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## Visit London What's New Press Briefing

21 January 08

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This month's highlights include World Wetlands Day at the London Wetland Centre (see image), more chances to see The First Emperor exhibition at The British Museum, and the capital's only lighting festival, Switched On 2008. London also has a host of offers and packages for Valentine's Day. For more information read our [Valentine's press release](#) and see our [Valentine's web pages](#).

### Hotels

#### Hyde Park Gate luxury refurbishment complete

Hyde Park Gate luxury serviced apartments has completed a major multi-million pound refurbishment. Set within three imposing Victorian houses, Hyde Park Gate has an enviable location overlooking Kensington Gardens. The redesign has been sympathetic to the original building but also includes state-of-the-art lifestyle technology in each apartment and enhanced security features. For more information contact [Verena Neumayr](#).

#### Valentine's Day offers at myhotel

Myhotel Chelsea has teamed up with adult store 'Secrets of the Boudoir' to offer a special package including an 'elixir of love' cocktail, intimate dinner and Kama Sutra gift set as well as accommodation. 'Secrets of the Boudoir' is available on 8-10 and 14-17 February, the total price of this offer is £179.00 excluding VAT, based on two people sharing a double room. Alternatively, myhotel Bloomsbury are offering two packages, 'myromance' and 'mysaucy'. For more information contact [Caroline Ray](#) on +44 (0)20 7907 4925.

#### Gourmet food and drink tasting menu at Pearl

Pearl, one of London's most glamorous fine dining restaurants, has developed an exquisite new Tasting Menu designed specifically for beer-loving gastronomes. Guests at Pearl can now enjoy a sommelier's selection of gourmet beers, which have been expertly paired to each individual dish on the Beer and Food Tasting Menu. The five-course tasting menu costs £75 per person and includes a specially selected beer with each course. For further information contact [Alison Hull](#)

#### Nightcaps menu at the Landmark London

Guests staying at the five-star Landmark London can now treat themselves to one of six nightcaps. The new nightcap menu includes a choice of indulgent drinks such as Starry Night, Blissful Dream, The London Dream and Moonlight, priced at £11 each. These have all been designed to help guests relax, unwind and enjoy the perfect night's sleep. For further information contact [Alison Hull](#)

### Attractions

#### Special winter openings at Chelsea Physic Garden

[Chelsea Physic Garden](#) will be open over two weekends in February to give visitors a rare opportunity to see the Garden in winter and enjoy the many fragrant shrubs and bulbs in London's 'secret garden', which is otherwise closed until Easter. Open on 2, 3, 9 and 10 February. For more information contact [Nigel Chew](#).

#### Kids go free as WWT London Wetland Centre celebrates World Wetlands Day

Under 16s get into [WWT](#) centres for free on 2 February as part of WWT's World Wetlands Day

celebrations. Get close to nature and enjoy plenty of fresh air and exercise in beautiful surroundings. WWT will be holding exciting events and hands-on activities. For more information contact [Stasa Veroukis](#).

#### **Catch the love boat this Valentine's**

Enjoy a romantic boat ride on the river with City Cruises. Valentine's London Showboat evening includes a cocktail on arrival, a four-course dinner with half a bottle of wine, entertainment from the resident cabaret singer, dancing, chocolates and a rose. £66.00 per person. For more information contact [David Steele](#) on + 44 (0)20 7740 0400.

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## **Exhibitions**

#### **The First Emperor – extended opening hours**

Thousands of people have already visited the Terracotta Army exhibition at [The British Museum](#). Due to popular demand, opening hours have now been extended until midnight from Thursday to Sunday through until 6 April, meaning that many more exhibition tickets are now available. For more information please contact [Charlotte Kewell](#).

#### **Outside Edge at Museum in Docklands**

Opening on 7 February, Outside Edge is a journey through black British lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) history of the last 30 years. The black LGBT community has been vibrantly active for a long time but has not always been well represented culturally. This display, which opens during LGBT History Month, seeks to redress the balance and acknowledge the presence of the black LGBT community. For more information contact [Stacey Witter](#) on + 44 (0)20 7814 5511.

#### **Sunshine and Showers at Museum of London**

On 15 February, Museum of London launches a display about the changing nature of the capital's climate over the last 2000 years. Weather Permitting: London's Changing Climate uses a colourful timeline filled with intriguing objects and quirky facts alongside stunning paintings to explore the changeable weather of the past and peer into the unpredictable weather of the future. For more information contact [Stacey Witter](#) on +44 (0)20 7814 5511.

