

# Discover London...

trail **7**

map & introduction

## BRUNEL AND DOCKLANDS . . .

Half day

2006 marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, one of the most versatile, audacious and inspirational engineers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This trail combines the legacy of three generations of the Brunel family with the past and present of London's vibrant Docklands.

Starting at Canary Wharf in the heart of the new Docklands, you will glimpse the distinctive glass structure of the 800-foot high Canada Tower, its classical pyramid reflecting the changing colour of the sky. The Tower, designed by Argentine architect Cesar Pelli and currently the tallest building in the UK, is located on what was once the West India Dock. This historic area has a constantly changing landscape and now thrives as a superb modern work environment. It is an excellent place for eating, walking, shopping and sightseeing.

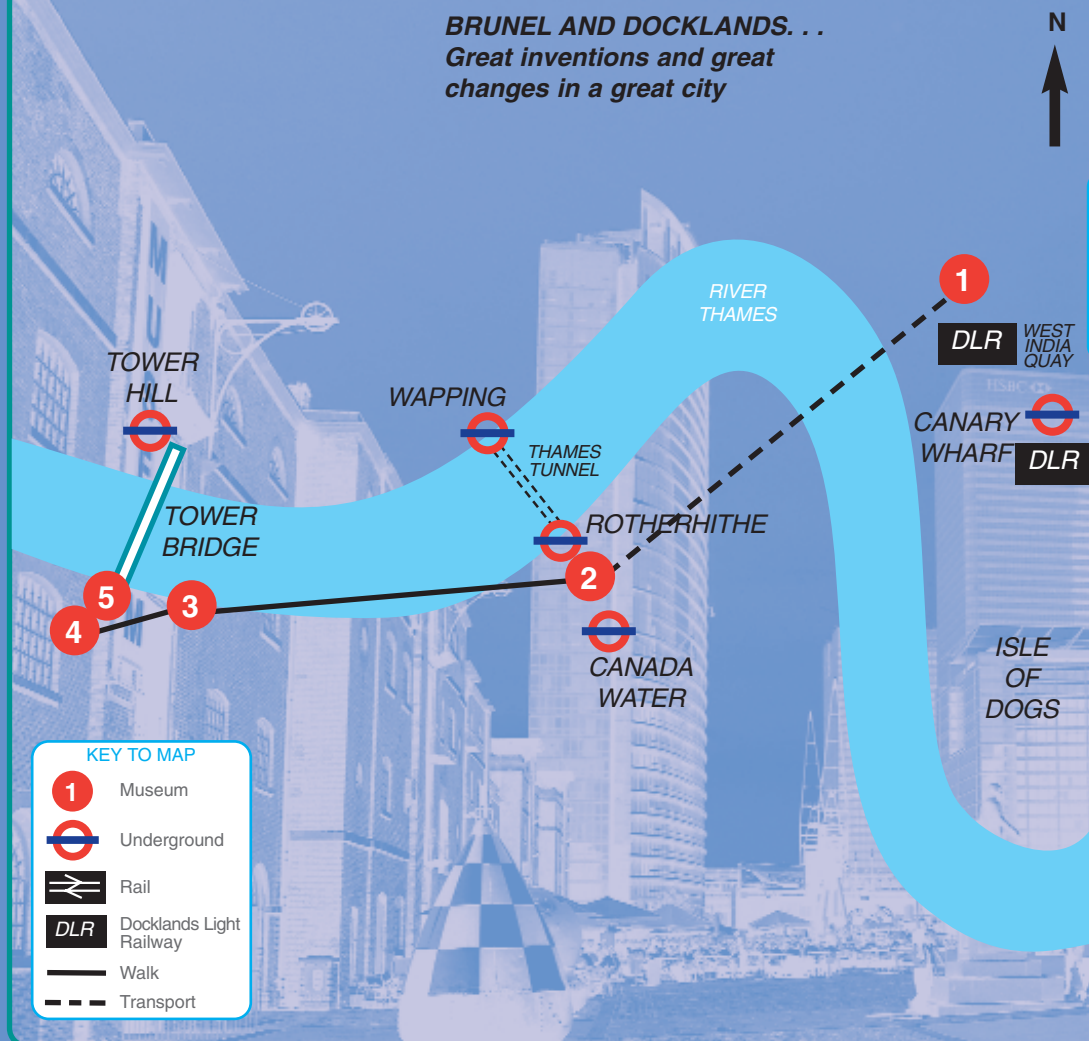
Moving away from the cutting edge technology of Docklands, you travel through the first tunnel ever to be built under a navigable river ... and imagine shopping underwater in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, you enjoy a walk along the Thames Path where you can visit a pub or two, the Design Museum and see City Hall, home to the Mayor of London, before exploring Tower Bridge.

