



Black Excellence in London

An Insider's Journey into the Culture & Cuisine of Britain's African Diaspora

June 1 – 8, 2024



Dear Travelers and Friends,

London is often defined by its iconic landmarks and royal heritage. Yet, within its vibrant streets along the Thames lies a lesser-known, deeply rich vein of history—the enduring legacy of its multifaceted Black communities. With a Black heritage dating back to Roman times, London has been home to diverse African and Caribbean communities who have indelibly shaped this global capital.

Join us for an exclusive journey that unveils a London rarely seen. Go behind the scenes of prestigious museums, private art galleries, vibrant historical neighborhoods, centuries-old heritage homes, and world-class restaurants, revealing stories often relegated to the margins. Enjoy enriching guidance from internationally acclaimed experts who have dedicated their careers to unearthing and sharing this often-overlooked narrative. Become reacquainted with London’s familiar landmarks, uncovering hidden connections to Africa and the Caribbean that pulse through the city’s millennia-long history.

Each day will bring revelations: On a private tour of the National Gallery, discover Old Master paintings and Impressionist works that reveal a longstanding Black presence in Europe and Britain, from Sir Joshua Reynolds’s *Colonel Tarleton* to Degas’s depiction of a mixed-race acrobat, *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando*. At the Bank of England, an expert curator will take us behind the scenes of the bank’s history highlighting how slavery has touched even the most venerable institutions. In Hampstead Heath, go behind the scenes of the lavish Kenwood House, once the residence of Dido Belle, who emerged from slavery to become Britain’s first Black aristocrat, challenging preconceived notions of race and class in the 18th century.

Discover London’s Black history not only through its storied landmarks but also in the vibrant flavors of its cuisine. During exclusive Michelin-starred meals and visits to world-renowned eateries like Stork, Akoko, 12:51, and Chishuru, meet visionary, award-winning chefs whose dishes fuse African flavors and British ingredients, a testament to the cultural synthesis that defines the city.

You will enjoy the best of London, including a Champagne reception and a private ride in a London Eye pod that will lift us above the city, offering a panoramic view that spans centuries of history and transformation. We hope you join us to rediscover London from a fresh vantage point—through the eyes of the often-unsung communities that have made it one of the world’s greatest cities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim".

Jim Friedlander
President, Museum Travel Alliance

English Heritage plaque dedicated to Frank Crichlow, Kensington.
Crichlow’s life was dramatized in the recent BBC drama
Mangrove, directed by Steve McQueen





TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

DISCOVER London anew through a transformative exploration of the city's Black history, culture, and cuisine, led by internationally acclaimed experts, featuring behind-the-scenes visits to key sites, museums, historical homes, and restaurants

JOIN London's acclaimed Black chefs and restaurateurs for exclusive meetings and innovative culinary experiences, from an introductory Sunday lunch prepared by Michelin-starred chefs to your festive farewell dinner at Chishuru, led by an award-winning, Nigerian-born chef

DELVE into the intricate web of history connecting the Bank of England and the transatlantic slave trade on a private, curator-led tour of the bank's unique museum

ENJOY a private, curator-led morning tour of Kenwood House, the 17th-century residence of Dido Belle, an enslaved woman who became Britain's first Black aristocrat

ADMIRE Kenwood House's collection of paintings by artists like Rembrandt, Vermeer, Van Dyck, Gainsborough, and Reynolds

EXPERIENCE a private guided tour of London's iconic landmarks, discovering their deep African and Caribbean heritage led by the founder of the Black History Walks organization

EXPLORE representations of the Black figure in Western art history during an exclusive guided tour of the National Gallery's extensive collection, including artworks by Veronese, Hogarth, Reynolds, and Degas

UNCOVER the layered history of Britain's Houses of Parliament during a private visit and see the historic portrait of Diane Abbott, Britain's first Black female MP

GATHER for a Champagne reception followed by a private ride in a London Eye pod, offering stunning panoramic views of the city

IMMERSE yourself in Brixton on a walking tour, spotlighting the often-overlooked contributions of Black women in civil rights history, and take an inside look at an African-owned art gallery with the founders and artists

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Edgar Degas, *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando* (detail), 1879,
National Gallery, London



MONDAY, JUNE 3: LONDON

Embark on a private morning tour of the National Gallery, where the focus will be on exploring the profound Black presence in their extensive art collection. Discover representations of the Black figure in European and, more precisely, British art, including pieces like William Hogarth's *Marriage A-la-Mode: 4, The Toilette*, Paolo Veronese's *The Adoration of the Kings*, Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Colonel Tarleton*, and Edgar Degas's *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando*, a depiction of a mixed-raced female acrobat.

This afternoon, savor a memorable lunch at Akoko, where you'll meet the restaurant's visionary founder. Learn how he artfully weaves his West African heritage into an inventive menu brimming with bold flavors. Delight in such dishes as smoked jollof rice, grilled aged beef *suya* with caramelized onion and confit tomato, and barbecued octopus with *ndolé* and plantain (*pending seasonal menu*).

