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# Hidden Sports Gems

## Queens, New York City, Brooklyn, Staten Island, 4 Days

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# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** In addition to the usual suspects (Yankee Stadium, ESPN Sports Zone), this city holds all sorts of hidden gems for the sports fan.







Photo: Built by U.S. Steel for the 1964-65 World's Fair as a symbol of world peace, the iconic Unisphere now sits in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park in Queens, next door to the National Tennis Center. (photo by adamisserlis)

# Itinerary Overview

things to do  
restaurants  
hotels  
nightlife

## Day 1 - New York City, Staten Island






**DAY NOTE:** Avoid the Midtown crowds by choosing a hotel in Lower Manhattan—a good home base is the Best Western Seaport Inn, located in the historic South Street Seaport. For a good start to your sports tour of New York, pay a visit to the brand-new Sports Museum of America, a comprehensive showcase for sports memorabilia and state-of-the-art interactive exhibitions. In the summer months, hop on the free Staten Island Ferry and head across to the Richmond County Bank Ballpark, home of the minor-league baseball team the Staten Island Yankees. It's a relaxed, family-friendly ballpark experience, but you can still take in some first-rate games and maybe catch a glimpse of a rising star (current Yankee ace Chien-Ming Wang is a former Baby Bomber). Back in the city, have dinner at the Bridge Café.

	<b>Best Western Seaport Inn</b> Beneath Brooklyn Bridge
	<b>South Street Seaport</b> Historic port houses tourist-friendly shops & restaurants
	<b>Sports Museum of America</b> All Sports Experience
	<b>Staten Island Ferry</b> Free trip across New York Harbor
	<b>Richmond County Bank Ballpark - Staten Island Yankees</b> Baby Bombers in action
	<b>Bridge Cafe</b> Eclectic American food in a 18th century institution

## Day 2 - New York City, Brooklyn






**DAY NOTE:** On your second day, head across the Brooklyn Bridge to Dumbo and the historic Gleason's Gym, where great boxers throughout the ages have trained and where pros and amateurs alike can compete. Afterwards, take a walk in Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park while enjoying stunning views of both the Brooklyn and the Manhattan Bridge. Finally, take the F train to Red Hook (during the summer) and catch some local baseball or soccer games at the Red Hook Ball Fields. The fields are famous for their food vendors, which offer some of the city's very best

and most authentic street food from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean.

	<b>Brooklyn Bridge</b> Historic bridge offers stunning skyline views
	<b>Gleason's Gym</b> Legendary boxing gym
	<b>Empire - Fulton Ferry State Park</b> Nine acres of grass
	<b>Red Hook Ball Fields</b> Brooklyn neighborhood sports and eats
	<b>Best Western Seaport Inn</b> Beneath Brooklyn Bridge

## Day 3 - New York City

**DAY NOTE:** On day three, head uptown to Central Park and dine at Mickey Mantle's, a sports bar and restaurant named for the Yankee great. Afterwards, hop on the subway going further uptown to the historic neighborhood of Harlem. The B/D train to 155th Street takes you to the Polo Grounds Community Center, past site of the legendary Polo Grounds stadium and current home to the Rucker Park basketball courts, where top NBA-bound talents frequently show off their stuff. For dinner, head back southwest for soul food at the great Sylvia's or barbecue at Dinosaur BBQ.

	<b>Central Park</b> Urban oasis, perfect for exploring or relaxing
	<b>Mickey Mantle's</b> Baseball legend's eatery
	<b>Harlem</b> Historical neighborhood
	<b>Polo Grounds Community Center</b> Historic stadium site
	<b>Sylvia's</b> Soul food

# Itinerary Overview

things to do  
restaurants  
hotels  
nightlife



## Dinosaur Bar-B-Que

It's not vegetarian



## Best Western Seaport Inn

Beneath Brooklyn Bridge

## Day 4 - Queens

**DAY NOTE:** Even if you're not Maria Sharapova, you can still head to Queens and grunt your heart out on the courts of the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, home of the U.S. Open Championships. For ten months out of the year, the center's many courts are open to the public. After a good workout (or after a day session at the tournament, held in early September), take advantage of some of the great dining and nightlife options that Queens has to offer, including outstanding (and cheap) Thai food at Sripraphai or beers under the stars at Bohemian Hall and Beer Garden.



## USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center

U.S. Open site



## Sripraphai

Affordable and delicious Asian fare

# Day 1 - New York City, Staten Island



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### contact:

tel: +1 212 766 6600  
fax: +1 212 766 6615  
<http://www.bestwesternnewyork.com/>

### location:

33 Peck Slip  
New York NY 10038

## 1 Best Western Seaport Inn

**DESCRIPTION:** The Seaport Inn in lower Manhattan has many comfortable rooms with terraces and commanding views of the Brooklyn Bridge above. Located on the Hudson River near the South Street Seaport, this modern Best Western hotel offers plenty of hospitality and charm. Trips to the Statue of Liberty, Chinatown, Little Italy and the Financial District can easily be arranged by the staff. All rooms feature a refrigerator, safe, television with VCR and a hairdryer. To plan your stay please see the website. © wcities.com



Hotels.com

**contact:**

tel: +1 212 732 7678  
fax: +1 212 964 8056  
<http://www.southstreetseaport.com>

**location:**

12 Fulton St  
New York NY 10038

**hours:**

Museum Apr-Dec Tues-Sun  
10am-6pm, Thurs 10am-8pm;  
Jan-Mar Fri-Mon 10am-5pm  
(On Mon, Schermerhorn Row  
galleries only); ships open  
noon-4pm

## 2 South Street Seaport

**OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

The Titanic Memorial, a small white lighthouse located at the intersection of Fulton and Water streets at the gateway to the seaport, commemorates the sinking of the RMS Titanic in 1912.

**DESCRIPTION:** This historic trading port, which dates back to the 1600s, is located on the edge of the Financial District, where Fulton Street meets the East River. It was restored and revitalized for tourist use in the late 1960s, and now boasts more than 120 shops, restaurants, and bars, as well as the South Street Seaport Museum, the Pier 17 Pavilion, and the New York City Police Museum. Visitors to the Seaport will also find some of the oldest architecture in downtown Manhattan, including renovated original mercantile buildings from the early 19th century, renovated sailing ships, and the former Fulton Fish Market.

With its cobblestone streets and broad piers, South Street Seaport offers a welcome escape from the congested, skyscraper-lined streets of downtown. There are usually free outdoor performances going on - check out a number of prominent and up-and-coming acts at the outdoor stage set up in the summertime - and the cool breezes, fun people-watching, and beautiful views of the Brooklyn Bridge can all be enjoyed for free. © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of visitingdc.com

**contact:**

tel: (212) 747-0900  
fax: +1 212 837 7949  
<http://www.sportsmuseum.com/>

**location:**

26 Broadway  
New York NY 10004

## 3 Sports Museum of America

**DESCRIPTION:** Take a trip through sports past and present in this brand new downtown museum, which houses a number of interactive and multimedia exhibits related to all kinds of different sports. The museum benefits from partnerships with some 50 sports halls of fame around the country and features the latest in mechanical and computer technology as well as a wealth of artifacts and memorabilia from icons of sports history.



