Tradition vs Modernity

by Roberto Galea

Some cities are distinctly monochromatic, with a certain element dominating the <u>colour scheme</u> of that particular metropolis. London, <u>on the other hand</u>, <u>bursts at the seams</u> with all the <u>hues</u> of the rainbow. It is a lively and <u>vibrant</u> city, unlike any other in Europe or beyond.

Political London

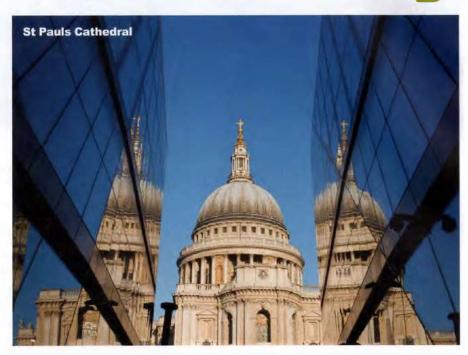
London is the <u>seat</u> of politics in the UK, where all the decision-making is done, <u>mainly</u> within the Houses of Parliament, officially known as Westminster Palace. This impressive Gothic building sits impressively on the north <u>bank</u> of the Thames and is open to the public for <u>guided tours</u>. Visitors can walk around several areas of the building, <u>including</u> the famous <u>Commons Chamber</u>, which is at the heart of British politics.

However it's not necessary to <u>book</u> a £25 tour just to see the inside of the building. Whenever <u>the House of Lords</u> or <u>the House of Commons</u> is in session, visitors can sit in the public gallery and

o colour scheme 'kAlə(r) ski:m | kolorystyka on the other hand | z drugiej strony to burst at the seams | pękać w szwach hue | kolor, odcień vibrant | tu: dynamiczny 1 seat | siedziba mainly | głównie

bank | brzeg guided tour | wycieczka z przewodnikiem

including | włącznie



get a bird's eye view of all the action. Who knows? Perhaps you could witness a session which goes down in the history books!

After you're done being <u>awestruck</u> by the splendid architecture of the palace, head north for a five minute walk to a little alley called Downing Street, home to one of the most important men in the world. The street itself is closed to the general public, as the police <u>keep a very close eye on security</u>. However, if you stand at the gates of Whitehall, you can <u>catch a glimpse of</u> the iconic black door which opens only from the inside.

Commons Chamber 'komənz 'tfeɪmbə(r) | sala obrad Izby Gmin

to book sth | za/rezerwować coś the House of Lords | Izba Lordów the House of Commons | Izba Gmin to get a bird's eye view of sth | uzyskać widok z lotu ptaka na coś

2 to witness sth | być świadkiem czegoś to go down in the history books | zostać zawartym w podręcznikach do historii; przejść do historii Ironically, there is much more to London politics than those <u>related to</u> the UK. Many international political figures have made London their home over the years. These <u>include Karl Marx and Frederick Engels</u>, who <u>gave lectures</u> in a room above the Red Lion pub, in London's Soho district.

Marx was also a regular of the British Museum Library, where he would sit for hours <u>ruminating on</u> the concept which would eventually germinate into the Communist Manifesto.

Other <u>luminaries</u> who had a card at the library included Lenin (who

awestruck 'o:strʌk | oniemiały z wrażenia to keep a (very) close eye on sth | bacznie obserwować coś

to catch a glimpse of sth | dostrzec coś
s related to sth | powiązany z czymś
to include sb | obejmować kogoś
to give lectures | dawać wykłady
to ruminate on sth | myśleć nad czymś
eventually | w końcu, ostatecznie
to germinate into sth | przerodzić się w coś
luminary | sława

2

signed in under the name Jacob Richter), as well as <u>novelists</u> Bram Stoker and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Royal London

The world is <u>aflutter with</u> excitement about a new member of the British Royal Family. Charlotte will be <u>joining</u> three other generations of monarchy who are at the heart of British life. Their principal residence and workplace is Buckingham Palace, an impressive Neoclassical structure, which is visited by <u>hordes</u> of tourists every month.

The Palace not only serves as a home to the Royal Family, but also a <u>hub</u> for the British nation to <u>gather</u> in times of rejoicing. Iconic elements of the Palace are the Queen's Guards: members of the British Army whose job it is to protect the Family.

A tour of the royal sights in London would not be complete without a visit to the Tower of London, an imposing edifice which covers 12 acres of land in the middle of the city. The palace has a dreadful past as a prison which housed many people who were key to the history of the UK. These included Thomas More, a philosopher and statesman who opposed Henry VII's position as the head of the Protestant church in England. More was imprisoned for a year in the Tower before he was beheaded. His body is buried behind the walls of the crypt of St Peter Ad Vincula.

Many of the four million tourists who visit the Tower on a yearly basis, do so to

see the famed <u>Crown Jewels</u> – a collection of <u>precious</u> stones so impressive that will leave the visitor <u>speechless</u>. Among the jewels of the collection (no <u>pun intended</u>) are several crowns and diadems which have been worn by the British monarchy throughout the ages.

Another traditional element of the Tower are the ravens, which are meant to protect the Tower of London. According to lore, "If the Tower of London's ravens are lost or fly away, the Crown will fall and Britain with it." Therefore it is imperative to keep a handful of black birds around the Tower, just in case. And with the ravens, comes the famed Ravenmaster - perhaps one of the best jobs in the United Kingdom. He once said that it's hard work keeping the birds in check. They eat a lot of meat, as well as biscuits soaked in blood. They sometimes also get the odd roadkill which the Ravenmaster comes across on the side of the road. If "it's not been too badly mangled!"

