



Friday

1 BERMONDSEY MARKET

Half car boot sale, half chic Parisian flea market, Bermondsey market is the place where the dealers come to stock up on china, silver, furniture and glassware. Located in Bermondsey Square, a stone's throw from The Shard, the market boasts 200-odd stalls, now also including food, fashion and craft.

Dealers frequent the market knowing it is the best place to find quality antiques and interesting artefacts and every visitor who makes a bargain deal will understand why they keep it a secret. Discover timeless antique china alongside Victorian photos, rare furniture with mystic engravings and perfect retro decor for your home. And if you are in the market for glassware, these age-old streets will certainly also provide.

But, be warned, arrive early; deals are done quickly and vendors begin packing away in the afternoon. And with no tube lines running at this time, research a bus route or even book a taxi.

Where: 5b Greenwich Market, London SE10 9HZ, United Kingdom

When: Monday to Sunday, 10am-5.30pm

Web: www.greenwichmarketlondon.com

WHERE TO STAY

Bermondsey Square Hotel is the perfect location from which to explore the antiques markets of south London. Bermondsey antiques market is on its doorstep (in fact it takes place on the square outside), Greenwich Market is a half-hour bus ride away (188) and getting to Camden Passage, Spitalfields and Brick Lane is an easy hop on the 47

Subscribers can save 10 percent off their bar bill and 15 percent off the cost of dining at the Bermondsey Square Hotel, simply quote 'B2Antiques' when booking. Reservations must be made directly with hotel, email reservations@bermondseysquarehotel.co.uk

LONDON calling

With its ancient history, colourful markets and fine shops, London is a veritable treasure chest for a long weekend's antique and art hunting - Nicholas Martin lifts the lid

From the colour, character and enthusiastic clamour of Portobello Road on a Saturday morning - the world's largest antiques market with 1,000 dealers - to the reassuredly refined air of Kensington's Church Street, London's range of markets, shops and galleries is as diverse and eclectic as every other facet of this global city. Well-heeled and wealthy visitors who flock to London in search of rare

works of art and fine antiques can secure exquisite items such as Tang dynasty porcelain and Chippendale masterpieces. Meanwhile, in other districts, bustling markets offer the chance to bag in vogue vintage furniture at bargain prices.

And, with its long history of trade and opportunity, expert hagglers can discover that London's streets are still paved with gold - if you know where to look.

2 GREENWICH MARKET

Welcome to one of London's finest covered markets and the only one set inside a World Heritage Site. Greenwich Market's seven-day bonanza brings you 120 stalls showing anything and everything. From antiques and collectables to independent boutiques and well-known fashion brands, Greenwich is the perfect balance of vintage pieces and modern designs. Antiques and collectables are the order of business on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Fridays are jam-packed as the craft and design team also joins the fun. Antique days are noticeably smaller than the busy weekends. However this doesn't detract from the quality. More than 40 stalls and local antique shops selling 20th-century bespoke and restored pieces, fill the hall. And shipping is offered on any item that is too big to carry home.

Where: 5b Greenwich Market, London SE10 9HZ, United Kingdom
When: Monday to Sunday, 10am-5.30pm
Web: www.greenwichmarketlondon.com



3 GRAYS ANTIQUE CENTRE

Located just five minutes from Selfridges, Grays Antique Centre offers an entertaining antique-hunting experience among 200 independent dealers selling a broad array of collectable, antique and vintage items.

Housed in a stunning red terracotta building, the centre claims to be "one of the world's largest and most diverse collections of fine antiques, jewellery, and vintage fashion". And while the emphasis is very much on antique silver, watches and jewellery, there are a number of stalls that specialise in militaria, porcelain, English ephemera, glass, tribal & Asian art, ethnic items and general antiques. Vendors located downstairs showcase fabulous vintage clothing and costume jewellery.

