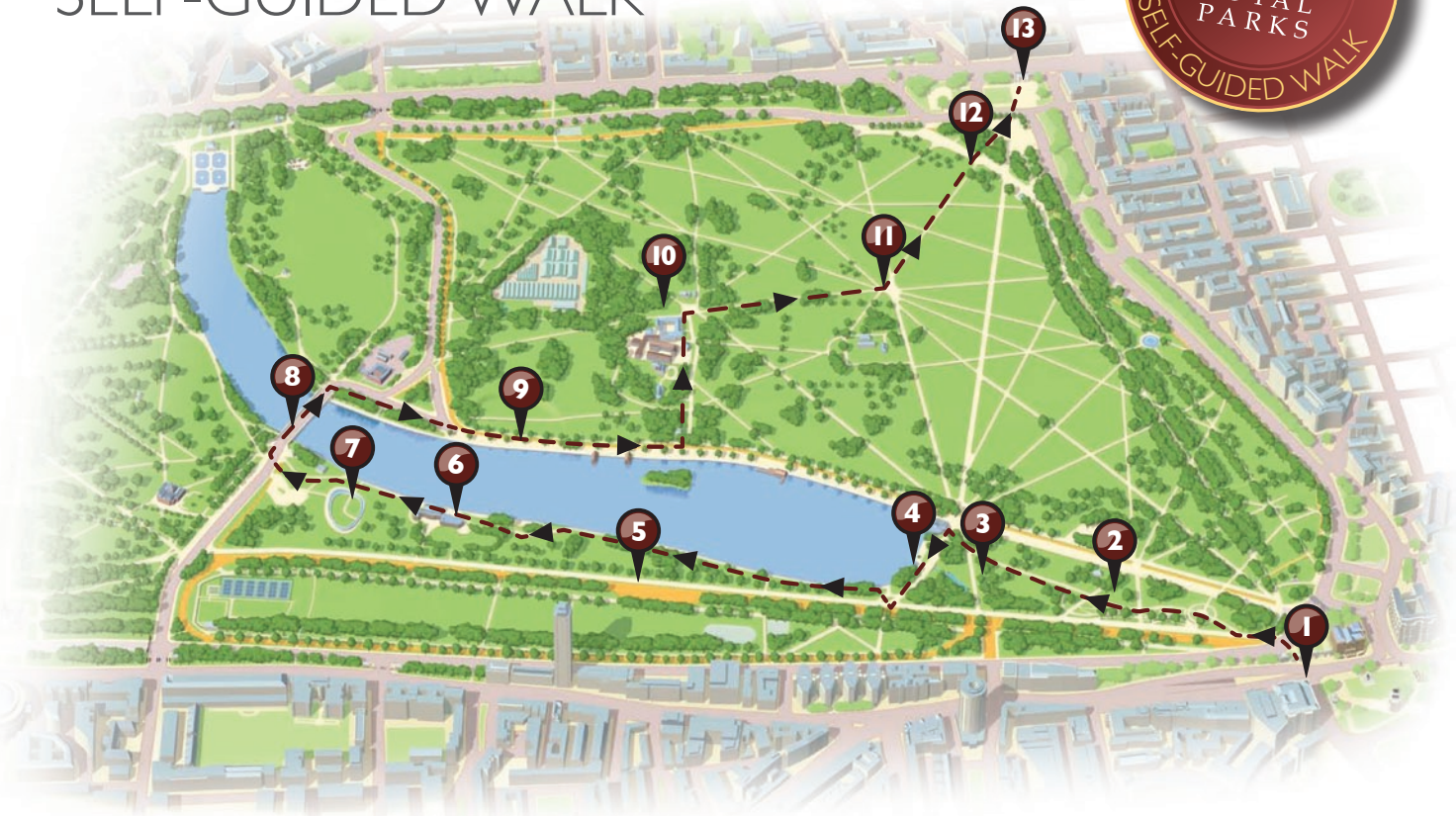











# HYDE PARK SELF-GUIDED WALK



**HYDE PARK** IS ONE OF THE GREATEST CITY PARKS IN THE WORLD WITH SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE. ON THIS WALK, WE'LL GIVE YOU A TASTE OF THE PARK'S DRAMATIC HISTORY, GRAND ARCHITECTURE, FAMOUS MEMORIALS AND ORNAMENTAL GARDENS, AS WELL AS SPORTS FACILITIES AND WILDLIFE.