Following this <u>hearty</u> dose of culture, why not <u>take a stroll</u> in St James's Park, a 57-acre space <u>slap-bang</u> in the middle of the city. Very much like Central Park in New York, St James's (as it is <u>affectionately</u> known) offers London's residents a muchwelcome <u>respite</u> from the <u>hustle</u> and <u>bustle</u> of the city.

The park includes two small islands. One of these, Duck Island, <u>bears this name</u> <u>after</u> the lake's collection of water <u>fowl</u>, ▶

imprisoned | uwięziony
beheaded | ścięty
buried | pochowany
on a yearly basis | corocznie

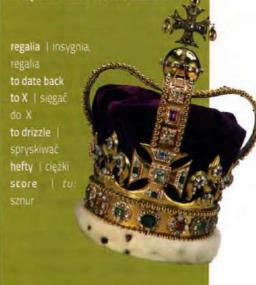
5 Crown Jewels kraun 'dʒu:als | klejnoty
koronne
precious 'prejas | cenny
speechless | oniemiały
pun | gra słów
intended | zamierzony
raven 'retvn | kruk
according to sth | według czegoś
lore | tu:wierzenia ludowe
to fly away | odlatywać
to fall | upadać, tu:kończyć się

Did you know?

Crown Jewels

The oldest piece of <u>regalia dates</u> <u>back to</u> the 12th century and is a gold spoon used to <u>drizzle</u> holy oil on monarchs.

One of the major pieces of the collection is St Edward's Crown. It weighs in at a hefty 2.23 kg and is decorated with scores of diamonds, rubies and other precious stones. It was last used during the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.



handful | garstka, tu: stado to keep sb/sth in check | mieć kogoś/coś pod kontrola soaked in sth | nasączony czymś roadkill | przejechane zwierzę to come across sth | natykać się na coś mangled | zmiażdżony, pogruchotany hearty | obfity to take a stroll | przespacerować się slap-bang | pot. bezpośrednio affectionately | czule respite | ulga, wytchnienie hustle and bustle 'hasl an 'basl | krzatanina to bear the name after sb/sth | nosić imię po kimś/czymś fowl faul | ptactwo

4 to sign in | zapisać się
novelist | powieściopisarz
aflutter with sth | poruszony, pobudzony
to join sth | dołączyć do czegoś
horde | chmara, stado
hub hʌb | centrum
to gather | gromadzić się
imposing | imponujący, olśniewający, robiący
wrażenie
edifice | budynek
to cover sth | tu: rozciągać się
na czymś
dreadful | straszny, okropny
to house sb | gromadzić kogoś, zakwaterować
kogoś

statesman | rzecznik

imperative | nadrzędny

London in Numbers

11 the number of different lines in the city's metro network, lovingly called 'the Tube'.

 43AD the year the area was first <u>settled</u> by Romans.

32 the number of <u>boroughs</u> in London.

 Over 300 the number of languages is spoken in London.

 8.2 million is the number of people who live London (2011 census).

> to settle | tu:zasiedlać borough 'bʌrə / 'bɜ:roʊ | dzielnica census | spis ludności

which include a colony of pelicans which were first gifted to the park by a Russian ambassador in 1664.

The Tiffany fountain is situated to the south of Duck Island, and creates jets of water up to eight metres high. The main aim of this feature is to aerate the water and make it a better medium for fish to grow in, but the effect is also aesthetic. At night the fountain is illuminated with a crafty LED system providing an enchanting view of Buckingham Palace in the backdrop.

And with all this talk of royals in the British capital, one cannot miss Westminster Abbey, the church which has hosted the coronation of almost every English (and later British) Monarch since 1066.

When You Tire of London, You Tire of Life

Perhaps more than any other European capital, London has it all, and is at the forefront of things with distinct districts paying tribute to different life pulses - a throbbing financial centre that sets the

<u>pace</u> for other major markets; <u>cutting edge</u> journalism around Fleet Street; packed theatres playing out <u>life's fare</u> in the West End, while nearby Soho is

a nostalgic <u>reminder</u> of the City's hedonistic days

In short, whatever you are looking for, you can find in London, the epicentre of world culture, finance and society. The Royal family might be somewhat controversial, but let's <u>admit</u> it, over the last centuries, it has built, or bought or <u>established</u> things that now <u>enchant</u> tourists from all over the world!

In the words of Samuel Johnson, who wrote the first dictionary of the English language: "When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford."

- s gifted | tu: sprezentowane jet | strumień to aerate sth | napowietrzać coś crafty | zmyślny, przemyślany enchanting | urzekający in the backdrop | w tle
- 7 to host sth | gościć coś to pay tribute to sth | oddawać czemuś hołd throbbing | pulsujący, tętniący życiem to set the pace for sth | wyznaczać tempo cutting edge | najnowocześniejszy life's fare | tu:chleb powszedni, życie codzienne
- 8 reminder | pamiątka, pozostałość to admit sth | przyznawać coś to establish sth | ustanawiać coś, zakładać coś to enchant sb | oczarowywać kogoś to afford | tu: oferować

