

THE SOUTH BANK

The South Bank: One of London's most attractive and stimulating districts. A calming walk along the tree-lined South Bank meanders past concert halls, restaurants, theatres and galleries. The views are stunning and must be relished at night time as well.

There is an abundance of literary and artistic stimulation en route from second hand book stalls to numerous public sculptures. The transformation began in 1951 when the South Bank was chosen as the site for the Festival of Britain. Within the last decade the area's profile has been raised by the addition of such attractions as the London Eye, the Millennium Bridge, The Tate Modern, and Shakespeare's Globe.

OXO Tower Wharf

OXO Tower:
—A. W. Moore
1928

OXO Tower Wharf:
—Liftschutz Davidson
1995

OXO TOWER WHARF



Built as a power station, the Wharf was acquired in the 1920s by the Extract of Meat Company. The building was largely rebuilt to an Art Deco design by architect Albert Moore. Liebig wanted to include a tower featuring illuminated signs advertising their product. The tower was built with four sets of three vertically-aligned windows, each of which “coincidentally” happened to be in the shapes of a circle, a cross and a circle spelling “OXO”.



BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE



ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE



NATIONAL FILM THEATRE

Blackfriars Bridge

—J. Cubitt, 1860-69

Originally the William Pitt Bridge (after the Tory Prime Minister), the name proved so unpopular that it was renamed for an order of Dominican Monks that had settled in London in 1279. The bridge itself had nine elliptical arches of Portland Stone, which was rebuilt with five cast-iron arches on granite piers. All that now remains of the Blackfriars Rail Bridge, are the red columns in the river and the brightly colored cast-iron insignia of the company: London, Chatham and Dover Railway.

Royal National Theatre

—Denys Lasdun, 1969-1976

Despite its weathered concrete, car-park like appearance, you have to love the National Theatre. The building is a controversial ‘Modernist’ design of reinforced concrete and brutal horizontal lines. The National Theatre opened in 1976, after more than a century of planning and preparation. Having spent fourteen years residing in the Old Vic, the National Theatre company moved into the unfinished building to open up the three theatres: Lyttelton, Olivier, and Cottesloe.

National Film Theatre

—Leslie Martin, Hubert Bennett, 1956-58

Tucked beneath the arches of Waterloo Bridge, the NFT owes its origins to the 1951 Festival of Britain and the ‘Télekinema,’ a purpose-built cinema designed to celebrate British film-making and technology. The Télekinema was never intended to be a permanent exhibition, but its popularity led to the National Film Theatre opening in 1957. Initially containing only one cinema, a second was added in 1970.

TAKE ME
TO THE RIVER

8 MUST SEE DESTINATIONS
FROM SOUTHBANK TO
BANKSIDE



THE LONDON EYE

The London Eye

—Marks Barfield, 2000

Standing 135 metres tall, the London Eye is the world's largest ferris wheel. This monument was recently voted London's favorite tourist attraction. Built as the centerpiece for the city's Millennium celebrations, the huge structure needed to be brought down the Thames river before being assembled by a massive floating crane.

The Eye's popularity was so instantaneous that today it's hard to imagine the London skyline without it. On a clear day, from one of its thirty-two glass observation pods you can see 25 miles over the city.



SHAKESPEARE'S GLOBE

Shakespeare's Globe

—Jon Greenfield, 1997

This is a working reconstruction of the original playhouse used by Shakespeare four centuries ago. The original Tudor playhouse was built in 1598, financed by a consortium that included William Shakespeare. The globe burnt down in 1613, and after its replacement was demolished by the Puritans in 1642 the site remained empty for the next three centuries.

American director Sam Wanamaker began the project to re-create an accurate, functioning reconstruction of the Globe. The new Globe was built using contemporary craftsmen's techniques and features the first thatched roof London has seen since the Great Fire of 1666.



MILLENNIUM BRIDGE

Millennium Bridge

—Foster And Partners, Anthony Caro, Arup, 2000-01

The first completely new pedestrian bridge to be built over the Thames in a hundred years, the Millennium Bridge is a combination of art, design and technology. Engineers, Architects and Sculptors, designed the bridge to be streamlined. This complex structure appears as a simple form: a shallow suspension bridge that spans the river as an 'elegant blade.'

The bridge was opened on June 10, 2000, but after seeing 90,00 pedestrians on its first day, it had to be serviced 48 hours after opening. After the installation of a 'passive dampening solution' and a period of testing the bridge was successfully re-opened on February 22, 2002



TATE MODERN

Tate Modern

—Giles Gilbert Scott, 1947-63

—Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, 1995-2000

The Tate Modern is now one of the most successful and popular art galleries in the world, as well as London's most popular free tourist attraction. The building was originally Bankside Power Station, designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, and was built in two stages between 1947 and 1963.

The Tate Gallery acquired the site in 1995, and was converted by architects Herzog & de Meuron. For illumination, a 'lightbeam' roof was added: a two-storey glass structure placed on top of the power station, flooding the upper floors with natural light and housing a café with spectacular views across the river.