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A Day and Night in New York City

New York City, 1 Day

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Beginning on the Upper West Side, heading across Central Park and down to Soho and the Village, then up to the lights of Times Square, this is a whirlwind one-day tour of some of New York City's many attractions.









Photo: On the steps of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. By Monica Arellano-Ongpin.





Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - New York City

DAY NOTE: Start on the beautiful Upper West Side (hotels in the area include the Hotel Lucerne) and eat a hearty breakfast (Nice Matin is French and a little more fancy; Café con Leche is a casual Cuban eatery) or grab a bagel to go (H&H on Broadway at 80th Street is considered one of the city's best). Enter Central Park at 81st Street and walk across the park to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. After taking in your fill of the world's most impressive museum (don't try to do it all in one day or you'll exhaust yourself; prioritize your favorites), get down to Houston Street by bus (the M1 to South Ferry goes all the way down Fifth Avenue) or subway (6 train from 86th & Lexington to Spring Street) and eat coal oven-fired pizza at Lombardi's. For a fancier meal (and maybe some celeb-spotting) try the French bistro Balthazar. After lunch, window-shop and people-watch your way through SoHo and the West Village (check out Washington Square, a hub of activity for nearby New York University) and grab a cup of coffee or a pint at the Blind Tiger on Bleecker Street). Make sure to get up to Times Square so you can gawk at the lights, push through the crowds, and still make it to your Broadway show (the St. James Theatre is a favorite for big musicals) on time. Finally, eat a late sushi dinner at Blue Fin and toast a day's worth of the Big Apple.

-  **The Lucerne**
European style hotel
-  **Nice Matin**
Nice Matin's nice meal
-  **Cafe Con Leche**
Cuban flavor
-  **Central Park**
Urban oasis, perfect for exploring or relaxing
-  **Metropolitan Museum of Art**
Mammoth museum featuring art from around the world
-  **Lombardi's Pizza Gennaro's Caffe**
Brick-oven pizza favorite in Little Italy
-  **Balthazar**
Red Banquette Brasserie
-  **Washington Square**
Greenwich Village green

-  **New York University**
Preparing for a career
-  **Times Square**
Iconic center revamped for the tourist's enjoyment
-  **St. James Theatre**
Musical house on Broadway
-  **Blue Fin**
Too good to miss

Day 1 - New York City



QUICK NOTE

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contact:

tel: +1 212 875 1000 / +1 800 492 8122

fax: +1 212 721

1179(Reservations)

<http://www.thelucernehotel.com/>, <http://www.empirehotelgroup.com/lucerne/index.html>

location:

201 W 79th St
New York NY 10024

1 The Lucerne

DESCRIPTION: Situated along Manhattan's Upper West Side, The Lucerne Hotel grants tourists an easy commute to attractions such as The American Museum of Natural History, Times Square and Central Park. Visitors appreciated the hotel's on-site fitness center, state-of-the-art spa, free hotel-wide Wi-Fi and 24-hour room service. Guestrooms come equipped with flat screen televisions, marble-countered bathrooms, Gilchrist & Soames toiletries and coffeemakers, fully stocked with Wolfgang Puck Coffee products. Sole complaints concerned cramped guestrooms, although return visitors suggested



Hotels.com

booking corner units, as they are slightly more spacious. © Raveable

contact:
tel: 1 212 873 6423
fax: 1 212 873 1832
www.nicematinnyc.com/

location:
201 West 79th Street
New York NY 10096

hours:
Breakfast Daily: 7:00am - 11:30am; Lunch: Monday - Friday: 11:30am - 5:00pm; Dinner: Sunday - Thursday: 5:00pm - 11:00pm, Friday - Saturday: 5:00pm - 12:00am

