

All you need to know about the Coca-Cola London Eye



Conceived and designed by Marks Barfield Architects.

Operated by London Eye Management Services
Limited, a Merlin Entertainments PLC.

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Discover the world of London's 21st century landmark

Who would have thought that such a simple idea could be so stunningly successful? The world's tallest cantilevered observation wheel at 135m high and sat proud on the banks of the River Thames offers 360 degree, breathtaking views across London.

But there's much, much more to the London Eye than its views and engineering. It plays an integral role in the community, has become an internationally recognised symbol for London, a hugely popular filming location and is also a unique venue for corporate events, launches and entertainment.

A source of pride for the whole country as well as the capital, the London Eye is the most distinctive addition to the world's greatest city this century, loved by Britons and tourists alike.

It's so uncomplicated, but so visionary, it's surprising that nobody thought of it years before it happened.



Coca-Cola
London Eye

Now

Since it officially opened to the public on March 9th 2000, the London Eye has become as iconic a London landmark as Tower Bridge, Big Ben, St Paul's Cathedral and the Tower of London.

In fact, it has become the UK's most popular paid for visitor attraction. A remarkable feat of design and engineering, the London Eye gave London's skyline a dramatic new addition and has been offering guests a new perspective on London ever since.

Originally, it was intended as a temporary structure, able to be dismantled and transported to a new location, and had planning permission for just five years. But with millions boarding it every year, its popularity has prompted its lease to be extended. Today it is a permanent fixture on the London skyline and a beautiful symbol of modern London.



The vision

As the 20th Century drew to a close there was a natural human desire to mark the new millennium in an enduring and substantial way. Newspapers asked readers for their suggestions; competitions were held; everybody had a view.

Two people with a better idea than most were the architects and husband and wife, David Marks and Julia Barfield. They wanted to give London its own 21st Century Eiffel Tower: a structure of beauty that would celebrate London's creativity, innovation and technical prowess, and provide a new perspective on the world's greatest city.

They chose to represent London with a wheel - an age-old symbol of time and change and, therefore, the perfect structure with which to mark the dawn of a new millennium in a city that never stands still.



A feat of design and engineering

The Coca-Cola London Eye was designed as a huge bicycle wheel structure that is cantilevered – supported on one side.

The London Eye uses enormous 'A' frame legs supported by colossal foundations and tied back by more cables anchored underneath Jubilee Gardens.



1. It took seven years and the skills of hundreds of people from five countries to make the London Eye a reality.

2. The residents of an alpine village helped to test its boarding procedures.

3. The design is similar to an enormous bicycle wheel, with a central hub and spindle connected to outer and inner rims by cable spokes. It is over 200 times larger than the average bike wheel (and four times wider than the dome of St Paul's Cathedral).

4. The 80 spokes laid together would stretch for 6km – the distance from Trafalgar Square to Canary Wharf.

5. The spindle which holds the wheel structure is 23m long – the height of nine classic London red telephone boxes.

6. The hub and spindle weigh in at 330 tonnes – equivalent to 49 double decker buses and 20 times heavier than Big Ben – the bell inside St Stephen's Tower at the Houses of Parliament.

7. Some 1,700 tonnes of British steel were used in the construction of the London Eye, which makes it 298 times heavier than all the top London football teams (West Ham, Arsenal, Tottenham, Chelsea, Fulham and Charlton) combined.

8. The London Eye was shipped up the River Thames by barge in sections and assembled at the South Bank. It took a week to lift it from a horizontal position to the fully vertical one we all know. The technology employed had previously been used to erect North Sea oil rigs.

9. The total weight of the wheel and capsules is 2,100 tonnes – or as much as 1,272 London black cabs.

10. The operation had to be co-ordinated carefully with the tides to ensure that the river was low enough to fit everything underneath London's bridges. It was a squeeze: the clearance under Southwark Bridge was just 40cm in some places.

11. All 32 capsules were fixed onto the wheel in just eight days. A decade later they were improved, to make their heating and ventilation systems more efficient and environmentally friendly. The upgraded capsules are now expected to last at least another decade.