Where: 58 Davies Street and 1-7 Davies Mews, London, W1K 5AB
When: Monday to Saturday 10am-6pm
Web: www.graysantiques.com

4 ALFIES ANTIQUES MARKET

Located just south west of Regent's Park, Alfies Antiques Market is London's largest indoor antiques market (35,000 sq feet) and a treasure trove of individual shops. Alfies hosts a bustling indoor market with a bohemian chic atmosphere that's great for decorative and unusual antiques, vintage and collectables. With close to 100 dealers over the building's four floors, for over 30 years Alfies has attracted serious collectors, interior designers and even celebrities. Overall, Alfies offers a good blend of houseware, clothing, and furniture – much of it mid-century modern design and art deco.

Where: 13-25 Church Street, Marylebone, London, NW8 8DT
When: Tuesday to Saturday 10am-6pm
Web: www.alfiesantiques.com

1 CAMDEN PASSAGE

Saturday

A quaint, pedestrianised passage with over 200 antique dealers trading in anything from Staffordshire pottery to antique door handles. Not to be confused with Camden Market, Camden Passage in Islington is London's premier antiques village. With four separate markets serving different areas, take your time to experience the mounds of sparkling trinkets, vintage clothing rarities and scarce first editions. One of the markets - Pierrepont Arcade is a covered area towards the far end of the passage offering antique gifts and designer costume jewellery.

Camden Passage is a wonderful place to browse if you are not looking for anything in particular. A short rummage through the stalls and you will certainly find a gem, or simply take pleasure in a few hours away from the bustle of the city.



Where: Camden Passage, Islington, London, N1 8EA
When: Various times
Web: www.camdenpassageislington.co.uk



2 PORTOBELLO ROAD

One of the most famous antiques markets in the world, every weekend thousands of tourists and locals descend on Notting Hill to search for delectable antiques, exquisite vintage fashion and finest jewellery from over 1,000 dealers.

Although open seven days a week, it's the weekend when the streets really come alive with an estimated 100,000 visitors. Exit the tube station and discover a mile-long strip of stalls, arcades and shops to satisfy all visitors.

Antiques, of course, are the main attraction of Portobello Road, with a rich heritage dating back to the 1940s. Each vendor is a specialist in a certain field and together they have hundreds of items on offer. Friday and Saturday buzz with energy, Vintage bargain hunters should head to the north end of Portobello Green and the never-ending selection of vintage clothes rails. At the southern end, the antique stalls are laden with beautiful old relics and ornate vintage furniture. Come early, 7.30-8am is best. From 11.30am onwards not only are the streets fit to bursting, many of the antique bargains will have gone, with lots of dealers packing up.

Insider tip

Ollie & Bow (69 Portobello Road) specialises in architectural oddments and old furniture

Where: Portobello Road, London, W11
When: Monday to Saturday 9am-6pm
Web: www.portobelloroad.co.uk





Sunday

1 BRICK LANE MARKET

The Brick Lane flea market is not simply a street filled with market booths, it is a network of five connected markets, known as The Truman Markets. These markets are located within the

confines of the historic 11-acre Old Truman Brewery, at the north end of Brick Lane. Of these the Tea Rooms and the Vintage Markets are the most interesting, offering an eclectic collection of antiques and collectables.

Insider tip

Nearby Labour & Wait (85 Redchurch St) sells old-fashioned hardware including enamelware and storage jars

Where: Brick Lane, Shoreditch, London, E1 6QL

When: Friday to Sunday 11am-5pm

Web: www.visitbricklane.org

2 OLD SPITALFIELDS MARKET

Open seven days a week with specialist market days and one-off monthly events, collectors can rummage around the eclectic mix of antique gems, vintage fashion and fine art dealers. From antique walking sticks to old-fashioned shipping maps, to the endless rows of quality sterling silver jewellery Spitalfields offers something for everyone. No wonder, then, that Londoners join thousands of tourists to visit this modern development of 150 stalls of vendors from across the globe. Plus the street food on offer is terrific.