2 Nice Matin

DESCRIPTION: Located on the ground floor of the Lucerno Hotel, Nice Matin is named after the largest daily newspaper in the South of France. It offers French and Mediterranean cuisine in an ambience of casual elegance. The menu is diverse; there's everything, from vegetables stuffed with braised beef to Roast Codfish and Pissaladiere. You can never go wrong with the Monday Night special - Aioli Montre. Infact, go ahead, try anything! All dishes are superb and very well-presented. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Nice Matin

contact:
tel: 1 212 595 7000
fax: +1 212 595 0936
http://www.cafeconlechenyc.com

location:
424 Amsterdam Avenue
New York NY 10024-5857

hours:
8a-midnight M-Su

3 Cafe Con Leche

DESCRIPTION: Cuban comfort food has arrived on the Upper West Side, to the delight of local residents. This bright, sociable spot serves simple fare like Seafood and Rice Soup and Arroz Con Pollo to a lively, eclectic crowd. The cafe is popular and not very big, so you will probably have to wait if you go at peak dining hours. The namesake Café Con Leche is delicious. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Cafe Con Leche

contact:
tel: +1 212 310 6600
http://www.centralparknyc.org

location:
Central Park Driveway
New York NY 10022

4 Central Park

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
The Central Park Conservancy runs free, volunteer-led walking tours; they take place rain or shine. No reservations are necessary.

DESCRIPTION: The idea for Central Park was born in 1858, which a competition was held to choose a design for what would be the first public park built in America. The winners were Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, whose Greensward plan proposed an entirely man-made park that would be intended only for public use, as a refuge from the relentless rhythms of New York City's already overcrowded streets. It took more than 15 years and \$14 million (the equivalent of about \$200 million today) to build the Park, with its 843 acres and six-mile perimeter extending from Central Park West to Fifth Avenue and from 59th Street to 110th Street. Those 843 acres



include 136 acres of woodlands, 250 acres of lawns, and 7 different bodies of water totaling some 150 acres. Starting in 1980, a public-private partnership between New York City and the Central Park Conservancy restored and preserved Central Park, and attendance has only been rising in recent years. Now, more than 25 million visitors per year stroll its 58 miles of pedestrian paths, go horseback riding on 4.5 miles of bridle paths, bike or jog on its 6.5 miles of winding roads, or simply relax on the grass or on the nearly 9,000 benches provided. The famous Tavern on the Green restaurant - the location of the finish line for the New York City Marathon - was originally a sheepfold, housing the shepherd and the flock that grazed Sheeps Meadow until 1934. In nice weather, the still lush meadow now welcomes hordes of sunbathers, picnickers, and people-watchers, all of whom enjoy lounging underneath some of the only sky in Manhattan unmarked by tall buildings. Other special features of the park include the Central Park Carousel, the Marionette Theater, the Central Park Wildlife Center, the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, the Delacorte Theater, the Great Lawn, the Central Park Zoo, the Henry Luce Nature Observatory, Wollman Rink, Lasker Rink, the Loeb Boathouse, and the North Meadow. © NileGuide

contact:

tel: +1 212 535 7710
fax: +1 212 570 3972
<http://www.metmuseum.org>

location:

1000 Fifth Ave
New York NY 10028-0198

hours:

Sun, holiday Mon (Memorial Day, Labor Day, and so forth), and Tues-Thurs 9:30am-5:30pm; Fri-Sat 9:30am-9pm

5 Metropolitan Museum of Art

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

To cover the costs of special exhibitions, the Met asks guests to pay the full "recommended" admission fee, which is \$20 for adults. This fee includes one-day admission to the Main Building as well as to The Cloisters Museum & Gardens in Fort Tryon Park, the Met branch dedicated to the art and architecture of medieval Europe.

DESCRIPTION: Don't expect to fully take in all that this enormous museum has to offer in one visit. With the finest collection of American art in the world, a collection of more than 3,000 European paintings, an expansive array of art from ancient Egypt, and recently renovated halls of Greek, Roman, Cypriot, and Asian art, there is a reason the Metropolitan Museum is considered the foremost symbol of arts and culture in a city chock-full of arts and culture. Often referred to simply as "The Met", the museum is located on Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street, on the eastern edge of Central Park and at the center of the so-called "Museum Mile".

