

Cheval Life

making the most of your time in London
Winter Edition

Capital Christmas

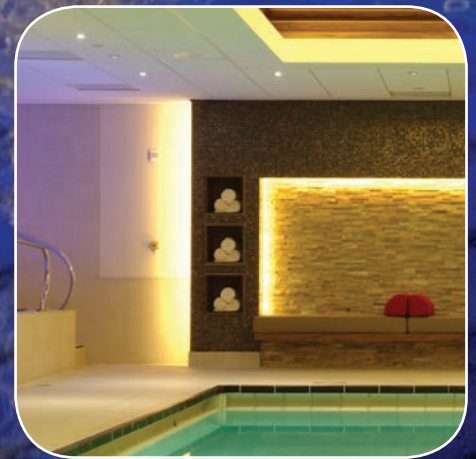
Why the city is a winter wonderland



FESTIVE SHOPPER
Stuck for inspiration? We take a look at the best gifts and the most fun places to get them



LUXURY SERVICE
Award-winning Phoenix House offers gourmet grazing and an historic neighbourhood



WARM UP IN STYLE
From spa pampering to afternoon tea, London has plenty of hideaways for the cold weather



Seasonal Shopping

London is packed with places to shop. But where are the best places for unique gifts, and where can you enjoy the festive spirit?

LIGHT FANTASTIC

London's Christmas lights are switched on throughout the capital from November to January, with Oxford Street, Regent Street, Marylebone, and Bond Street being the main focus for festive decorations. The big stores such as Liberty, Selfridges, and Harvey Nichols also put on elaborate window displays.

of Christmas bliss. There are seven floors crammed with toys, including the ground floor 'jungle' packed with every soft toy imaginable, and rooms stuffed with board games, action figures and dressing-up clothes.

Harrods' Toy World is another great place for gift inspiration. Children with fashion-designer aspirations will love the glam Barbie dolls. There are dolls inspired by Juicy Couture (£109) as well as a Barbie clad in a Vera Wang bridal dress (£149).

GIFTS FOR HIM

For those who enjoy a tippie of good whisky, Milroy's of Soho has 700 to choose from with varieties from all over the world. There are always 300 malts to try before you buy, and the shop can also source fine wines and other whiskies.

English eccentric William Penhaligon moved to London in the 1860s and set up a barber shop next door to the decadent Hammam Turkish baths in Piccadilly. Penhaligon went on to be barber to the Royal Court. The London stores stock shaving and grooming products, including the famous Blenheim Bouquet scent, created for the Duke of Marlborough in 1902.

GIFTS FOR HER

With an extensive handbag department, cool jewellery and rows upon rows of beauty counters, Harvey Nichols is the shopping hot-spot for all the gifts for women you could possibly want. Handbag collections include Anya Hindmarch and Chloé. Or for modern elegant jewellery, check out the range from Kara Ross.

Selfridges is known for its vast collection of accessories so you're bound to find some inspiration there. If you're still stuck for ideas though, head to the store's Wonder Room, which has an unusual selection of gifts for 'the person who has everything'.

GIFTS FOR KIDS

Giant toy store Hamleys on Regent Street has to be every child's idea



Capital Christmas

Maybe it is because Christmas in London has been immortalised in countless films and books, maybe it's the famous festive lights that illuminate historic streets and alleyways - whatever the reason, London is a winter wonderland.

CHRISTMAS PASTIMES

London has no shortage of festive pastimes, from the traditional to the downright bizarre. If you want a taster of English eccentricity at its most quirky, watch the members of the Serpentine Swimming Club as they take their Christmas morning dip in Hyde Park with little protection from the 4°C degree water than swimming trunks and a Santa hat.

Less bizarre but still very much a cherished London institution is carol singing around the Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square. Every year since 1947, a tree has been given to the people of London from Norway as a thank-you for Britain's support during World War II.

A British Christmas wouldn't be the same without all the decorations. If you want to see how interiors were decorated for the festive season through the centuries, head to the Geffrye Museum for its exhibition '400 Years of Seasonal Traditions in English Homes' (November 25 to January 4).

PARK LIFE

There are plenty of green spaces around the capital to blow away the cobwebs, and the parks are particularly beautiful with a light coating of frost. Combine it with tales of seasonal folklore that are being told on a guided walk through Kensington Gardens (11 December) or Hyde Park (12 December). Alternatively, venture out to the vast Wimbledon Common for a bracing walk then warm up with a tippie by the open fire at the Crooked Billet pub.

