

Top 33 Atmospheric London Pubs

1. Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese (EC4A 2BU): very atmospheric dungeon pub with ghosts, stuffed parrot. Served Dr Johnson, Thackeray, Tennyson, Carlyle, Collins, Dickens, Yeats, Twain, Doyle, Wilde.
2. The Spaniards (NW3 7JJ): Van Helsing, the Woman in White, Dick Turpin's ghost were regulars.
3. The Flask (N6 6BU): ghosts of shot man (see bullet in wall), Francis Bacon's headless chicken.
4. Ye Olde Mitre (EC1N 6TD): Bishop of Ely owned it til 1978, so London rozzers couldn't enter.
5. The 7 Stars (WC2A 2JB): lovely gem of a pre-Fire Whig pub. Even the pub cats wear C17th ruffs.
6. The George Inn (SE1 1NH): London's last coaching inn. Served Shakespeare; Chaucer link.
7. The Mayflower (SE16 4NF): Pilgrim Dads left from here (after soft drinks?). Pirate ghost regular.
8. The Prospect of Whitby (E1W 3SH): used to be called 'the Devil' after hanging Judge Jeffreys.
9. The Holly Bush (NW3 6SG): ghost of a barmaid takes orders (but sadly doesn't bring the drinks).
10. The Old Cock (EC4Y 1AA): ghost of Oliver Goldsmith's head. Grinling Gibbons fireplace.
11. The Jamaica Wine House (EC3V 9DS): back-alley City ex-coffeehouse classic. Dickens link.
12. Simpson's of Cornhill (EC3v 9DR): & go for hard-core Victorian lunch in the chop house.
13. The Blackfriar (EC4V 4EG): Art Nouveau 1-off saved by Betjeman. Check out the Marble Devil.
14. The Jerusalem Tavern (EC1M 5UQ): lovely C18th coffee house. Handel jammed here.
15. The Trafalgar Tavern/The Yacht (SE10 9PB): Whig & Tory cabinets used to come for dinner.
16. The Cittie of Yorke (WC1V 6BN): atmospheric faux-medieval London boozier with cosy booths.
17. Ye Old Watling (EC4M 9BR): built from ship's timbers by Wren, who used it as a drawing office
18. The Crown Tavern (EC1R 0EG): Lenin met Stalin here. Secret tunnel; 'Ye Conspirators' Clock'.
19. The Windsor Castle (W8 7AR): Cobbett's son paid a bar bill with the bones of Thomas Paine.
20. The Grenadier (SW1X 7NR): Wellington drank here. Haunted by one of his soldiers. Tiny.
21. The Star Tavern (SW1X 8HT): Great Train Robbery planned here (disputed with Argyll Arms).
22. The Lamb and Flag (WC2E 9EB): was 'Bucket of Blood'. Rochester had Dryden beaten outside.
23. The Dog & Duck (W1D 3AJ): served Mozart, Rossetti, Orwell (inspired his Moon Under Water).
24. The Anchor (SE1 9EF): Pepys watched the Great Fire from here (presumably with pint in hand).
25. The Fox & Anchor (EC1M 6AA): has early license for the Smithfield market traders. Plague pit.
26. The Plumbers Arms (SW1W OLN): Lord Lucan's wife ran in covered in blood after the murder.
27. The Bleeding Heart (EC1N 8SJ): Dickens' '3 Cripples'. Named after a famous murder in 1626.
28. The Magdala (NW3 2SB): Last woman hanged in England shot lover here: bullet holes visible.

29. The Ten Bells (E1 6LY): Jack the Ripper found 2 victims here. Still sleazy.
30. The Blind Beggar (E1 1BU): East End boozier known for famous Krays murder.
31. French House (W1D 5BG): served Aleister Crowley; Dylan Thomas left Under Milk Wood here.
32. Duke of Hamilton (NW3 1JD): An Oliver Reed pub (1 of many), coroner's inquests held here.
33. The Fountains Abbey (W2 1RL): spores from the cellar helped Fleming discover Penicillin.

Honourable mentions: The Cross Keys; The Princess Louise; Ye Old Bell; The Nag's Head; The Pillars of Hercules; The Newman Arms; The Cutty Sark; The Bull and Last; The Ship.

Lost pubs: The Devil (Fleet Street) & The Blue Boar (Cheapside) for Johnson & Shakespeare links.

Top 3 Atmospheric London Wine Bars:

1. Gordon's Wine Bar (WC2N 6NE): mouldering dungeons; served Pepys, Chesterton, Kipling, etc.
2. El Vino's/The Olde Wine Shades (EC2Y 5AP): City branch has very rare pre-fire interior.
3. The Cork & Bottle (WC2H 7AN): time-warp cellars under the sex shop on Leicester Sq.

...& the World's Most Atmospheric Offy:

1. Berry Brothers & Rudd (SW1A 1EG): c.1698. Gorgeous 18th century panelled rooms sit above extensive cellars on several levels. Served (and weighed!) everyone who has been anyone for 300 years, from Pit, Fox, Byron, and Beau Brummel to royalty.