First opened in 1872, the Met has been significantly expanded over the years, and its permanent collection now contains more than two million works of art, divided into nineteen curatorial departments. In addition to its giant holdings of American, European, Egyptian, African, Asian, Oceanic, Byzantine, and Islamic art, the museum is also home to encyclopedic collections of musical instruments, costumes and accessories, and antique weapons and armor from around the world. A number of notable interiors, ranging from 1st century Rome



through modern American design, are permanently installed in the Met's galleries. The Met also organizes and hosts a continually changing series of special exhibitions each year. © NileGuide

contact:

tel: 1 212 941 7994
fax: 1 212 941 4159
<http://www.lombardisoriginalpizza.com/newyork.html>

location:

32 Spring Street
New York NY 10012-4173

hours:

Su-Th 11:30a-11p, F-Sa
11:30a-midnight

6 Lombardi's Pizza Gennaro's Caffe

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Reservations are not accepted.

DESCRIPTION: Established in 1905, Lombardi's stakes its claim as America's oldest fully-functioning pizzeria. Its influence stretches into every corner of the New York pizza establishment, as Gennaro Lombardi taught pizza-making to the founders of several other New York pizza institutions: John Sasso of John's, Patsy Lancieri of Patsy's, and Anthony Pero of Totunno's. Today, the restaurant is often overcrowded with tourists and faithful waiting to sample the classic brick-oven pizza served with a huge selection of fresh toppings. Prepare for a wait on weekends, and dining in the backyard garden (weather permitting) is more pleasant than the crowded indoor area. In the heated battles over New York's best slice, Lombardi's has its passionate defenders, many of whom cite the pizza with fresh chopped clams as one of the more memorable options.

© NileGuide



contact:

tel: 1 212 965 1785
fax: +1 212 343 1274
<http://www.balthazarny.com/>

location:

80 Spring Street
New York NY 10012

hours:

M-Th 7:30a-1a, F 7:30-2a, Sa
8a-2a, Su 8a-midnight

7 Balthazar

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

To avoid the crowds and soak up the authentic Paris flavor, try an early weekday Balthazar breakfast.

DESCRIPTION: When it is this difficult to get a table, you know something has to be special about Balthazar. A recreation of a French brasserie, it is bold, loud and exciting. The space is dominated by red leather banquettes, and retro mirrors add to the room's spaciousness. The restaurant is the creation of Keith McNally, who also owns Pastis in the Meatpacking District. Balthazar serves such excellent dishes as rillettes of rabbit with marinated mushrooms. So grab a table (if you can find one). © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: +1 212 484 1200 (Tourist Information)
fax: +1 212 245 5943 (Tourist Information)
<http://www.washingtonsquarepark.org/>

location:

5th Avenue
New York NY 10003

hours:

24 hrs

8 Washington Square

DESCRIPTION: This Greenwich Village park is popular with students and residents. It is one of the few green spots in the area. At the northern end of the park is a triumphal arch, built in 1789 to honor George Washington, the late President of the United States. The area was home to artists and writers, including Henry James, Edith Wharton and Edward Hopper; many lived in the still intact row houses across from the northern end of the park. Other parts of the park are surrounded by the campus of New York University. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: +1 212 998 2356
fax: +1 212 995 4400
<http://www.nyu.edu/>

location:

70 Washington Square South,
12th Floor
New York NY 10012

hours:

Call for details

9 New York University

DESCRIPTION: When New York University was founded in 1831, most higher education in the United States focused on such classical studies as Latin and Greek. NYU was determined to concentrate on more practical studies, and today over 30,000 students from all over the world get degrees in medicine, dentistry, business, law, education, social work and many other areas. This is much more than just an urban commuter college, and cultural events and lectures are readily available and usually open to the public. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of New York University.

contact:

tel: +1 212 768 1560 (Times Square Alliance)
fax: +1 212 768 0233 (Times Square Alliance)
<http://www.timessquarenyc.org/>

location:

1560 Broadway, Between
46th & 47th streets
New York NY 10036

A Times Square

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

A free tour of the area run by the Times Square Alliance leaves every Friday at noon from the Times Square Information Center. Perhaps even more helpfully, the center also has public restrooms and a wealth of tourist resources.

DESCRIPTION: Located at the junction of Broadway and Seventh Avenue and stretching from West 42nd to West 47th Street, its glittering lights and neon signs make Times Square one of the most iconic sights of New York City. Formerly the property of fur trading and real estate tycoon John Jacob Astor, the square got its name in the early 1900s when the New York Times moved into a new skyscraper on 42nd Street. After new subways brought thousands of commuters to 42nd Street, the city's theaters moved up from the Bowery and lower Broadway, and the area is now the center of New York's bustling theater district.

