a host of activities that take you behind the scenes of this vibrant city. From a private viewing of the Crown Jewels to an excursion in the footsteps of Harry Potter, these special tours strive to capture the heart of the British capital, with all its nuances and idiosyncrasies.

Enjoy this magazine, recommending what not to miss in London now, as well as four fabulous resorts beyond the city. Contact our team before your next trip there: 212-988-2611.

Book My Trip: The Indagare Advantage

We Know More...

Our personal team is constantly traveling, to give you the most relevant, unique and up-to-date recommendations.

We Think More...

We are frequent travelers and we pool our knowledge and members’ feedback to tweak the details of your trip.

We Care More...

There’s no such thing as a “best” hotel or destination. We customize all your trips based on your preferences.

We Do More...

Think of us as your advocates who go above and beyond to ensure that each trip is packed with special touches.

We Get More...

We secure special rates and amenities at hundreds of properties worldwide, including upgrades and VIP treatment.

There is no bookings fee for Indagare members. Contact us at 212-988-2611 or bookings@indagare.com.

LAY OF THE LAND

Today's London is an amalgamation of numerous villages, some dating back to ancient Roman times. As a result, the city's neighborhoods have distinct personalities and attributes. Traveling from west to east, Notting Hill and Kensington are primarily residential and home to some hidden restaurants and boutiques. Chelsea, South Kensington and Knightsbridge are ideal for strolling and shopping, with some excellent cafés and famed British stores like Harvey Nichols. Mayfair is where you'll find many of the city's grandest hotels and restaurants like Claridge's and The Square. Meanwhile the West End, Soho and Covent Garden districts are famous for its theaters, museums and general hubbub (see: Picadilly Circus).

Major historical sightseeing (such as the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey and the London Eye) is located in central London. In the east is "The City," the financial district and hip neighborhoods like Shoreditch and

Clerkenwell, home to some seriously cool restaurants. Directly across the Thames, South Bank is a foodie destination with funky restaurants and the cult favorite Borough Market.

GETTING AROUND

Black Cabs are pricier and harder to come by than taxis in other cities, but the Underground or "tube" is quick, clean and safe. If you plan on staying in the city for more than a couple days and using the underground system, look into purchasing a multi-day card. Be aware that you must present your ticket as you exit the station, so keep it handy.

London is an example of a city that has perfected the airport transfer (New York City, take note). Heathrow and Gatwick Express trains run between the airports and Paddington or Victoria train stations (respectively) multiple times per hour. Tickets can be purchased in advance or just before departure, and they are significantly cheaper than taxis.





Clockwise from top: London skyline, Penshurst Place Garden (in Kent); a room at the Covent Garden Hotel





WHERE TO STAY

Here are some of Indagare's favorite properties in the British capital. Many more reviews and suggestions can be found on Indagare.com. *For help deciding which property is the best match for your next trip, contact our Bookings Team.*

LUXURY

The Berkeley

This is the kind of discreet, elegant hotel preferred by people who like to be well taken care of but don't like a lot of fuss. Indagare members have raved about the spot-on service, fabulous rooftop pool and child friendliness (rooms can be outfitted by request with everything from high chairs, Game Boy Advances and bottle warmers to child-sized terry robes and slippers). The 214 rooms, many of which have views extending to Hyde Park, are conservative and comfortable, and the location is perfect: with easy access to major sites within the city, as well as adjacent to Hyde Park and the Knights-

bridge shopping district. The prêt-à-porter tea, with fashion-inspired treats, is famous. *Read Indagare's review.*

The Connaught

An Indagare Adored property, the centrally located Connaught has long been one of the top hotels in London. It conveys an unmistakable sense of dignity and gravitas. Its atmosphere, architecture and staff all seem to say, "This is how you run a proper hotel." The property emerged from an extensive renovation in 2007 with a supremely successful blend of historic and contemporary details: antiques and original architectural flourishes (most notably the massive mahogany staircase) were preserved, juxtaposed with such winning new touches as a wing with 33 airier rooms, a proper gym and a sleek Aman spa, as well as a fine dining restaurant overseen by Michelin-starred chef Hélène Darroze. The David Collins–designed Bar is a hot spot for a predinner cocktail. *Read Indagare's review.*



From left: The Halkin hotel; a terrace suite at the Connaught; a sitting room at the Covent Garden Hotel

GRAND

+ Claridge's

If you want to live large, this London icon, on the corner of Brook and Davies Streets, is the place to do it, especially in its glamorous public spaces. Popular with presidents, kings, prime ministers and movie stars, the 203-room hotel artfully combines history, Art Deco charm and top-notch service, all under one opulent roof. The English Old Guard especially loves it—as does anyone who appreciates huge marble baths and showerheads the size of hubcaps. Some of the property's newest suites were designed by British darling David Linley, who took inspiration from Classical and Art Deco periods.

Read Indagare's review.

+ Dorchester

A storied hotel with a great parkside location between Marble Arch and Hyde Park Corner, the Dorchester lays its luxury on thick, which may be one reason it has long been the first choice in London many for celebrities and

Middle Eastern royals. All the rooms on the front overlook Hyde Park. The simpler rooms are decorated in a supremely comfortable English style with floral chintzes; the suites have more elaborate Art Deco and Regency furniture and fabrics. The enormous lobby foyer is always abuzz with arrivals, departures and rendezvous, making the Dorchester a place to be seen, if not necessarily heard above the crowd.

Read Indagare's review.

BOUTIQUE

+ 45 Park Lane

Located next to the flashy Dorchester

+ **Indagare Plus** Members who book through Indagare receive preferential rates and/or special amenities at the properties with the Indagare Plus symbol. There is no bookings fee for members. Indagare is a Preferred Partner of Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts, Orient-Express, Rocco Forte and many others. Our Bookings Team can also procure American Express Platinum and Centurion card benefits.



The rooftop of the Berkeley

flagship in Mayfair, this 45-room boutique hotel (also part of the Dorchester Collection) occupies a restored historic building that used to house London's Playboy Club. French designer Thierry Despont created impressive but cool interiors sporting original contemporary art, including works by Damian Hirst, chocolate-brown suede walls and pretty limed mahogany. With no reception area and intimate interiors, 45 Park Lane feels less like a hotel than a cozy club, especially in cool Bar 45, on the first floor. *Read Indagare's review.*

Covent Garden

Divine, not too pricey and situated in the heart of London's theater district, Covent Garden has an intimate and clubby atmosphere that draws a star-studded crowd. Part of the Firdale Group, it was designed by the talented Kit Kemp, who lovingly decorated each of the fifty-eight bedrooms and suites in a different style. Indagare members have commented that this is a great choice for theater-going visitors as

well as families (it's in the middle of many tourist sights). But do not expect the neighborhood to feel quiet or tucked away; you are staying in the middle of bustling Covent Garden.

Read Indagare's review.