The day continues with a private tour of Britain's Houses of Parliament, where you'll have the opportunity to view the portrait of Diane Abbott, the first Black woman elected to Parliament and the longest-serving Black MP. Afterwards, enjoy dinner at leisure, experiencing London's culinary delights at your own pace.

B,L

SATURDAY, JUNE 1: DEPARTURE

Depart for London on an overnight flight.

SUNDAY, JUNE 2: LONDON, ENGLAND

Upon arrival in London, you'll be warmly greeted and transferred to the elegant Kimpton Fitzroy Hotel. Here, enjoy a special Sunday lunch specially crafted by two Michelin-starred chefs, a taste of many elevated culinary experiences to come on this journey. Then join the acclaimed founder of the Black History Walks organization on an enlightening tour by motor coach. Along the way, gain a fresh perspective of London's iconic landmarks, unveiling hidden connections to the African and Caribbean heritage woven into the city's millennia-long history.

The day wraps up back at the hotel with a warm welcome reception and an intriguing talk by an expert in African Caribbean genealogy. An evening at leisure offers a chance to relax and reflect on the day's discoveries in the comfort of the Kimpton Fitzroy Hotel.

L,R

Throne of England, The House of Lords,
Houses of Parliament, London



TUESDAY JUNE 4: LONDON

Begin a day of discovery at the Bank of England Museum with an exclusive curator-led tour, exploring the intricate connections between transatlantic slavery, the Bank, and London's financial history. During an in-depth inside look, learn how slavery-fueled wealth shaped Britain.

In the afternoon, unwind over a classic British pub lunch, followed by a private tour at the National Maritime Museum, guided by a specialist in Black British history and literature. Here, delve into centuries of interaction between Britain, Africa, and the Americas, tracing the complexities of the triangular trade, African civilizations, the Middle Passage, and the abolition movement.

On your tour, learn about such trailblazing figures as Toussaint L'Ouverture, an enslaved man who rose to lead Haiti's fight for independence against the French, the only successful slave revolt in modern history; and Olaudah Equiano, an enslaved Nigerian who gained freedom, wrote a well-regarded autobiography, and played a crucial role in the eventual abolition of the English slave trade.

Conclude with a Champagne reception and a private ride in a London Eye pod offering breathtaking panoramic views of the city, followed by a memorable dinner. B,L,R,D



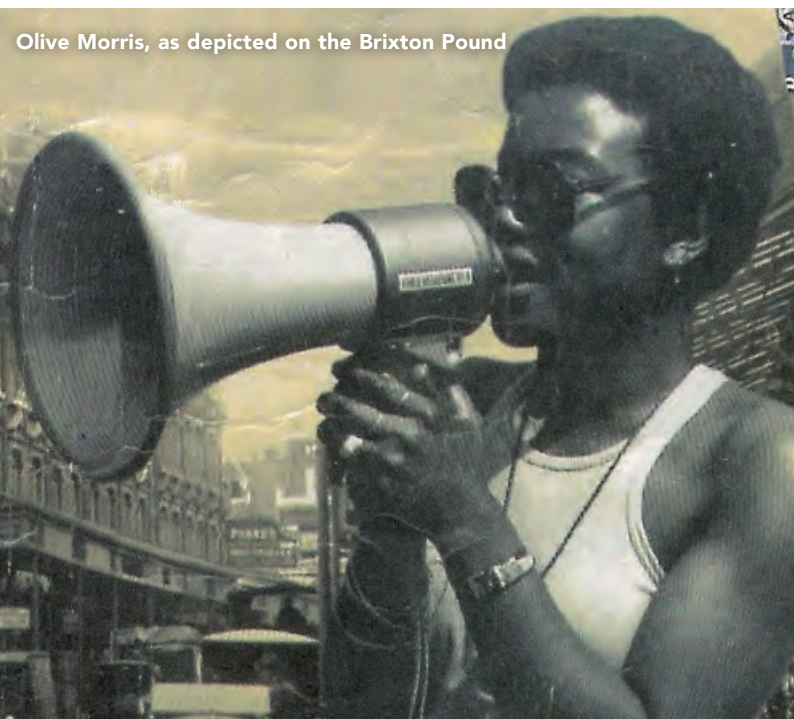
Brixton Market, London

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5: LONDON

Set forth on a guided walking tour of Brixton, one of London's most fascinating neighborhoods. This tour will shine a spotlight on the often-overlooked contributions of Black women who played a pivotal role in the fight for civil rights, including Jamaican-born activist Olive Morris, who co-founded influential groups like the Brixton Black Women's Group and played a key role in Britain's Black Women's Movement during the 1970s. Following the enlightening tour, enjoy lunch at leisure before visiting with the founders and artists-in-residence of an esteemed Black-owned art gallery.

