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EXCITING TIMES FOR THE CAPITAL

London is soon to host some of the biggest events in the world, and with all eyes on the capital, many improvements are being made. from new transport links, to new event venues and hotels



► London is one of the most inspirational and diverse capitals in the world and these are exciting times for London. Over the next year London is set to host some of the biggest events in the world – from a plethora of sporting test events happening this summer, to the eagerly awaited Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June 2012 and of course the Piece De Resistance event crown the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games which will start 27 July.

With the eyes of the world on London, the halo effect around all these events are already being felt right now in the city. There are literally thousands of improvements across the city – such as new transport links, new venues, new hotels and new activities – all of which can be taken advantage of now. If you are planning an event or conference in 2011, 2012 or beyond, London has the capacity to cater for the most intimate meeting to the largest of congresses. London also boasts the most diverse and quirky events spaces from medieval to modern, basic to boutique eccentric to elegant.

If you are considering soaking up the celebratory atmosphere by bringing an event or corporate activity to London then start your research by speaking to the official

convention bureau London & Partners.

London & Partners (previously known as Visit London) has a dedicated team in place to assist any business bringing their events to London, and the best thing, it's totally free and impartial.

The London & Partners convention bureau can help you navigate through thousands of venues, hotels and activity options. They will advise you on everything that's possible in London.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2011?

2011 is shaping up to be a bumper year for sports in the capital. Plan your trips around the schedule of world-class competitions coming to London including the World Badminton Championships at Wembley Arena (8-14 August), the ITU World Triathlon London (6-7 August), and the final stages of the Tour of Britain (18 September). Visitors can catch a match their

take a tour of one of the city's iconic sports venues, from Wembley to Wimbledon.

London also has many cultural options to suite any itinerary; don't miss the British Museum's Australian season which will see an Australian landscape garden appear in the building's forecourt. Or for something

closer to home, explore the fascinating heritage behind London's streets at the Museum of London's Street Photography exhibition – showing until September.

Enjoy the long summer nights with a trip to Regent's Park to see a production at the Open Air Theatre, this year playing host to the hit Gershwin musical comedy, 'Crazy for You' from July. From there, why not take a stroll to visit ZSL London Zoo and check out their brand new penguin exhibit.

A summer's day is perfectly spent with a trip to World Heritage Site Greenwich. Stand at the point where time begins, learn about the nation's maritime heritage and see a show at the O2 Arena, the most successful music venue in the world. While there, head to the British Music Experience, Britain's museum of popular music – from June the Jazz, Blues & Beyond exhibition will chronicle the origins of the British music festival with a series of previously unpublished photographs of The Who, Cream, Rolling Stones and more. Great group rates and coach parking are available.

WHERE TO STAY?

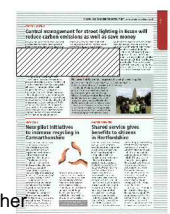
Over the last 12 months London has seen a flurry of new incredible hotels opening. Here the London & Partners business team ►

► share just a few of the new hotels which are making London a must-visit city:

The **Montcalm London** City Hotel has recently opened its doors to delegates, business travellers and weekenders in the confines of the reputed and award-winning event space that is The Brewery. Formerly the site of the Whitbread & Co brewery, this exceptional Grade II listed building has been stunningly transformed into a contemporary 5* hotel whilst preserving its heritage values. Offering world class service levels with a design-led ethos, the new hotel has 235 boutique designed bedrooms designed especially for business travellers.

Created by renowned London architects at Jestico + Whiles, the sleek new W London-Leicester Square hotel features 192 stylish guest rooms, a W The Store retail outlet, as well as a destination restaurant and a signature bar experience. W London – Leicester Square has been designed for true Londoners, offering a stylish urban sanctuary for global jetsetters and local London insiders.

London Syon Park, a Waldorf Astoria Hotel, will be a 5* deluxe hotel offering guests a most incredible and unique experience. The hotel is based in the 200-acre estate of Syon Park, the grounds of the London home of the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland. Taking its cue from the Syon Pleasure



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Ground created in the 18th century by famed landscape designer Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, this new jewel in the Waldorf Astoria crown overlooks a captivating landscape and offers the best of all pleasurable worlds – tranquil escape, a tradition of grand hospitality and state-of-the-art amenities that define both the Waldorf Astoria experience and the rich legacy of Syon Park.