**contact:**

tel: +1 718 390 5253  
<http://www.siferry.com/>

**location:**

1 Bay Street  
New York NY 10301

**hours:**

24 Hrs

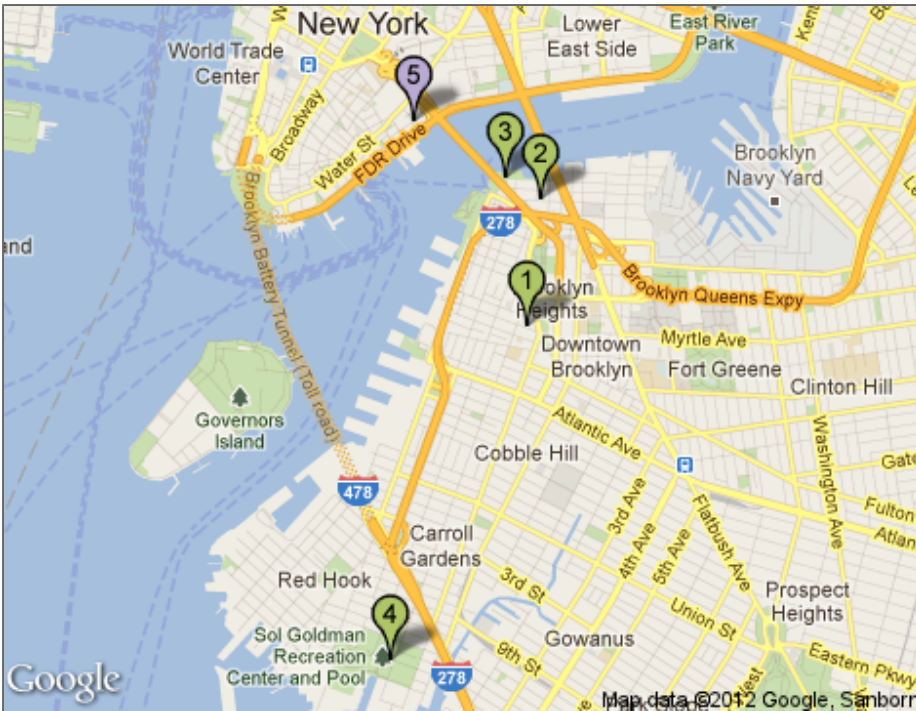
## 4 Staten Island Ferry

**DESCRIPTION:** This is undoubtedly New York City's best free ride. The 25-minute one-way trip across New York Harbor should give you ample opportunity to see such nearby sites as the Statue of Liberty, Brooklyn Bridge and lower Manhattan's skyscrapers. The fare for the ferry, which runs every 20 to 30 minutes, actually went down from 50 cents a few years ago. During rush hour, it is filled with Staten Island residents going to or from work in Manhattan. Cars and motorcycles are no longer allowed on the ferry. © wcities.com





# Day 2 - New York City, Brooklyn



## QUICK NOTE

**DAY NOTE:** On your second day, head across the Brooklyn Bridge to Dumbo and the historic Gleason's Gym, where great boxers throughout the ages have trained and where pros and amateurs alike can compete. Afterwards, take a walk in Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park while enjoying stunning views of both the Brooklyn and the Manhattan Bridge. Finally, take the F train to Red Hook (during the summer) and catch some local baseball or soccer games at the Red Hook Ball Fields. The fields are famous for their food vendors, which offer some of the city's very best and most authentic street food from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean.

### contact:

tel: 212 484 1200 (Tourist information)

fax: 212 245 5943 (Tourist information)

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/bridges.html#brooklyn>

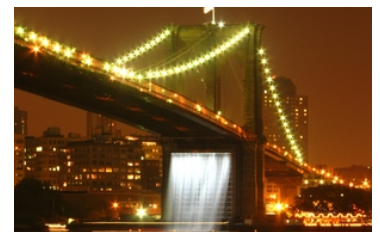
### location:

Off South Street Viaduct  
New York NY 11201

## 1 Brooklyn Bridge

**DESCRIPTION:** Opened in 1883, the Brooklyn Bridge is one of the oldest suspension bridges in the United States. It stretches 5,989 feet (1825 meters) across the East River and connects the boroughs of Manhattan and Brooklyn. At the time of its construction, it was the largest suspension bridge in the world and the first steel-wire suspension bridge. The bridge was designed by the New Jersey architect John Augustus Roebling, who died before construction began after he contracted tetanus from a wound sustained in a ferry accident during surveys for the bridge project. Built from limestone, granite, and cement, the Brooklyn Bridge is an example of Gothic-style architecture, with its characteristic pointed arches topping twin passageways through huge stone towers. Because Roebling designed a bridge and truss system six times stronger than he thought it needed to be, the Brooklyn Bridge is still standing, while many other bridges built around the same time have had to be replaced.

In the past, the inside lanes of traffic on the bridge carried the elevated trains of the Brooklyn-Manhattan Transport



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(BMT) Corporation from stations in Brooklyn to a terminal at Manhattan's Park Row. Streetcars shared the other lanes with other traffic until the elevated trains stopped using the bridge in 1944 and the streetcars moved to the center lanes. Six years later, the streetcars also stopped running, and the bridge was rebuilt to its present configuration, with six lanes of automobile traffic. A separate walkway runs along the centerline for pedestrians and bicyclists, and boasts some of the best views of the Manhattan and Brooklyn skylines. © NileGuide

**contact:**  
tel: (718) 797-2872  
<http://www.gleasonsgym.net/>

**location:**  
77 Front Street  
Brooklyn NY 11201

## 2 Gleason's Gym

**DESCRIPTION:** Photos line the wall of this boxing institution, mostly depicting the great boxers who have trained here, including Muhammad Ali, Jake LaMotta, and Roberto Duran. Amateurs are welcome to train or compete here, for reasonable rates. Once a month on Saturday, the gym offers amateurs the chance to compete in front of a paying crowd in its "White Collar Fights" events.