<b>START:</b>	Hyde Park Corner underground
<b>FINISH:</b>	Marble Arch underground
<b>DISTANCE:</b>	Approximately 2 miles
<b>DURATION:</b>	Allow over 1 hour
<b>REFRESHMENTS:</b>	The new Serpentine Bar and Kitchen, The Lido restaurant and at kiosks
<b>SAFETY:</b>	Please take particular care on paths that are shared with cycles and cars.

## BRIEF HISTORY

<b>1536</b>	<b>1637</b>	<b>1690s</b>	<b>1730s</b>	<b>1851</b>
				
King Henry VIII acquired Hyde Park to hunt deer	King Charles I opened the park to the public	300 oil lamps installed on Rotten Row, the country's first artificially-lit road	The Serpentine lake created for Queen Caroline	The Great Exhibition was held at the temporary Crystal Palace
<b>1872</b>	<b>1930</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2009</b>	
				
People allowed to speak on any subject at Speakers' Corner	The Lido was established for sunbathing and swimming	Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fountain opened in 2004	52 pillars represent the people killed in the July 7th bombings in London 2005	



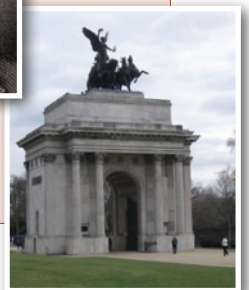
## TO START THE WALK

Hyde Park is one of the greatest city parks in the world with something for everyone. On this walk, we'll give you a taste of the park's dramatic history, grand architecture, famous memorials and ornamental gardens, as well as sports facilities and wildlife.

▼ The Decimus Burton Screen



◀ King George IV



▲ Wellington Arch

### 1 HYDE PARK CORNER

This classical style gateway was designed in 1825 for King George IV as a grand royal entrance to Hyde Park. The architect was Decimus Burton, who was just 25 at the time. It is made of Portland stone and decorated with copies of the Elgin Marbles sculptures that were originally on the Parthenon in Athens.

Burton also designed a grand triumphal arch, now in the middle of the roundabout opposite Hyde Park. It was a grand entrance into central London from the west and commemorated Britain's victories in the Napoleonic Wars. A statue of the Duke of Wellington stood on top of the arch for nearly 40 years but it was later moved to Aldershot and the present sculpture of the angel of peace and chariot of war was added in 1912.

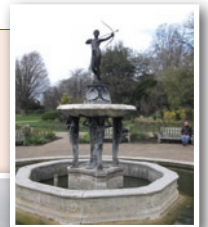
The honey-coloured building next to the gateway is Apsley House, the Duke of Wellington's home, which once had the address Number One, London and is now open to the public.

Go through one of the arches in the gateway, cross South Carriage Drive at the pedestrian crossing. Take the path immediately on your left bordered by black bollards. (This path is shared with cyclists so stay on the pedestrian section.) After about 10 metres, turn right and walk through the small metal gate into the enclosed garden.

### 2 ROSE GARDEN

This collection of roses, shrubs and herbaceous plants has colour all year round but the scents are particularly strong in June. Look out for the Boy and Dolphin statue on your left as you enter the garden. This was designed in the 19th century by Alexander Munro, a friend of the Alice in Wonderland author, Lewis Carroll. There is an interpretation panel explaining its history. Also on the left is the bronze figure of the Greek goddess, Artemis, shooting an arrow. The fountain was installed here in 1906 and the designer was Countess Feodora Gleichen, the first woman member of the Royal society of British Sculptors.

Artemis fountain ▶



▲ Flowers in the rose garden

At a fork in the path, bear right and leave the rose garden through another small gate. You'll soon come to a grove of white-stemmed birch trees planted for the Holocaust Memorial Garden on the left of the path.

