



nileGUIDE

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New York for Kids

New York City, Brooklyn, 5 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: New York's ever-changing mix of restaurants, bars, theater and other nightlife may make it the ideal playground for adults--but it's also a great destination for you to explore with kids of all ages.

Photo: Entrance to F.A.O. Schwarz. By Daniel Morris.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - New York City

DAY NOTE: Begin your kid-friendly Big Apple extravaganza in Central Park, where kids can ride the old-fashioned carousel, visit the small but charming zoo, and (depending on the season) go ice skating. Afterwards, take them for lunch (and some of the famous frozen hot chocolate) at Serendipity 3. Continue to spoil them with a trip to the city's most famous toy store, FAO Schwarz.



Central Park

Urban oasis, perfect for exploring or relaxing



Central Park Carousel

Antique merriment in the park



Central Park Zoo/Tisch Children's Zoo

Penguin suits



Wollman Rink

Skating in Central Park makes for a fun family outing



Serendipity 3

Home of the frozen hot chocolate



FAO Schwarz

World's biggest toy store

DAY NOTE: Another day, another kid-friendly borough: head to Brooklyn's Coney Island for a walk on the boardwalk and a hot dog at Nathan's Famous. Older kids might enjoy the thrills of a ride on the rickety Cyclone roller coaster at Astroland Amusement Park, while young sports fans will love seeing a minor-league baseball game in the fun atmosphere of Keyspan Park, home of the Brooklyn Cyclones.



Coney Island

Brooklyn beach resort



Nathan's Famous

Best dogs on the planet



Astroland Amusement Park

Cyclone, Wonder Wheel and other historic Coney Island rides



Keyspan Park

Minor league ball

Day 4 - New York City

DAY NOTE: Just because you haven't shelled out for tickets to The Lion King, you can still give your kids a Broadway experience. Line up at the TKTS booth in Times Square for tickets to one of the many matinee shows; matinee tickets (same-day only) are on sale Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm. Get there early! Afterwards, it's a short walk to John's, one of the city's most popular pizzerias.



John's Pizzeria

Pizza in Time Square

Day 5 - New York City

DAY NOTE: On your last day, take the uptown 2 or 5 train to the E Tremont Ave-W Farm Square stop and head to the Bronx Zoo. Make sure to visit the Children's Zoo and its collection of interactive exhibits. For one last great family meal, check out Gramercy's Blue Smoke, for upscale barbecue and other comfort food (macaroni and cheese and homemade potato chips with blue cheese dip, to name just two options).



Bronx Zoo

Day 2 - New York City

DAY NOTE: For one of New York's most kid-friendly attractions, head out on the 7 train from Times Square or Grand Central to 111th Street in Queens to visit the New York Hall of Science. After a long day of interactive exhibits, head back to Manhattan and down to Madison Square Park for a burger and frozen custard at another New York institution, Shake Shack.



