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Foodie's Guide to New York

New York City, Brooklyn, 4 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: From burgers in the park to fine French dining, New York City is a food-lover's mecca--here are three days' worth of great eating experiences.

Photo: Gramercy Tavern's tavern room. By Doug Letterman.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - New York City

DAY NOTE: To get the lay of the land, you can sign up for one of the customized culinary tours at Foods of New York Tours. Or, do it yourself: start with lunch at Café Boulud, the more casual but still elegant restaurant run by celebrated chef Daniel Boulud. After spending an afternoon at one of the museums nearby, or simply walking around Central Park to get ready for the next meal, head downtown to the East Village (make your reservation way in advance!) for one of NYC's most exciting restaurant experiences at Momofuku Ko, the latest offering from James Beard Award-winning chef David Chang.



Foods of New York Tours

Delicious food tastings, history, and culture.



Café Boulud

French tradition



Central Park

Urban oasis, perfect for exploring or relaxing



Momofuku Ko

Of-the-moment dining destination

Day 2 - New York City

DAY NOTE: The next day, start in Chinatown for one of the many dim sum options; one of the biggest dim sum palaces is Mandarin Court, where you can choose from the endless arrays of foods that the servers bring to your table. You'll be full when you leave, so take a walk around Soho, Nolita, or Little Italy so you can have room for dinner at what is perennially ranked as New York's top restaurant, Danny Meyer's Gramercy Tavern. Book early to get a reservation in the main dining room, or take a chance that you'll get a table in the more casual tavern area. For a slightly less highbrow New York dining experience, head to the nearby Shake Shack, Meyer's outdoor fast food mecca in Madison Square Park.



Mandarin Court

Dim sum specialist



Chinatown

Asian experience in Manhattan, beyond dumplings and dim sum



Gramercy Tavern

Impeccable dining experience



Shake Shack

Burger heaven draws a crowd

Day 3 - Brooklyn, New York City

DAY NOTE: On your third day, taste what another borough has to offer and head over to Brooklyn for an afternoon walk in Prospect Park. The closest subways are the 2/3 to Grand Army Plaza or the F to 15th Street/Prospect Park. One of Brooklyn's local favorites (and a destination for Manhattanites) is Al di Lá Trattoria on Union Street, within walking distance of the park. They don't take reservations, and people start lining up before it opens, so try to get there early.



Prospect Park

Brooklyn's largest park



Al di Là Trattoria

Homey Italian trattoria

Day 4 - New York City

DAY NOTE: Finally, if you're still hungry, try one of the neighborhood-specific culinary tours offered by Savory Sojourns--a good option would be the West Village, home to Babbo, owned by celebrity chef Mario Batali, where you can have another great meal and celebrate having eaten your way through the Big Apple.



Savory Sojourns

Eating tours of NYC



Babbo Ristorante

Italian fare, modern flair

Day 1 - New York City



QUICK NOTE

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contact:
tel: (212) 209-3370
<http://foodsofny.com>

location:
9 Barrow St
New York NY 10014

hours:
Daily 8am-10pm

1 Foods of New York Tours

DESCRIPTION: Foods of New York Tours, Inc. offers unique food tasting and cultural walking tours through New York City's most delicious and historic neighborhoods. We provide a non-touristy experience so you feel like a native New Yorker.



citysearch

contact:
tel: 1 212 772 2600
fax: 1 212 772 7755
www.danielnyc.com/cafebouludNY.html

location:
20 East 76th St.
New York NY 10021

2 Café Boulud

DESCRIPTION: Dying to try the stellar cuisine of Daniel Boulud, New York's best French chef, but can't quite afford **Daniel**? Then head to Café Boulud, Boulud's more casual playground for new ideas and culinary cross-pollinations. Daniel's high style has been pleasingly laid back and toned down here. With the food, Boulud has gone eclectic, offering four menus: La Tradition, featuring Boulud's signature French-



citysearch

hours:

