

My favourite things



Erin Johnson Gachoki is from Cleveland, Ohio, USA, and recently returned to the UK in October 2018 to join her husband. She previously resided in London from 2012-2013 for postgraduate studies. Erin has mainly lived in the American Midwest and briefly in San Francisco, California. She currently calls south London home and works as a market research strategist.

Your best advice to someone just arriving in the UK?

Get out, get involved, be open-minded and pace yourself — there's so much to do here.

The best place to meet people?

FOCUS is a great place to start. I've also met wonderful people through church, *Meetup.com*, events listed on *Eventbrite* and other groups tied to my interests.

The ultimate boutique or clothing store?

I like browsing Dover Street Market and appreciating the quirky clothing and displays.

The highlight of your UK adventure so far?

Visiting a good friend at her family's home in Cornwall. It's a beautiful region and I enjoyed gaining insight into Cornish culture and history.

Your favourite flower shop?

The Columbia Road Flower Market near Hoxton Station (before the crowds get there).

Your most watched British TV show?

I'm a big fan of *Black Mirror*.

Your favourite expression you have adopted since being here?

I find myself saying "no worries" often. Also, "lovely" and "brilliant" are great replacements for my very American overuse of the word "awesome".

Your preferred mode of transport?

I love sitting on the upper deck of the bus and getting a better understanding of the city's layout. Living in south east London, I also regularly use the Overground.

Your first memory of arriving in the UK?

Looking out of the window as my plane descended into Heathrow and staring at the landscape below.

What is London's best kept secret?

The Leake Street tunnel underneath Waterloo Station is interesting and constantly changing. Banksy popularised it as an area where street artists can legally paint.

The best spot to people watch?

Brixton is a great neighbourhood to people watch. Brixton Village Market in particular has cafés where you can sit and observe.

The best place to take out-of-town guests?

A traditional afternoon tea experience and venturing around central London. Also, make time to head down to Greenwich and appreciate its history and excellent views.

Your favourite park?

My husband and I live close to Crystal Palace Park. It has some unusual attractions like the life-size Victorian dinosaur sculptures and remnants from the Crystal Palace exhibition building.

Your favourite neighbourhood or area to explore?

I'm fond of the East End, particularly around Spitalfields and Brick Lane. I also plan to head out west to Richmond more often.

Your favourite place to walk?

The paths alongside the Regent's Canal including Little Venice.

Your favourite place to have a fun, cultural night out?

South Bank has plenty of choices for culture and nightlife.

Best thing about London in the spring?

The sun is (maybe) out, the flowers are blooming and the Tube is not unbearably hot yet!

I felt settled when...

I received my National Insurance Number.