Further information on the **Isambard Kingdom Brunel Bicentenary** can be found at [www.brunel200.com](http://www.brunel200.com)

- 1 **Museum in Docklands**
- 2 **The Brunel Museum**
- 3 **Design Museum**
- 4 **City Hall**
- 5 **Tower Bridge Exhibition**

Not to scale

**BRUNEL AND DOCKLANDS . . .**  
*Great inventions and great changes in a great city*



### KEY TO MAP

- 1 Museum
- Underground
- Rail
- DLR Docklands Light Railway
- Walk
- Transport



Discover London Trails have been produced by the Campaign for Museums, a registered charity, in support of London's Smaller Museums and Galleries with funding from the Mayor of London and ALM London.

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## TRAIL SUMMARY

This trail begins at the awe-inspiring Canary Wharf station on the Jubilee line (also accessible by the Docklands Light Railway). Marvel at recent developments before visiting the new **Museum in Docklands** covering the history of the area by themes of River, Port and People. Back on the Jubilee Line one stop to Canada Water, you change for the East London Line to Wapping to begin your unique insight into the Great Britain, **Isambard Kingdom Brunel**.



You will travel through the Thames Tunnel, the oldest section of tunnel in the London Underground, and the birthplace of urban transport, before visiting **The Brunel Museum** in Rotherhithe for the history of this great feat of engineering. Walk from Rotherhithe along the Thames Path for approximately 25 minutes to Butler's Wharf for the **Design Museum**, a display of international design and architecture, with a focus on modern design history. Walking a little way beyond Tower Bridge, you see **City Hall** before visiting the Victorian Engine Rooms at the **Tower Bridge Exhibition**.



The trail ends at Tower Hill station.

*Plan your own journey by visiting Transport for London's website [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk).*

### Museum in Docklands

West India Quay,  
Canary Wharf, E14

[www.museumindocklands.org.uk](http://www.museumindocklands.org.uk)

Open: 1000-1800 daily

Admission charge

**Tel: 0870 444 3857**

Unlocks the 2000-year old story of London's river, port and people

### The Brunel Museum

Railway Avenue, Rotherhithe, SE16

[www.brunel-museum.org.uk](http://www.brunel-museum.org.uk)

Open: 1300-1700 daily

Admission charge

**Tel: 020 7231 3840**

Tells the dramatic story of the Thames Tunnel

### Design Museum

Butlers Wharf, Shad Thames, SE1

[www.designmuseum.org](http://www.designmuseum.org)

Open: 1000-1745 daily

Admission charge

**Tel: 0870 833 9955**

Examines how great design affects our lives

### City Hall

The Queen's Walk, SE1

[www.london.gov.uk/gla/city\\_hall/](http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/city_hall/)

Open (parts): 0800-2000 Mon-Fri  
occasional Sat, Sun

**Tel: 020 7983 4000**

Home to the Mayor of London

### Tower Bridge Exhibition

Tower Bridge, SE1

[www.towerbridge.org.uk](http://www.towerbridge.org.uk)

Open: 1000-1730 daily 1 Apr-30 Sep  
daily 0930-1800 1 Oct-31 Mar daily

Admission charge

**Tel: 020 7403 3761**

Brings to life the story of Tower Bridge

## CHILDREN'S/FAMILY ACTIVITIES

**Museum in Docklands** – free entry for under 16s, children's gallery with hands-on interactive exhibits, regular family events.

**The Brunel Museum** – free entry for under 12s, tunnel peepshow kits, activity packs, regular family events including floodlit tube journeys, festivals, playschemes

**The Design Museum** – free entry for under 12s, design action packs, treasure trails, bookable Sunday events.

**Tower Bridge Exhibition** – various family activities throughout the year

Images  
*The Brunel Museum*  
*Museum in Docklands*

# Discover London...



the trail in detail

## BRUNEL AND DOCKLANDS . . .

Take the Jubilee Line or Docklands Light Railway to Canary Wharf and walk to the new **Museum in Docklands**. This museum explores the history of London's River, port of people from Roman times through to the recent regeneration of London's former Docklands. Twelve major galleries are located within a splendid late Georgian warehouse on West India Quay in the Canary Wharf district. The centuries of social and economic change of the area are shown within the galleries; there are also stories of the people who helped to build and shape the city, including the great engineers, father, son and grandson Brunel.