The London Eye is often mistakenly called a Ferris wheel. This is not the case; first, the capsules are completely enclosed and climate controlled; second, the capsules are positioned on the outside of the wheel structure and are fully motorised; and third, the entire structure is supported by an A-frame on one side only; making it the world's tallest cantilevered observation wheel.



Coca-Cola Great Britain

Coca-Cola is one of the world's best known brands and has a rich heritage of spreading messages of happiness for over 129 years.

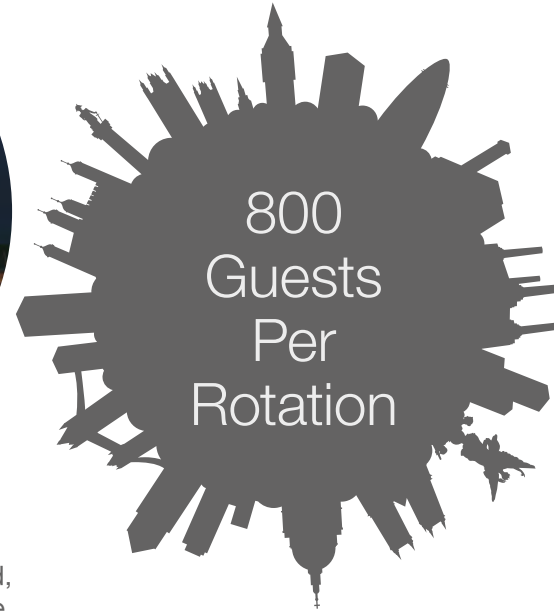
Coca-Cola Great Britain is responsible for marketing 19 brands and over 100 different drinks to consumers across the country. In addition to the four Coca-Cola variants– Coca-Cola, Diet Coke, Coca-Cola Zero and Coca-Cola Life –brands also include Sprite, Fanta, Dr Pepper, Oasis, Schweppes, glacéau vitaminwater and glacéau smartwater.

Coca-Cola has a rich history in London – from their first appearance in the 1900s, to starting sales in Selfridges in the early 1920s. They've gone on to feature on the famous billboard of Piccadilly Circus since 1954, sponsored the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and now the Coca-Cola London Eye.



Impressive facts and figures

The things you didn't know about the London Eye.



1. You can see around 40km from the top – as far as Windsor Castle on a clear day.
2. The London Eye can carry 800 guests per rotation – equivalent to 11 London red double decker buses.
3. There are 32 capsules in total; one for each of the London boroughs. For superstitious reasons they are numbered up to 33, with capsule 13 left out for good luck.
4. Each of the 32 capsules weighs 11 tonnes. To put that figure into perspective, it's the same weight as 1,157,894 pound coins.

5. Each rotation takes approximately 30 minutes, meaning that a capsule travels at a stately 26cm per second, or 0.9km (0.6 miles) per hour – twice as fast as a tortoise sprinting; this slow rate of rotation allows guests to step on and off without the wheel having to stop.
6. In one year the London Eye will rotate 7668 times, or 2300 miles, as far as from London to Cairo in Egypt, home to other wonders of the world.
7. The circumference of the London Eye is 424m (1,392ft).
8. The height of the London Eye is 135m (443ft – equivalent to 64 red telephone boxes piled on top of each other),

9. Supermodel Kate Moss holds the record for the UK celebrity that's enjoyed the most rotations, standing at 25, and Hollywood star Jessica Alba holds the record for an overseas celebrity that's enjoyed the most rotations, standing at 31.
10. The London Eye receives more visitors annually than ancient wonders of the world like the Taj Mahal, Stonehenge and even the Great Pyramids of Giza.
11. A new LED lighting system has been introduced on the London Eye, which saves 75% more energy than the previous system.

12. Since opening, there have been over 5000 marriage proposals – not surprising then that the London Eye has been voted the UK's most romantic destination and the world's second just behind the Eiffel Tower in Paris.
13. All oils on the London Eye are biodegradable, the grease is edible and causes no harm to wildlife and cleaning products are biodegradable and non-pollutant.

Big impressions count

Since launching as a corporate entertainment venue in September 2000 with a Champagne gala event attended by then Prime Minister Tony Blair, the London Eye's Corporate and Special Events department has garnered a reputation as a dab hand at hosting high-profile, high impact parties, launches and ceremonies - anything is possible!