The new Corinthia Hotel London, which is located near Trafalgar Square, was once was the magnificent Metropole Hotel. With 300 exceptionally designed and spacious rooms. The Corinthia also offers a number of suites boasting some amazing views, including the River Thames and the London Eye. The elegant central courtyard foyer, restaurants, luxury ESPA spa, destination bar, meeting facilities and delicately refurbished grand ballroom guarantee guests a lavish retreat.

THE HEART OF LONDON

The St. Ermin's Hotel, formerly known as the NH Jolly St. Ermin's, features stylish, contemporary accommodation and warm service in the heart of Westminster. The hotel offers 230 rooms and is located a five-minute stroll to Parliament Square, the London Eye, Westminster Abbey, Houses of Parliament and Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, making it an ideal destination for ►

► first-class business and leisure travel.

The Marriott St. Pancras Renaissance London Hotel is a grade 1 listed building, originally designed by architect Sir George Gilbert Scott to house the Midland Grand Hotel. It is a Victorian masterpiece, lovingly restored in every detail, from the Gothic revival façade to the grand stairwell, gold leaf ceilings and other eccentric touches. To stay at the St Pancras London Renaissance Hotel is to experience all the romance of the golden age of rail travel, brought thrillingly into the 21st century.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, and its new destination brand, Aloft Hotels, are due to open Aloft London ExCeL by 2012. The hotel will boast 252 rooms located at ExCeL London and will deliver an urban-influenced, open and vibrant design experience at an affordable price.

The more established Guoman & Thistle hotels are confidently holding their place for top quality meeting space and accommodation in London.

Multi million pound investments have been made in refurbishing the product and enhancing service across the hotels. Guoman & Thistle has over 5,000 bedrooms and 150 meeting rooms; from the contemporary to classic, within a range of 16 iconic, excellently appointed hotels across the capital.

FUN ACTIVITIES

As well as soaking up the general celebratory atmosphere in London, there are also a number of new corporate events and activities on offer.

A great team-building or corporate event could be an afternoon tea. The InterContinental London Park Lane has revealed a brand new take on afternoon tea, to be enjoyed exclusively in its recently transformed Wellington Lounge. Inspired by the grand parks the hotel overlooks, The Wellington Tea – created by the hotel's executive chef Paul Bates – uses a range of delicious ingredients from the British Isles. Incorporating all the favourite elements of an afternoon tea, the summer menu at the Wellington Lounge will feature West Coast lobster open sandwiches with the brightest baby red stalk sorrel from Worcestershire and warm, home-baked scones with Kentish strawberry jam and Cornish clotted cream.

THE ULTIMATE TEAM BUILDING

Why not try out the brand new Lee Valley Regional Park which will be used in the 2012 Olympic Games. The Lee Valley White Water Centre opened this spring and has two separate courses – a 300m Olympic Games competition course and a 160m training course. This is the only brand new London 2012 venue to open to the public before the Games and will be a great location to team build whilst trying out white water rafting or perfect your kayaking skills. ►

► SECRET GARDENS

Senate House, the art deco centrepiece of the University of London, has unlocked its three private garden spaces for event hire. Nestled amongst the Georgian architecture of Bloomsbury, the Woborn Square, Malet Street and Gordon Square spaces offer respite from the city's hustle and bustle. Ideal for groups from 100 to 2,000, the verdant rose filled gardens offer an intimate setting and perfect backdrop for alfresco dining, entertaining or even a fun team building event.

Chelsea Football Club has a new dedicated events space at its Stamford Bridge Stadium. Entitled 'Under the Bridge', the new space can accommodate up to 600 standing or 300 for dinner and is designed for showcases, fashion shows, concerts, photo shoots and product launches. Stamford Bridge has 21 event spaces including the Great Hall, 60 syndicate rooms,

281 bedrooms in two hotels, four restaurants and bars including two by Marco Pierre White, and a club and spa, The Chelsea Club.

