

American coffee giant Starbucks alone has more than 1,000 coffee shops in the UK. Brits' love for coffee has surely soared, especially among the new generation.

I felt that the Londoners care for their environment. During my stay, I regularly saw people taking their own reusable cups and flasks to coffee shops to reduce waste. On a weekday morning, you will see hundreds and hundreds of people biking to their places of work. The shops in London do not issue plastic shopping bags; it's either paper bag or no bag at all. In a few places where I thought they bagged things in plastic bags, the bags were not really made from non-degradable polyethylene plastic, but a kind of biodegradable one. People take their own shopping bags to shops and malls.

When in London, there are a few places that must be on a visitor's bucket list. If time permits, walk across the Tower Bridge, London's defining landmark which crosses the River Thames.

Westminster Abbey is a breath-taking gothic structure, which is not only a church but also the traditional coronation venue and a burial site for monarchs, aristocrats, British prime ministers and national figures, including military generals, admirals, writers and scientists. Sir Isaac Newton, William Wordsworth, Charles Darwin, Charles Dickens, Geoffrey Chaucer and many other notable British figures were buried here. Theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking's



ashes were buried here after he died last year. Be prepared to stand in a long queue and pay a hefty £23 to enter the abbey.

St. Paul's Cathedral, Kensington Palace, and Buckingham Palace are some of tourists' favourite places to visit in London. London is an expensive city, so plan accordingly. If you want to go inside any of these places, you have to buy a ticket. But there are some great museums that are free to the public. The National Gallery, British Museum, Natural History Museum, Tate Modern do not cost a penny. Founded in 1753, the world-famous British Museum spans over two million years of human history, art, culture and civilization. You can spend an entire day here, marvelling at its

eight million objects on display.

Today, let's not get into the debate of whether the British royal family is the rightful owner of Koh-i-Noor, but If you want take a look at the enormous 105.6-carat diamond, let me tell you that you may have to stand in a line for as long as an hour. The famous diamond is on public display at the Jewel House in the Tower of London. There is a moving walkway around the exhibit to prevent people from stopping and gaping at it. Photography is not allowed and you have to buy a ticket for about £25 to enter the Tower of London.

Do you want to enjoy the most spectacular view of London? Buy a ticket

to the 72nd floor of The Shard, the tallest building in the European Union. You can also enjoy a lovely view of London from the London Eye, the iconic Ferris-wheel. If you can make time, consider gliding over River Thames on Emirates Airline cable car, which provides service between Greenwich Peninsula and Royal Victoria Dock.

I thought my trip to London would remain incomplete without visiting the Royal Observatory in Greenwich and having myself photographed standing with my feet apart on the prime meridian, the line where the eastern hemisphere meets the western hemisphere at 0° Longitude!

Getting around London is easy and convenient. The underground train system, known by its nickname the Tube, is clean, runs on time and systematic. And don't leave London without taking a ride on a quintessential London red double-decker bus! Get an Oyster card, an electronic ticket that you can top up. It's the most cost-effective way to travel around London on public transport.

There is so much to see and to do in London that a week is never enough. I want to go back to this amazing cosmopolitan city to explore food and places that I could not explore this time. Until then, let me sign off like a Brit: Cheers!

By Wara Karim

Photo: Wara Karim

CHECK IT OUT

The best of the season from Sadakalo

For this year's Puja festivities, Jamini Roy's art has been the key inspiration for Sadakalo. The latest collection features art on Radha-Krishna from the famed artist.

As added media, the fashion house has incorporated screen print, block print and hand embroidery in various designs. Saris, panjabis, tops plus matching clothes for family and couples are all part of Sadakalo's Puja ensemble this year.

The collection is available in all Sadakalo's outlets as well as online at www.sadakalo.net

For more information, check out www.facebook.com/sadalobangladesh



PERSONA offers Puja-special packages and discounts

Durga Puja is already picking up and Persona is here to set an even better mood. All outlets of Persona are offering attractive packages and price discounts till 10 October, 2019.

Five packages are being offered within the price range of Tk 1,400 to Tk 3,000. For Ashtami and Nabami, there will be a special offer on hair, makeup and sari styling.

Not only that, there will also be eye-catching teep designs, and 12 percent off on hair re-bonding and colouring.

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/yourpersona

