

Take a dip this summer



Picture: Ron Ellis/Shutterstock.com

With a heatwave expected next week, MetroTravel goes in search of London's best places for an outdoor swim.

Oasis Sports Centre Covent Garden

THE fact there's a public, outdoor swimming pool just a stone's throw from Covent Garden may come as a surprise. Oasis, at 32 Endell Street, WC2, offers central London's only outdoor, heated pool, along with a sunbathing deck, indoor pool, gym and squash courts.

How to get there: It's just a ten-minute walk from Tottenham Court Road station [Northern and Central line], or Covent Garden station [Piccadilly line]. Bus routes 1 and 242 stop nearby.

The Ponds Hampstead Heath

There are several outdoor swimming areas at Hampstead Heath, including the Ladies', Men's and Mixed Ponds. Surrounded by acres of heathland, it's like being in the wilds of the countryside without actually leaving the city. The waters are deep and children aged eight to 15 are only allowed at the discretion of lifeguards.

For those who fancy a less 'wild' dip, the Parliament Hill Lido is also part of Hampstead Heath. It's an unheated, 60metre by 27metre pool open all year round.

How to get there: Take the 214 bus to Highgate West Hill for the Men's and Ladies' Ponds. Hampstead Heath

Overground station is a ten-minute walk to the mixed bathing pond, while Gospel Oak station is near to Parliament Hill Lido.

Brockwell Lido Brockwell Park

This is one of London's most recognisable outdoor swimming options. The building dates back to 1937 and now has Grade II-listed status. It boasts a 50metre pool, which is open all year round, a gym and award-winning café.

When the temperature rises, it's a hugely popular destination for people of all ages and over-60s can swim for free between 7am to 10am. The lido is in Brockwell Park on Dulwich Road, SE24.

How to get there: Bus routes 3, 37, 196 and 690 stop outside the lido, or it's a five-minute walk from Herne Hill rail station.

London Fields Lido London Fields

This lido was reopened in 2006 after several years of closure. London Fields offers a heated 50metre pool that's open all year round.

There's plenty of space to sunbathe, as well as a café. You'll find it on the west side of London Fields, Hackney.

How to get there: London Fields Overground station or bus route 394 runs nearby.

The Serpentine Lido Hyde Park

The Serpentine Lido is open to members of the public from May to September, and open all year round to members of the Serpentine Swimming Club.

The 100metre by 30metre lido is one for fans of wild swimming, being unheated and unchlorinated. There's also a child-friendly paddling pool and café. Last entry is at 5.30pm.

How to get there: Head for Knightsbridge or Hyde Park Corner [both on the Piccadilly line] and walk through the park.

Tooting Bec Lido

Spanning 91metres in length and with distinctive colourful changing huts this is the UK's largest outdoor, freshwater pool [pictured].

You have to be a member to swim in the winter, but the public are welcome between the warmer months of May to September.

How to get there: Tooting Bec Tube station [Northern line] is a 20-minute walk away, but bus routes 249, 315 or 319 will drop you nearer the lido itself.

■ **To plan your outdoor swimming journey, visit tfl.gov.uk/journey-planner**



If it's not booked it's just a stranger's car

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A tribute to Bob Kiley

BOB Kiley, Transport for London's first commissioner (2001-2006), has died at the age of 80.

Tributes have been paid to his amazing contribution to transport in London.

Current commissioner Mike Brown MVO said: 'As London's first transport commissioner, Bob Kiley was instrumental in securing the investment to modernise London Underground and transform the bus network.'

'He led the way with the Congestion Charge which, alongside massively improved public transport, encouraged people out of cars and onto more sustainable forms of getting around. Bob helped shape modern London, ensuring that it remained a world leading city.'



The London Underground flag flying at half-mast yesterday as a mark of respect.

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