

Walking in the footsteps of Wizards – A Harry Potter Bus Tour in London

“I solemnly swear that I am up to no good”.

Harry Potter.

[via GIPHY](#)

This is probably my favourite Harry Potter quote due to how appropriate it is regarding my children. I love them dearly, but they are cheeky little blighters sometimes. ‘Spirited’ is a more pleasant way of saying it isn’t it. Spirited little blighters, there we go.

We were asked the other week, by a lovely lady called Pascaline, if we would like to go on a Harry Potter Bus Tour of London. Pascaline is starting a new business called Culture and Adventure and she runs different tours all over the place. Keep your eyes peeled on her Facebook page for any upcoming events! I was desperate to do it because me and Luke (my eldest) are huge Potter fans, but due to being absolutely useless on the London Underground by myself, and my kids being ‘spirited’, I have never been brave enough to take them there by myself. Anyway, it was an opportunity too good to miss so I said yes and began frantically swatting up on my underground map like Harry Potter does with his Marauders Map.

If only I had broomsticks to get us there rather than Southwest Trains.

The tour lasts approximately 2.5 hours and costs £20 per adult and £15 per child (price correct at time of writing).

The day came for our Harry Potter Bus Tour and it was a glorious winters day. Cold, but sunny, just how I like it. I sorted a bag with some snacks, drinks and tissues – I was able to travel a bit lighter because Mr Knutts had the toddler for me so I could enjoy the day with the older two. No nappies and wipes this time!

We set off for the station, which thankfully is only a 10 minute walk from our house, and excitedly got our train tickets and waited on the platform for our train. The kids still love the novelty of getting a train somewhere and I love seeing their excited little (spirited) faces as they wait, full of anticipation (and mischief).

The train arrives and we hop on, managing to get seats. It's a miracle! All is well and the boys chat with me and we stare out of the window like excited tourists...



As we near Waterloo, completely out of the blue, my eldest says he doesn't feel very well. In fact he says, "I feel a bit sick mummy".

Great.

Bloody great.

"Ok," I reply, "We are almost at Waterloo, just hold on until then if you can chap".

Dear god, please don't let him throw up on the train...

As we get off the train at Waterloo he goes ghostly white and says, "IT'S COMING!"

Action stations!

We sprint over to a bin and he manages to throw up into the

bin rather than all over the platform. A minor miracle.

However, he then thinks he is finished when he isn't and throws up again down his front. Kill me now. I tell him not to worry and we will sort it out. We head out of the barriers and go to find the toilets at Waterloo. Being the novice Londoner I am, I don't realise you have to pay to use the toilets there...and I have no change.

Noooooooooooo!

I have an 8 year old lad, threatening to throw up again, who is covered in puke, and no change to get in the poxy toilets.

Thankfully, the lovely toilet attendant saw my quandary (and the 8 year old covered in puke – thankfully his body-warmer was waterproof!) and let us in for free. I couldn't thank her enough but she was reluctant to shake my hand when I offered it. Can't think why? He goes and throws up again whilst I wash his body-warmer and dry it under the hand dryer. Luckily it comes up ok and as Luke appears from the toilet he announces, "I'm all better now! I don't feel sick anymore! Can we still go on the bus tour?"

Kids.

A mystery to us all.

"Are you sure?" I ask nervously. "I can't have you being sick on the bus tour..."

"I promise you mummy, I am fine. The sick has all gone now and I feel like eating a McDonalds so I think that means I'm better" he says.

"Right you are then. Off we go!" I say, and so off we trot.





We stop on the Southbank for a little while to have a look about and then continue our walk over Jubilee Bridge towards our bus tour start point near the Sherlock Holmes Pub. All is still fine and Luke seems to have perked right up.

Thank goodness for that.

The bus arrives and it is an old Routemaster. Absolutely glorious. It's bright red, shiny and completely immaculate. I do love these old buses.