Photo courtesy of Gleason's Gym

**contact:**  
tel: +1 718 858 4708  
<http://nysparks.state.ny.us/parks/info.asp>

**location:**  
26 New Dock Street  
New York NY 11201

**hours:**  
Daily

## 3 Empire - Fulton Ferry State Park

**DESCRIPTION:** If you are looking out for a picnic spot where you can throw a frisbee around with your friends, then head out to this sprawling green spot. Since it is nestled in the old industrial area, one can't help but notice the two huge warehouses nearby. The Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park offers a great view of the bridge and lower Manhattan on a clear day. © wcities.com



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**contact:**  
<http://www.nycgovparks.org>

**location:**  
Clinton Street and Bay Street  
Brooklyn NY 11231

## 4 Red Hook Ball Fields

**DESCRIPTION:** Every weekend in summer, head out to Red Hook to watch local league soccer and baseball games in a fun, relaxed neighborhood atmosphere that draws crowds. If you're an athlete, a sports fan, or just hungry, you'll enjoy summer at the Red Hook Ball Fields. The location is also justifiably famous as a destination for foodies, on account of the vendors who gather around the field's perimeter and purvey authentic Mexican, Caribbean, and Central and South American street food that is praised as some of the best in the city.



Photo courtesy of Red Hook Ball Fields

**contact:**

tel: +1 212 766 6600

fax: +1 212 766 6615

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

**location:**

33 Peck Slip

New York NY 10038



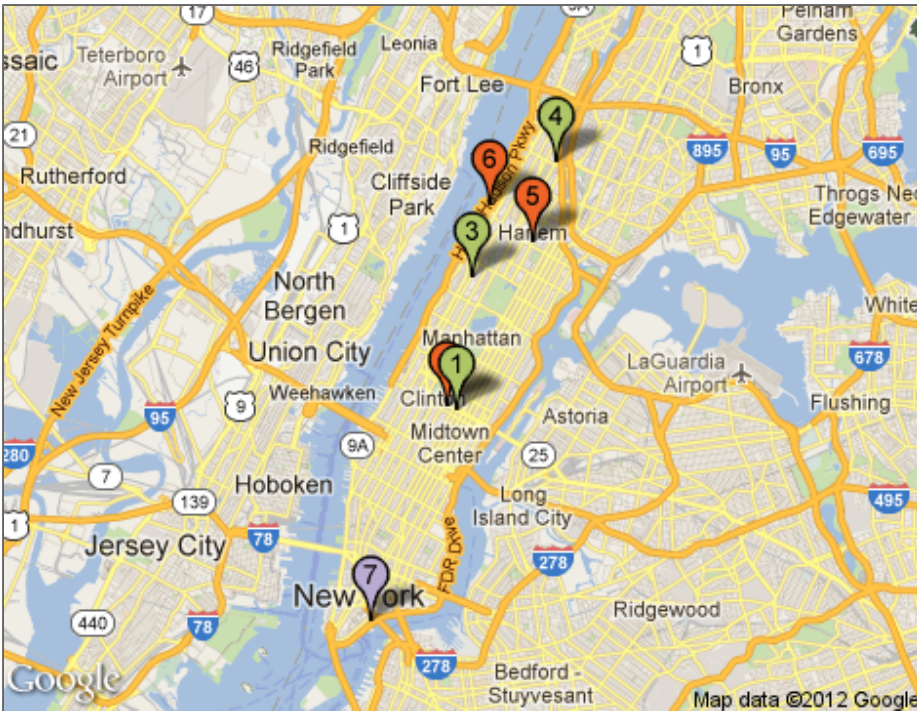
## Best Western Seaport Inn

**DESCRIPTION:** The Seaport Inn in lower Manhattan has many comfortable rooms with terraces and commanding views of the Brooklyn Bridge above. Located on the Hudson River near the South Street Seaport, this modern Best Western hotel offers plenty of hospitality and charm. Trips to the Statue of Liberty, Chinatown, Little Italy and the Financial District can easily be arranged by the staff. All rooms feature a refrigerator, safe, television with VCR and a hairdryer. To plan your stay please see the website. © wcities.com



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# Day 3 - New York City



## QUICK NOTE

**DAY NOTE:** On day three, head uptown to Central Park and dine at Mickey Mantle's, a sports bar and restaurant named for the Yankee great. Afterwards, hop on the subway going further uptown to the historic neighborhood of Harlem. The B/D train to 155th Street takes you to the Polo Grounds Community Center, past site of the legendary Polo Grounds stadium and current home to the Rucker Park basketball courts, where top NBA-bound talents frequently show off their stuff. For dinner, head back southwest for soul food at the great Sylvia's or barbecue at Dinosaur BBQ.

