

**IT'S A
LONDON
THING**

FRED BUTLER

IT'S A LONDON THING

AN INSIDER'S CITY GUIDE

PRESTEL

Munich • London • New York



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Bubbles over St Paul's Cathedral from Tate Modern..

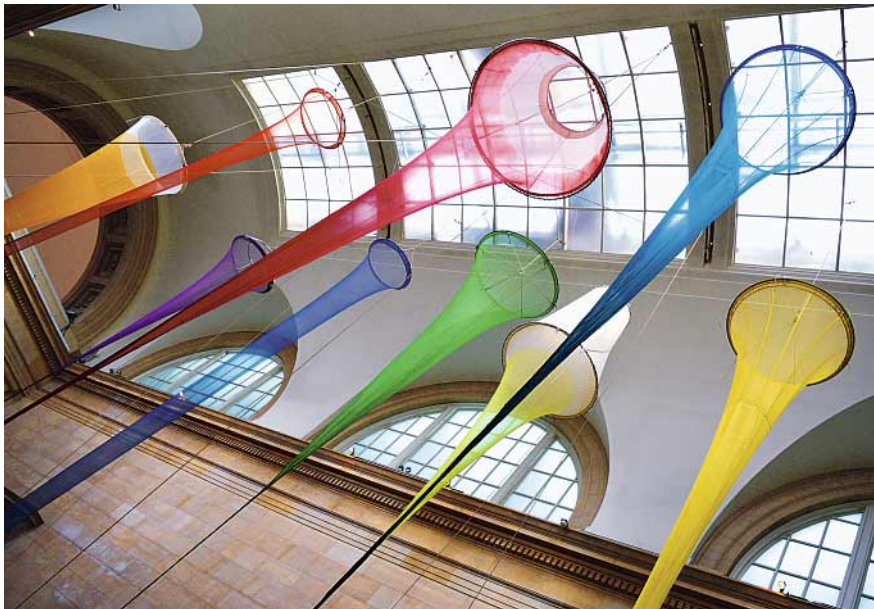
Introduction

It's a London thing. It's a glorious thing. It's potentially, at times, a wet and grey thing. But it's also a multicoloured, multifaceted, multicultural multi-pass to something magic. This book contains my insider's insights from a cosmic perspective, and is preoccupied with discovering every detail. It's a guide for navigating the streets—what the local taxi drivers refer to as 'The Knowledge'—and a time capsule that locks in what might later be lost.

The listings in *It's a London Thing* are organised by neighbourhood (Central, North, East, South and West) and each area features a map pinpointing the locations of my recommendations. Every chapter begins with a photograph taken inside my house, providing a sneak peek into my own personal London style. I've also asked a number of the capital's essential idiosyncratic characters for their top tips to bring you a complete 360-degree scoop of the city's flavour.

During my time compiling this compendium I've witnessed cavities being dug out and a canopy of high-rises bionically shoot up. The skyline has fluctuated as quickly as the columns of a volume display rise and fall. Artists' warehouse studios are now a flicker of PC screensavers between partitioned walls. Gentrification is the dirty word on everyone's lips. Our local high streets are becoming high roads and we're having to do a Dick Whittington and dart out of here, to duck and dive to survive.

So here is an antidote to that spiralling fear. Reacquaint yourself with, rediscover and rejoice in what is quintessentially London. Switch off and check in.



Christina Mackie's 2015 Tate Britain Commission, *The Filters*.

Don't go for the pre-packaged 'meal deal' aisle; go into the Italian café that's been here since day dot and have a chat for a more nourishing exchange—and leave with more change. Don't get run down; run along the South Bank at night and see the lights reflect on the lapping Thames like a 21st-century Turner. Run into the National Gallery to see his original bequest paintings for free. Reignite your intrigue with firework displays on Guy Fawkes Night and Diwali. Light your lantern at Chinatown's New Year's parade and your Christingle candle while carol singing at St Paul's. Find a furry friend to hug at a city farm and swim with swans in the Serpentine come summertime. Sunbathe at Hampstead's ponds; let your dog loose and fly a kite at the summit of Parliament Hill Fields. See the skyline from the South Side at Bold Tendencies, Peckham's multi-storey sculpture park. Snuffle out samples of truffle burgers at Borough Market and learn body-popping 'n' locking in the Charing Cross subway. Skate at the Southbank Centre's undercroft and follow the boom-box beats to catch the street dancers practising routines in the first-floor foyer. Hot-desk from the British Library and learn how to service your own wheels at the London Bike Kitchen. Go for a bike ride and stalk some deer with the dappled Bambis in Richmond Park. Plant trees, catch swarms and collect urban honey with Bootstrap Bees.



Chloe Dewe Mathews's 2015 video installation *Congregation* at Bosse & Baum in Peckham, South London.



Artist Bethan Laura Wood at Dover Street Market, a unique London talent in a unique London space.

Paint your face with flowers for Halloween at the British Museum's Day of the Dead. Take your date to a Friday Late at the Tate and wait outside Wimbledon for someone to liberate their day pass to world-class tennis.

Don't pass up opportunities. Ask questions, beat down doors and don't be shy. Leave no stone unturned and turn over a new leaf in the way you view London. Our London. My London ... which is now, in turn, your London too. As you turn over this page, feel the paper and feel the force. Enjoy it. Digest it. Breathe it all in. Exhale to spread the words of optimistic energy and let the ripples hit the Thames Barrier and bounce right back again. In the words of Scott Garcia and MC Styles' classic UK garage tune: *It's. A. London. Thing. This is a London thing.*

Fred Butler
London, 2016

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TRIAL





Fred Butler

Fred Butler It's a London Thing

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Prestel

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London für Fortgeschrittene: auf Entdeckungstour mit Fred Butler

Wo sind in London die besten Orte zum Feiern, Joggen, Shoppen oder um Musik oder Kunst zu erleben? Fred Butler weiß, was gerade angesagt ist! Die vielseitig talentierte Londoner Designerin ist immer unterwegs zum nächsten Event. Mit ihrem extravaganten Style ist Fred selbst eine Trendsetterin und arbeitet erfolgreich als DJ und Kostümdesignerin – zu ihren Kundinnen gehören Stars wie Lady Gaga, Björk und Nicki Minaj. In ihrer Heimatstadt London hat Fred unzählige Kreative aus der Mode-, Musik-, Gastronomie- und Design-Welt um sich geschart. Zusammen mit ihren Freunden – darunter angesagte Radiomoderatoren, Journalisten, Designer und DJs – stellt Fred ihre liebsten Orte in London vor. Die Geheimtipps sind vielfältig: von Bars, Restaurants und Nachtclubs bis zu Museen, Galerien und Parks. Ein Kalender mit jährlichen Veranstaltungen und persönliche Einblicke in Freds private Wohnung und ihr kreatives Umfeld machen das Buch zum perfekten Insiderguide.

 [Der Titel im Katalog](#)