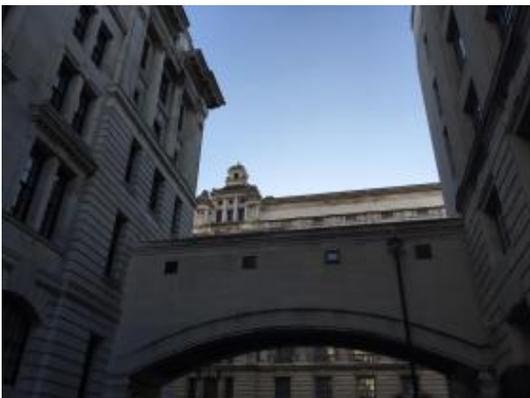


The boys zoomed up to the top deck and sat right at the front. They had planned to sit here for the last 3 days and thankfully our lovely tour guide Pascaline said it was fine to sit there. She also very kindly gave Luke and Zak a wand each which they treasured for the whole tour and have pride of place in their bedrooms now. Sadly the wands are pretend and don't magic the kids to sleep nor do they do their homework for them, which is what my eldest had hoped for!

After 10 minutes or so, the bus set off for our first stop. The driver did very well navigating around the narrow streets full of parked cars, I was in awe of his driving skills to be honest! I'd have got road rage at numerous points.

Pascaline spoke to us on a microphone so we could all hear what she was saying, even up on the top deck. She told us some fun Harry Potter facts and gave us clues as to where we were headed. The boys loved guessing what our first stop was going to be.

When we arrived at the destination, we hopped off the Routemaster and congregated by a very large building. We were asked if we knew which place this represented in the movies. Luke shouted out random places, but wasn't right, and then one of our fellow group members got it right. It was called Scotland Place and it was used as the location where Harry and Mr Weasley entered into a phone box to access the Ministry of Magic in Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix.



As we were stood listening, Luke said, "I am going to be sick again Mummy!" just completely out of the blue again. He ran off over to the building, yep, the one used in the film, and

threw up.

For goodness sake.

Everyone very politely checked if he was ok and Luke said he was and we went back onto the bus again. I was mortified but he assured me he really did feel better this time...so on we went.



Our next stop was the place called Cecil Court, which was used as inspiration for Diagon Alley.

It was a beautiful little street full of curious little book shops. Had Luke not been telling me he was going to throw up again the whole way down it I might have taken a bit more in. The poor lad. We did see a shop selling some Harry Potter money there which was quite cool.



After taking some photos, we hopped back on the bus and went off to see some more of the sights/venues.

I don't want to give all the stops and venues away in case you want to do the tour yourselves, so I won't do a stop by stop rundown, but I can assure you it was interesting, fun and my Potter mad boys LOVED it (yes, despite one of them being very sick).





I do just need to give a special mention to my favourite stop on the tour however which was Leadenhall Market. This Victorian market has hardly changed since it was built and the grandeur of it is truly something to behold. It's easy to see why they chose it as a Harry Potter film location when you're there. I haven't been to Leadenhall Market before but it is now top of my list for places to return to when I make it back into London. It would be magical anytime of year but seeing it all decked out for Christmas with its beautiful lights and traditional tree was really quite special.





The poor lamb managed to push on but he was sick near the steps of St Paul's cathedral, in the Tate Modern (we all stopped here to use the facilities), Leadenhall market and again once we were back at our home town station. Needless to say the little chap went to bed once he was in and mummy vowed never to go anywhere with the children on her own again. True story.

The end of the tour was at Kings Cross where we went to see where the 'entrance' to platform 9 and 3/4 is. There is

nothing there to mark the spot anymore but there is a pretend trolley going into a wall near the entrance to Kings Cross station which you can have your photo taken with. It was originally in the exact spot used in the films on the platform but, due to health and safety, it was moved. Sadly Luke was too poorly to do this bit but we plan to return one day to get a photo.





I would absolutely recommend this Harry Potter Bus Tour of London. If you're a fan yourself, or you have older kids who are (I would certainly say this is an age 6+ tour and they will only find it interesting if they have watched all the films) then you're guaranteed a super day out. The fact the tour is on a bus is fabulous because you get to cover a lot of ground in a short space of time. Doing it by foot on your own would take an entire day and you would get very tired!

Pascaline our guide was nothing but brilliant (especially seen as I had a puking child with me) and I hope her Culture and Adventure tours go from strength to strength.

She is running another tour

on Sunday 12th February 2017
and you can book your slot on
the Routemaster Bus here

**(If you're unable to book for
any reason, please contact
Pascaline on:
info@cultureandadventure.com)**

**Disclosure: I was given 3 tickets to attend this Harry Potter
Tour in return for this review. All words, thoughts, images
and opinions are my own.**