A lively mix of traditional displays and multi-media technology animates the 2000-year storyline. Artefacts, engravings, paintings, testimonies and photos drawn from the outstanding collections of the Museum of London and Port of London Authority emphasise the skills and ingenuity of the Docklands community. Temporary exhibitions and events showcase the region's rich cultural heritage.

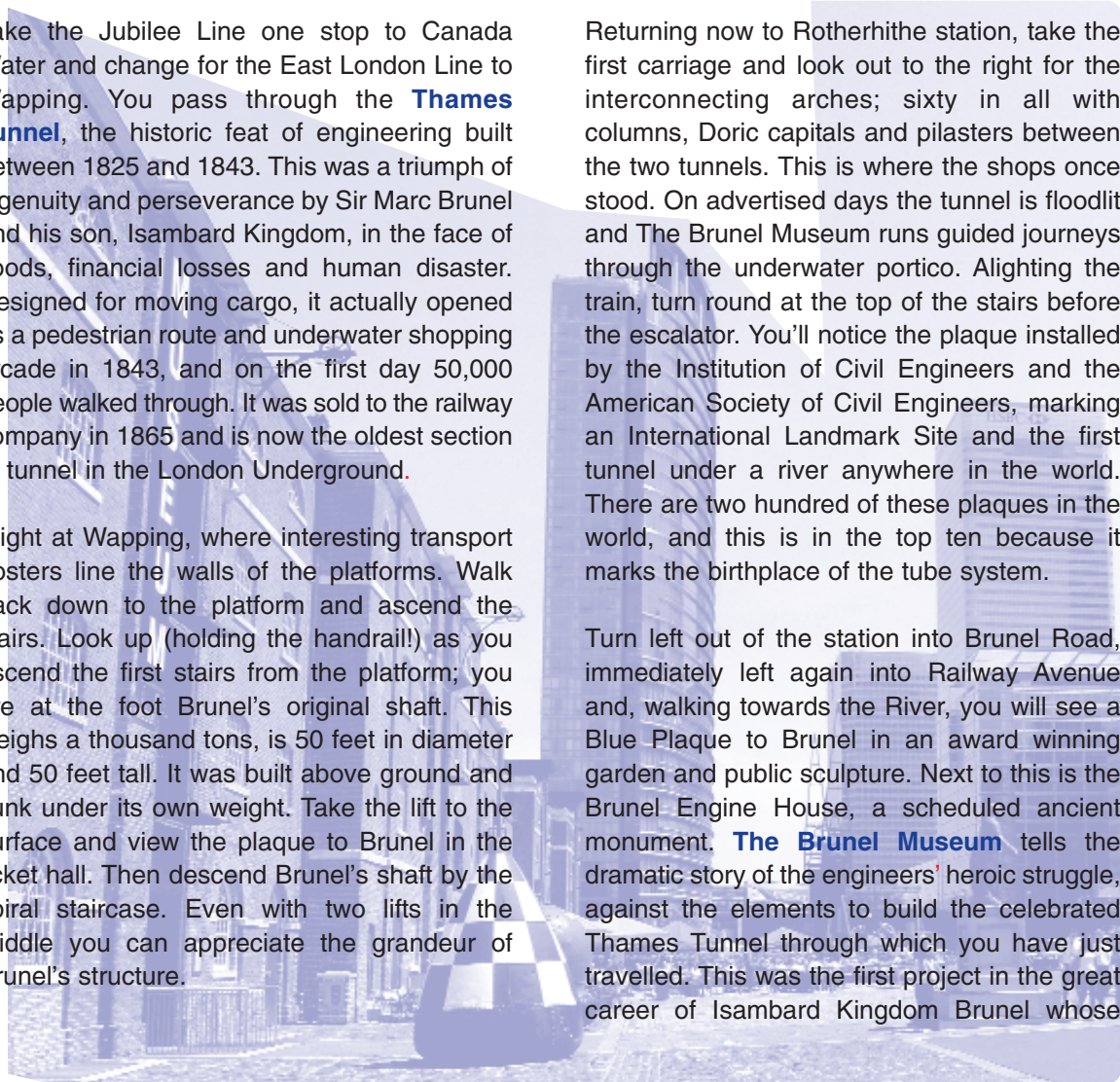
The area around the museum in West India Quay has been completely transformed and you can now enjoy refreshment at one of the cafes and restaurants overlooking the river as well as within the Museum.