Many customers and clients choose to hire the entire London Eye, but if you want to hire just one capsule we can help too. With a range of products from wine and Champagne tasting capsules to seasonal treats such as winter cocktails and Christmas canapés, there's something special all year round.

In 2011 and 2013 the London Eye played host to the famous Red Bull Music Academy events. Beamed across the globe on the internet, the event had famous musicians and DJs performing in each capsule to an intimate audience. Simultaneously, thousands of guests enjoyed a silent disco in the shadow of the London Eye hosted by some of the world's most famous DJs. Guests described it as the best party ever.

In May 2001 we hosted our first-ever wedding with the happy couple saying 'Eye do' live in front of an audience of five million on GMTV, then Europe's most-watched breakfast show. We've been hosting happy couples ever since - an average of 60 per year.

During the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the London Eye played an integral part in the run up and duration of the games. We hosted hundreds of media and sponsors from across the globe, had the Olympic Torch on top of one of our capsules and even featured in both the opening and closing ceremony, highlighting the London Eye's place amongst the capital's historic treasures.



The London Eye River Cruise

The Coca-Cola London Eye also operates a unique award-winning 40 minute sightseeing cruise on the River Thames with live commentary that brings the city to life, presented by expert guides.

“The live commentary is superb and everyone who takes this river cruise will learn something new about one of the attractions they pass”.

Laura Porter, About.com

The circular cruise aboard the Silver Bonito, with both covered and sun deck seating, departs from the London Eye pier directly underneath the London Eye, goes as far as Tower Bridge and returns 40 minutes later. Cruising past the Houses of Parliament, St Paul's Cathedral, the Tower of London, Shakespeare's Globe as well as Westminster, Millennium and Tower Bridges.

The Silver Bonito can carry up to 170 passengers at any one time and is one of the few fully accessible boats on the river, with full disabled access to both decks. Audio commentary is also available in French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Italian, Russian, Japanese and Mandarin.



Experience the London Eye online



Our website, www.londoneye.com, has gained a reputation for being visually stunning, informative, fun and easy to use. If you haven't yet visited or experienced the London Eye this is as close to the real thing as you'll get and is a great taster for the experience that awaits you. It has an online booking facility with exclusive discounts on tickets bought online, and is a superb resource for the media and public alike, with text and commentary in several languages including English, Spanish, French, and German.

The Press section is where you'll find our press releases, filming/ photography application forms, details on how to obtain London Eye images and contact details.

Filming and photography



Since opening, the Press Office has worked with countless location managers, film crews and photographers on projects ranging from fashion shoots and news items to TV adverts and international feature films. We value the exposure filming and photography gives the London Eye and London as a whole and encourage applications which reflect the London Eye's status as a must do experience in the capital as well as a global icon.

The London Eye has featured in international feature films such as *Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer*, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, *Wimbledon*, *Thunderbirds* and *Paddington the Movie* along with well-known TV programmes such as *The Simpsons*, *Doctor Who*, *Sherlock* and *The Apprentice* to mention only a few.

Call a member of the Press Office on 0870 220 2777 or visit www.londoneye.com/filming for application forms and full guidelines.



A positive impact on the community

We are fully accessible

We go above and beyond industry standards to ensure that we are fully accessible to all. Features include:

- Entrances that feature widened access and ramps for wheelchair users
- Voice and visual alarms
- Slowed-down boarding for disabled people
- Fully accessible ticket office and website
- Knowledgeable members of staff who are always on hand to assist
- T-loop systems in our ticket office and on the London Eye River Cruise
- All disabled guests can bring a carer free of charge
- Fast Track service for elderly and disabled guests in small groups



A local business

What matters to London matters to us and this is why we proactively contribute to the issues and causes that are important to us and our community. The opening of the Coca-Cola London Eye, together with other organisations, played a vital part in the regeneration and continuous enhancement of the South Bank, which now welcomes 28 million visitors a year.

Charitable donations

Because of our iconic status, we are proud to use the Coca-Cola London Eye to help charities, big and small. As part of the London Eye's ongoing commitment to the local area, 1% of revenue is donated back into the community, part of the London Eye's original planning permission, known as 'Section 106.'

