



CAPA London Center Neighborhood

The CAPA London Center is located on busy Cromwell Road within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, to the west of the city of Westminster. With great transport links and access to multiple parks, museums, shopping, and restaurants, it is a popular neighborhood. CAPA is situated in the middle of the most interesting areas of the borough, with High Street Kensington and its many shops to the north, Earls Court and Chelsea to the south, and South Kensington to the east.

To learn more about South Kensington, see below. Cromwell Road itself is the main artery leading out of the city and is busy day and night—you might even see the occasional Royal entourage pass by en route to Windsor Palace. Immediately near the center, the street has multiple hotels on one side and a selection of local shops and restaurants on the other.



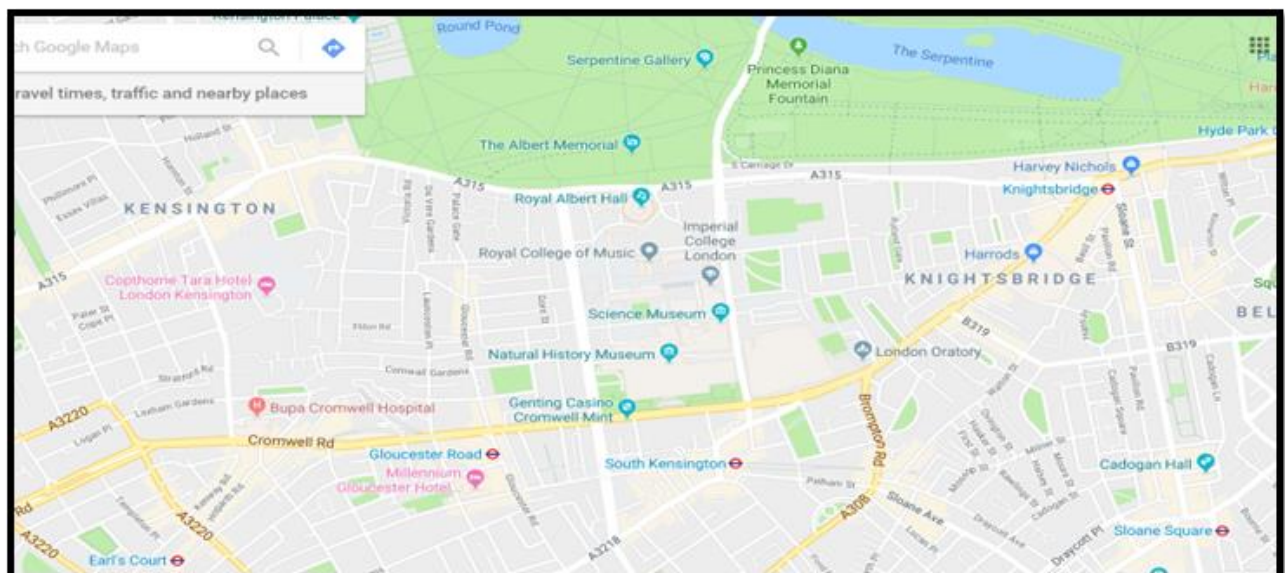
Like all of London, there is a multi-cultural and urban feel along Cromwell Road, with quiet, pretty residential streets, many with private garden squares, just a short stroll away. Famous residents of the borough include the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge (who lives in nearby Kensington Palace), and within the Holland Park area (nicknamed Millionaire's Row), you will find the likes of Sir Richard Branson, the Beckhams, Elton John, Robbie Williams, Jimmy Page, and Simon Cowell.





The London Center has three underground stations in close proximity, shown on the map below:

- Gloucester Road
- Earl's Court
- South Kensington



The London Center is within walking distance of London's 'Museum District':

- Natural History Museum
- Science Museum
- The Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A)
- The Albert Memorial

The London Center is close to large parks, the 'lungs of London,' including:

- Kensington Gardens
- Hyde Park
- Holland Park

Two of the best-known stores in London are a short bus ride away:

- Harrods
- Harvey Nichols



HISTORY OF SOUTH KENSINGTON

London is a sprawling metropolis that has continually changed over the past 2,000 years or thereabouts. It is a city made up of diverse areas and districts, one of which is South Kensington in Southwest London. South Kensington as a district is part of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, but is difficult to define. Generally, it comprises the South Kensington and Gloucester Road Tube stations, running up to the edge of Hyde Park in the north and Brompton Road in the south.

Although there is mention of the area (like most areas) in the Domesday book of the 11th century, it wasn't until the early part of the 17th century that it started to take on a more defined area. At this point, the area produced much of the fruit and vegetable supply for London and is a reason why there are still so many garden squares in the district.



KENSINGTON GARDENS

Beyond Kensington High Street lies beautiful Kensington Gardens. The royal grounds are open to visitors to enjoy. The Princess Diana Memorial Playground, which features its own pirate ship, is located near the palace, along with the Albert Memorial, built by [Queen Victoria](#) in 1872.

In the 1700s, South Kensington started to see its fortunes rise with the building of the main highway west out of London—what is now the A4 Cromwell Road. It was not until the Great Exhibition in 1851, however, that the area really started to take off.

