

## Three good things

### Tourist tours from eye-opening perspectives

Words by  
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#### 1 | London through an immigrant lens

Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, the Thames: we know what to expect from a typical tour of London, but three excursions now offer an immigrant's perspective.

Led by women from Albania, Ethiopia and Morocco, the tours discuss customs and traditions from the women's home countries and how these influence immigrant communities in London.

Ella, Sefanit and Kaoutar arrived in the UK with little money, limited English and no connections. But they received training and mentoring from the Women in Travel social enterprise,

before launching the tours with the company Intrepid Urban Adventures. Food and drink play a part in each experience, from learning how to make Moroccan mint tea, to a traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony. Tours last between 45 minutes and 2.5 hours and cost between £19–£82.

"When I came to London, I missed the relationships I had in Morocco: family, shopkeepers, everyone," said Kaoutar Hafsi (pictured right), who leads the Moroccan experience. "This tour is about connection and togetherness experienced through Moroccan traditions."



#### 2 | From gang life to a graffiti tour

For almost three decades, the Egipto neighbourhood of Bogotá, Colombia, was the epicentre of the city's gang-related conflict. Today, former gang members guide visitors through the area's story – revealing its rich history and thriving street art scene as well as its violent past.

The tour starts on Calle 10, the road marking the invisible border between two neighbourhoods at the heart of the city's gang activity. It also inspires the tour's name: Breaking Borders.

Guides offer a hopeful glimpse into what Bogotá has become since the early 2000s, while fees generated by the experience allow the guides to support their families through legal and meaningful work.

Egipto remains underdeveloped and many residents who live there still struggle to access basic utilities. "In spite of these conditions, this place is full of life thanks to the people's warmth and joy", said tour organisers.

#### 3 | The street children turned tour guides

Far from Delhi's popular tourist attractions, visitors wander through the chaotic, colourful Paharganj neighbourhood with young people who know these roads better than most. After all, this is where they used to live and work.

Some 70,000 children live on the streets of India's capital city, and the Salaam Baalak Trust is one of the

organisations trying to help them: in this case, by training people up as guides. Its two-hour City Walk tour is led by young people who want to practise their speaking skills while sharing their unique stories.

Travellers get a unique perspective of the city, while the young people leading the walks receive a salary from the Salaam Baalak Trust.

