

North Isle of Dogs and Canary Wharf

Use map link on webpage to see a map

Starting point: Westferry DLR Station
Finishing point: South Quay DLR Station
Estimate time: 1.5 hours

1. Dock Police Cottages
2. Dockmasters House
3. West India Quay Warehouses
4. Museum of Docklands
5. Ledger Building
6. Floating footbridge
7. Cabot Square
8. No. 1 Canada Square
9. Canary Wharf Jubilee Line station
10. Billingsgate Fish Market
11. Bridge House
12. Nelson House
13. Gun Pub
14. Blue Bridge
15. Storm Water Pumping Station

From Westferry DLR cross the Westferry Road and follow the path running between an attractive yellow and blue housing development. Turn right and left into Garford Street. On your right you will see the Dock Police Cottages (1) built in 1807 for the Dock Police Force, formed in 1802.

At the end of the road turn right to Dockmasters House (2). Now an Indian restaurant, this Georgian building has had many uses. Designed in 1807 by Thomas Morris, the Engineer to the West India Dock Company, it was first used as an excise office, then a tavern, then a Dock Managers office, but strangely never used by a Dockmaster!

At the end of the road, turn left onto Hertsmere Road where you will see the imposing West India Quay Warehouses (3). These magnificent Grade 1 listed buildings are two of an original group of nine warehouses built in the early nineteenth century - the other seven warehouses were destroyed during bombing in the Second World War. Now carefully restored and converted into an attractive development of apartments above and a mix of shops and restaurants below.

Locate the entrance and make your way through to West India Quay – a great place for outdoor eating on a warm mid-summer evening.

Turn left to the Museum of Docklands (4)* housed within this spectacular Georgian warehouse, and home to a vast collection of objects and materials spanning 2,000 years of 'London's River, Port and People'. Next door is the Ledger Building (5), another Grade 1 listed building, once used to keep the records on everything that came in and out of the docks and now converted into a restaurant.

Cross the green floating footbridge (6) to Wren's Landing, up some steps and across the road into Cabot Square (7). This pleasant tree-lined open space is a popular lunchtime spot, and during the summer is a setting for outdoor arts and events. From here are fine views of the City. Pause for a moment to take in the scale of Canary Wharf. The 240-metre tower that dominates the skyline is No. 1 Canada Square (8), designed by American Architect, Cesar Pelli.

Make your way to the right of the Tower, turn right into Chancellor Passage and left past several bars to bring you to Canary Wharf Jubilee Line station (9). Designed by Norman Foster Associates, this vast underground building feels more like a cathedral than a tube station with its huge columns and curved glass entrance canopies.

Go up the steps in front of the Tower and turn right along Churchill Place to Cartier Circle Roundabout and Trafalgar Way. From here are fine views across to Billingsgate Fish Market (10).

Locate a pedestrian bridge on the right of the road through a colourful tall development to bring you to Blackwall Basin. The walkway bends round to the left to reach Poplar Dock, now an attractive marina full of colourful canal boats.

Continue to follow the path around the dock, past two restored dock cranes and into a tree-lined walkway. The wall to your left is the top of part of the original dock wall, built in 1828-29 to protect the docks. It has recently been renovated and is now Grade 1 listed.

Exit onto Prestons Road and turn right past Bridge House (11). This Grade 2 listed building was designed by the engineer John Rennie and was completed in 1819 as a home for the Superintendent of the West India Dock Company. In the 1950s it became a police training college and is now occupied by the London Federation of Boys Club.

Continue over the original entrance to Blackwall Basin, where there are good views of Canary Wharf and, to the left, the Millennium Dome.

Turn left into Coldharbour. Immediately in front of you are two superb 18th Century Houses, Isle House and next door, Nelson House (12). Endless scandalous stories abound about Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton using Nelson House as a tryst, as well as underground passages to the Gun pub. Unlikely, but amusing tales nonetheless.

This very attractive lane ends at the Gun Pub (13). This area used to have a foundry called Gun Yard and the original inn would have been built to serve gunsmiths, foundry workers and sailors.

Turn right past a row of Dockers Cottages and left back onto Prestons Road across the Blue Bridge (14), to the junction, and left into Stewart Street, where you will immediately see the imposing Storm Water Pumping Station (15), designed in 1989 by John Outram Associates and winner of several architectural awards. Here storm water is pumped up into a big surge tank from where it drains by gravity into the Thames. The jet engine type fan in the pediment is functional and expels sewer gases from the station.

Retrace your steps back to the junction and cross the road into Marsh Wall. Turn right past Jack Dash House, and into Lawn House Close and follow the Dockside Walkway which will bring you back to Marsh Wall. Turn right, South Quay Station is a short distance from here.

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