

Dockside dawdle



ANDREAS SCHMIDT

Natasha Polyviou takes in the capital's maritime heritage and the green spaces of Greenwich and the Isle of Dogs

1 GREAT EASTERN

Start by disembarking from your waterbus at Masthouse Terrace Pier, looking ahead and slightly to the right as soon as you exit. A large, fenced-off wooden ramp on the opposite side of the street is actually the remains of the launching point of the **Great Eastern**. Isambard Kingdom Brunel's gargantuan ship caused considerable consternation to her celebrated engineer by stubbornly resisting launch: following 13 unsuccessful attempts, the ill-fated vessel was eventually cajoled broadside (sideways) into Old Father Thames in 1858.

2 THAMES PATH

With the river to your right, follow the Thames Path eastwards. A few paces along on your left is **Burrell's Wharf**, a former

shipyard and, later, paint manufacturer where grade II-listed Victorian buildings and a characteristic octagonal chimney stack are preserved. It is now a housing development.

3 MUDLARKS

Still on the Thames Path, stroll close to the river so you can look out for mudlarks combing the shore for washed-up treasure. Try not to be disoriented by a London Eye-like Ferris wheel coming into view across the water – it's the temporary **Greenwich Wheel**. Your peaceful perambulation, punctuated by not much more than the odd seagull squawk and hum of passing boats, leads to the end of this section of the Thames Path. Swing left past the **Elephant Royale** Thai restaurant, then right at the blue Thames Path sign, and left again at the **Ferry House** pub.

4 THE CITY FARM

Walk straight across the junction on to East Ferry Road, notice the **Canary Wharf Tower** up ahead and duck into the altogether more pleasant environs of **Millwall Park** on your right. Pass the bowls green, skirt

anti-clockwise round the cricket pitch and swing right at the top of the steps into **Mudchute Park & Farm**, a triumph of local action against developers, who wanted to turn this urban wilderness into high-rises in 1974. A bucolic, tree-lined avenue leads to the farm's riding arena and Mudchute Kitchen is at the end of the stable yard.

Time **1½ hours**
Start **Masthouse Terrace Pier**
Finish **Greenwich Park**
Miles **2.17**

5 WORLD WAR I AIR-RAID SHELTER

Exit the farm on the opposite side of the café, past the allotments, then turn right, following the blue sign to **Island Gardens**, through the estate and down Stebondale Street. At the end of the street make a right and take the first left, opposite Island Gardens DLR station. The glass dome of the north end of the **Greenwich Foot Tunnel** rises into view.

Designed to give dock workers living south of the river access to the Isle of Dogs, the tunnel also served as a shelter from zeppelins during World War I. You can download free recordings of Londoners who experienced the raids at memoryscape.org.uk.

6 GREENWICH

Proceed through the cool, damp-smelling, tiled tunnel under the river and emerge on the south shore. Make a left before the covered restoration site of the **Cutty Sark** and a right on to King William Walk. Walk up to the junction with Romney Road, passing the **National Maritime Museum**. Don't miss a wander through **Greenwich Park**. If you can make it to the top near the Observatory, you'll be rewarded with fantastic views over the city. A short walk will take you to the **Ranger's House**, a Georgian villa filled with medieval and Renaissance artworks, silver, porcelain and jewellery.



BRITTA JASCHINSKI

From top: Mudchute Park & Farm, Old Royal Naval College, National Maritime Museum



EAT AND DRINK HERE **Mudchute Kitchen** Mudchute Park & Farm, Pier St, Isle of Dogs, E14 (020 7515 5901/mudchute.org). **Cockle & Co Kings Arms**, King William Walk, SE10 (020 8858 4544).