Game, set and relax at Mandara Spa – the new luxurious Mandara Spa at Park Plaza Westminster Bridge, located in the heart of the South Bank offers a whole range of fantastic spa treatments. Launched in

February this year, Mandara Spa has brought a taste of Bali to Britain. From a menu of therapies incorporating ingredients native to the Indonesian islands, to its soothing design with a contemporary Balinese décor, the spa offers an exotic escape in the heart of the city.

In addition to Mandara Spa body treatments, such as its signature Balinese Massage, Asian Head Massage and Mandara Harmony Package, the spa also offers signature Elemis facials and detox therapies as well as manicures,

pedicures and waxing courtesy of Bliss. Spacious treatment rooms include one double suite for couples' treatments, three single treatment rooms complete with showers and an additional five generously-sized single treatment rooms.

WHERE TO DINE

Executive chef at Baltic, Silvena Rowe is well known for her slots on TV's Saturday Kitchen and has now opened her new restaurant Quince at The May Fair hotel. Serving up a menu of eastern-Mediterranean cuisine the restaurant is a perfect spot for business lunches and corporate events.

Heston Blumenthal has brought his quirky and brilliant approach to culinary alchemy to the Mandarin Oriental London in the form of his new restaurant, Dinner by Heston Blumenthal. The menu focuses on the revival and innovation of traditional British recipes, and includes simple contemporary dishes inspired by our historic gastronomic past, such as scallops with cucumber ketchup and peas, bergamot cured mackerel salad and slow cooked short rib of beef.

Pollen Street Social is the first independent restaurant from Jason Atherton, who left Maze restaurant last year to fulfil his long held ambition. Pollen Street Social, as the name suggests, is located on Pollen Street, close to Hanover Square, London. The restaurant represents a new, more informal restaurant style for Jason, where his much acclaimed cuisine is served in a stylish and unstuffy environment. The menu offers dishes that Jason describes as "having one foot in the past and the other in the future," where classical techniques underpin his creativity and influences picked up during his time working in some of the most innovative kitchens of the world. ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION
www.londonandpartners.com

TIPS FOR LONDON EVENT PLANNING

Zanine Adams, London & Partners' head of event solutions and UK sales, gives us some of her top tips for

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planning an event in the capital:

Prior to the event, send your delegates downloadable audio guides to give them an opportunity to sample a taste of London and get the most out of their stay. Cities in Sound uses local people to give you a real insight into London – select 'Guard Change' and explore life under the bear skin with a former Guardsman.

Work with London's talented Blue Badge Guides to give your attendees a local's insight into where to find the city's best hidden gems. You could incentivise your guests with a blue badge tour of the Olympic Park, or to have an enjoyable trip around London learning little snippets of history.

Check out London's busy event schedule and plan your conference around one of the many free events held in the capital each year. Landmark events such as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and World Pride, both coming in 2012, will provide fantastic free downtime activities for delegates.

Make use of the Olympic venues – book your next conference in the Velodrome or the Olympic Stadium. Or get into the spirit over the next year and book a venue like ExCeL London, The O2 Arena or Greenwich Park, all soon to be Olympic venues. Get the best view of Olympic Park itself by hosting your event at Foreman's Fish Island where you can sample the finest smoked salmon while

you watch the park take shape.

Time your conference to take advantage of great value offerings; consider booking between the Olympic and Paralympics and take advantage of the city spirit. The 13-29 August will avoid peak periods, but still allow you to make the most of the city's Games spirit.

Take advantage of the incredible free museums and galleries in the capital. From culture to art and history, your delegates can see some of the world's finest collections without spending a penny.

Get creative! Pop-ups stores are all the rage in the fashion and celeb world. Why not create London pop-up stalls to serve your delegates different refreshments – maybe a Brick Lane curry or Fortnum & Mason macaroons stall.

Keep within budget, yet still have a great time

Bordering the ancient woodlands of Epping Forest, the Waltham Abbey Marriott Hotel in Essex offers a special setting that keeps business travellers productive and leisure travellers relaxed.

It is ideally located 100 yards from junction 26 off the M25 and near the M11, M1. Loughton Underground station and the Central Line into London is a five minute drive from the hotel.

This contemporary hotel is only 20 minutes from Stansted airport, and only 30 minutes from central London and its world-class commercial centres and famed sights.