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

**location:**  
Central Park Driveway  
New York NY 10022

## 1 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 Wildfire 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: 1 212 688 7777  
<http://www.mickeymantles.com/>

**location:**  
42 Central Park South  
New York NY 10019

**hours:**  
Noon-midnight M-Sa, 11:30a-midnight Su

## 2 Mickey Mantle's

**DESCRIPTION:** As befits a place founded by the late baseball legend Mickey Mantle, sports (and especially baseball) take center stage here. Baseball memorabilia and large television sets dominate the room. Solid if unremarkable American fare is served including burgers, fries, chicken potpie and baby back ribs. Portions are large, but prices are not that cheap. Light eaters can dine on a variety of salads, and there is a menu for 'little leaguers' (children) as well. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Mickey Mantle's

**contact:**  
tel: +1 212 427 7200 (Tourist Information)  
<http://www.littleitalynyc.com/>

**location:**  
96th-155th Street  
New York NY 10027

**hours:**  
24 hrs

## 3 Harlem

**DESCRIPTION:** First settled in 1637, this neighborhood has a long and rich history. After the Dutch immigrants of the 17th century and the Jewish immigrants of the 19th century, a wave of African Americans from the south arrived in the 1920s. During the prohibition era, Harlem developed a well-deserved reputation for good music, good food and speakeasy clubs that attracted a largely Midtown white crowd. Meanwhile, Harlem's black writers and artists spearheaded the cultural Harlem Renaissance. After some hard times in recent decades, the neighborhood is undergoing a true economic revival. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Harlem

**contact:**  
tel: (212) 491-6127

**location:**  
2965 Eighth Avenue

## 4 Polo Grounds Community Center

**DESCRIPTION:** Though the Polo Grounds stadium in Harlem--originally opened in 1876 for the sport of polo, as the name suggests--as demolished in 1964, it has more of an enduring legacy than other New York sports venues-gone-by, such as the legendary Ebbetts Field in Brooklyn.

New York NY 10039

Home to the New York Giants baseball team (now the San Francisco Giants) for 70 years, the Polo Grounds was later used by the Mets before the completion of Shea Stadium in the early 1960s. Now, a public housing project on the site includes the Rucker Park Court, where college and NBA basketball stars have been known to grab pick-up games.

**contact:**

tel: 1 212 996 0660  
fax: 1 212 427 6389  
<http://www.sylviassoulfood.com>

**location:**

328 Lenox Avenue  
New York NY 10027

**hours:**

8:30a-10:30p M-Th,  
7:30a-10:30p F-Sa, 11:30a-8p  
Su

**5 Sylvia's**

**DESCRIPTION:** For down-home food in uptown Harlem, Sylvia's is the place to go. Dishes are homey and old-fashioned, with more than a little soul. Entrees are hardy, low-priced and include such delectable sides as collared greens and mashed potatoes. The best deal in the house is the barbecue ribs special, but the southern fried chicken is also outstanding. The atmosphere is friendly, and owner Sylvia is an institution in Harlem with her own labeled food sold in area stores. Tourists are frequent visitors to the restaurant. © [wcities.com](http://wcities.com)



Photo courtesy of Sylvia's

**contact:**

tel: 1 212 694 1777  
[www.dinosaurbarbque.com](http://www.dinosaurbarbque.com)

**location:**

700 west 125th st  
New York NY 10027

**hours:**

Lunch: Tuesday - Sunday  
11:30am-4:30pm; Dinner:  
Tuesday - Thursday  
4:30pm-11:00pm, Friday &  
Saturday 4:30pm-12:00am,  
Sunday 12:00pm-10:00pm

**6 Dinosaur Bar-B-Que**

**DESCRIPTION:** It's one thing for a genuine Southern barbecue joint to infiltrate Manhattan, but it's quite another when the barbecue interloper is from up north. Now that's chutzpah! The popular Syracuse-based barbecue chain that built its reputation with bikers entered the New York City market with a roadhouse-like restaurant on the outskirts of West Harlem. What can Syracuse know about barbecue, you ask? Well, they know pulled pork, which is slow-cooked till it's tender. And they know Texas brisket for the same reasons. The ribs I sampled didn't fare as well, but two out of three ain't bad -- especially for a Yankee. Sides are standard: coleslaw, macaroni salad, collard greens, and standout barbecue beans. The restaurant is loud, but if you're lucky, you might be able to catch some of the good blues playing over the din. There's a lively bar and service is as down-home as an upstate restaurant can be. Though its location is seemingly remote -- close to the West Side Highway -- it's only a 3-block walk from the no. 1 train. © Frommer's