This evening, indulge in a five-course meal with drink pairings at James Cochran's iconic establishment, 12:51 By Chef James Cochran, named after a song by the American rock band The Strokes. Driven by Caribbean and Scottish influences, Chef Cochran has curated a menu full of personality and joy, winning him the prestigious "Eater London Chef of the Year" Award. B,D

The Bank of England, London



Olive Morris, as depicted on the Brixton Pound

THURSDAY, JUNE 6: LONDON

This morning, take a private look at Hampstead Heath's Kenwood House, built in the 17th century and later the residence of Britain's first Black aristocrat, Dido Elizabeth Belle. Born to an African enslaved woman and a naval officer in 1761, Belle was notably raised in aristocracy by her white great-uncle, William Murray, the 1st Earl of Mansfield. During her 30-year stay at Kenwood House, she worked closely with Lord Mansfield and managed the estate's dairy and poultry.

Amid lavish period furnishings and interiors, your tour includes exhibits showcasing Belle's life and Lord Mansfield's role in abolishing slavery. You will also encounter Kenwood's exceptional collection of Old Master paintings, including Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait with Two Circles*, Vermeer's *The Guitar Player*, and Antony van Dyck's *Princess Henrietta of Lorraine, Attended by a Page*.

After the tour, enjoy lunch and the afternoon at your leisure. In the evening, experience a culinary tribute to Africa's global culinary influence at Stork, whose name was inspired by the extensive migration journey of the famed long-legged bird. The restaurant celebrates Africa's gastronomical richness and creativity through vibrant food and art, highlighting authentic flavors, textures, and artistic presentations. Indulge in a seasonal Pan-African menu for a dining experience that celebrates the depth and diversity of African flavors. B,D

Kenwood House, London



Hackney, London

FRIDAY, JUNE 7: LONDON

Venture to East London for an expert-guided morning exploration of Hackney, home to people of African descent since the 1750s, including 18th-century abolitionists like Olaudah Equiano and the writer and composer Ignatius Sancho, the first person of African descent to vote in a British election.

Next, you will have afternoon leisure time for lunch and further exploration on your own. As the sun sets over London, gather for a festive farewell dinner at Chishuru, a stylish space of textured coral walls and terrazzo-flecked tables. Here, experience the Nigerian-born chef/owner's award-winning cuisine, tucking into such flavorful dishes as *waina* (deep-fried rice and coconut dough) and chicken supreme with lemon sauce (*pending seasonal menu*). B,D

SATURDAY, JUNE 8: LONDON / RETURN

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for flights home. B

This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of Museum Travel Alliance. For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at <https://museumtravelalliance.com/faq.php>.

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ACCOMMODATIONS



Kimpton Fitzroy Hotel, London

KIMPTON FITZROY HOTEL, LONDON

A striking blend of timeless elegance and modern luxury, this historic landmark boasts a stunning Victorian façade that hints at the grandeur within. Upon entering, guests are welcomed by a sophisticated and inviting atmosphere, where contemporary design seamlessly mingles with classic charm. The rooms and suites are meticulously designed, featuring plush furnishings and thoughtful details that ensure a comfortable stay. The Kimpton Fitzroy places a strong emphasis on guest well-being, providing amenities like a fully-equipped fitness center and tranquil spa facilities.

PROGRAM RATE

\$7,999 per person, double rate

\$10,499 single rate

RATE INCLUDES

- Six nights hotel accommodations as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine at welcome and farewell dinners
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Airport/hotel/airport transfers for all participants on suggested flights
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers

NOT INCLUDED IN RATE International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than what is noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; airport transfers other than for those on suggested flights; excess baggage; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.

Front cover: Mikéla Henry-Lowe, *Portrait of Dido Belle* (detail), 2021 (Image: © English Heritage). Highlights page: National Maritime Museum, London.

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London Eye and Big Ben

MUSEUM TRAVEL ALLIANCE BLACK EXCELLENCE IN LONDON JUNE 1 – 8, 2024 RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a place, please call Museum Travel Alliance at 212-324-1893 or 855-533-0033, fax: 212-344-7493; email: trips@museumtravelalliance.com; or complete and return this form with your deposit of \$1,000 per person (of which \$500 is non-refundable for administrative fees) to *Museum Travel Alliance*. Mail to: Museum Travel Alliance, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name(s) in full as on passport(s). Please print.

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone (home)

(business)

Fax

E-mail

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Room Preference One bed Two beds Single

I wish to share a room with _____

FORM OF PAYMENT

Enclosed is my check (*Museum Travel Alliance*)

Debit card Credit card

Name on debit/credit card

Debit/credit card number

3- or 4-digit security code

Expiration date

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the *Terms & Conditions* of this Program (see <https://museumtravelalliance.com/faq.php> to review or call for a copy). I/We agree to full payment by check, wire transfer, or credit card 120 days prior to departure. Each participant must sign below.

Signature (required)

Date

Signature (required)

Date