Metropolitan

The sister hotel of the Halkin (also owned and run by the Comco Hotel Group), the Metropolitan is a fashion darling, with hip but minimalist interiors, a Zen vibe, and boasting a branch of Nobu and one of London's most acclaimed spas on the premises. Many rooms overlook Hyde Park, and those on higher floors are veritable cocoons of serenity floating above the green expanse. The members-only Met Bar remains one of London's trendiest meeting spots (guests have automatic access). *Read Indagare's review.*

The Stafford London Kempinski

The 109 rooms of this historic hotel are scattered throughout three distinct buildings in the Edwardian St. James neighborhood, includ-

ing a main house (recently refurbished), the romantic Carriage House (former stables with country home interiors) and the Stafford Mews, added in 2007 and housing surprisingly modern suites. A quintessential British vibe prevails, and even though the hotel is just steps from Piccadilly and the area's acclaimed contemporary art galleries, it feels wonderfully tucked away and quiet. The American Bar has been one of London's most famous watering holes for visitors since the 1930s. *Read Indagare's review.*

HIDEAWAY

Halkin

Founded by Singaporean hotelier Christina Ong, this boutique hotel, on a quiet street in Belgravia, is a favorite retreat for the fashion crowd. The rooms, with their minimal clutter and cream-colored fabrics, feel like experiments in inducing serenity. If working out is part of your daily ritual, you will have to hoof it to the Halkin's sister hotel, the Metropolitan, to use its small basement gym, which is decidedly less glamorous than doing yoga back in your meditative room. *Read Indagare's review.*

The Goring

This elegant boutique hotel near Buckingham Palace in Belgravia is where Kate Middleton decided to spend the night before her wedding. The vibe here is traditional English, particularly in its excellent service. In fact, the

Goring is one of the few truly old-school English hotels left in London. Interiors boast silk wall coverings and lovely whimsical touches (a toy sheep on every bed) that give the Goring a lot of character. Each of the sixty-eight rooms has a different decor. In good weather breakfast is served on a patio overlooking the croquet lawn. This is a great option for those who want a larger hotel without the luxury label or who prefer a property that feels English through and through. Belgravia's excellent cafés, restaurants and shops are all within walking distance. *Read Indagare's review.*

The Knightsbridge

This forty-four-room boutique property, part of the Firdale empire, resembles an haute version of a bed and breakfast. Interiors (courtesy of Kit Kemp) are stylish and contemporary while still quintessentially British: snug sitting rooms, sandstone fireplaces, a library for afternoon tea. There's no restaurant, but a wonderful breakfast is served in the sitting rooms (room service is also available). Tucked among elegant, residential townhouses, the Knightsbridge is also very well located for first-time visitors: down the street from Harrods, Harvey Nichols and the V&A Museum. *Read Indagare's review.*

For help booking a stay in London, contact Indagare's Bookings Team at 212-988-2611.

London Matchmaker

Even more than in Paris or Rome, picking the hotel that's right for you in London can be tricky. The capital is a huge sprawl, so where you are based is key. Opting for a five-star barely narrows down the field. Your choice will depend on whether you prefer grand or petite, classic British or contemporary, quiet or with a scene. The Indagare travel team includes many London experts who revisit the city annually and so can make personalized recommendations. To talk to one of them about the hotels mentioned in this report, as well as such other acclaimed properties as the **Corinthia**, the **Savoy**, the **Four Seasons Park Lane**, the **Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park** and many others, contact our Bookings Team by email: bookings@indagare.com or by calling 212-988-2611.

Le Blanc, Saul Mont, FRANCE 2010
 Easy to enjoy. A perfect balance of floral and savory notes £12.65

Wien 1, R&A Pöf, Vienna, AUSTRIA 2010
 Dry, with a long, rock finish £21.50

Balotti Bianco, Piedmont, ITALY, 2010 (BIO)
 Nose of lilies, dry spices, quince with hot veg, walnuts and a long finish £27.50

Bourgogne Blanc "les Saulniers" Montanet-Thoden
 FRANCE 2009 (ORG)
 An elegant wine - it has liveliness and freshness £35.00

Primitivo Fatale, Puglia ITALY 2010 (ORG)
 Authentic and rustic, once you do try it, you go back

St Laurent, Johannesberg, Austria
 This wine has an excellent balance and wonderful nose

Rosso Dell'abazia, Langhe & Roero, ITALY 2010
 Complex, creamy and full bodied. Aged wine with



Clockwise, from top: Ottolenghi; Dock Kitchen; Pizarro

WHERE TO EAT

Here are some of Indagare's favorite restaurants in the British capital. Many more reviews and suggestions can be found on Indagare.com.

Chelsea/South Kensington

The Sloane Ranger might be an outdated term, but it still applies to this area's style. Cute shops and news houses fill the pedestrian-friendly district, which also includes Belgravia, Brompton, Pimlico, Knightsbridge and Hyde Park.

Nearby Hotels: *The Berkeley, Halkin, the Goring, the Knightsbridge*

This district abounds with cozy neighborhood spots tucked among Michelin-rated establishments. Start the day at the bustling **Colbert**, a brasserie-style hot spot in the mold of Paris's Café de Flore and Les Deux Magots that is open from breakfast until late at night. Terrific for lunch are the congenial **Tom's Kitchen**, with long wooden tables, open-to-view kitchen and deliciously simple dishes, and The Harwood

COURTESY (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP): OTTOLENGHI; DOCK KITCHEN; PIZARRO; PHOTO BY PAUL WINCH-FURNESS

Arms, a local gastropub serving British specialties. **Tinello**, an intimate Tuscan restaurant, has a convenient location near Sloane Square; diners in the mood for *soupe de poisson* and grilled rabbit should head to **Racine**, a bistro dedicated to classic French dining. After an afternoon of antiquing on Pimlico Road, **Daylesford Organic** is an ideal spot for a pick-me-up cappuccino and slice of chestnut pie.

A great choice for dinner is **Medlar**, an old-school establishment where seating is comfortable and the art is as well curated as the French-inspired menu. Chelsea and Belgravia are also home to two of London's most acclaimed Indian restaurants, both *Michelin*-starred: the tiny and refined **Rasoi Vineet Bhatia** and the flashy **Amaya**, with a fun bar scene. Even more *Michelin* stars are found at the Halkin and the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park: they house, respectively, **Ametsa by Arzak** and **Dinner by Heston Blumenthal**, two of London's top culinary tables. Expect lengthy, expertly prepared tasting menus and pitch-perfect surroundings.

Notting Hill/Kensington

Mainly residential, the Notting Hill/Kensington area (which also includes Bayswater) specializes

in cute neighborhood spots for all-day dining. Beautiful one-off shops can be found on the village-like Westbourne Grove, Portland Road and Blenheim Crescent.

Notting Hill is home to the chef whose deceptively simple style inspired a foodie fan craze: Yotam Ottolenghi. The Notting Hill deli where it all started, **Ottolenghi**, is a must for breakfast or a quick break from boutique shopping; its countertops are veritable feasts for the eyes. Notting Hill has also attracted two of Australia's most renowned culinary names: Bill Granger, Sydney's sunny-natured celebrity chef, runs trendy newcomer **Granger & Co.**, which serves breakfast until 5 P.M. and is famous for its brunch; Brett Graham oversees the two-*Michelin*-starred **Ledbury**, whose lunch tasting menu is a culinary treat.