Where: 16 Horner Square, London, E1 6EW

When: Monday to Sunday 10am-5pm

Web: www.oldspitalfieldsmarket.com

Nicholas Martin is the founder of fleamarketinsiders.com an online guide to the world's best flea markets.

Q&A

Nick Jones specialises in 18th to 20th-century antiques at his shop in Church Street, Marylebone. He is a regular exhibitor at the thrice yearly Decorative Fair in Battersea



Q If money was no object which area/shops should you head for?

A For me, there are so many really fantastic shops on Church Street that I wouldn't have to stray far from Marylebone. But, slightly farther away, I would recommend M Charpentier in Lillie Road, Fulham. It's run by Alix and Camilla Charpentier who grew up dealing in antiques and have the most amazing eye. They stock an eclectic mix – from decorative furniture, to mercury mirrors and garden ornaments and just get it right. They have innate style. Another dealer on my list would be Schmid McDonagh, here in Church Street – again another dealer with an excellent eye. Another must-visit dealer, also in Church Street, is the legendary Simon Sprake whose style I really admire. His striking window displays are worth a trip on their own. His shop is notorious among Londoners 'in the know' for having some unbelievable treasures. He specialises in one-of-a-kind items from fantastical French and English furniture to voodoo dolls.

Q What about if you were on a budget?

A One dealer who springs to mind is Andrew Collier but, because he is based in Nottingham, you'd have to time your visit to coincide with when he is at one of the London fairs. He specialises in oddities, curiosities and gentlemen's paraphernalia and his stuff is not only great, but really, really affordable. You could start a collection with Andrew for £20.

Q What antiques do you collect?

A Bronze sculptural figures. I'm not sure how it happened but my home is full of them. I don't collect for the sake of it, I buy things that I love. If you just collect one thing you are rather restricted. I'll buy anything from a Chinese screen to a piece of German ceramics. I am also a great fan of Empire furniture and now is a great time to buy. I recently bought a Queen Anne chest, a few years ago it would have cost £12,000, I bought it for £3,000.

Q What areas are currently selling well with you?

A Lighting has suddenly taken off. It might sound odd but, come the autumn, when people start switching the lights on, lighting becomes a top seller. At the moment it's 1950s Italian floor lamps, as well as ceiling lights. Popular furniture at the moment is earlier – from the 1820s-1900. People don't buy in the same way they used to. Today the criteria is how it will look in the home. People might buy more than one, say, Clarice Cliff vase but it would be because they look good on a particular table, not because they collect art deco ceramics.

Q Where are your favourite antique hunting grounds in London?

A Portobello market on a Saturday, but you need to get there early because it's pretty much over by 11.30am; the fairs at Alexandra Palace; the "Horti" Sunday fairs at the Royal Horticultural Halls, Elverton Street, are terrific and the Decorative Fair Battersea is a must visit. In fact, if I had one tip it would be for visitors to coincide their visit with the Decorative Fair. All the exhibitors, including myself, take new stock previously unseen. I'm taking a pair of Spanish green-veined marbled console tables and a pair of gilt mirrors decorated with gilt feathers. It's a chance for dealers to showcase their stock to interior designers, as well impress potential new clients – so there are some wonderful things on show, all of which are vetted.

Q Can you recommend any museums or art galleries that are a must for antique lovers?

A If you are looking to develop an eye, or learn about craftsmanship there is no better place to start than museums. I love the British Museum for its antiquities. Also Tate Britain and the Sir John Soane's Museum in Lincoln Inn Fields. The Wallace Collection, which is open seven days a week and free to enter, is an absolute must for anyone interested in antiques.

Nick Jones' shop can be found at 34 Church Street, London NW8 8EP, call 020 7723 1555, or follow him on Instagram @ [nick_jones_antiques](https://www.instagram.com/nick_jones_antiques). For more details on the Decorative Fair Battersea visit www.decorativefair.com, or read our preview on page 54.

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