A Visual Story to support your Meet Santa experience
Arriving at ZSL London Zoo

You will be coming to ZSL London Zoo for the day. ZSL stands for the Zoological Society of London.

There may be a queue to enter the Zoo. The queue may include people you don't know.

Ticket holders for our Quiet Sessions do not need to queue. When you arrive at the Zoo, please bring your Quiet Session ticket with your Zoo ticket or ZSL Membership card straight to the entrance.

A map of the Zoo can be downloaded here: Map of ZSL London Zoo
Arriving for Meet Santa

When it’s time for your experience, you will go to meet Santa Claus and his elf friends in the Christmas grotto!

The elves will be dressed in red and green.

Upon your arrival at the grotto, an elf will be sitting at a desk just inside the door.

The elf will find your name on their list in a big brown book and will then show you inside the grotto.
Starting your experience

• When you enter the grotto, you will see lots of Christmas trees and some picnic tables.
• The lights will be low and twinkly and there will be crunchy bark chip under your feet.
• There will be music playing that you can hear in the background.
• You may even see or smell some pigs in their indoor den.
• An elf will show you to your table where you will be able to make a Christmas decoration before you meet Santa.
Meeting Santa

• When it is your time to meet Santa, an elf will take you into Santa’s house.
• You will walk up a long path with red curtains into Santa’s living room.
• Santa will be sitting on a red chair next to a fireplace and there will be two red stools nearby. You can choose one of these stools to sit on so that you can have a chat with Santa.
• Santa will be wearing a mask throughout your experience.
• Santa might ask you what you would like for Christmas and you can ask him questions too if you like!
After your visit to meet Santa in his Grotto, you will help to make a present for one of our animals! We call this enrichment or animal-gift giving.

First, one of the London Zoo team (who will be wearing a dark green uniform) will take you on a short tour of the Zoo.

At the end of the tour you will be able to make a present for one of the animals by putting some food treats into a small cardboard box or plastic ball. You will need to wear gloves for this activity.

Afterwards, the team member will take you to the animals’ enclosure so you help or watch the keeper put your presents in and watch the animals enjoy their delicious treats!

You might be making your present to give to the red river hogs, monitor lizards or wallabies (all pictured above), or you might be making your present to give to another of our species at the Zoo.
After your experience

• Santa will have given you a special golden ticket after your chat with him. Once you’ve finished your experience, you can use this ticket to exchange for a gift.

• To collect your gift, go to the gift chalet which is near the carousel and the Galapagos Tortoise House. The chalet is called ‘Santa’s Gift Collection’.

• Show your ticket to the elf on duty and they will let you choose your gift.

• We hope you have a lovely time meeting Santa and his elves!
Sensory Sweet Shop

• Near the stall where you will collect your present, you'll find several huts that have been decorated in the theme of sweets.

• There are four of these huts: a marshmallow meadow, cotton candy clouds, a gingerbread house and a candy cane forest.

• You are allowed to enter the themed huts and you can touch the items inside.

• There are also several other huts nearby where you can purchase sweets. These huts do not have open doors and there will be people in these huts to serve you, so you won’t need to go into them.
Festive family trail

• You can also take part in our festive trail after you Meet Santa. This trail is separate to Meet Santa and takes place across the Zoo.

• You'll be given a card by one of our elves which has the names of some animals and space for you to write.

• You can go around the Zoo to see the animals and write down on the card what you think the animals would like for Christmas.

• Once you've filled in all of your suggestions on the card, you'll go to the Polar Post Room.

• There will be lots of letters and sacks in this room.

• Hand your completed card in to Mrs Claus who will make sure your present suggestions get sent to Santa before Christmas!
Enjoying the rest of the Zoo

• The people who work or volunteer at ZSL London Zoo are very friendly and you can ask them questions about the animals or for help if you need it.

• They wear green shirts, blue shirts or red shirts with ZSL London Zoo written on them.

• You can look at the animals but you must not touch them, unless a Zookeeper says you can.
Who lives at ZSL London Zoo?

Sumatran tigers live in Tiger Territory
Who lives at ZSL London Zoo?

Western Lowland gorillas live in *Gorilla Kingdom*
Who lives at ZSL London Zoo?

Asiatic Lions live in *Land of the Lions*
Who lives at ZSL London Zoo?

Humboldt Penguins live at Penguin Beach
Who lives at ZSL London Zoo?

Some of the animals will be big, like this giraffe!

Some of the animals will be very small like this mantis!
• Some of the animal exhibits are inside and very warm.

• Other animal exhibits are outside.

• In some animal exhibits you can walk next to the animals.

• There might be some unusual smells as you walk around because animals smell very different from humans.

• Sometimes the animals make noises.
Things to see at ZSL London Zoo

• You can watch a show if you want to.

• The keepers use microphones so that everyone can hear.

• The animals may come close but will not touch you.
Places you might go in the Zoo

• There are lots of places where you can buy food if you are hungry.
• Or you can bring your own food and have a picnic.
• Sit by a tree on one of the lawns, or explore the nature walk by Land of the Lions.
There are also shops where you can buy things, and toilets you can use.
Penguin Pass

• Supporting families with additional needs, the Penguin Pass queue hopper gives families the opportunity to hop queues at the Zoo.

• There is no need to book your Penguin Pass for ZSL London Zoo, simply click the picture on the left hand side to download & print the pass or download onto your phone for a more discreet option. We also have passes available to collect on arrival from our admissions team, please return your pass to the main Zoo Shop at the end of your visit.

• Show your Penguin Pass to our team at admissions, retail or catering outlets and our walk-through exhibits. Our staff & volunteers will do their best to reduce your queueing time.

• For more information on accessibility, please visit: https://www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo/visitor-information/accessibility
Time to leave ZSL London Zoo

After your day at the Zoo you can tell all your friends and family about all the animals you saw and all the fun you had!