

The London Baby Directory Awards 2013

After 17 years of scouring the streets of London and the internet for the best services, reviewing products and sourcing ideas that any new family could need in London, the Baby Directory celebrates the best products that will make any new family's life better in the weeks and months ahead. Many other parenting awards invite companies to pay to nominate their own products but here we have selected the winners based purely on our experience of these items as used by real parents.



Winner: Changing bags Melobaby Tote

You'll need a baby changing bag - unless you're happy for your own handbag to lose it's sense of identity. So without much fuss, the Melobaby Tote is just the right size to hold two bottles (upright), a changing mat, plenty of space for a change of clothes, nappies and wipes.

There are little external zipped pockets for your keys and phone - two little straps which hook it to the handle of your pushchair, giving you easy access to its contents. The fabric is lightweight and wipe clean - and even Dads will be happy to be seen with it.

www.melobaby.co.uk

Winner: From birth car seat

Cybox Sirona



This relatively new brand from Germany is beginning to gather pace as the UK transitions to rear-facing car seats for children 0-4 years. The seat has integrated isofix fittings (so no extra base needed) and a 3 point harness and just isn't as big as our other favourite, the Besafe Izi Combi. Magically, you can turn the seat to the side to get baby in and out which will save your back from unnecessary twisting.

If you are keen to transition to forward facing before 4 years, then you tuck the 3 point harness away into the back of the seat unit, and use a large padded cushion as the restraint. It's not ideal for children wanting to tuck into a packet of Organix snacks, but safety is of utmost importance.

cybox-online.com

Winner: From 9 months Maxi-Cosi Axiss

This is the traditional forward-facing model suitable from 9 months (or 9-18kg+) that also turns to the side for getting baby in and out. Maxi-cosi can always be relied upon for comfort and safety as well as being roomy. Great side impact protection as well as the ability to recline for a great in-car nap.

www.maxi-cosi.co.uk



Winner: From birth pushchair Bugaboo Buffalo

Your lightweight baby will appreciate the smooth ride of this new model from Bugaboo, and you'll love the fact that those front wheels will tackle all sorts of obstacles. You'll be able to take a short-cut across the meadows of Hyde Park and breeze the cobbled streets of Borough Market. Other innovations include a decent shopping basket (hooray!) and a self-standing fold with the seat unit still attached.

Bugaboo is still one of the most intuitive pushchair brands, which means you don't need a complicated online video to work out how to use or fold it. We still love the Uppababy Vista (last year's winner), but the folding of the frame takes a little practice - and it really shouldn't. And although iCandy looks neat and compact (for a baby), you have to bear in the mind that toddlers' legs grow and that seat frame doesn't.

www.bugaboo.com



Winner: Double pushchair Baby Jogger City Select

Strictly speaking a double pushchair has been designed with twins in mind, but depending on your family planning strategy, it could be that events have taken on a speedier course and you're managing a baby and a toddler under 2. This is where the flexibility of the City Select excels - and it manages to deal with narrow Victorian front doors and you can avoid the friendly scowles of pedestrians on crowded pavements.

www.babyjogger



Winner: Three-wheeler Out'n'about Nipper V2

There are many mums who really want to get fitter. And with baby+buggy fitness classes well spaced around town, you can now give you body a good workout, without compromising your running posture.

This running buggy has a handlebar brake, large wheels with plenty of suspension, and a nearly-flat reclining pushchair seat - that will accommodate a mid-morning sleep whilst you are on the run. Go girl!

www.outnabout.com



Winner Buggies and lightweight strollers Uppababy G-Luxe

When (rather than if) you come to buy your lightweight stroller - do remember that your first pushchair choice was not wrong. There is no way you can put a newborn baby in a semi-recline position and rattle at speed around town. But there comes a point when your fragile little bundle becomes a robust 3 year old who still wants to inspect every daisy on the pavement, whilst you need to be at that appointment on time.

The G-Luxe fills this need effortlessly. Lightweight without being flimsy, stylishly classic with modern fabrics - without catapulting you into 2027.

www.uppababy.co.uk

Winner: Monitor
Babyping

There's a technical revolution gathering momentum in the area of baby monitors. No longer do you have to re-charge a separate "parent monitor" unit - you just sync the nursery camera with your phone or tablet. The Babyping is the first out of the starting block. Their innovative app allows you to monitor your baby across a WiFi network, with various settings to alert you to baby's crying.



And although the "camera" part of the monitor is a relatively simple technical achievement, expect rapid development of the app in response to parent feedback.

www.babyping.com

Winner: Travel cot
Babybjorn Travel Light

Think of this as a pint-sized pop up tent. You don't have to co-ordinate several manoeuvres to erect and collapse this cot, and it's so small when folded - so staying away with parents or friends is back on the agenda.

You could also use it at home as a temporary playpen to keep baby safe if the doorbell goes or if you have loving dogs.

www.babybjorn.co.uk



Winner: Nappy Bin
Ubbi

Another import from the USA this year is the Ubbi. This stainless steel nappy bin has the tidiest of slide-openings for nappy-sized parcels and although you can buy Ubbi scented bags, it will also fit traditional kitchen bin liners - so you won't have the expense of traditional refill cassettes.

It comes in a range of great colours to coordinate with your nursery style, plus fun little stickers.

ubbiworld.com

Winner: Day chair
Mamaroo

Why not accept a little help from the Mamaroo? This self-rocking, gliding, swinging day chair is everything but jingly. Babies who love motion will adore the action, however slow, and with an ipod docking station you can start them early on a decent repertoire of songs. Or you can have them completely still and just high enough off the floor to prevent an older sibling from doing too much cuddling.

www.4moms.com





Winner: Nursing lingerie
Mammae



Their special design allows the smallest of openings for baby to access your nipple, without you feeling at all exposed. The outer layer covers up nipples and breastpads as well as creating a smooth t-shirt bra look.

With no high triangles any more you can wear your bra confidently under summer tops and low cut dresses.

mammae.co.uk



Winner: Maternity wear

Bumpalicious

It's hard to feel glamorous when you're in your third trimester. You've managed to keep on trend with high street favourites, and then a special occasion arrives just when you are about to pop.

Bumpalicious' maternity dresses are gorgeous in shape, style and fabric with pieces created specifically for weddings, dinners or that special work presentation.

Bumpalicious Maternity offers a bespoke maternity shopping destination that provides hand-picked, gorgeous maternity clothing; a place you can trust and one that offers a personal and caring service to ensure that you look your absolute best throughout your pregnancy.

www.bumpaliciousmaternity.co.uk