Breakfast: Monday -
Saturday: 7:00am - 10:00am,
Sunday: 8:00am - 11:00am
Lunch: Monday - Saturday:
12:00pm - 2:30pm Dinner:
Sunday - Friday: 5:45pm
-10:30pm, Saturday: 5:30pm
- 11:00pm Sunday Brunch:
12:00pm- 3:00pm

country classics; Le Potager, a vegetarian menu; La Saison, seasonal dishes; and Le Voyage, a monthly globe-hopping menu highlighting Tuscany, Thailand, or somewhere in between. The experimental nature of the wide-ranging menu makes choosing a thrill, and even the most inventive dishes tend to dazzle the palate. But in true Boulud tradition, La Tradition and La Saison are where the kitchen really excels. The poached Dover sole with baby leeks and sauce vin blanc is truly memorable. All in all, a first-rate dining experience at more palatable prices than cuisine this memorable usually costs. Don't be in a rush, though, especially at lunch. © Frommer's

contact:

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

location:

Central Park Driveway
New York NY 10022

3 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: no phone
<http://momofuku.com/ko/default.asp>

location:

171 First Avenue
New York NY 10003

hours:

Lunch: Daily noon-4p, Dinner:
Su-Th 5:30p-11p, F-Sa 5:30p-
midnight

4 Momofuku Ko

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Seats can be booked only a week in advance, and only by logging on to the Momofuku website.

DESCRIPTION: An ingenious mix of American Nouveau, Japanese, and Korean cuisine is what you'll find at Momofuku Ko, the newest East Village offering from David Chang (of Momofuku and Momofuku Ssam Bar). The 10-course tasting menu is \$85, while the ever-changing fixed price menu contains specialties such as kimchee purée, deep-fried short ribs, and cereal-milk panna cotta. © NileGuide

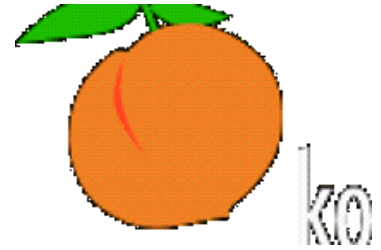
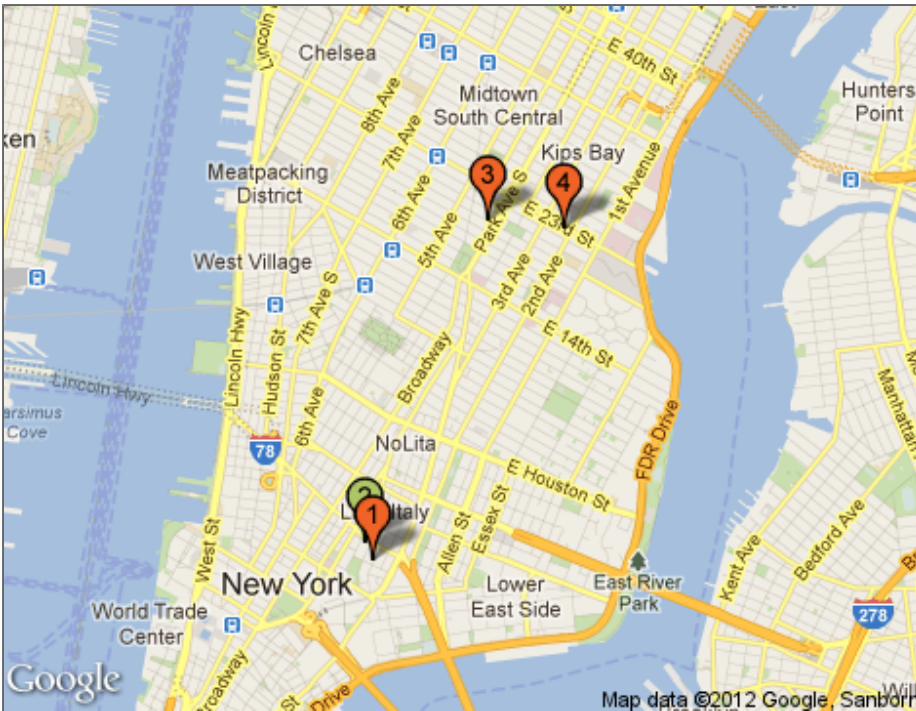