Therefore the Coca-Cola London Eye donates in cash and gifts in kind to a huge range of local community groups and charities including Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, Coin Street Community Builders, Contact a Family, Oasis Johanna Primary School and Thames Festival.

We also help charitable organisations to promote national campaigns by hosting photo calls and launch events. The constantly expanding list of charities we have worked with includes Help for Heroes, ITV's Text Santa, Royal British Legion and Sport Relief.



For charity requests please email charity@londoneye.com

All of the London Eye's fundraising activity is directed towards the Merlin Entertainments charity Merlin's Magic Wand, who provide magical experiences to children who are seriously ill, disabled or disadvantaged and who might not otherwise be able to visit one of our many attractions around the world.

For more info visit www.merlinsmagicwand.org



Fireworks

For over a decade the London Eye has been the focal point of the Mayor of London's famous New Year's Eve firework celebrations which sees hundreds of thousands of people congregate in the heart of London each year.

4D Cinema Experience

In August 2009 the London Eye introduced a revolutionary 4D film that brings a new dimension to the visitor experience, providing a completely new vision of the city that is both emotional and entertaining - the perfect prelude to an experience on the iconic London Eye. The film focuses on the journey of a little girl and her father in London in which they visit the London Eye and find a spectacular new perspective of the capital. Their experience is brought to life with colourful parties inside the London Eye capsules, breathtaking firework displays, which gain an extra dimension with advanced sensory effects, making the watcher feel immersed in the action.

The London Eye 4D Experience is the first live action, 4D attraction film ever produced in the UK and contains the first ever 3D aerial photography over London.

The film brings together a number of 3D filming styles: aerials, time lapse, live action as well as sophisticated visual effects. Capitalising on the latest cutting edge technology, 4D adds a new dimension to traditional 3D technology; using sensory effects such as wind, snow and even smell to bring to life the images on screen.

The bespoke 4D film which is almost four minutes in length was developed especially for the London Eye at the award winning Pinewood Shepperton studios, and was produced by Centre Screen Productions Ltd in association with PLF/Pablo Post.

The team of industry acclaimed award-winning talent who have worked on the 4D film have also worked on projects such as the IMAX film 'Bugs!', other 3D cinema projects and various attractions with clients ranging from English Heritage to the Hong Kong Government.



Merlin Entertainments

The Coca-Cola London Eye is operated by MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS plc, the leading name in location-based, family entertainment. Europe's number one and the world's second-largest visitor attraction operator, Merlin currently operates 109 attractions, 12 hotels and four holiday villages in 23 countries and across four continents. The company aims to deliver memorable and rewarding experiences to its almost 63 million visitors worldwide, through its iconic global and local brands, and the commitment and passion of its managers and 26,000 employees.

Among Merlin's attractions are - SEA LIFE, Madame Tussauds, LEGOLAND, The London Eye, Dungeons, Gardaland, LEGOLAND Discovery Centres, Alton Towers Resort, Warwick Castle, THORPE PARK Resort, Blackpool Tower, Heide Park Resort, WILD LIFE Sydney Zoo, Sydney Tower Eye and SKYWALK. All brands which are distinctive, challenging and innovative – and which have great potential for growth in the future. Visit www.merlinentertainments.biz for more information.



General information

For general information about the London Eye and for discount on bookings, visit www.londoneye.com or call 0871 781 3000.

Events and special occasions

For events and special occasions including corporate entertainment, hospitality and weddings, call 0871 222 4002 or email corporate.events@londoneye.com

Customer services

For customer services call 0871 781 3000/0333 321 2001 or email customer.services@londoneye.com

Press enquires

Including photography, filming and media visits call 0870 220 2777 or email pressoffice@londoneye.com

To view the latest news and press releases on London Eye activity and events, visit www.londoneye.com/news

The postal address for the London Eye is:

The London Eye, Riverside Building, County Hall, Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7PB.

Other useful information

The London Eye is open all year round, except for Christmas Day (25 December) and for two weeks in January, when annual maintenance takes place.

The London Eye ticket office is open from 9:30am daily - alternatively save money and time by booking tickets online in advance.