If you're exploring Kensington Garden, a good spot for lunch is **Clarke's**, a longtime mainstay serving dependable food prepared with the very best market ingredients. Those preferring a trendy setting should head north to the **Dock Kitchen**, located in furniture designer Tom Dixon's headquarters overlooking the Grand Union Canal. Or take a taxi to the

London's Best Oyster Bars

London is a city infatuated with food trends: tapas, Peruvian cooking and even savory *éclairs* are having their moments right now. The best of them are here to stay. Oyster bars are famously at home in the British capital. Here are some of Indagare's favorites:

Scott's: Its oval oyster bar is a see-and-be-seen spot for lunch and dinner. The central location makes Scott's a favorite. Mayfair. 20 Mount St.; (44 (0) 020 7495-7309.

J. Sheekey Oyster Bar: A West End institution with mirror-clad interiors. Covent Garden. 28-32 St. Martin's Court; (44) 020 7240-2565.

Wright Brothers Soho: Great during warm weather, with tables spilling onto a courtyard. 13 Kingly St.; (44) 020 7434-3611.

Bentley's: An institution with a huge variety of oysters, including Scottish, Irish Rock and Loch Ryan Natives. Piccadilly. 11-15 Swallow St.; (44) 020 7734-4756.

london: where to eat

acclaimed **River Café**, located on the banks of the Thames and so particularly winning during the summer months, which offers excellent Italian dishes and a café vibe. If, on the other hand, you're weary of trendiness, seek out the minimalist **Shiori**, in Bayswater, a Japanese Zen gem specializing in *kaiseki*. If you are touring this area during the summer, don't miss having a drink at the **Roof Gardens**, a hidden oasis perched 100 feet above one of London's busiest streets. (Garden lovers can even arrange a daytime visit.)

high, so be careful about where you choose to dine. Formal mainstays include **Cecconi's**, which showcases expert Italian cooking, and the **Square**. French cuisine is served up at Parisian-style brasserie **Bellamy's**, whose signature dishes include scrambled eggs with Périgord truffles. A more relaxed ambiance can be found at **La Petite Maison**, a transplant from the South of France that offers a Provençal menu based on a "sharing" philosophy. Another favorite is **Wild Honey**, known for its reasonable prices and French-inflected dishes. North of



From left: Clove Club; a dish at Dock Kitchen; private dining at the Connaught; Bellamy's.



Mayfair/Marylebone/Fitzrovia

Home to many of the city's most luxurious hotels, the Mayfair area is the most formal of London, as is much of its shopping district, which includes Bond and Regent Streets. Neighboring Marylebone and Fitzrovia are slightly more casual and home to shopping mecca Oxford Street.

Nearby Hotels: *Claridge's, the Connaught, the Dorchester, the Stafford, Metropolitan*

Restaurant prices in touristy Mayfair are sky-

Bond Street, Fitzrovia is home to twelve-table sensation **Dabbous**, opened in 2012. A few blocks away is another top newcomer, **Lima**, catering to London's current obsession with Peruvian food. Small plates take center-stage at **Donostia**, a new tapas bar in Marylebone that offers Basque-inspired *pintxos*. Nearby you'll find *Michelin*-starred **Locanda Locatelli**, one of London's best Italian restaurants (with prices to match), and **Bright Courtyard**, serving up-market Shanghaiese cuisine. It's always worth returning to the hot spot that made Chinese

dining trendy in the first place: sexy **Hakkasan**, which has outposts in Fitzrovia and Mayfair.

West End/ Soho/Covent Garden

If London has a heartbeat, then it's located in this area, just east of Mayfair. Many of the city's museums, including the National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery, are in Trafalgar Square, as are the majority of the theaters. Parts can be touristy, but spots like the newly revamped Café Royal keep the neighborhood, which also includes Piccadilly, interesting.

fare is served at **Hawksmoor**, the renowned steak house in a convenient spot at Seven Dials. The neighborhood's mainstays include the ever-fashionable Ivy (skip this tourist spot and visit the **Ivy Club** instead), the antiques-filled **Rules**, London's oldest restaurant, which serves properly old-school British food, and **Andrew Edmunds**, known for its romantic setting and bistro-style menu. If you're looking for more of a scene, there's the all-day **Brasserie Zedel**, whose grand Beaux Arts/Art Deco interiors alone make it worth visiting. The area is also



Nearby Hotels: *Covent Garden Hotel (and Claridge's and the Connaught of Mayfair)*

London's quintessential breakfast place is the **Wolseley**: bustling, grand and famous for its ricotta pancakes. To experience a newcomer, head to the **Café at the Café Royal**, reopened in 2013 and with floor-to-ceiling windows looking onto Regent Street. Another good pre- or posttheater spot is **Bocca di Lupo**, an Italian eatery just behind Shaftesbury Avenue and a rare find in the maze of South Soho. Heartier

home to cult chef Yotam Ottolenghi his first restaurant, **Nopi**, which has been packed since opening in 2011, and beloved Vietnamese spot **Cay Tre Soho**.

East London/ Shoreditch/ The City/ Clerkenwell

The up-and-coming neighborhoods in the eastern part of London are thriving, with an influx of young residents, hip restaurants and funky shops. The financial district, referred to as the City, is marked by the familiar Gherkin tower.

Restaurant Address Book:

Andrew Edmunds:

46 Lexington St.;
44 (0)207 437 5708

Amaya: Halkin Arcade,
Motcomb St.,
44 (0)207 823 1166

Ametsa by Arzak:

Halkin St.;
44 (0)207 333 1234

Bellamy's:

18 Bruton Pl.;
44 (0)207 491 2727

Bocca di Lupo:

12 Archer St.;
44 (0)207 734 2223

Boundary:

2-4 Boundary St.;
44 (0)207 729 1051

Bright Courtyard:

37-67 Baker St.;
44 (0)207 486 6998

Brasserie Zédel: 20
Sherwood St.; 44 (0) 20
7734 4888

Café at the Café Royal:

20 Sherwood St.;
44 (0)207 734 4888

Cay Tre Soho:

42-43 Dean St.;
44 (0)207 317 9118

Cecconi's:

5A Burlington Gardens;
44 (0)207 434 1500

Clarke's:

124 Kensington
Church St.;
44 (0)207 221 9225

Colbert:

50-52 Sloane Sq.;
44 (0)207 730 2804

Dinner by Heston

Blumenthal:

66 Knightsbridge;
44 (0)207 201 3833

Dishoom:

7 Boundary St.;
44 (0)207 420 9324

Dabbous:

39 Whitfield St.;
44 (0)207 323 1544

Dock Kitchen:

342-344
Ladbroke Grove;
44 (0)208 982 1610

Donostia Basque:

10 Seymour Pl.;
44 (0)203 620 1845

Granger & Co.:

175
Westbourne Grove;
44 (0)207 229 9111

Harwood Arms:

Walham Grove;
44 (0)207 386 1847

Hakkasan Mayfair:

17 Bruton St.;
44 (0)207 907 1888

Hawksmoor Seven

Dials: 11 Langley St.;
44 (0)207 420 9390

Ivy:

1-5 West St.;
44 (0)207 836 4751

La Petite Maison:

54 Brooks Mews;
44 (0)207 495 4774

Locanda Locatelli:

8 Seymour St.;
44 (0)207 935 9088

Lima:

31 Rathbone Pl.;
44 (0)203 002 2640

Modern Pantry:

47-48 St John's Sq.;
44 (0)207 553 9210

Moro:

34-36 Exmouth Market;
44 (0)207 833 8336

Nopi:

21-22 Warwick St.;
44 (0)207 494 9584

Oblix at the Shard:

31 St Thomas St. 32nd Fl.;
44 (0)207 268 6700

Ottolenghi:

63 Ledbury Rd.;
44 (0)207 727 1121

Pizarro:

194 Bermondsey St.;
44 (0)207 378 9455

Racine:

239 Brompton Rd.;
44 (0)207 584 4477

Rules:

35 Maiden Ln.;
44 (0)207 836 5314

Tom's Kitchen:

27 Cale St.;
44 (0)207 349 0202

Tinello:

87 Pimlico Rd.;
44 (0)207 730 3663

Tramshed:

32 Rivington St.;
44 (0)207 749 0478

Rasoi Vineet Bhatia:

10 Lincoln St.;
44 (0)207 225 1881

River Cafe:

Thames
Wharf; Rainville Rd.;
44 (0)207 386 4200

Eastern London is all about cozy dining rooms run by dedicated chefs, with breakout places getting a lot of press. Among the latter are **Tramshed**, featuring a dramatic Damien Hirst installation and seasonal British fare by star chef Mark Hix, and the **Clove Club**, conceived by supper-club impresarios Daniel Willis and Johnny Smith, who teamed up with acclaimed young chef Isaac McHale. It's located in the renovated Shoreditch Town Hall, a striking space with many of the original Edwardian features intact.

Less trendy are **Boundary**, an early adopter of the Shoreditch neighborhood, and **St. John Bread & Wine**, an all-day eatery with whitewashed walls. At **Moro**, in Clerkenwell, a husband and wife present a delicious mix of Spanish and North African food. The area also has two acclaimed Indian restaurants: the buzzing **Dishoom**, with branches in Shoreditch and Covent Garden; and Punjabi grill **Tayyabs**, serving Indian food—juicy, spicy, messy—in a loud setting. Good for all-day dining is Clerkenwell's **Modern Pantry**, which comprises a lovely restaurant and a deli.

South Bank

Often overlooked, South Bank, (best reached by walking over London Bridge) is home to some fabulous finds, such as gourmet haven Borough Market and charming cobblestoned lanes.

One of the most popular sights on this side of the river is Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, whose **Swan** restaurant, perched on the third floor, is a great option for a gastropub lunch with lovely views. Hip and trendy is **Maltby Street Market**, whose popular new **Ropewalk** is a must for visiting foodies. Down the street another hot spot luring diners south of the river is **Pizarro**, a tapas place headed by beloved Spanish chef José Pizarro. For fine dining with an expansive view, try **Oblix**, on the thirty-second floor of Renzo Piano's Shard building, itself a striking addition to the London skyline.

Cultural Calendar: May & June

Here are some highlights in the museums and on stage not to miss when visiting London this spring season.



Museums

David Bowie: The quirky Victoria & Albert is exhibiting David Bowie's fantastic costumes, music videos and pop star paraphernalia. (Victoria & Albert; through August 11)

The Queen: Portraits of a Monarch: This collection of likenesses of Queen Elizabeth II range from her childhood through to the present, and come to us from a wide array of artists. (The Royal Collection; through June 9)

Vermeer and Music: The Art of Love and Leisure: Three of Vermeer's most famous works depicting musical performances are displayed alongside paintings—and antique instruments—from his era. (The National Gallery; June 26-September 8)

THEATER

The Audience: Dame Helen Mirren plays Queen Elizabeth II in *The Audience* where she and two of her corgis meet the various twelve prime ministers that have spanned her reign, from Churchill to Cameron. (John Gielgud Theatre; through June 15).

Peter and Alice: Judi Dench and Ben Whishaw are starring in *Peter and Alice*, a new play written by John Logan (who also penned the films *Hugo* and *Skyfall*), in which real-life Peter Pan meets Alice in Wonderland at the opening of a Lewis Carroll exhibition in 1932. (Noel Coward Theatre; through June 1).

A Midsummer Night's Dream & Macbeth: Two of the Bard's most beloved plays will be performed at the fabulously authentic Globe Theater. (Shakespeare's Globe; various dates)

OPERA

Don Carlo: Nicholas Hytner directs acclaimed tenor Jonas Kaufmann in Verdi's dramatic opera. German soprano Anja Harteros and baritone Mariusz Kwiecien round out the stellar cast. (Royal Opera; May 4, 8, 11, 15, 18)

La Donna del Lago: Rossini specialists Joyce di Donato

and beloved tenor Juan Diego Florez team up in this production. (Royal Opera; May 17, 20, 23, 27, 31 and June 4, 7, 11)

Dance

6,000 Miles Away: Catch prima-ballerina Sylvie Guillem returning to London after the successful tour of this compilation of dances made for Guillem by Mats Ek, William Forsythe and Jiří Kylián. (Sadler Wells; May 20-25)

Akram Khan: The acclaimed English dancer and choreographer will premiere his new work *iTMOi* at Sadler Wells in May (28 through June 1), as well as return with the Olivier Award-winning *DESH* in June (11 through 15)

Sport

Wimbledon: The tennis championship is still held in the original Wimbledon stadiums, notable for its unforgiving grass courts. (Wimbledon; June 24-July 7)

Ascot: The most glamorous horse races of the season is undoubtedly at Ascot, which runs for four days every June. 2012's winner was a horse called "Black Caviar." (Ascot; June 18-22)

Cartier Queen's Cup Finals Day: Her Majesty the Queen presents the winning team with the trophy at the annual Cartier polo match. (Guards Polo Club; June 16)

Other

Chelsea Flower Show: The world's most beloved flower show is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. (Royal Hospital; May 21-25)

Trooping the Colour: An annual parade celebrating the Queen's birthday, this is a royal spectacle. (Mall and Buckingham Palace; June 15)

2013 Man Booker International Prize Readings: Finalists for the prestigious prize are honored at this event, which is held yearly just prior to the winner announcement. (Queen Elizabeth Hall; May 20)



WHAT TO SEE & DO

Sight-heavy cities like Paris, Rome and Vienna have a clear-cut “best of” lists that any first-time visitor can tackle. Not so London, which may be the only city in the world (besides New York) with such a wealth of sights and activities and ever-changing dining and shopping scene that it can overwhelm even the most seasoned of traveler. Creating an itinerary is all about figuring out what’s most important to you and whittling the list down to a doable number of museums, monuments and experiences. The best way to get your bearings is to go with a guide who can offer a quick introduction to the icons (Big Ben,

the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey), then immerse you in the corners of London that speak to your sensibility and interest. *Here is a short list of some Indagare favorites in London; many more can be found on Indagare.com. Contact our Bookings Team for help arranging behind-the-scenes tours: 212-988-2611.*

Sights

Many kick off their London touring in the sky, aboard the London Eye, a particular favorite with families (if you prebook a Fast Track ticket online, you can skip the long lines). Other ac-

tivities that keep the little ones entertained are visiting the Tower of London and watching the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace. Round out your initial exploration by crossing the Millennium Bridge to the South Bank to visit Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, whose Swan, a classic pub, is a great lunch spot.