Photo courtesy of Dinosaur Bar-B-Que

**contact:**

tel: +1 212 766 6600  
fax: +1 212 766 6615  
<http://www.bestwesternnewyork.com/>

**location:**

33 Peck Slip  
New York NY 10038

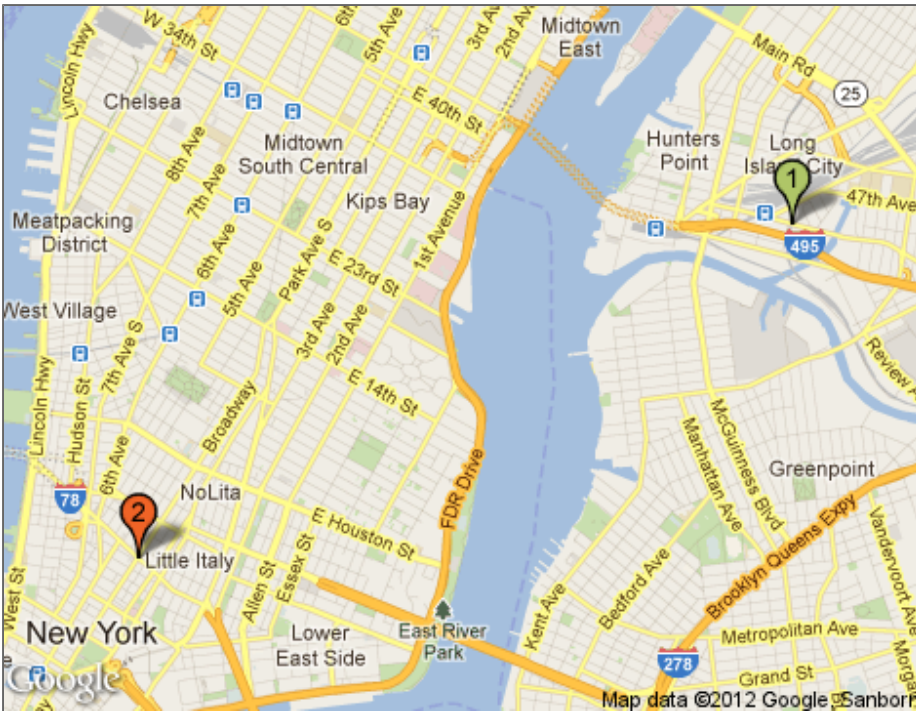
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Hotels.com

# Day 4 - Queens



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### contact:

tel: 718 760-6200

[http://www.usta.com/about\\_us/ntc/](http://www.usta.com/about_us/ntc/)

### location:

49th Avenue  
Queens NY 11368

## 1 USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center

**DESCRIPTION:** Recently renamed for pioneering female tennis star Billie Jean King, the National Tennis Center is home to the U.S. Open National Championships, the last leg of tennis's mighty Grand Slam. Though the Arthur Ashe and Louis Armstrong stadium courts and the Grandstand court are not open for public use, the tennis center offers 33 outdoor courts and nine indoor courts for year-round use by the public 10 months out of the year, excluding the weeks surrounding the U.S. Open in early September. Call up to two days in advance for court reservations.



Photo courtesy of USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center

**contact:**

tel: 1 718 899 9599  
<http://www.sripraphairestaurant.com/>

**location:**

64-13 39th Avenue  
Woodside NY 11377

**hours:**

Th-Tu 11:30a-10p

**2 Sripraphai**

**DESCRIPTION:** Don't be fooled by the simple appearance of Sripraphai. The food here is as terrific as the prices. Crispy Dried Catfish, Chili-Pepper Salad, Fiery Beef Panang, Minced Pork - the list is endless. Get here early because its usually packed and they don't take reservations. Tip: Enjoy your wonderful Thai meal alfresco because it can really get cramped inside. If you are stuffed, pack some coconut-rice confections or milk pudding for the road. © wcities.com



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# 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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# 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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