### 3 HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL GARDEN

This garden of four boulders set in gravel was the first public memorial in Britain to victims of the Holocaust. It was constructed in 1983 and paid for by the Board of Deputies of British Jews. The largest boulder has an inscription of text from the Book of Lamentations: "For thee I weep / streams of tears flow / from my eyes / because of the destruction / of my people"



▲ Holocaust Memorial

Just beyond the Memorial is a junction in the path. You can now take a short detour by turning left to visit the The Dell, a hollow with cascade and pool fed by water from the Serpentine.

Alternatively, continue along the route by turning first right and then left just before the single-storey building of the Serpentine Bar and Kitchen. Here there is a small brown urn on a white stone plinth marking the pipe that supplied spring water from Hyde Park to Westminster Abbey until 1861. Walk past the restaurant, or pop in for a bite to eat. The Serpentine is on your right, and you will see a white stone urn on a plinth next to the water.



#### 4 THE SERPENTINE AND QUEEN CAROLINE

The stone urn is a memorial to Queen Caroline (wife of King George II) who created the Serpentine in Hyde Park and the Long Water in Kensington Gardens from 1726-1730. Her gardeners joined together six existing fish ponds and dammed the Westbourne Stream which flowed through the park. The Serpentine was used for a mock sea battle during celebrations in 1814 to mark 100 years of the Brunswick royal family. In 1826, Henry Hunt drove his company's coach and horses across the frozen lake and won a bet of 100 guineas. Today the lake is used for boating and swimming and is a good place to watch water birds.



◀ Queen Caroline Memorial



▲ Serpentine

Continue with the Serpentine on your right until a split in the path.

Continue straight ahead for a few metres until you reach the long straight road lined by lampposts. This is Rotten Row.

#### 5 ROYAL ROUTE

Rotten Row is the remains of a royal carriage route from Kensington to Westminster. It was built in the 1690s for King William II, who lived at Kensington Palace because the air in what was then the edge of London was better for his asthma than the smoke of Westminster. The road had 300 oil lamps and was the first road in Britain to be artificially lit. Its original name was the French Route du Roi but this became corrupted to Rotten Row. The sandy track alongside is a horse ride and is used by the Household Cavalry based at Hyde Park Barracks in Knightsbridge.

▼ Rotten Row



Turn round and return to the path around the Serpentine. Continue along the path with the lake on your right until you reach the Lido restaurant and bathing area. While you walk, look for the solar powered shuttle that ferries visitors across the Serpentine. As you approach the Lido, the lawns on the left beyond Rotten Row are the site of the Crystal Palace built for the Great Exhibition in 1852.

#### 6 THE LIDO

People have swum in the Serpentine for more than 250 years. The Serpentine Swimming Club, formed in 1864, is the oldest in Britain. The creator of Peter Pan, James Barrie, established the Peter Pan Cup in 1904 for the winner of a 100 yard swim on Christmas Day. The race is still held and club members continue to swim all year round. When the lake is frozen they break a hole in the ice. (Public swimming is from June to September.) The Lido with its columns and clock tower was built in 1930 as a changing room and is now a restaurant.

► Swimmers in the Serpentine



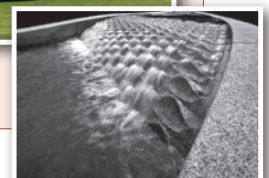
▲ The Lido

Continue past the Lido restaurant and café to the fenced lawns of the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fountain.

#### 7 DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN

This unique fountain was opened by Her Majesty The Queen in July 2004. From a distance, it looks like a necklace of moving water. The design, by Kathryn Gustafson and Neil Porter, reflects Diana's life. Water flows from the highest point in two directions, cascading and swirling until it meets in a calm pool at the bottom. Diana's quality of openness is symbolised by three bridges where you can cross the water and enter the heart of the fountain. The memorial contains 550 pieces of Cornish granite shaped by traditional hand skills and computer-generated technology. Please feel free to sit on the edge and dip your feet in the water but we ask you not to walk on the Memorial.

▼ Diana Memorial





Leave the fountain and continue along the path with the lake on your right. Follow the path uphill, ignoring side paths on the right and left. At the top of the hill, next to a refreshment kiosk, you meet a road that crosses the Serpentine. Turn right, past the kiosk and head for the middle of the Serpentine Bridge.