Museum Classics

London's heavy hitters include the Tate Britain and Tate Modern, reachable via the Tate Boat, which runs between two. The British Museum is interesting for kids, while the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Serpentine Gallery and the Saatchi Gallery will satisfy contemporary-art hounds. The National Gallery has one of the world's most important paintings collection.

Museum In-Depth

A more in-depth museum itinerary would include the petite but excellent Wallace Collection; the Queen's Gallery, adjacent to Buckingham Palace; and the little-known Dulwich Gallery, in a building designed by Regency architect Sir John Soane. The White Cube is an important contemporary gallery, while Somerset House is popular for its many fountains during the summer and ice-skating during wintertime.

Family Friendly

London abounds with family-friendly activities, not least because of its myriad green spaces, including Hyde Park, which features horseback riding and pond with paddleboats, and Regent's Park, which contains gorgeous Queen Mary's Garden and the London Zoo. If the weather doesn't encourage outdoor exploration, head to the Aquarium, the Imperial War Museum (whose tanks and planes capture the imagination) or the Sherlock Holmes Museum on Baker Street. At the Museum of London, five galleries with interactive displays tell the story of London

from 1066 to today; for another history lesson, board the Golden Hinde, a full-sized reconstruction of a Tudor galleon. Among the most popular family activities is a tour based on the Harry Potter series, including visiting the film studios and King Cross Station, home of the magical Platform 9¾.

Contact Indagare to help plan your family friendly itinerary.

Private Access

Indagare's Bookings Team can help arrange anything from a half-day walking tour of Covent Garden to a private viewing of the crown jewels. Get backstage access to the British capital by calling us: 212-988-2611. Here's a sampling of what can be arranged.

- *Private Tour of the State Apartments of Buckingham Palace (depending on the Queen's whereabouts)*
- *Private Cruise on the Thames on a private yacht*
- *Private viewing of the Crown Jewels at the Tower of London*
- *Tour of Arsenal's Emirates Stadium, including a soccer ball practice session*
- *Private guided tour of Spencer House, the ancestral home of Lady Diana*
- *Private Tour of Prince Charles' organic gardens at Highgrove*
- *Private lunch or dinner with the owners of such historic houses as Blenheim Palace and Sudley Castle*
- *Tea with the owners of Highclere Castle (where popular TV show Downton Abbey is set)*
- *Themed children's tea party*
- *Special Tour of the Harry Potter movie set*
- *Private Dinner at the exclusive, political Carlton Club*
- *Curator guided tour at Tate Modern*
- *Private dinner at the Wallace Collection*

london: where to shop



Clockwise from top: Miller Harris; Lock & Co.; Mallon & Taub; David Gill Galleries



WHERE TO SHOP

No other city offers such diverse shopping as London, thanks to British style's renowned iconoclasm (think Vivienne Westwood, Paul Smith and Alexander McQueen). That is not to say that mainstream fashion is forgotten. Even first timers know about such famous department stores as Liberty's and Selfridges and about trendsetters who started their global empires in the British capital (Charlotte Olympia, Anya Hindmarch and Terrance Conran). Although browsing the West End, Chelsea and Marylebone is as much fun as ever, plugged-in

shoppers know which boutiques to include in an itinerary: those that carry unmistakably, only-in-London treasures.

Antiques: Guinevere

Style icon Anouska Hempel has called this antiques emporium, opened some fifty years ago by French hatter Genevieve Weaver, an "Aladdin's cave" of unique finds. Composed of four interconnected shops in the antiques ghetto of Kings Road, Guinevere includes about a dozen showrooms. Genevieve's sons, Kevin and Marc Weaver, run the business, adhering to their late

mother's philosophy that what matters is less the significance of a piece than its visual impact within a room. *Fulham. 578 Kings Rd.; 44 (0) 20 7736 2917.*

Art: Serpentine Gallery Shop

Well-known for its contemporary-art shows, the Serpentine Gallery has a fabulous shop selling limited-edition prints by artists exhibiting there. Jeff Koons, Wolfgang Tilmans, Richard Hamilton and many others have created works for the forward-thinking gallery. Prices range from £26 for Yoko Ono's sweet *Grow Love With Me* (a bean seed in a can) to £5,000 for a Philippe Parreno's acid-on-glass etching. *Kensington Gardens; 44 (0) 20 7402-6075.*

Beauty: Miller Harris

Niche perfumer Lyn Harris's thirteen-year-old shop, the site as well of her fragrance laboratory, is set on a quiet back street in Notting Hill. In addition to luxury fragrances, scented candles and bath and body lotions, Miller Harris makes its own wallpaper, teas and jams. Don't miss the new summer scent *Fleur de Sel*, which incorporates rare herbs and flowers that grow around the salt marshes of Brittany. *Notting Hill. 14 Needham Rd.; 44 (0) 20 7221-1545.*

Books: Daunt Books

Having started out as a travel-book shop, the welcoming and ever-popular Daunt, with its wide oak floors and cheery skylights, has since expanded to include a wide range of popular literature. The travel section is predictably broken down by country, but tucked within each destination are works of fiction and nonfiction, as well as essay collections. W.G. Sebald's musings on Corsica, *Campo Santo*, is found in France, while Russia includes Soviet satirist

Sergei Dovlatov. Interesting authors come to speak every month, and the Hampstead branch of Daunt's leads walking book groups through Hampstead Heath. *Marylebone; 83 Marylebone High Street; 44 (0) 7224-2295.*

Books: Lutyens and Rubinstein

Bookworms will love this shop, opened in 2009 by literary agents Sarah Lutyens and Felicity Rubinstein. They've have stocked the two-story sanctum with everything from popular novels to reprints of forgotten or neglected classics. There are also clever bespoke services, charming toys and honey made by Notting Hill bees kept by Rubinstein's husband. *Notting Hill. 21 Kensington Park Rd.; 44 (0) 20 7229-1010.*

Department Store: Peter Jones

If there is a one-stop London shop, it is this John Lewis-owned department store. The brand is as British as Mulberry cufflinks, Johnnie Walker Scotch and Molton Brown body lotion, all of which are available here. So are kettles, toasters, mattresses, clothing for all ages, appliances, lighting, linens and sports equipment. This is a enduring staple. *Chelsea; Sloane Square; 44 (0) 20 7730-3434.*

Design: David Gill Galleries

This large showroom of 20th- and 21st-century design is full of covetable statement pieces by talents who are "contemporary, strong and new," in Gill's words. Many of the works veer toward the theatrical, like the Campana Brothers' gilded bronze-and-fur armchair, Zaha Hadid's high-gloss Dune Formation furniture and Matia Bonetti's Chewing Gum table. Elton John, Madonna and Christies' owner François Pinault are all fans. *St. James; 2-4 King Street; 44 (0) 20 3195-6600.*