As a guest of the Waltham Abbey Marriott Hotel UK, you'll find stylish guest rooms that blend classic comfort with modern flair. Recreation opportunities include leisure club, with a large indoor pool, children's splash pool, fitness centre and sauna. For dining, the contemporary restaurant offers guests a truly exceptional and unique dining experience, and as a premier

business hotel in Essex your event will prosper in one of our 14 meeting rooms.

At the Waltham Abbey Marriott there are many amazing savings to take advantage of, such as our Thursday special rates from £99 24-hrs delegate, which includes unlimited tea and coffee, three-course lunch, meeting room hire, overnight accommodation and a full English breakfast. For more information on this and many other fantastic offers, contact our team today.

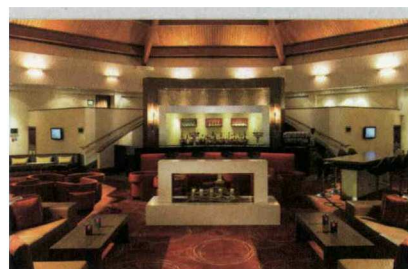
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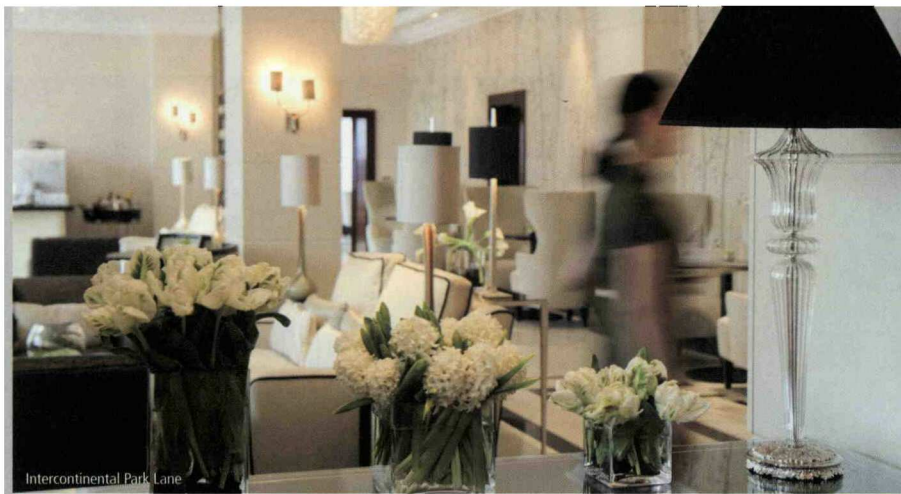
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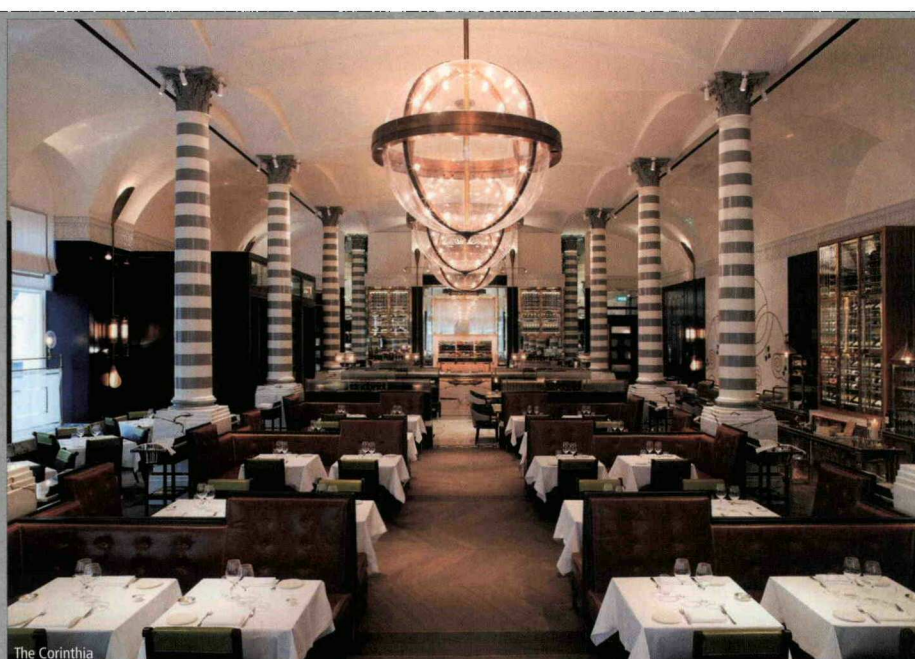