In the decades after the Great Depression, Times Square became known as a dangerous neighborhood and a symbol of the city's decline and corruption from the 1960s to the 1990s. After a long-term development plan and a comprehensive



wcities

crackdown on crime by the city government, the infamous center of pickpockets and porno theaters has been thoroughly reinvented and filled with more upscale and tourist-friendly attractions, hotels, vendors, and street performers. © NileGuide

contact:

tel: 212 239 6200
<http://www.stjames-theater.com/>

location:

246 West 44th Street
New York NY 10036

B St. James Theatre

DESCRIPTION: Named after London's famed St James Theater, this Broadway theater has been home to many classics like 'The King and I' starring Yul Brynner and 'Hello Dolly'. With a capacity to seat more than 1600 people, this venue has had a tumultuous history and has seen a change of ownership many a times. But this has not had any effect on the quality of productions it stages. Mel Brooks' The Producers has been playing at this theatre to full houses. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of St. James Theatre

contact:

tel: 1 212 918 1400
www.bluefinnyc.com

location:

1567 Broadway at 47th Street
New York NY 10036

hours:

Sunday - Monday: 7:00am - 11:00pm
Tuesday - Thursday: 7:00am - 11:30pm
Friday - Saturday: 7:00am - 12:00am

C Blue Fin

DESCRIPTION: You'll probably feel silly for not going to this gem in Times Square before... it is that good. Traditional American recipes and seafood delicacies will keep your tummies busy, while the décor soothes the eyes. The abstract fish sculpture, the large white staircase, plush seating and spacious interiors all contribute to a calm eating space. The place is popular so somehow the 400-seat restaurant never looks too empty. Bring along some friends and discover why critics rate it as one of the best eateries in the city. © wcities.com



citysearch

New York City Snapshot

Local Info

New York, New York: There's truly no other city in the world like it. The city reaches far and wide with neighborhoods and people changing at every block you cross. Don't let the Big Apple intimidate you though, it's got a little bit of everything for travelers of all kinds to enjoy. Shopaholics and fashionistas roam the pricey boutiques of Soho while downtown locals flock to the street food of Chinatown. View stately museums of the Upper East Side or challenge your knowledge of art browsing Chelsea, this sprawling metropolis offers the best of all worlds...and that's just the big city of Manhattan. Here's an overview of some of that island's noteworthy neighborhoods, as well as the basics on the outer boroughs, too—Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens and Staten Island. To dig deeper on any of these destinations, check out the relevant Neighborhood Information section.

Midtown

This is the beating heart of the Big Apple, complete with towering skyscrapers, packed streets, and many of the city's top destinations for sightseeing, shopping, and entertainment, including Times Square, the United Nations, the Empire State Building and Rockefeller Center. This is must-see New York, but make sure to spend some time outside this neighborhood if you want to breathe a bit more freely.

Central Park

Nestled between the Upper West and Upper East Sides, this 843-acre oasis is the most visited urban park in the country. Among its many charms are miles of winding pathways, several lakes and ponds, two skating rinks, a zoo, and a conservatory. Visit in the summer if you can, when the park hosts free concerts and plays.

Times Square/Theater District/Hell's Kitchen

The once seedy Times Square zone is all cleaned up and packed full of chain restaurants and other tourist-friendly attractions. Catch a Broadway show in the Theater District, or head west to Hell's Kitchen, also cleaned up from its seedier days and full of dining and nightlife options.

Chelsea

Chelsea has been the center of the city's art scene since the mid-1990s, with more than 200 galleries centered mostly in its western reaches (near 10th and 11th Avenues). In addition to the High Line, a newly opened public space along an old elevated railway, it also boasts some of the city's hottest nightclubs, is chock-full of busy restaurants and bars, and has long been seen as the heart of gay-friendly New York. □

Gramercy/Flatiron/Union Square

This central neighborhood has a little of everything, from pedigreed Gramercy Park to bustling Union Square (site of the city's largest greenmarket). It's also home to a number of the city's most popular restaurants, and the dining options abound on Park Avenue South and the area around Madison Square Park, near the iconic Flatiron Building.

