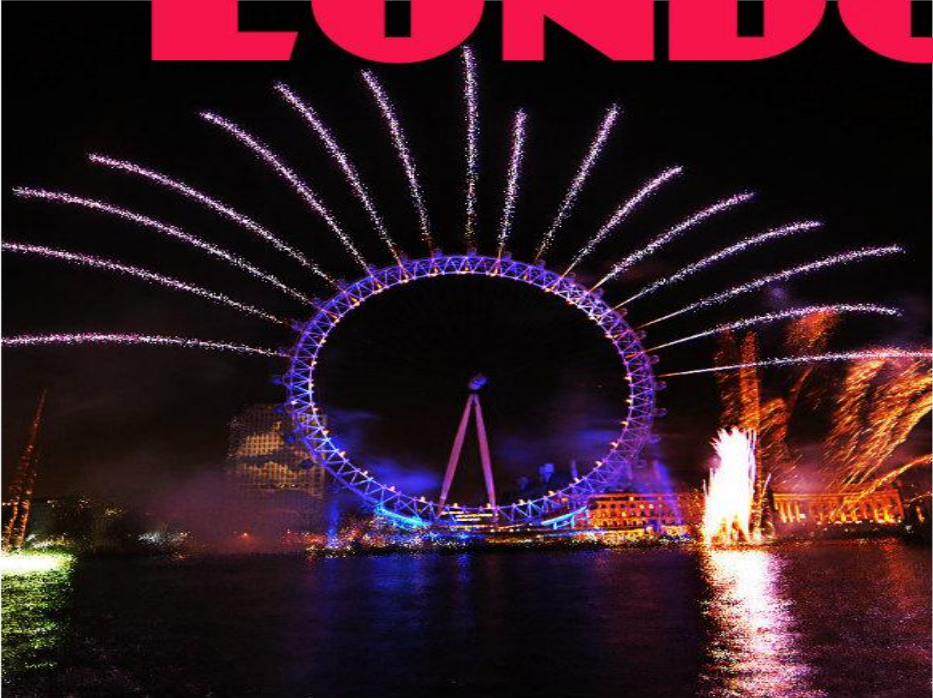




LONDON EYE



The London Eye

- The **London Eye** is a giant [Ferris wheel](#) situated on the banks of the [River Thames](#) in [London, England](#). The entire structure is 135 m tall and the wheel has a diameter of 120 m.
- It is the most popular paid [tourist attraction in the United Kingdom](#), visited by over 3.5 million people annually.
- The London Eye, or Millennium Wheel, was officially called the British Airways London Eye and then the Merlin Entertainments London Eye. Since 20 January 2011, its official name is the EDF Energy London Eye following a three-year sponsorship deal.
- The London Eye adjoins the western end of [Jubilee Gardens](#), on the [South Bank](#) of the River Thames between [Westminster Bridge](#) and [Hungerford Bridge](#), in the [London Borough of Lambeth](#).

History

The London Eye was designed by architects Frank Anatole, Nic Bailey, Steve Chilton, Malcolm Cook, Mark Sparrowhawk, and the husband-and-wife team of Julia Barfield and David Marks.

They submitted their idea for a large observation wheel as part of a competition to design a landmark for the new millennium.

None of the entrants won the competition, but the couple pressed on and eventually got the support of British Airways, who sponsored the project.