Take the Jubilee Line one stop to Canada Water and change for the East London Line to Wapping. You pass through the **Thames Tunnel**, the historic feat of engineering built between 1825 and 1843. This was a triumph of ingenuity and perseverance by Sir Marc Brunel and his son, Isambard Kingdom, in the face of floods, financial losses and human disaster. Designed for moving cargo, it actually opened as a pedestrian route and underwater shopping arcade in 1843, and on the first day 50,000 people walked through. It was sold to the railway company in 1865 and is now the oldest section of tunnel in the London Underground.

Alight at Wapping, where interesting transport posters line the walls of the platforms. Walk back down to the platform and ascend the stairs. Look up (holding the handrail!) as you ascend the first stairs from the platform; you are at the foot Brunel's original shaft. This weighs a thousand tons, is 50 feet in diameter and 50 feet tall. It was built above ground and sunk under its own weight. Take the lift to the surface and view the plaque to Brunel in the ticket hall. Then descend Brunel's shaft by the spiral staircase. Even with two lifts in the middle you can appreciate the grandeur of Brunel's structure.

Returning now to Rotherhithe station, take the first carriage and look out to the right for the interconnecting arches; sixty in all with columns, Doric capitals and pilasters between the two tunnels. This is where the shops once stood. On advertised days the tunnel is floodlit and The Brunel Museum runs guided journeys through the underwater portico. Alighting the train, turn round at the top of the stairs before the escalator. You'll notice the plaque installed by the Institution of Civil Engineers and the American Society of Civil Engineers, marking an International Landmark Site and the first tunnel under a river anywhere in the world. There are two hundred of these plaques in the world, and this is in the top ten because it marks the birthplace of the tube system.

Turn left out of the station into Brunel Road, immediately left again into Railway Avenue and, walking towards the River, you will see a Blue Plaque to Brunel in an award winning garden and public sculpture. Next to this is the Brunel Engine House, a scheduled ancient monument. **The Brunel Museum** tells the dramatic story of the engineers' heroic struggle, against the elements to build the celebrated Thames Tunnel through which you have just travelled. This was the first project in the great career of Isambard Kingdom Brunel whose



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other major achievements include Paddington Station, terminus of the Great Western Railway, and Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol. A plaque marks the spot where he narrowly escaped drowning.

The museum is in a charming conservation area with cobbled streets and old wharves. The Mayflower jetty and pub, from where the Pilgrim Fathers sailed for the New World, is opposite the Museum. The Fellows of the Royal Society met here on Marc Brunel's 65<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1834 and launched the Tunnel Club in the upper room.

From Rotherhithe, walk along the Thames path for approximately 25 minutes to Butler's Wharf. This area was the largest warehouse complex on the Thames when completed in 1873. The wharf, which mainly dealt in foodstuffs, closed in 1972. The buildings have now been converted, by Sir Terence Conran, into luxury apartments and quality restaurants.

**The Design Museum** is one of the world's leading museums of modern and contemporary design with a mission to excite everyone about design. Since its foundation in 1989, the museum has become the cultural champion of UK design and won international acclaim for exhibitions of modern design history and

contemporary design innovation. This stylish museum has a regularly changing exhibition programme covering a wide range of themes from product and graphic design, fashion, furniture, architecture and engineering. Current exhibitions include 'Designer of the year' (until 18 June) and 'My world – the new subjectivity in design' (10 June – 10 September). There is a riverside café and a shop that stocks a range of design-led products and books from design classics to the latest innovations.

Walk just beyond Tower Bridge to see the striking rounded glass building of **City Hall** – home to the Mayor of London, the London Assembly and Greater London Authority. Completed in 2002, the building is a new landmark for the Capital. The landscaped area around it provides space for people to sit and children to play. At certain weekends throughout the year, visitors can see and walk around some of the areas not open to the public during the week, including the Chamber and the top floor 'London's Living Room', with its panoramic views.

Isambard Kingdom Brunel's son Henry Marc Brunel was consultant engineer on Tower Bridge, which has stood over the Thames since 1894 and is one of the finest, most recognisable bridges in the world.

The entrance to the **Tower Bridge Exhibition** is located on the north west side of the Bridge. Here you can enjoy breathtaking views from the high-level walkways and learn about the history of the Bridge and how it was built. From the top of the North Tower you can see the Bridge's steel skeleton hidden beneath the Victorian Gothic exterior built to match the Tower of London. You can then visit the Victorian Engine Rooms on the south side of the Bridge. The huge, and beautifully maintained, coal-driven steam engines (in use until 1976) were used to power the bascule Bridge lifting the roadway to allow ships to pass underneath.

Walk back towards Tower Hill Underground station.