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Live and Work in London

By Sarah Manners

London is an amazing city from the cosmopolitan vibrancy of Soho and the magnificent views from

the millennium eye to the historic gems of Big Ben and the Tower of London.

You encounter Irish people inhabiting one London area next to Jewish and Muslim people. In certain parts you will meet Greeks, Americans, New Zealanders, Australians, Germans, and Africans. It is definitely one of the most multi-ethnic cities in the world.

Considering beauty, fame and the size of London it is no wonder that so many people choose to stay, work and live there.

Live and Work in London

Many school leavers and university graduates leave South Africa to live and work in London once their studies are complete. Some come for a few months and other stay the full two years their working visas permit. The two year working visa is the most common amongst South Africans who wish to come and work in the UK. There is however the option of obtaining a Highly Skilled Migrant **Visa** which has no restrictions on employment or length of time allowed in the UK. This is an extremely attractive option for South Africans who are looking to live and work in the UK for an extended period of time. Most people don't actually know about this visa and therefore don't even consider working in the UK an option – because they think they are ineligible (when this is not necessarily the case at all).

During their time in London, South Africans are afforded with the opportunities of exploring a world foreign to their own, embracing new cultures and experiences that will stay with them long after they have returned to South Africa.

Many South Africans go to London to **earn money** while they travel in order to bring the money back home and begin their lives independently and on a good financial footing. The invaluable international experience they accumulate working in London makes them far more employable once they have returned home. As there are such unbelievable work opportunities in the UK for qualified and experienced candidates from South Africa it is actually easier to find jobs in the UK than many people think. Though this is a popular option being in a foreign country for long periods of time away from your friends and family is not easy. Many South Africans have only truly realised how blessed they are to live in such a warm and friendly country once they have left. They return to South Africa enriched and with a new passion for their own country.

South Africans in London

Making the transition to London from South Africa is not as difficult as it used to be. Any South African who has been to London will tell you that when you walk around the city South African accents fill your ears with the comfort of home. Afrikaans is also widely spread so don't gossip about anyone on the tube in Afrikaans - they may just speak it too.

There are social clubs, braai clubs and even dating services for South Africans. A trip to the **South African shop** will delight and never disappoint those who are feeling a little home sick and in dire need of the culinary comforts of home. Biltong, Nik-Naks, Ms Balls and Marmite are but some of the treasures that adorn this trove in the middle of London 9027 kilometres from home. Any South African who has lived and worked in London will tell you that a trip to the Springbok Pub is an absolute essential when you are craving a night out SA style. South Africans congregate here to watch the Springboks take on opponents on the rugby fields of the world and when it comes to a match against the British Lions the supporters don their green and gold jerseys and come together to celebrate their home country and allegiance even though they are living in lion territory.

South Africans have access to newspapers, magazines, television programs and radio stations from all over South Africa which enable them to keep in touch with what's going on at home. Feeling a little homesick is only natural when you arrive in this fast paced city. The people you will meet whether they are Kiwis, British or other South Africans will enrich your life dramatically. Learning to live outside of your comfort zone in a different country, with different cultures and traditions is not always easy. It is however an **extremely enriching and wonderful experience** which is why so many South Africans leave home each year and travel to London.

Many South Africans make the decision to live and work in the UK, for some it's just a dream as when the hassles of visas, travel arrangements and job hunting arise many abandon this dream. Whether you're exploring the world, your career or your finances,

offers a range of services to make

getting to, living and working in London easier. 1st Contact's services are open to candidates from South Africa, New Zealand and Australia who wish to live and work in the UK.

Use London for your company's big meetings

By David Wilson

There are lots of reasons why you should use London for your company's big meetings, and here are three of the most obvious:

1. London is one of the world's most vibrant and exciting cities
2. London is well served by international and local travel links
3. London has a plethora of world-class venues; from basic rooms in big hotels to large custom-built, state-of-the-art conference centres.

London is considered a world leader for business; as a result the facilities that the city has to offer are tailored to the discerning business traveller. So, if you opt to use London for your company's big meetings you won't be far from anything that you would need, either professionally or for leisure.

There are almost 94,000 hotel rooms in London and over 6,000 eating establishments, so finding somewhere to stay or have dinner is never a problem! With accommodation to match every corporate budget and with many establishments offering an all-in rate including meeting rooms, London is an ideal venue for any company's big meetings!

There is no doubt that because of its fantastic transport links – two major international airports at Heathrow and Gatwick plus three smaller ones, major motorway and road links, a major Eurostar hub and extensive public transport – the capital is easy to get to from most parts of the world. And once in London the excellent integrated public transport system allows easy, cost-effective travel from hotel to venue and vice versa.

After business is concluded why not treat your company's employees to a taste of the superb London nightlife? With restaurants offering every type of cuisine and a superb theatre district in the capital's West End there's always somewhere to go and something fabulous to do! There are 150 theatres, 200 nightclubs and over 3,800 pubs in London. So, after the big meeting is concluded there are a multitude of leisure and entertainment options for you and your fellow employees.

Put your employees in the sort of bustling, energetic environment offered by England's capital are they are bound to be inspired before they even set foot in London for your company's big meeting; they'll be enthused and energised by the city itself.

London is fast-moving towards a 24 hour, seven days a week culture so regardless of the time of arrival of your delegates or the time of your big meeting then there are facilities to cater for them. Certain hotels offer early riser breakfasts from 4 a.m. in the morning, or alternatively later riser breakfasts until 12 noon. With so much going for the capital you should really consider using London for your company's big meetings.

Article by David Wilson

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