OUT ON THE ICE

Whether you've not skated for years or are a seasoned pro, London has some fantastic ice rinks for the festive season and many famous landmarks form the backdrop to the rink itself. The courtyard at Somerset House has a tree decorated by Tiffany & Co (rink from 19 November to 25 January) and is particularly magical at night when the neoclassical palace is lit up. The dramatic façade of the Natural History Museum (rink, 6 November to 18 January) also makes an awesome setting for skating.

MULLED WINE AND SHOPPING

You don't need to head to the Continent for a traditional European market. London hosts a German market in Hyde Park (22 November to 4 January) at the Winter Wonderland. While you're there check out the views from the Giant Wheel, try your ice-skating skills or whiz down the toboggan slide. The Finnish Church in London also organises a Christmas market with specialities from Finland (21 to 29 November).

ON STAGE

Always gloriously camp, British pantomimes are popular family entertainment at Christmas. Hackney Empire's annual show is much loved and is in the fabulous surrounds of a 1901 music hall that once hosted the likes of Charlie Chaplin and Stan Laurel. This year's panto is Mother Goose (29 November to 10 January).

Children will love festive ballet. The Nutcracker. Book in advance for the English National Ballet's acclaimed production (17 December to 30 December). Or see the Barbican's holiday show, Hansel and Gretel (1 December to 4 January). Aimed at ages 8+, this is a promenade performance with the audience walking around a spooky forest and into a house made of sweets.

FESTIVE FOODS

A roast goose or turkey is the Christmas Day dinner of choice across Britain, along with mince pies, Christmas pudding and cake. To try some of the best, check out food halls such as Harrods (or Cheval



Clockwise from left: Liberty's impressive building Department store Selfridges Ice skating at Somerset House The London Eye in winter The Nutcracker



ChevalNews

AWARD WINNERS

Cheval Group's Hyde Park Gate, Phoenix House and Gloucester Park have all been awarded five stars - the highest rating available - in the Visit Britain assessment scheme. Under the British Common Standard for Serviced Apartments, the properties achieved the rating for their wide range of facilities, on-site management, interior design, cleanliness and amenities. All properties are expected to have been graded by the end of 2008.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING...

For those who want to enjoy a traditional British Christmas but have no time to make the preparations, Cheval has launched its seasonal services which include everything from tree-trimming to hamper delivery. Christmas tree specialists Trim-a-Tree are on hand to decorate guests' apartments to their specification (prices from £340 for a six-foot tree). You can also enjoy a traditional Christmas lunch in your apartment - Cheval is ordering the best KellyBronze turkeys from the acclaimed Lidgates butchers in Holland Park (from £50).

Property Profile

Phoenix House Visit London Awards 2007: Silver Award - Best Small Hotel

Located in the heart of Chelsea, Phoenix House is close to one of London's most famous streets, King's Road. Charles II had the road constructed to link his palaces at Whitehall and at Hampton Court - and, rather conveniently, it passed by the home of his mistress Nell Gwynne. Before 1830 only those with a copper token with the king's head on could use the road. It shot to fame in the 'swinging sixties' with its famous boutiques, and the tradition continues today with the street packed with shops. **Green thinking** Phoenix House is committed to reducing its impact on the environment and has



introduced various initiatives such as energy efficient appliances in kitchens, using greener cleaning products, and offering bike hire to guests. In addition, organic products are chosen for kitchen supplies, sourced locally wherever possible.

IN THE AREA

See The Saatchi Gallery has just moved into its new home - the impressive Duke of York building on King's Road. The gallery promotes contemporary art, presenting work by largely unseen young artists or by established international artists whose work is rarely exhibited in the UK. Currently on show until January 18 is 'The Revolution Continues: New Art from China', featuring 24 of China's leading artists. Admission is free. **Drink** The Gilt Bar at the Jumeirah Carlton Tower on Cadogan Place is an opulent place for a glass of champagne. Stop by for a pre-dinner cocktail or for nibbles such as tiger prawn tempura.



Eat The Thomas Cubitt on Elizabeth St is one of London's top gastropubs. Dishes include herb crusted venison; and caramelised pork belly with roasted langoustines. Or choose from a bar menu with the likes of potted Dorset crab. For more intimate surroundings, try the award-winning Le Cercle at Phoenix House. Guests have a private lift directly into the restaurant.



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Reasons To Be Cheerful

When the festive fun is over, London offers countless post-Christmas pick-me-ups...