Photo courtesy of Momofuku Ko

Day 2 - New York City



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: The next day, start in Chinatown for one of the many dim sum options; one of the biggest dim sum palaces is Mandarin Court, where you can choose from the endless arrays of foods that the servers bring to your table. You'll be full when you leave, so take a walk around Soho, Nolita, or Little Italy so you can have room for dinner at what is perennially ranked as New York's top restaurant, Danny Meyer's Gramercy Tavern. Book early to get a reservation in the main dining room, or take a chance that you'll get a table in the more casual tavern area. For a slightly less highbrow New York dining experience, head to the nearby Shake Shack, Meyer's outdoor fast food mecca in Madison Square Park.

contact:

tel: 1 212 608 3838
fax: +1 212 226 6110

location:

61 Mott Street
New York NY 10013

hours:

Daily 7:30a-11p

1 Mandarin Court

DESCRIPTION: Dim Sum, dumplings and small appetizers are the specialties in this small, reasonably priced authentic Chinese restaurant. People from all over the city have been flocking here for years, leading to long waits on the weekend. Meals during the week are usually far less stressful. The emphasis is on the food rather than the decor or the service, so do not expect to be pampered. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +1 212 484 1222(Tourist Information)
fax: +1 212 245 5943(Tourist Information)
<http://www.explorechinatown.com>

location:

2 Chinatown

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

After fighting it out with the Canal Street crowds for knock-off bags, go with a group to one of the neighborhood's many restaurants for dim sum, a



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Canal Street to Bayard Street
New York NY 10002

filling selection of bite-sized treats, usually eaten for breakfast, brunch, or lunch.

DESCRIPTION: New York's Chinatown is a cultural haven full of ancient and exotic traditions, and a huge amount of restaurants. This bustling and crowded neighborhood is home to over half of the city's Chinese population. In the grocery stores and fruit stands, you will find many food items available nowhere else in the city—from exotic fruit and vegetables to live snails and dried shrimp. In recent years, excellent Thai, Vietnamese and Korean restaurants have joined the mix. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 1 212 477 0777
<http://www.gramercytavern.com>

location:

42 E. 20th St
New York NY 10003-1300

hours:

Gramercy Tavern accepts reservations for the Main Dining Room beginning at 10:00 a.m., 7 days a week, 28 days in advance. We do not take reservations for our Tavern area. Main Dining Room: Lunch: Monday - Friday: 12:00pm - 2:00pm; Dinner: Sunday - Thursday: 5:30pm - 10:00pm, Friday - Saturday: 5:30pm - 11:00pm Tavern Room: Serves continuously Sunday - Thursday 12:00 noon - 11:00pm Friday - Saturday: 12:00 noon - midnight

3 Gramercy Tavern

DESCRIPTION: This chic and popular dining spot is well known among the Manhattan elite for excellent service, superb food, plush surroundings and an extensive wine list. Gramercy Tavern has two rooms: The elegant main dining room is for those with more polished palates, serving such specials as venison and rabbit; reservations are a must. The dressed-down Tavern Room is perfect for the casual diner, and you are likely to get a table without a reservation, albeit with a wait! © wcities.com



citysearch

contact:

tel: 1 212 889 6600
<http://www.shakeshacknyc.com/>

location:

Near Madison Avenue and
East 23rd Street
New York NY 10010

hours:

Apr-Nov: Daily 11a-11p

4 Shake Shack

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

The Shake Shack now has five NYC locations (Madison Square Park, Columbus Ave near 77th St, Theater District, Upper East Side, and at Citi Field, new home of the New York Mets).