Eyewear: Mallon & Taub

Housed in an award-winning modern boutique, this shop sells a wide range of bespoke and handcrafted designer eyewear. The knowledgeable, helpful staff will remold glasses to suit someone's face shape, and most lenses are custom-made in Japan by Seiko Optical. Top-selling brands include German traditionalist Hoffman Natural Eyewear and French cutting-edge Gold & Wood. *Marylebone; 35d Marylebone High Street; 44 (0) 20 7935-8200.*

Fashion & Accessories: Bamford

Lady Bamford sells the kind of gorgeous clothes that she herself likes to wear and the beautifully made elegant objects that she chooses to be surrounded by. Quality trumps trend here, where materials and lasting beauty are what matter. The spare white space sets off the subtle workmanship of the wares. This is truly a shop not to miss. *Knightsbridge. 169 Draycott Avenue.; 44 (0) 20 7589-8729.*

Fashion & Accessories: Egg

This off-the-radar shop is a local favorite. Housed in a former dairy on a cobbled back street, it features an eclectic mix of fashion selected by owner Maureen Doherty (who used

to work with Issey Miyake). Look for tangerine and fuchsia handwoven scarves from India, knitted leather bags from Belgium, twisted sea-grass hats in a riot of colors, poplin pleated white dresses and an Audrey Hepburn-esque polka-dot umbrella with a cream leather handle. *Belgravia. 36 Kinnerton Street; 44 (0) 20 7838-9705.*

Fashion & Accessories: Labour and Wait

Set in a green-tiled former pub in trendy East London, Labour and Wait is the brainchild of two menswear designers who stock the light-filled shop with functional, well-designed and timeless pieces. There's also a selection of stylish housewares and accessories, like French vintage jugs and cotton canvas aprons. *Shoreditch. 85 Redchurch St.; 44 (0) 20 7729-6253.*

Fashion & Accessories: The Shop at Bluebird

Come here for an eclectic mix of fashion and lifestyle items, including ones from established names like Carven, Balenciaga, Victoria Beckham and Isabel Marant, as well as vintage, up-and-coming or exclusive labels. Look for Korean designer Eudon Choi, Peter May (whose cotton and silk dresses flatter all shapes and

sizes), Lebanese label Moka and Dutch-English duo Baartmans and Siegel. *Chelsea; 350 Kings Rd.; 44 (0)20 7351-3873.*

Fashion & Accessories: Start

This trendy East End clothing boutique was founded by Philip and Brix Start (the so-called denim doctor). It's a fun mix to browse, from Church's soft white leather brogues and Equipment's camouflage silk print shirts to Rick Owen's floor-sweeping black halter dress and Acne's pretty peach contrast dress. Look for designer Sophia Webster, whose polka-dot and heart-shoe designs are worth the trek. *Shoreditch. 42-44 Rivington St.; 44 (0)20 7033-3951.*

Hats: Lock & Co.

Winston Churchill, Charlie Chaplin, Dallas's Larry Hagman, Jeremy Irons, Penelope Cruz, even the band Mumford & Sons have worn hats from this hat shop, reportedly the world's oldest, dating to 1676. At first glance, the interiors appear small and tired, but the historic gem extends to the rear and upstairs, with a functioning workshop on the top floor. A glass case at the foot of the stairs contains a hat that belonged to the Duke of Wellington, a replica of one worn by Lord Nelson and the current queen's head block, or measurements. If only the walls could talk. *St James; 6 St. James Street; 44 (0) 20 7930-8874.*

Jewelry: Peter Edwards

London is full of excellent jewelry shops, like Mayfair's wide-ranging SJ Philips and Faberge authority Wartski, but for 20th-century designs, Peter Edwards is terrific. Not only is Edwards full of amusing anecdotes about his chosen era but the jewels he sells are beyond chic. With its modernist furniture and black-and-white

photographs, the shop is a perfect backdrop for artful pieces by Jean Fouquet, Rene Boivin, Suzanne Belperron and Pierre Sterle. *Mayfair. 26 Conduit Street; 44 (0) 20 7491-1589; peteredwardsjewels.com.*

Market: Silver Vaults

Thirty shops, mostly longtime family-run businesses, operate underground in this windowless maze of vaults (in which the elite once stored its wealth). The merchants sell everything from £10 silver bookmarks to a gigantic £275,000 chess set. If you don't feel like forking over £975 for a Victorian folding biscuit barrel, the proud dealers are more than happy to chat about their wares. *Holborn; Chancery House, Chancery Lane; 44 (0) 20 7242-3844.*

For many more shopping suggestions, including neighborhood walks through the West End, Chelsea and Notting Hill, visit Indagare.com

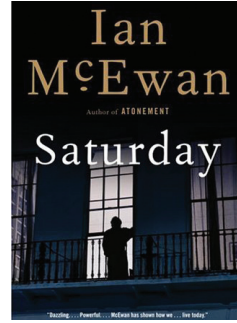
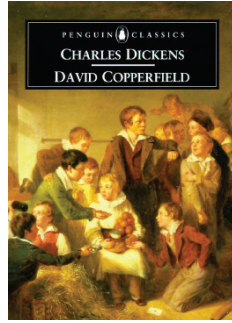


Labour & Wait

Library: Books & Films

“By seeing London, I have seen as much of life as the world can show.”

~Samuel Johnson



NONFICTION

London: The Biography, Peter Ackroyd, 2006 — Novelist/biographer Ackroyd's encyclopedic, anecdotal – and weighty – take on the capital from pre-Roman history to the present.

Changing Stages: A View of British and American Theater, Richard Eyre, Nicholas Wright, 2001

A fascinating, exhaustive, insider's look at 20th century British theater, from London's Royal National Theater's Eyre and Wright.

Life of Johnson, James Boswell, 1791 — Considered among the great biographies, this is an 18th century English-language classic.

Tea and Cake London, Zena Alkayat, 2011 — A sweet picture book highlighting the city's best places for quick or leisurely tea breaks.

Londoners: The Days and Nights of London Now, Craig Taylor 2004
A collection of stories celebrating and bemoaning the British Capital and those who “love it, hate it, live it, left it, and long for it.”

FICTION

Vanity Fair, William Makepeace Thackeray, 1847-48 — A satirical novel about the opportunistic heroine Becky Sharp

David Copperfield, Charles Dickens, 1850 — In the author's most autobiographical work, the title character comes of age in 19th Century England.

Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia Woolf, 1925 — Woolf's brilliant description of a day spent in London running errands for an evening party.

The End of the Affair, Graham Greene, 1951 — Greene's heady spiritual romance (made into a movie starring Ralph Fiennes and Julianne Moore) follows an adulterous liaison in post World War II London.

The Complete Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1886
Give meaning to your stroll down Baker Street, and re-awaken your rational powers of observation, by reading this grand-daddy of all detection fiction.