Greenwich Village/West Village

With its labyrinthine (compared to the Midtown grid) streets and historic townhouses, the Village is classic New York. Its eastern region contains Washington Square Park and New York University, while the charming, formerly bohemian West Village is home to increasingly upscale shopping and restaurants. Head further west to the Meatpacking District, now a mecca of expensive dining/nightlife options.

East Village □

The East Village stands out for its young, arty, funky (though nowhere near as edgy as in years past) vibe, on display in its many shopping, dining and nightlife options. History buffs will appreciate landmarks like St. Mark's-in-the-Bowery Church, while a cleaned-up Tompkins Square Park offers great people-watching.

Lower East Side

□ Go below Houston Street on the east side and you'll find even more restaurants, boutiques and bars lining the streets of the ever-more-upscale Lower East Side. Though this area was once home to some of the city's worst slums, its gritty past has made way for a vibrant shopping, dining and nightlife scene. Learn about the neighborhood's past at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum (it's free!) or check out the historic Orchard Street Shopping District.

Soho

Though many galleries have moved to Chelsea, Soho still boasts its own art scene. Shopping is the real draw in this neighborhood, however, from high-fashion boutiques to the chain stores that line Broadway. At the eastern end of Soho, Nolita is perfect for shoppers who favor smaller, more unique stores. A plethora of kitschy Italian restaurants still draw tourists to the lively neighborhood of Little Italy, around Mulberry Street, including the throngs attracted by the annual San Gennaro Festival.

Lower Manhattan

This diverse zone encompasses Chinatown (with its designer knock-offs and dim sum), swanky Tribeca, family-friendly Battery Park City, and the bustling (at least during the week) Financial District. Must-see spots include South Street Seaport, Wall Street and the New York Stock Exchange, and the World Trade Center site.

Upper East Side □

The Metropolitan, the Whitney, and the Guggenheim are only the biggest players in this stately, museum-filled neighborhood, which also boasts some of the city's best high-end shopping (Madison Avenue) and some of its highest-priced real estate (Fifth Avenue along Central Park, Park Avenue).

Upper West Side

The beautiful Upper West Side, historically a mecca for New York City artists, writers and intellectuals, is also one of the city's most family-friendly neighborhoods, with brownstone-lined streets, brunch spots, shops galore, and easy access to Central Park. It's also home to Lincoln Center, the Museum of Natural History, architectural gems like the Ansonia and the Dakota, and (a bit further north) Columbia University.

Harlem

Long a vibrant center of African-American history, music and culture, Harlem has changed a lot in recent years, as a diverse new crowd of residents have started calling its stately old brownstones home. It's still a great destination for soul food (try stalwarts like Sylvia's) as well as live jazz and nightlife at historic spots like the Cotton Club or the Lenox Lounge.

New York City Snapshot continued

Brooklyn

From the galleries of Williamsburg to the brownstones of Brooklyn Heights, from family-friendly Park Slope to kitschy Coney Island, devotees of this borough wouldn't live anywhere else. Walk across the Brooklyn Bridge and check out the views from the Promenade, or stroll in Prospect Park, for just a taste of what Brooklyn has to offer. But don't neglect this outer borough on your next visit, there's plenty reason for Brooklyn to be worth your while.

Queens

The largest borough, Queens is also the most ethnically diverse, boasting arguably the best food in the city, from Greek in Astoria, to Indian in Jackson Heights, to Chinese and Korean in Flushing. It is also a popular destination for sports (Citi Field--new home to the New York Mets--and U.S. Open tennis) and culture (check out P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in Long Island City).

The Bronx

Though New York's northernmost borough is best known to many as the home of Yankee Stadium, the Bronx offers a good deal more than meets the eye. Explore

its beaches and museums, its world-famous zoo and botanical garden, its own Little Italy, quaint City Island, and more parkland than any other borough.

Staten Island

The breathtaking views from the free Staten Island Ferry are just the beginning of this borough's charms. With a more suburban feel than any of the other boroughs, Staten Island boasts a number of parks, as well as a zoo, a children's museum, a botanical garden, a minor league baseball stadium, and a restored colonial village.

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