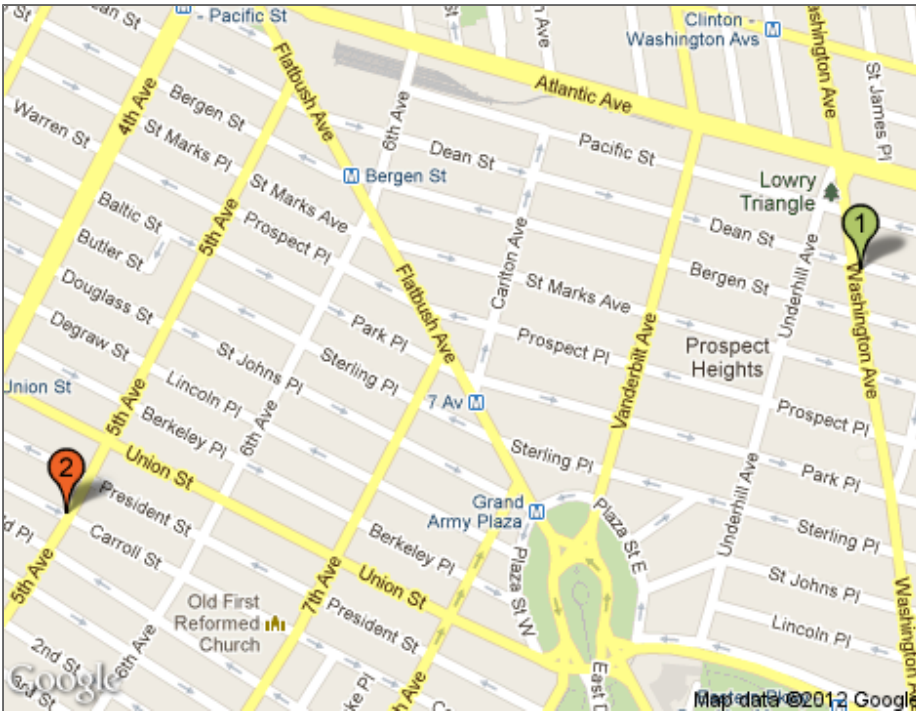
DESCRIPTION: Billed as a modern-day "roadside" burger stand, Shake Shack goes back to the basics of the hamburger (no truffles, foie gras, pork belly or Kobe beef in sight). As a



result, it's won over legions of fans since its opening in Madison Square Park in 2004 (around the corner from owner Danny Meyer's upscale star Eleven Madison Park), and has been a perennial contender for best burger in the city. In addition, the Shake Shack hot dog and frozen custard--a creamy twist on soft-serve ice cream--help build the lines in warmer weather to epic proportions in the park location.

© NileGuide

Day 3 - Brooklyn, New York City



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: On your third day, taste what another borough has to offer and head over to Brooklyn for an afternoon walk in Prospect Park. The closest subways are the 2/3 to Grand Army Plaza or the F to 15th Street/Prospect Park. One of Brooklyn's local favorites (and a destination for Manhattanites) is Al di Lá Trattoria on Union Street, within walking distance of the park. They don't take reservations, and people start lining up before it opens, so try to get there early.

contact:

tel: +1 718 965 8951
<http://www.prospectpark.org/>

location:

Eastern Parkway to Parkside Avenue
Brooklyn NY 11225

hours:

Daily 6a-dusk

1 Prospect Park

DESCRIPTION: The same architects who designed Central Park in Manhattan, Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, were responsible for creating this beautiful Brooklyn park. Unlike its more famous cousin in Manhattan, Prospect Park is not surrounded by skyscrapers. Many Olmsted fans dub this 526-acre park his crowning achievement. It features horseback riding, ice skating, tennis, paddle boats and a carousel, as well as the Prospect Park Wildlife Center. There is a band shell for concerts, and Prospect Lake is full of ducks, geese and swans.
© wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: 1 718 783 4565 / 1 718

636 8888

<http://www.aldilatrattoria.com/>

location:

248 5th Avenue (Carroll
Street)

Brooklyn NY 11215-1201

hours:

M & W-Th 6p-10:30p, F

6p-11p, Sa 5:30p-11p, Su

5p-10p

2 Al di Là Trattoria

DESCRIPTION: A vibrant ambience, colorful interior, and spacious feel are what this trattoria is all about. Al di Là serves up authentic North Italian cooking in an atmosphere that molds itself to your needs—if you're with a date, it can pass off as very romantic, and if you're with the family, as cheery and warm. The menu boasts of such dishes as creamy salt cod, braised rabbit, and tagliatelli with meat sauce, and the Italian wine list provides select accompaniments. Prices are reasonable, but no reservations are accepted, so make sure you come early—it can take up to two hours to get a table on weekends! © wcities.com



Day 4 - New York City



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Finally, if you're still hungry, try one of the neighborhood-specific culinary tours offered by Savory Sojourns--a good option would be the West Village, home to Babbo, owned by celebrity chef Mario Batali, where you can have another great meal and celebrate having eaten your way through the Big Apple.

