

Local Entertainment in London

From 7th to 12th March, my class and I went to London. In London we had to search for information on special themes in groups. Kim, Milena and I worked on the theme “Media and local entertainment”, my topic is local entertainment with some information about the radio in London.

My big question for working on my theme was: “What do the citizens of London in their spare time, and what do the tourists when they are in London?” There are a lot of different local entertainments in London, for example at Covent Garden, at Piccadilly Circus or Leicester Square, where you can find a lot of tourists, but also citizens of London. One of the biggest attractions for the men, but also for women in London is football, because there are a lot of good football clubs in the city.

The report is based upon my information, photos and impressions I get there from the people, museums and buildings, but before and after the trip I used the internet (www.wikipedia.org) to get more information about the different places and themes.

Covent Garden:

One of the most biggest “entertainment areas” in London is Covent Garden. Covent Garden has its own underground station, 13 theatres and more than 60 bars, clubs and pubs. In the middle of Covent Garden is the “Covent Garden Market”, an old market hall in which today there are cafes, pubs, small shops and the “Apple Market”. Around the market hall, a lot of street performers try to convince the people with their short show. Most of them earn their money with that, because they haven’t other jobs.

The offerings of the street performers are very individual. There are musicians with their instruments, singers, comedians, clowns and artists. Another attraction are the men and women who are mostly silver or gold painted and play statues.

They won’t all be rich with that kind of job, but for most of them it is enough to live with that money and to pay their equipment.

At Covent Garden, one show lasts approximately 20 minutes in which comedians, artists and clowns often involve the audience in their show, in the majority of cases little children.

Mostly the performers have a big audience, during one show I saw I expect that the man had ca. 100-150 viewer. But when they have an audience which is too small and they can’t earn enough money, they excuse themselves and break off their show. I saw an example of that, too. During the day, this group of street performers present their show at Covent Garden.

But in the evening, when the restaurants and cafes are very full, it’s the time of the singers and the musicians. With their music in the background, it’s a beautiful and harmonic atmosphere when you sit outside in one of these restaurants or cafes at Covent Garden.

My impression was, that especially at Covent Garden a lot of citizens spend their free time or lunch break in one of the restaurants. I think it’s clear that there are a lot of tourists, too.



“Covent Garden Market”

Piccadilly Circus:

The opposite of Covent Garden is Piccadilly Circus. The big difference between the two places is that Piccadilly Circus is more modern than Covent Garden. Another difference is the multimedia at Piccadilly Circus, and that there are many more tourists than at Covent Garden, because Piccadilly Circus is one of the most popular places in London. You can compare it with “Times Square” in New York City, but much smaller than in the USA.

In London there is one big neon sign on one of the big buildings. Between those buildings, there are a few street performers, too. When I was there, I saw a beat-boxer doing his performance. Around Piccadilly Circus, there are a lot of souvenir-shops, another reason why there are so much tourists.

In my view, Piccadilly Circus is much more for tourists than Covent Garden. One example for that is the big number of souvenir shops, which are at Piccadilly Circus, but not at Covent Garden.



Neon signs at Piccadilly Circus

Leicester Square:

Next to Piccadilly Circus and Covent Garden there is the area of Leicester Square. Leicester Square is the centre of London's cinema land, there are eight cinemas only around there. The biggest one is the "Odeon Leicester Square", which is one of the biggest cinemas all over the world. Every premiere of great films like "Harry Potter" or "James Bond" are in this cinema. The biggest room has a capacity of 1683 seats.

But cinemas are not the only form of entertainment which you can find at Leicester Square. Around the area, there are a lot of casinos, bars and restaurants, discotheques and clubs, where you can celebrate the whole evening and night. But you can also spend a lot of money, because Leicester Square, Piccadilly Circus and Covent Garden aren't the cheapest parts of London. There, you can find a ticket office for cheaper theatre tickets, too. You can buy there the remaining tickets for different theatre productions or musicals, mostly a little bit cheaper than normal.

I think, Leicester Square is the modern Covent Garden without artists and musicians. It's a place, where you can find a lot of tourists, but the majority are citizens, because of the cinemas, discotheques and casinos, which are more used from the Londoners as from others.

Radio in London:

At Leicester Square you can also find the radio station from Global Radio. The station is next to the "Odeon" cinema. But this radio station is only one of an unbelievable number of radio stations and broadcasting stations in London. The BBC alone has 11 different radio channels. Global Radio at Leicester square has also a lot of different channels, nine in all. But that's not the end: In London you can listen to an unbelievable number of radio stations.

A big advantage for all citizens of London is, that they all play different things like charts and modern music, "oldies" and classical music, but there are also radio stations where you can hear the whole day the news of the day, economic news or something like this.

I think, that some broadcast stations are very important for some companies, that's the reason for them to listen radio. But I also think that a lot of Londoners listen to the "music"-radio at work or in the spare time. We do that in our time at London, too. When we were at our hotel, we listen to a lot of different broadcasting stations like "KISS" or some other stations which play the charts or other modern music.

All in all you can say, that the radio is a very important medium in London and you can't know all the broadcasting stations there, because that are too many.

Football in London:

Football was invented in England and it is the most popular sport all over the world, also in England. The "Premier League" is the highest league in England and one of the best football leagues in the world. The "Football League Championship" is the second league in England. London has nine football clubs in these two leagues. It's unusual that one city has nine clubs at the highest level, but London is a big city and football the most important sport. The clubs are:

“Premier League”:

- Arsenal F.C.
- Chelsea F.C.
- Fulham F.C.
- Tottenham Hotspur F.C.
- West Ham United F.C.

“Football League Championship”:

- Millwall F.C.
- Crystal Palace
- Queens Park Rangers
- Watford F.C.

If you count the capacity of their stadiums and you add the famous Wembley-Stadium, in which none of these clubs play their matches, there are nearly 390.000 seats for football fans. If it's weekend and the clubs have a football match at home, a lot of citizens from London aren't at home, because there is enough room for them in the stadiums or around them in the pubs, where they can watch the match on TV.



Stamford Bridge, stadium of Chelsea F.C.

Conclusion:

Finally one can say that there is a lot of local entertainment for citizens of London **and** for tourists. The football, the musicians, the artists, the restaurants: That all are places where you can go. And if you are at home, you can still listen to one of the broadcasting stations. That's the reason why I think, that if you are a tourist or a citizen of London, it can't be boring, because there will be always something where you can go or listen to..

Sources:

- my own trip to London and the information and photos I can get and take there
- www.wikipedia.org