

Heading to London for the Summer Games? Have time to do some exploring? Here are just a few of the many places to visit and things to see in that interesting city and beyond.

UNITED KINGDOM

1 NORTHERN IRELAND



Isle of Lewis

From lush green hills to rugged mountains, Northern Ireland is a land of contrasts: Low beaches and high cliffs, stately manors and humble cottages, buzzing Belfast city and quiet countryside, high tea and legendary Guinness

2 SCOTLAND



The iconic Highland Bagpipes are found throughout Scottish society as well as all over the world; Scottish culture, from music and dance to drama and art, is rich, and Scotland's landscapes, with thousands of lochs and hundreds of islands, are majestic

3 Stratford-upon-Avon



The birthplace of William Shakespeare and home of the Royal Shakespeare Theater, Stratford is nestled on the banks of the river Avon in the lovely English countryside; the town also offers music in the parks, river cruises and ample opportunity for walking and relaxing

4 London



The 13-ton bell known as Big Ben that sits in the Clock Tower at the British parliament is just one of many London landmarks; others include the 775-room Buckingham Palace, home to the royal family, the Tower of London, where heads once rolled and the crown jewels are now on view, and Westminster Abbey, site of coronations and burial ground of kings and poets. A world-class city, London also charms with its theater, museums and neighborhoods, offering everything from street performers to posh shops. Situated along the Thames, London is a city for walking or for viewing from a riverboat or from the giant Ferris wheel called the London Eye

7 WALES



Home to more than 600 castles – more than any other European country – and 11 million sheep, 3 million people, three national parks and countless stories and songs, Wales is a magical place; 13th-century Beaumaris Castle (shown here) boasts a sturdy moat and is now a World Heritage site

6 Stonehenge



Some say it was an ancient temple; others, a giant solar calendar. What we do know is that Stonehenge was built purposefully; this prehistoric icon is made of large stones standing in a circle at the center of which are burial mounds; the first stones were laid perhaps as early as 3,100 B.C.; today, it is a World Heritage site

5 Oxford



The Radcliffe Camera with its lofty dome contains reading rooms used by students at Oxford, the oldest university in the English-speaking world. Founded in the 11th century, the university contains 38 colleges, all notable for their architecture. Oxfordshire county offers some of the best of rural England – quaint villages and lovely countryside