



WATER WAYS

There's plenty of ways to make the most of the Thames, get fit and relax at the same time in the summer months

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Although you may look upon friends jetting off and away from the big smoke with a pang of envy this month, don't discount the outdoor adventures to be had right here under the city skyline.

Residents of Greenwich and the surrounding areas are blessed with close proximity to London's Royal Docks, where throughout the summer you can have a go at wakeboarding with WakeUp Docklands, London's very own inner city water sports oasis (wakeupdocklands.com). If you're a bit

of a daredevil, you can also try your hand at fly boarding and skim across the water with the help of some rather high-powered jets. But it's not just adrenaline junkies who can find nirvana on the Thames: for those looking to float their way to inner Zen (and improve their core strength), stand up paddleboard yoga is the way to go.

It's a British Stand Up Paddleboard Association (BSUPA) registered school, so all lessons are delivered by professionally certified instructors. If you're a novice, fear not – you can either

buy or hire a wetsuit when you get there. There's also a fully licensed bar, The Shack, where you can simply relax and watch the action from the waterfront.

Other paddle sports and sailing activities on offer from Royal Docks Adventure (royaldocksadventure.org) include rowing, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, bell boating and raft building. Boasting a 2,000m rowing course with seven racing lanes and towpath access, it's a place where people of all ages and abilities can get involved.

And that's not all. Those of you who



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are either casual or even competitive swimmers can also embrace the joys of open water swimming. London Royal Docks Open Swimmers run four sessions a week, as well as group training and separate courses for complete beginners (londonroyaldocksows.co.uk).

To really make a day of your excursions, by far the best way to arrive at the docks is through the air and over the river by cable with Emirates

(emiratesairline.co.uk). Setting out from North Greenwich, it's a great way to appreciate the capital from above and to whet your appetite for the adventures ahead. Otherwise, it's easy enough to get the DLR to the nearest station, Royal Victoria, from Woolwich, Deptford, Lewisham or Greenwich.

Oh – and did we mention there's a beach? From July to August, the coast comes to town with Urban London Beach, where you can laze in a deckchair, build a sandcastle, relax with the Sunday papers and eat the obligatory ice cream.

Visit londonroyaldocks.com for more information and to book activities

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SUUNTO GREAT SWIM LONDON

On Saturday 1 July, swimmers can take on the challenge of a competitive swim at a distance to suit their ability. Ranging from a half mile up to the newly added 5k and 10k, it's not to be missed. greatrun.org

AJ BELL LONDON TRIATHLON

From 22 to 23 July, the world's largest triathlon will attract over 13,000 triathletes and over 30,000 spectators. A must-do event in the sporting calendar, it's suitable for all ages with various distances, routes and wave categories to choose from. livetotri.co.uk

DOCK TO DOCK SWIM

This iconic, historic 5k or 10k swim race starts and finishes in Royal Victoria Dock and incorporates either one or two laps of Royal Albert Dock, depending on the distance chosen. londonroyaldocksows.co.uk

RIVER RAT RACE

Round up the crew and swim, crawl, jump, slide and laugh your way around the wettest obstacle race in the UK, tackling over 35 obstacles including a 50ft water slide, giant inflatables and water jumps, while raising money for Children with Cancer UK. ratrace.com