White Teeth, Zadie Smith, 2000
This break-out novel from one of today's most acclaimed writers, addresses such issues as immigration, memory and preserving one's culture. Smith was just twenty-five when it was published.

Saturday, Ian McEwan, 2004
One day in the life of McEwan's well-to-do neurosurgeon who collides with a London thug.

FOR CHILDREN

This is London, Miroslav Sasek, 1959 — This charming children's classic provides a wonderful tour of the city, its inhabitants and its monuments.

Madeleine in London, Ludwig Bemelmans — The escapades of the charming young French schoolgirl's first visit to England.

FILMS

My Fair Lady, George Cukor, 1964
Audrey Hepburn plays a working class flower seller across from Rex Harrison, an austere professor.

Mary Poppins, Robert Stevenson, 1964 — The children's classic about a magical nanny, played by the incomparable Julie Andrews.

My Beautiful Laundrette, Stephen Frears, 1985 — Hanif Kureishi's witty drama about interracial male lovers (Gordon Warnecke, Daniel Day Lewis) who confront bigotry when they open a London Laundromat in Thatcher's England.

A Fish Called Wanda, Charles Crichton & John Cleese, 1988
A hilarious and star-studded comedy that takes place in 1980s London.

Notting Hill, Roger Michell, 1999
Hugh Grant embodies English boy charm in this winning comedy.

Wimbledon, Richard Loncraine, 2004 — A romantic comedy about the ancient and royal games of tennis and love.

Match Point, Woody Allen, 2005
Allen set the film in the British capital after he had trouble getting funding to shoot in New York, launching a love affair with shooting abroad (Paris and Rome followed).

The Queen, Stephen Frears, 2006
Helen Mirren deserved her Oscar for portraying Elizabeth II in this well-done look into royal life.



Top Day Trips

Some of the U.K.'s most celebrated castles, homes and gardens are a short drive outside London. Indagare's **Amelia Osborne** highlights the best.

CLASSIC CASTLES & HOMES

The 18th-century **Blenheim Palace** (one-and-a-half-hour drive from London, Oxfordshire) has been home to the Duke of Marlborough since John Churchill defeated the French army in 1704 and was given the title, land and pile as a reward. The landscaped grounds encompass more than 2,100 acres. Parts of the palace are open to visitors, and the gardens are an excellent place to stroll on sunny days.

Hugh Bonneville's Lord Grantham might be fictitious, but the setting of *Downtown Abbey*, **Highclere Castle** (one-and-a-half-hour drive from London, West Berkshire) actually exists, although it is not always open to the public. Indagare members can be hosted by the real-life owner, Lady Carnarvon, and tour the gardens, Victorian state rooms and Egyptian exhibition—in 1922, Lord Carnarvon was among the group that discovered Tutankhamun's tomb.

Considered the royal family's main residence, much more so than Buckingham Palace, **Windsor Castle** (forty-five-minute drive from London, Berkshire) was founded in the 11th

century, making it the oldest continually occupied castle in Europe. The structure was originally built to protect a crucial part of the river Thames, but its grandeur grew through the centuries, with kings and queens adding extensions in their own periods' styles. The palace has acted as a military headquarters, a prison and a showpiece for foreign guests. The town of Windsor is also home to Eton College.

Every year from March through October, Prince Charles opens his gardens at **Highgrove** (two-hour drive from London, Gloucestershire). To see them, you have to book a tour like the Afternoon Tea Tour. Limited to fifteen people, this consists of tea in the Orchard Room followed by a guided visit to the private gardens. For those who prefer a bit of bubbly, the Champagne and Canapés Tour is a good match. The garden tours last approximately one and a half hours.

LESSER KNOWN GEMS

Shaw's Corner (one-hour drive from London, Hertfordshire) was George Bernard Shaw's home for decades, and the charming house

london: day trips



Clockwise from top left: Borde Hill Garden; Blenheim Palace; Windsor Castle

remains much as it was when the famous writer lived there, including its Arts & Crafts interior. Shavian fans will want to attend the first International Shaw Society Conference, which will feature lectures by specialists and performances of his plays (June 17–21, 2013).

Long the home of the Earl of Warwick, the medieval **Warwick Castle** (two hours from London, Warwickshire) today features ingenious exhibitions for children. Visitors can view a torture chamber and dungeon and stroll the sixty-plus-acre Capability Brown–designed grounds. The kid-friendly property also contains a fabulous playground. The Grade I, 16th-century **Kelmscott Manor** (one-and-a-half-hour drive from London, the Cotswolds) was once home to textile designer, artist and writer William Morris. His naturalist style is thought to have been inspired by the building's seamless integration

with its surroundings. Morris's designs, which are associated with the Pre-Raphaelite art movement, can be found throughout the house.

Sudeley (two-hour-drive from London, Gloucestershire) is a fairy-tale castle with an illustrious history. During Tudor times, it was the royal residence of King Henry VIII's sixth wife, Queen Katherine Parr, who is buried here. Meticulously restored during the 1830s, it was a favorite meeting spot for the Victorian era's great politicians. Today Sudeley is the home of Lady Ashcombe and the Dent-Brocklehurst family, including Mollie Dent-Brocklehurst, a director of London's Pace Gallery, who curates the property's popular summer exhibitions.

GARDENS

Two of the most renowned gardens in England are located next door to each other in

the Cotswolds. **Kiftsgate Court** and **Hidcote Manor Garden** (two-hour drive from London, Warwickshire) are famous for their beautiful borders brimming with fragrance and color. Indagare can arrange a private tour and lunch with the Viscount and Viscountess De L'Isle, the owners of the stunning **Penshurst Place Garden** (one-hour drive from London, Kent). The walled gardens encompass eleven acres. **Borde Hill Garden** (one-hour drive from London, Sussex) is full of geometric borders of lavender and box hedges that emphasize shrub roses. Classic and recently hybridized varieties grow alongside each other throughout the spring and summer.

ENGLISH CHARM

Oxford, the City of Dreaming Spires (one-and-a-half-hour drive from London, Oxfordshire), is best known for its university, the oldest in the United Kingdom. The school comprises thirty-six colleges, with Christ Church and Trinity being the two most popular to visit. Locals, students and guests alike are welcome to go punting on the River Cherwell, a blissful summer outing. In addition, the movie studios where Harry Potter was shot are nearby; special tours through the sets can be arranged.

Built as a spa by Romans living in the region, **Bath** (two-hour drive from London, Somerset) maintained a reputation as a healing center until very recently. Today the charming city is

better known for its Roman baths and stunning Georgian architecture, not to mention being the home of one of Britain's most beloved authors. The Jane Austen Centre is a must-visit, and the teahouses are ideal for an afternoon respite. The birthplace and final resting ground of William Shakespeare, **Stratford-upon-Avon** (two-hour drive from London, Warwickshire) is a charming riverside town of streets lined with timber-framed houses. The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, based here, is planning performances of *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* during May and June 2013.

The famed megalithic stone circle **Stonehenge** (one-and-a-half-hour drive from London, Wiltshire) is as mysterious as it is ancient. Studies have shown that the site dates to around 3,000 B.C., but no one has yet confirmed the reason for its existence or how the huge stones were moved into place. We recommend having a private guide walk you around the site, which can get crowded with tourists, especially at the Summer Solstice, in mid-June.