Afternoon Tea at the Inter Continental Park Lane

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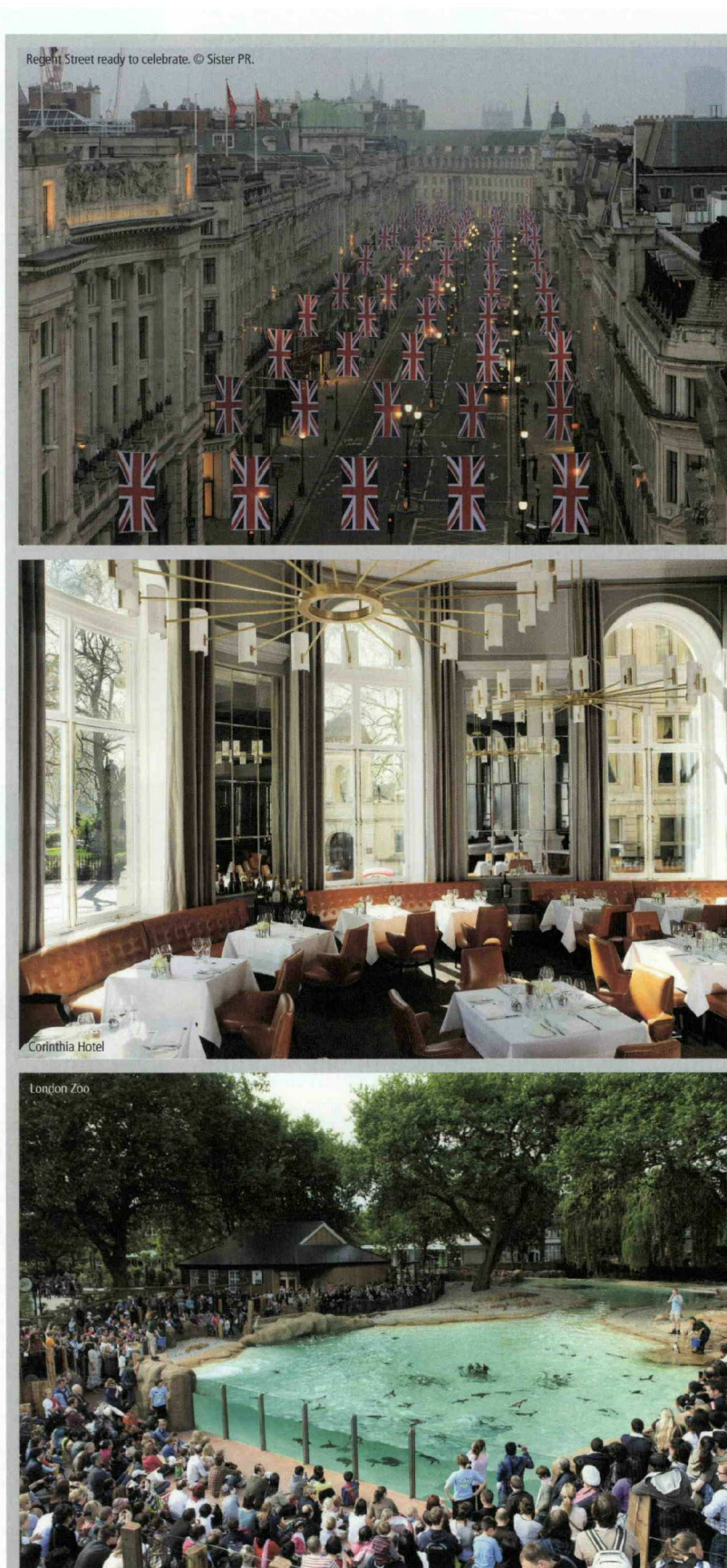
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