contact:

tel: +1 212 691 7314 / +1 888 972 8679

fax: +1 212 367 0984

<http://www.savorysojourns.com/>

location:

155 West 13th Street
New York NY 10011

hours:

Hours vary

1 Savory Sojourns

DESCRIPTION: Offering custom guided tours of New York's top restaurants and food neighborhoods, guided by founder Addie Tomei. Covering every inch of Manhattan, from Chinatown to Union Square, from ethnic neighborhoods to 4-star restaurants, you will get a taste of New York from the insider's perspective. The tours feature tastings, cooking demonstrations and behind-the-scenes tours. Rates are expensive, but it's worth every penny. Corporate group rates available. © wcities.com



Savory Sojourns

contact:

tel: 1 212 777 0303 / 1 212 353 8064

fax: 1 212 777 3365
babbonyc.com

location:

110 Waverly Place
New York NY 10011

2 Babbo Ristorante

DESCRIPTION: Celebrity chef Mario Batali and restaurateur Joe Bastianich have come together to create the ultimate Italian dining experience in New York City. A giant stairway dominates the main dining room, set off by pale wood paneling and an abundance of fresh flowers. The Italian fare is often reinvented classics; for example, before Babbo opened you would not



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hours:

M-Sa 5:30p-11:30p, Su
5p-11p

normally find beef cheek raviolis on a menu. Bastianich and Batali are also co-owners in the highly successful Italian restaurants Esca and Lupa. © wcities.com

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.

© NileGuide

Brooklyn Snapshot

Local Info

Just across the East River lies one of the largest and most distinctive cultural boroughs of New York City: Brooklyn. Only a subway ride away from Manhattan, this historical piece of the city transcends traditions, cultures, and cuisine unlike any other part of New York. Downtown Brooklyn is the borough's business center, up north is where creatives and artists have revealed working studios, while in the south you'll find some of the best and cheapest food including everyone's favorite- pizza, and in the center stretches Prospect Park which dissects several neighborhoods surrounded by literary and community institutions. There's the Russian-speaking community at Brighton Beach, the Irish, Italians and Norwegians at Bay Ridge, the Polish at Greenpoint and the Hispanics and Chinese at Sunset Park. Aside from this amazing diversity, Brooklyn is an exciting spot to visit because of its proud residents and the feeling of true community.

Sights

From the landmarks that have made Brooklyn famous to the parks and museums that dot this distinct city, you'll never run out of things to see. Walk or cycle to Manhattan via the Brooklyn Bridge, view the late 19th and early 20th century rowhouses at the Park Slope Historic District and ride the world's oldest wooden rollercoaster ride, the Coney Island Cyclone. And don't forget to make time in your itinerary to view the many museums in Brooklyn. Go to the Brooklyn Museum at Prospect Park which, by the way, is home to over 200 species of birds in their natural habitat, the New York Transit Museum in the Downtown area and the Brooklyn Children's Museum at Bedford-Stuyvesant. The Brooklyn Botanic Garden with its over 10,000 plant species and the 800-acre Marine Park are also well worth the trip. If you're in Brooklyn during the summer, Coney Island is still a favorite beach and amusement park hangout. And don't forget to grab a world-famous Coney Island Hotdog at Nathan's. Check out the New York Aquarium while you're there, too.

Dining

Brooklyn's diversity is also reflected in its food. 8th Avenue hosts high-end gourmet restaurants alongside cheap noodle shops. If you're craving Italian, Mexican or Japanese, head to Park Slope, which has a ton of restaurants reviewed in the Zagat's guide. Pizza lovers can take A Slice of Brooklyn pizza tour. Sample a taste of local beers at the Brooklyn Brewery. The Kensington, Fort Greene and Williamsburg Districts are also home to trendy restaurants. There's also a thriving restaurant scene in Smith Street at the Carroll Gardens area.

Shopping

Downtown Brooklyn is the main shopping district. Like any American city, you can find a great number of shops and department stores that sell anything from clothing to electronics. Go to Cobble Hill district if you want to shop for books and to Park Slope for health food options. For local jewelry and arts and crafts, check out the Brooklyn Flea in Fort Greene on Saturdays from 10 am to 5 pm.

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