

## 8 Awesome Places to Take Your Harry Potter Fan

# PARENTS



Karen Cicero

My daughter, Katie, tore through the *Harry Potter* series when she was in third grade. And now, five years later, she's still obsessed. So I keep Potter-related places to visit on my radar. We've been to a few of the ones below, and have the rest on our bucket list. And if you know of any more, send an owl post or just post in the comments at the end.

### **The Wizarding World of Harry Potter**

#### **[Universal Orlando Resort](#) and coming soon to [Universal Studios Hollywood](#)**

At these theme parks, your kids can easily pretend they're Hogwarts students. That's what my daughter did when we visited Orlando last year: She wore her Ravenclaw cape, drank butterbeer, exchanged her "muggle money" for Gringotts Bank Notes, crossed platform 9 3/4 to ride on the Hogwarts Express (chocolate frog in hand), and bowed to

the Hippogriff on a not-too-terrifying coaster. The Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey ride in Hogwarts castle isn't for the faint of heart (or kids less than 48 inches), but we survived twice. (You can meander through the non-rider line to take in the castle's coolness.) The California version—which is expected to open on April 7—will be virtually identical to the Hogsmeade section in Orlando, but it won't include the rides and attractions in Diagon Alley. Still, it's an easier trip for West Coast families.



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## **The Smithsonian American History Museum & The Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum**

### **Washington, DC, area**

Having a hard time convincing your kids that a trip to the nation's capital will be fun? Mention that the [Smithsonian](#) has one of Daniel Radcliffe's Gryffindor uniforms on display. In nearby Alexandria, Virginia, kids can see Harry Potter-inspired potion ingredients like dragon's blood and Mandrake root at the [Apothecary Museum](#). Register for a event on July 31 to celebrate Harry's birthday.

### **Harry Potter Festival**

#### **Philadelphia**

Mark your calendar for October 22 for this [annual spellbinding event](#) in the Chestnut Hill section of the city. This year's activities are still being planned, but previous fun included a Quidditch Tournament, Hunt for the Horcrux scavenger hunt, and Muggles Read-A-Thon. (If you're a Potter fan too, book a babysitter and join the pub-crawl the night before.)

#### ***Potted Potter***

#### **Touring show, locations worldwide**

We were a little worried that this 70-minute unauthorized [Harry Potter parody](#) of all seven books wouldn't be appropriate for kids, but friends who saw it assured us that it absolutely fine. So my husband took Katie when she was 10, and the two of them couldn't stop laughing.

#### **Harry Potter camp**

#### **Various locations**

It's a super-popular theme at camps across the country. This [one in Utah](#) sounds particularly cool with classes in wandmaking, potions, and astronomy.

#### **Warner Bros. Studio Tour London**

#### **Leavenworth, England**

The working studios where all eight *Harry Potter* films were made are about an hour outside the city. The [Studio Tour](#) is located right on that lot—families can explore two soundstages and a backlot filled with original sets, props, and costumes as well as animatronic creatures. One of my daughter's highlights was helping open the giant doors to start the tour after watching a short film. We also bought her an activity passport, which included a Golden Snitch hunt, to make the visit even more fun.



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## **Wizard Chambers at the Georgian House Hotel**

### **London**

A Harry Potter-inspired hotel room? Yep—it's for real. The [Georgian House Hotel](#) in London (near Victoria station) features two wizard chambers with stained-glass windows, potion bottles, leather-bound books, and other impressions of sleeping in a castle. You even have to go through a passageway hidden behind an inconspicuous bookcase to get to the magical rooms.

## **Harry Potter and The Cursed Child, Parts I and II**

### **London**

Suggested for kids ages 10 and older, this [two-part play](#) in London's West End (the equivalent of Broadway) debuts this summer. J.K. Rowling and other writers explore what happens to Harry and fellow wizards after the stories in the books wrap up. Tickets for most of 2016 are already sold out, but if you're planning a visit to London in 2017, buy your tickets this year! In the meantime, you can read the [script book](#), which will be published by Scholastic in July.

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