## 8 SERPENTINE BRIDGE

The bridge has good views to the right over the Serpentine, Hyde Park and beyond to the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey. To the left, you look over the Long Water and Kensington Gardens. The level of the Long Water was originally higher than the Serpentine and water poured in a great cascade into the lower lake. When the bridge was built in the 1820s, the level of both lakes was equalised. The designers of the bridge were John and George Rennie, sons of John Rennie, who built Southwark, Waterloo and London bridges.



▲ Serpentine bridge

Continue across the Serpentine Bridge. At the end, follow the path to the right towards the north bank of the Serpentine. As the road bends left, continue ahead towards the lakeside, past another refreshment kiosk. Continue along the lake until you reach the second boathouse.

## 9 BOATING AND PETER PAN

People have sailed boats on the Serpentine throughout its history. The Ordnance Survey map of 1894 has a pier near the boat houses. The second boat house was built in 1903 by the Royal Humane Society, which rescued people who fell in the lake by accident or deliberately tried to kill themselves.

The island in the lake beyond the boat house, although made from sludge dredged out of the lake in the 1860s, has a romantic tale attached to it. In the Peter Pan story, this is Bird Island where Peter Pan lived after he flew from home one night as a baby. He later sailed from the island in a boat made from a thrush's nest and landed in Kensington Gardens.



▼ Boating on the Serpentine

▲ "The island on which all the birds are born that become baby boys and girls." Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens



Just beyond the middle boathouse, turn left off the lakeside path onto a side road towards a group of buildings. Take care because this road is used by cars as well as pedestrians. Continue until you reach the Old Police House, a large building at the bottom of steps, set back on the left of the road.

## 10 LOOKING AFTER THE PARKS

The Old Police House is the headquarters of The Royal Parks, which looks after all eight parks, and the parks police. From a distance it looks like a country house of the late 17th century but it was actually built in 1900.

The site was once a military barracks and the current building, as the name suggests, was once police accommodation. There are still cells inside but they are no longer used.

▼ The Old Police House, built in 1900



Continue to a junction of paths just past the Old Police House. Take the 2nd path on the right, signed by a finger post to Reformers' Tree, a circular floor mosaic.



## 11 PROTEST AND PLEASURE

The mosaic marks the site of Reformers' Tree and celebrates the right of people to protest. The tree was burned down in 1866 by people campaigning for the right to vote after they were barred from holding a meeting in Hyde Park.

The stump continued as a rallying point, inspiring speeches about freedom to campaign. The large flat area beyond the mosaic is the parade ground, where Queen Elizabeth I reviewed her troops around 450 years ago. It was later used for political meetings and is now used for large rallies, concerts and exhibitions.



◀ Reform rally  
May 1867

▶ Concert held  
in Hyde Park



Find the arrow in the mosaic pointing to Marble Arch. Follow the path in this direction, crossing the parade ground, until you reach the corner of the park.

## 12 SPEAKERS' CORNER

In this corner of Hyde Park, people are free by law to speak publicly about anything they want, as long as they don't use indecent or obscene language. Since an act of parliament in 1872, Speakers' Corner has been a symbol of free speech throughout the world and thousands of people have used their right to put forward their ideas. Speakers have included the writer George Bernard Shaw and the Methodist minister, Lord Soper. Karl Marx, Lenin, Marcus Garvey and George Orwell all stood here to listen to speeches. On Sunday mornings, you can still hear many different subjects discussed.



▲ Speakers corner



To see the final feature of the walk, look outside the park at the vast Marble Arch on the roundabout at the junction of Park Lane and Oxford Street.

## 13 MARBLE ARCH

The Marble Arch was erected here in 1851 as another grand entrance to the park but it was built 20 years earlier outside Buckingham Palace as the main gateway. It was moved to Hyde Park to make space for a new front wing at the palace. The design, by John Nash, is based on the Arch of Constantine in Rome and it is the first British building to be clad in white Carrara marble. There are three small rooms inside which were used as a police station until 1950.



▲ The Marble Arch

Leave the park at Cumberland Gate. To return to the Hyde Park Corner and the start of the walk, follow the path with Park Lane on your left.

## MORE INFORMATION

There is more information about Hyde Park at [www.royalparks.org.uk](http://www.royalparks.org.uk) and in the Hyde Park leaflet, available from cafes and the park information centre at the Old Police House.