

IN & AROUND

CHINATOWN LONDON

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Chinatown London is evolving, creating an exciting mix of tradition and modernism.

Chinatown London is perfectly positioned to access central London's cultural highlights. A tourism hotspot in the heart of Theatreland, it's popular with show-goers seeking dinner and drinks, whilst bordering Seven Dials and Carnaby Street. The area is also bordered by lively Soho, Piccadilly Circus Station being only a stone's throw away, and Leicester Square located right on Chinatown's southeast corner.

Largely pedestrianised, Chinatown London is easy to explore on foot, with Gerrard Street and its main strip running through the centre. Other streets that form the Chinatown London hub include Wardour Street, Rupert Street and Rupert Court, Shaftesbury Avenue, Lisle Street, Macclesfield Street, Newport Place, Newport Court and Little Newport Street.

'Chinatown London itself is evolving, reflecting changes in China and the Far East. Traditional values are being complemented by new ideals, trends and cultural influences, creating an exciting mix of tradition and modernism that at Shaftesbury we're striving to curate in the heart of London's West End. We have recently welcomed a range of innovate concepts that offer modern takes on east Asian traditions including Hot Pot and Bubblewrap, and soon to open are XU and ICHI BUNS,' says the Shaftesbury team.

XU (pronounced 'shoe'), a concept from the creators of BAO in Soho and Fitzrovia, will immerse diners in the world of Taiwanese cuisine, showcasing the island's unique cultural diversity. 'A Taiwanese tea bar on the ground floor will serve rare and competition level leaf teas, providing diners with an insight to traditional Taiwanese tea ceremonies. Japanese-inspired burger concept, ICHI BUNS will be opening its debut site on Wardour Street this Summer, delighting customers with prime cuts of Wagyu

beef and an array of traditional Japanese dishes to deliver an authentic experience, in a modern Japanese environment. It's this mix of cuisine and cultures that create Chinatown London's diverse appeal,' says Shaftesbury.

Central Cross is a new £15m development currently being transformed at the eastern gateway that will create a 4,459 sq m mixed-use scheme, and includes the development of Newport Place that will be pedestrianised with a new pavilion and enhanced to create a landscaped public space.

Chinatown London covers just over three acres in the heart of London's West End and has the largest concentration of restaurants in the UK, offering visitors a choice of more than 90 places to eat and socialise. It also boasts the only independent cinema in the West End, the Prince Charles Cinema, which hosts world famous sing-a-long interactive film screenings, as well as three karaoke bars. The area is still very much a lively and important hub for the Chinese community with dedicated restaurants aimed at Chinese customers, supermarkets, hairdressers, bakeries, cafés, Chinese medicine and travel agents available.

'The importance of Chinatown London to the capital, and in fact the UK, has never been greater. London is one of the world's most outward-looking, tolerant and diverse cities, inherently celebrating other cultures. Chinatown London's uniqueness and rich history also makes it integral to the fabric and origins of London. No other place enjoys such popularity with the Chinese community, Londoners and tourists alike. This thriving network of streets, shops, bars, restaurants and much more serves as a truly unique melting pot of different cultures offering an affordable, fun, cultural experience for any visitor,' concludes Shaftesbury. **RF**



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