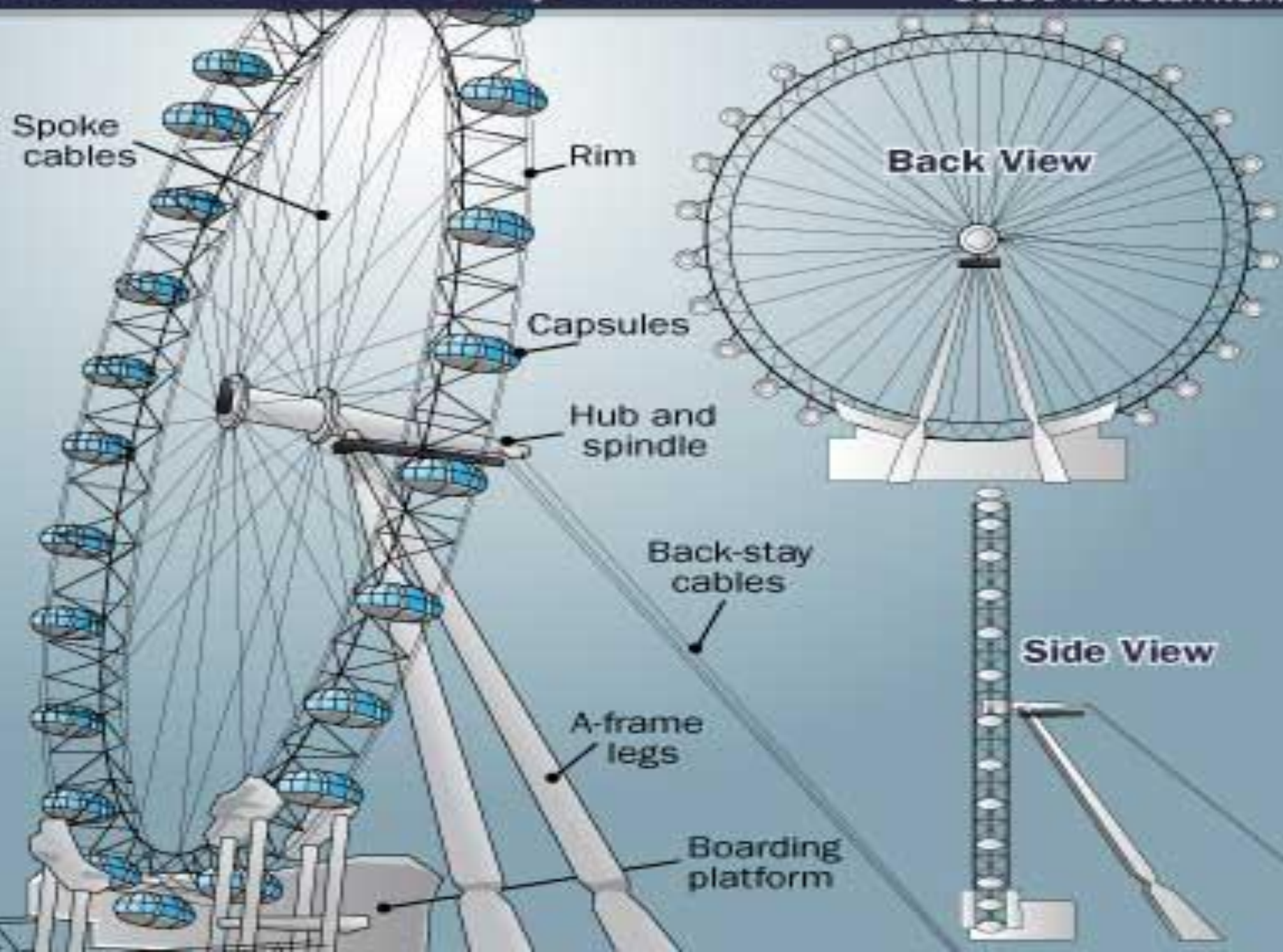
Opening

The London Eye was formally opened by the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, on December 31, 1999, although it was not opened to the public until March 9, 2000 because of the technical problems. Since its opening, the Eye has become a major landmark and tourist attraction.



How The London Eye Works

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Construction



In the process over 1700 tons of steel were used for the structure and more than 3000 tons of concrete were used for the foundations. Its steel design forms an "A" shape, with two large tapered legs at the base - 20 meters apart and each over 58 meters in length. The legs lean toward the river at a 65-degree angle. The rim of the Eye is supported by tensioned steel cables and resembles a huge spoked bicycle wheel.



The wheel's 32 sealed and air-conditioned ovoidal passenger capsules are attached to the external circumference of the wheel and rotated by electric motors. Each of the 10-tonne capsules represents one of the London Boroughs, and holds up to 25 people, who are free to walk around inside the capsule, though seating is provided. The wheel rotates at 26 cm per second so that one revolution takes about 30 minutes.

360° view over London



Thanks to the construction of the glass capsules on the outer side of the rim, the passengers have a great 360° view over London. Many famous landmarks are clearly visible, including Buckingham Palace , St. Paul's Cathedral, the Houses of Parliament etc.

What is the London Eye useful for?

Other than providing a great 360 views of London the London Eye hosts many major events. Such as every year the London Eye is part of London's new year celebration and apparently used by small businesses for the conferences.



INTERESTING FACTS

Olympic Torch 2012 reaches new heights on London Eye

- Amelia Hempleman-Adams, who became the youngest person to ski to the South Pole when aged just 16, grinned from ear to ear as she held the flame on top of a capsule on board the giant wheel.
- Illuminated by early morning sunshine, the 17-year-old girl held on tight as she raised the torch above the sleepy capital shortly after 8am.
- And she kept a tight grip as she posed with the flame at a height much greater than nearby Big Ben, surrounded by bright blue sky.



London 2012: Olympic Torch reaches new heights on London Eye



Breathtaking: brave torch bearer Amelia smiles for the camera as she stands on top of a capsule on the London Eye

INTERESTING FACTS

London Eye hosted its 5,000th marriage proposal

- Since the attraction opened in 2000, there have been 5,000 proposals that are known of, 512 weddings, 22 civil partnerships and about 1.5 million glasses of Champagne consumed.
- Jagan Rao and Natasha Palmer from Marylebone, central London, decided to get married on the wheel on Saturday.
- The couple have now been given a complimentary "Cupid's Capsule" on the date of their proposal every year.



Weddings on the London Eye



Celebrities draw inspiration from the visit of the London Eye

Supermodel Kate Moss has been on the London Eye 25 times – the record for a UK celebrity



In addition: List of [Ferris wheels](#) whose construction has been completed and which have opened to the public.

1. Singapore Flyer (165 m, 28 capsules)
2. Star of Nanchang (160 m, 60 capsules, China)
3. **LONDON EYE (UK)** (135 m, 32 capsules)

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