At the **Beaufort Polo Club** (two-hour drive from London, the Cotswolds), beginning and budding polo players of all ages can take lessons on either wooden practice horses or real ponies; private lessons start at £75 an hour. Tournaments featuring intermediate and expert players are held on most weekends in the summer, and the club has an excellent shop full of polo attire.

Making the Grade

The National Trust has created three status levels for historic buildings and structures and sites like bridges. Here's what to know.

Grade I: Buildings of exceptional interest, like Buckingham Palace and Royal Albert Hall.

Grade II: Particularly important buildings of more than special interest, such as the department store Liberty and the Imperial War Museum.

Grade II*: Buildings that are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them, such as Abbey Road (of the Beatles' album cover fame) and Claridge's.

In the Country

Four special retreats outside London have garnered rave reviews from Indagare members who escape from city bustle for days of relaxation, spa treatments, great food and family-friendly activities.



Clockwise from top: Four Seasons Hampshire (2); a treehouse suite at Chewton Glen; Calcott Manor; Coworth Park



45-Minutes Outside London: COWORTH PARK

Why We Love It: For travelers who want a quick-fix country destination, this property, about a twenty-minute drive from Heathrow, is a good bet. It's not as remote as some of the other country hotels, but it feels totally serene.

At a Glance: Set on 240 acres, this country-house hotel, housed in a 17th-century mansion, has a long history but has been owned by the Dorchester Group since 2011. The setting is grand and glamorous, with an eco-consciousness evident in the minimalist-chic rooms, which are divided among the mansion house, the stables and cottages tucked into the splendid grounds. Expect vast wildflower meadows and polo fields—it's in the town of Ascot, after all.

Property Highlights: The incredible, eco-friendly spa. Book an afternoon Traveler's Tonic massage followed by a swim in the infinity pool bordered by large sculptural amethyst crystals.

Where: Ascot, West Berkshire.

1 Hour Outside London: FOUR SEASONS HAMPSHIRE

Why We Love It: Close to London in semirural Hampshire, the Four Seasons offers myriad activities in the splendid countryside setting of Hampshire.

At a Glance: Housed in a refurbished Georgian manor house set on 500 acres, this hotel has received raves from the Indagare community. Interiors are traditional and polished, and the high-tech amenities and spot-on service keep the property feeling fresh.

Property Highlights: The massive spa, housed in a former stable block, is a highlight at this property. Besides a fantastic range of treatments, it also includes a stunning, glass-encased indoor pool, a steam room and fitness studio. The real draw, however, are the many outdoor activities, including tennis, falconry, golf, croquet and clay pigeons. The countryside can be explored on foot or horseback.

Where: Dogmersfield, Hampshire.

2 Hours Outside London: CALCOTT MANOR

Why We Love It: A proper hotel for adults, Calcott also offers all sorts of treats for children, guaranteeing a good time for the whole family.

At a Glance: This property in the Cotswolds comprises just thirty-five rooms, in a farmhouse dating to the 14th century. Parents can't get enough of the child-friendly amenities and programs, including an all-day crèche, a special children's high tea and a monitor system—the hotel will provide a monitor in the bedroom that the front desk staff watches closely while the parents dine.

Property Highlights: Raves one Indagare member, "You can certainly go without kids—and they make sure there are rules in place so it's not overrun—but it is heaven if you've got them along. If there were something like this outside New York, I would go once a month."

Where: Tetbury, Gloucestershire (Cotswolds).

2 Hours Outside London: CHEWTON GLEN

Why We Love It: Chewton Glen is one of Britain's most iconic hotels—the crown jewel of British country house hotels—and although it has been open for more than four decades, it continues to live up to the hype.

At a Glance: Located on 130 acres of glorious Hampshire countryside, Chewton Glen is housed in an original Georgian building that dates to the early 18th century.

Property Highlights: The twelve fabulous Tree House Suites, which Chewton Glen, always pushing the innovation envelope, introduced in 2012. These lofty accommodations have oak-beamed floors, wood-burning fireplaces and bathrooms featuring huge walk-in showers and stand-alone tubs. The kitchenette is stocked with De Longhi cappuccino makers, healthy cereals and little homemade cakes and cookies. The only sound is birdsong, and sunsets are marvelous.

Where: New Milton, Hampshire.

Q&A with Kit Kemp

Design maven and hotelier Kit Kemp, of Firmdale Hotels, has changed the style of London boutique hotels. Here she shares the secret of her design success.



Can you describe how the design varies across the London Firmdale hotels?

London is like a series of villages, and this concept dictates the look of each of the hotels, which are all in different neighborhoods. Guests in one of our properties shouldn't be instantly aware that there are others in the group—they should instead have a special, individual experience. For instance, the Covent Garden Hotel is quite different from the Haymarket Hotel, which is an 18th-century building that was designed by famed architect John Nash. While the exterior is very classic London, the inside is quite contemporary, with a lot of sculpture and art. The Covent Garden Hotel is much more traditional in feel.

Has your own style sensibility changed since you designed your first hotel?

I should hope so! Every time I do something it makes me look at it in a new way. Plus, there's so much always happening in design, it would be madness not to move along and get excited by what's new. I don't ever want a building to be a pastiche of the past or overly modern. I want the places to last and to get better. That's how I feel about everything, whether it's a bedside table or a work of art.

What are some of your favorite style periods?

At the moment I seem to be really into the 1960s. I like the work of artists Joe Tilson and Sandra Blow. Like me, they work with bright colors. Equally I've enjoyed themes such as 19th-century sporting art featuring hunting and dogs. Mostly I'm interested in things that are being created now.

When traveling, are you a voracious shopper or a minimalist?

I'm afraid I'm a maximalist. I'm just about to leave for India—Udaipur and Jaipur and Jodhpur—so I'm hoping to hunt for some fabulous textiles. We're bringing some of our designs and want to make lamps and even some furniture. I imagine I'll be inspired over there and take the opportunity to build on some ideas.

What are some of your favorite antiques shops in London?

Portobello Market is fantastic, as is **Talisman** (79–91 New King's Road; 44-207-731-4686), **Josephine Ryan Antiques** (63 Abbeville Road; 44-208-675-3900), **Guinevere** (574–580 Kings Road; 44-207-736-2917) and **Tobias and the Angel** (68 White Hart Lane; 44-208-878-8902). I also like the **Dining Room Shop** (62 White Hart Lane; 44-208-878-1020), which sometimes has great old crockery from Ireland along with various bits and pieces.

What are your favorite places to visit?

I love to go everywhere: South America, especially Peru and Argentina for textiles. The English countryside—I adore England's tradition of crafts; I just designed an all-wool room for the Campaign for Wool at Somerset House.

Read interviews with many more London insiders at [Indagare](#).



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“London opens to you like a novel itself. [...] It is divided into chapters, the chapters into scenes, the scenes into sentences; it opens to you like a series of rooms, door, passage, door. Mayfair to Piccadilly to Soho to the Strand.” ~ Anna Quindlen

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