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## **Events**

#### **Switched On London 2008 – the capital's only lighting festival**

[Switched On London](#) will take place for the second time on 7-14 February. It aims to show that lighting in an urban environment can be achieved energy efficiently and stress the importance of lighting from a social, economic and environmental perspective. There will be around fifteen lighting projects in total, including some of London's most iconic landmarks. For more information contact [Paul James](#) on +44 (0)161 480 3344

#### **NFL Superbowl party at Cheers bar**

[Cheers, London](#) will be showing live coverage of this hard hitting, action packed sporting event from Arizona, on 3 February. The bar will stay open till 3.30am and will be decorated with official NFL Super Bowl merchandise. The famous half time show will be playing, along with the coveted 'Super Bowl premiere' commercials, live from the USA. Tickets are available at £9.95 in advance. For more information contact [Prannay Rughani](#) on +44 (0)20 7494 3322.

#### **Connect festival at Sadler's Wells**

Over 1200 performers ranging from ages 0 to 90 descend on Sadler's Wells for the annual Connect Festival. From Saturday 23 February – Sunday 16 March local primary and secondary school children rub shoulders with Associate Artists and the Sadler's Wells' resident over 60s performers for three weeks of wide-ranging dance activities. For more information contact [Abigail Desch](#) on +44 (0)20 7863 8119.

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## **Bars & Restaurants**

#### **The Warrington opens**

In February, Gordon Ramsay Holdings will launch its third pub, [The Warrington](#), in Maida Vale. Dating back to 1857, this landmark building has been sympathetically returned to its former glory following an extensive restoration designed to retain and enhance its best historical features. The ground floor will operate as a traditional pub while the first floor will house a 90-cover restaurant and dedicated bar. Reservations now open. For more information contact [Zoe Wilmer](#).

#### **New healthy options menu at Blue Elephant**

Thai food lovers can enjoy a new super-healthy 600 calorie menu at the world-famous Blue Elephant restaurant. The meticulously prepared menu tells you the fat, protein, carbohydrate and calorie intake for each dish. The restaurant is also introducing a 'Herbal Thai food' menu which

details the medicinal benefits of the ingredients, for example chilli is good for the digestive system and garlic can help to reduce blood pressure. For further information contact [Gareth Vaughan](#) on +44 (0)20 7237 5832

#### **Jazz nights in the Café in the Crypt**

Wednesday is the night for Jazz in the Café in the Crypt, St Martin-in-the-Fields. The Café in the Crypt has recently reopened after an extensive refurbishment. To celebrate the reopening, Jazz Nights are now every Wednesday. Join us for some great food and drink while some of London's most kicking, most funky and most sizzling jazz bands rock the 18th century crypt. For further information contact [Julie Emig](#) on +44 (0)20 7766 1115.

#### **Aphrodisiac Menu at Moti Mahal**

New and exclusive to Valentine's Day, enjoy the tandoori 'Valentine's Aphrodisiac Set Menu' at Moti Mahal. With dishes including panfried seabass with aniseed and ginger, and karahi style stirfried lamb tikka. Priced at £38 per person. For more information call +44 (0)20 7240 9329.

#### **Awana's recipe for love**

Awana is offering a special 'recipe of love' tasting menu. Main courses include a classic rendang of tender lamb with mushrooms, char-grilled king prawns with sambal fried vegetables, a stir fry of barbecued corn-fed chicken, and acar salad with steamed fragrant rice. Awana's 'recipe of love menu' is available on 14 February for £45 per person and from 4–13 and 15–17 February for £38 per person. For more information contact [Ben Groom](#)

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## **Theatre & Film**

#### **Tosca at the Royal Albert Hall**

Puccini's masterpiece Tosca returns to London's Royal Albert Hall for a limited two week season in February 2008, the year Puccini celebrates his 150th birthday. The tragic principal characters, most famously portrayed by Maria Callas and Luciano Pavarotti, are the most celebrated in operatic history. For further information please contact Peter Leone/Caroline Ansdell on +44 (0)20 7637 2994.

#### **Speed the Plow at the Old Vic**

Kevin Spacey is joined by Jeff Goldblum and Laura Michelle Kelly in David Mamet's quick fire play satirising the deal-making that goes on behind the scenes in the movie business. For more information please contact [Jo Allan](#) or [Julia Hallawell](#) on +44 (0)20 7351 1555.

#### **Merchant of Venice at the Greenwich Playhouse**

The Galleon Theatre Company brings Shakespeare's dark tale of love, revenge, jealousy and greed to Greenwich. Directed by Bruce Jamieson and produced by Alice de Sousa, the play runs from 12 February – 9 March. For more information contact the Greenwich Playhouse Press Office on +44 (0)20 8310 7276.

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