Following the success of the 1851 Great Exhibition in Hyde Park for which the Crystal Palace was built, an 87-acre area, around what is now Exhibition Road, was purchased by the commissioners of the exhibition to create a home for institutions dedicated to the arts and sciences. The result was the foundation of the following:



The Victoria and Albert Museum

[The Victoria and Albert Museum](#) (often abbreviated as the V&A) is the world's largest museum of decorative arts and design, housing a permanent collection of over 2.27 million objects. It was founded in 1852 and named after Queen Victoria and [Prince Albert](#).

The Natural History Museum

This museum is home to life and earth science specimens comprising some 80 million items within five main collections: botany, entomology,

mineralogy, paleontology, and zoology. [The museum](#) is a center of research specializing in taxonomy, identification, and conservation.

Imperial College

Imperial College London (officially the Imperial College of Science, Technology, and Medicine) was founded by Prince Albert, who envisioned a cultural area composed of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Natural History Museum, Royal Albert Hall, and the [Imperial Institute](#). His wife, Queen Victoria, laid the foundation stone for the Imperial Institute in 1888. In 1907, the college joined the [University of London](#), before leaving it a century later. In 1988, [the Imperial College School of Medicine](#) was formed through a merger with [St Mary's Hospital Medical School](#). In 2004, Queen Elizabeth II opened the [Imperial College Business School](#).

The Royal Albert Hall

This is a [concert hall](#) that has held [the Proms](#) concerts annually each summer since 1941. Since its opening by Queen Victoria in 1871, the world's leading artists from many performance genres have appeared on its stage and it has become one of the UK's most treasured and distinctive buildings. The location of some of the most notable events in British culture, each year it hosts more than 390 shows in the main auditorium, including classical, rock, and pop concerts, ballet, opera, film screenings with live orchestra, sports, award ceremonies, school and community events, charity performances, and banquets. A further 400 events are held each year in the non-auditorium spaces.

[The Hall](#) was originally supposed to have been called the Central Hall of Arts and Sciences, but the name was changed to the Royal Albert Hall of Arts and Sciences by Queen Victoria upon laying the Hall's foundation stone in 1867, in





memory of her husband, Prince Albert, who had died six years earlier. It forms part of a memorial to the Prince Consort—the decorative part is the [Albert Memorial](#).

Kensington Palace

This fabulous [royal residence](#) was once home to Princess Diana and is now where the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge reside. Parts of Kensington Palace and its gardens, which date back to the 17th century, are open to visitors. For an added treat, indulge in afternoon tea at Kensington Palace's beautiful Orangery.

Serpentine Galleries

The [Serpentine Galleries](#) are two contemporary art galleries: the Serpentine Gallery and the Serpentine Sackler Gallery. They are within five minutes' walk of each other, linked by the bridge over the [Serpentine Lake](#) from which the galleries get their names. Their exhibitions, architecture, education, and public programs attract up to 1.2 million visitors a year. Admission to both galleries is free.

Royal Geographic Society

This is the UK's [learned society](#) and professional body for [geography](#), founded in 1830 for the advancement of geographical sciences. Today, it is the leading center for geographers and geographical learning. The Society has over 16,500 members and its work reaches millions of people each year through publications, research groups, and lectures.



It was this cultural investment in the area that changed it from a garden suburb to a high-class residential area with large and beautiful terraced houses once owned in their entirety by individual families. Although the area still retains most of these buildings, the majority have been subdivided into separate flats.

The absorption of South Kensington into London was sealed by the arrival of the Underground to Gloucester Road and South Kensington in 1868, linking the area



directly to the main railway termini and to the political, commercial, and financial hearts of the city.

South Kensington station has two parts: sub-surface platforms, opened in 1868 by the Metropolitan Railway as part of the company's extension of the Inner Circle route from Paddington to South Kensington and to Westminster, and deep-level platforms, opened in 1906 by the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway. This is reflected in its architecture.

FAMOUS INHABITANTS OF THE AREA

- **George Wallis, FSA**, (1811-1891), artist, museum curator and art educator, first Keeper of Fine Art Collection at South Kensington Museum
- **Sir J M Barrie** (1860-1937), playwright and novelist, author of Peter Pan, and his wife Mary née Ansell, actress, at 133 Gloucester Road
- **Beatrix Potter** (1866-1943), author and artist, spent her early life in Bolton Gardens
- **Virginia Woolf** (1882–1941), writer, and her sister Vanessa Bell (1879–1961), painter and interior designer, lived at 22 Hyde Park Gate until 1904
- **Francis Bacon** (1909–1992), Irish-born British artist, lived at 17 Queensberry Mews and 7 Reese Mews
- **Sir William Schwenck Gilbert** (1836-1911), best known for the fourteen comic operas (known as the Savoy operas), produced in collaboration with the composer Sir Arthur Sullivan, lived at 39 Harrington Gardens
- **Alfred Hitchcock** (1899-1980), film director, known for such classics as Psycho and North by Northwest, lived for a time directly across the street from CAPA!
- **T.S. Eliot** (1888-1965), poet, famous for the Wasteland and the Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, lived and died at 3 Kensington Court Gardens.

South Kensington remains a highly affluent residential area of London and comprises some of the most expensive real estate in the city. In recent years, it has seen an increasing French émigré population, which has built up around the famous Lycée Français Charles De Gaulle de Londres. It continues to be a very sought-after residential area, with fantastic links both into the city and to Heathrow Airport.