STAR GRAZING

Menus made up of small tasting plates have proved a massive hit with London diners, with restaurants ranging from Indian to Spanish offering a range of grazing dishes so you can experience the full talents of the kitchen. Acclaimed restaurant Le Cercle has a grazing menu made up of regional specialities from all over France and guests at Phoenix House can now eat the same food in the privacy of their apartment. The Gourmet Grazing menu has seven sections to choose from including Marin (fish and seafood), Fermier (meat and game), Plaisirs (richer, more luxurious dishes, some with caviar or foie gras), and Gourmandises (desserts).



Britainview/ Simon Wainall

SALES FEVER

London's January sales offer hundreds of bargains. The Harrods' sale is one of the most famous and people queue the night before for the opening. This year, it starts at 9am on Saturday 27 December - as usual, it will be opened by a celebrity - and continues until Saturday 24 January. Most shops are similar. Harvey Nichols' sales start on December 27 and last a month.



The Landmark



Elemis Spa

ME TIME

Kick-start the New Year with some pampering. Take a dip in the pool at The Landmark's sleek spa, relax in the gentle heat of the sanarium, then wake yourself up under the menthol and sandalwood infused showers. There are treatments for men and women that include ESPA facials; the 'life saving' back treatment; a jet lag reviver, and an aromatherapy sports and fitness massage.

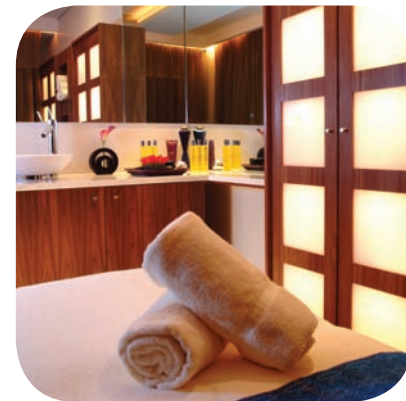
Or relax at the Elemis spa at the InterContinental which has a therapeutic steam temple with atmospheric twinkling star lights - combine it with a cleansing clay treatment. Men and women are both well catered for: choose from therapies designed to relax, detox or recharge.

Spa Offer

The five star Landmark London in Marylebone is offering a One Day Spa & Health Club Pass to guests who book a one hour massage or facial before 30 April 2008.

The One Day Spa & Health Club Pass gives complimentary access to the facilities, including the semi-ozone pool, glass-walled poolside Klafs sanarium, menthol and sandalwood showers, whirlpool, steam rooms, and fully-equipped gymnasium.

To take up this offer, please quote: "Cheval Group" when making the reservation with the spa on 020 7631 8010.



The Landmark

Tea for Two: Traditional vs Modern

How do you take your tea - traditional or with a twist? Afternoon tea in London is the perfect way to spend a cold wintry day - you just need to decide if you prefer old-school opulence or modern and funky.

Traditional



BROWN'S

Afternoon tea has been served at Brown's for over 170 years and it was enjoyed by Agatha Christie while she wrote 'At Bertram's Hotel' there. Listen to the sounds of the baby grand piano while tucking into finger sandwiches, pastries and scones. (£35, £44 with champagne).



THE DORCHESTER

Take afternoon tea in the Promenade, a room the same length as London landmark, Nelson's Column. There are sandwiches and scones or you can opt for high tea (£46) if you're feeling particularly peckish, which also includes dishes such as asparagus and poached wild salmon, and a glass of champagne.



THE RITZ

Dress up for the Palm Court, the grand room at the Ritz where tea is served among the marble columns and elaborate gilt decoration. Book at least six weeks in advance. It's a formal affair and men are requested to wear a jacket and tie. Afternoon tea costs £37, £48 with champagne.

Modern



YAUATCHA

Take 'oriental afternoon tea', at this funky dim sum restaurant. Start with a dim sum selection, such as baked venison puff and char sui bun, then move on to scones, gateaux, and a plate of exotic fruits (£24.50). Blue teas are on the menu and desserts include Dragon: a chocolate brownie with raspberry and red pepper coulis.



NICOLE'S

Have a miniature afternoon tea at designer Nicole Farhi's in-store restaurant. Choose from bite-sized macarons, mini patisseries and sandwiches, as well as blinis with smoked salmon (£16.50 or £26 with champagne). Those looking after their waistline can indulge in a 97% fat-free chocolate cake and "Pu-Erh" tea.



THE PARLOUR AT SKETCH

The Parlour offers a traditional afternoon tea but in quirky surroundings with opulent fabrics, whimsical lights and animal heads poking out from around curtains. Afternoon tea costs £19.50, £30 with champagne. The tea selection includes Ayurvedic infusions and a Japanese tea with lemongrass.