New York Hall of Science

Experimenting and exploring for kids



Shake Shack

Burger heaven draws a crowd

Day 3 - New York City, Brooklyn

Itinerary Overview

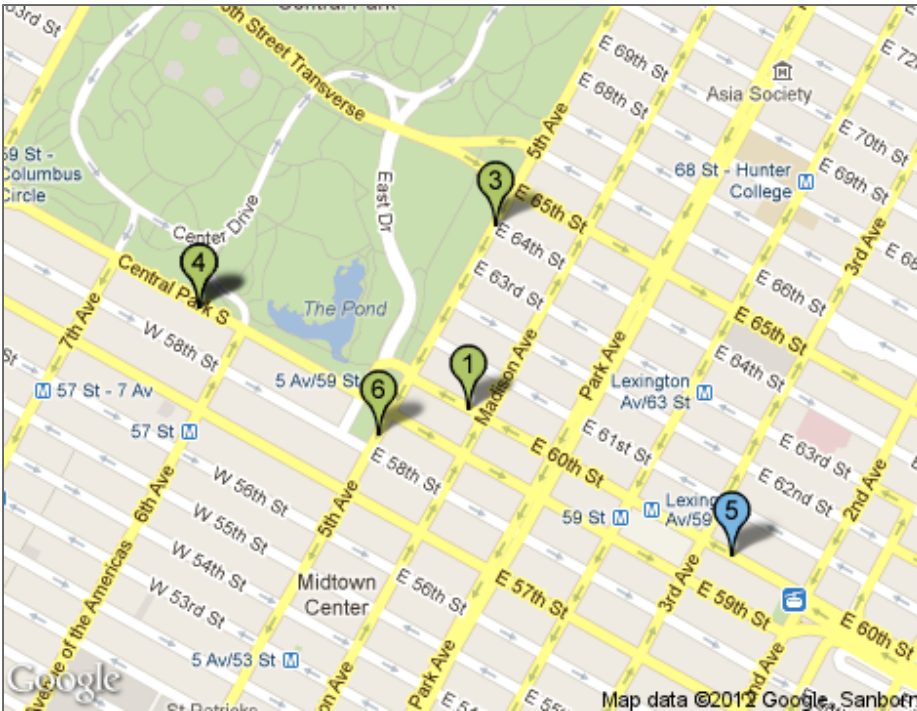
things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Urban zoo with sprawling grounds, home to 6,000-plus animals



Blue Smoke
The smoke signal

Day 1 - New York City



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Begin your kid-friendly Big Apple extravaganza in Central Park, where kids can ride the old-fashioned carousel, visit the small but charming zoo, and (depending on the season) go ice skating. Afterwards, take them for lunch (and some of the famous frozen hot chocolate) at Serendipity 3. Continue to spoil them with a trip to the city's most famous toy store, FAO Schwarz.

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, volunteered 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: +1 212 879 0244
fax: +1 212 947 0874.
<http://www.centralpark.org/>

location:

64th Street
New York NY 10019

hours:

Apr-Nov: 10a-6p M-Su, Nov-
Apr: 10a-4:30p M-Su

2 Central Park Carousel

DESCRIPTION: One of the many treasures to be found within Central Park, this beautiful restored carousel is made up of huge, hand-carved and hand-painted jumping horses. It is simple, old-fashioned and children of all ages adore it. A carousel was originally placed in the park in 1871. The current carousel has been on this site since 1951 (although it is much older than that). You can take your children to one of the many playgrounds located throughout the park. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: +1 212 861 6030
<http://www.wcs.org>

location:

830 Fifth Ave
New York NY 10153

hours:

Apr-Oct Mon-Fri 10am-5pm,
Sat-Sun 10am-5:30pm; Nov-
Mar daily 10am-4:30pm.
Last entrance 30 min. before
closing

3 Central Park Zoo/Tisch Children's Zoo

DESCRIPTION: This Central Park zoo has a smart, eco-friendly environment. Animal cages have been dispensed with in favor of open-air habitats, water and pseudo-forests. The Center is divided into three major territories: the Polar Circle, the Temperate Territory and the Tropic Zone, all of which encircle the central Sea Lion Pool. In the Polar Circle, glass walls allow you to see penguins and polar bears swimming just inches from your face. Check the website for admission prices and further information. © wcities.com



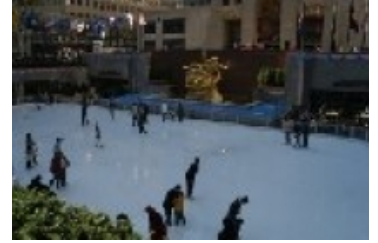
wcities

contact:
tel: +1 212 439 6900
fax: +1 212 396 0008
<http://www.wollmanskatingrink.com/>

location:
62nd Street
New York NY 10019

4 Wollman Rink

DESCRIPTION: Located in Central Park, this outdoor rink is one of the city's premier ice skating spots. The atmosphere is fun and relaxed, and amateurs are certainly welcome. There is a snack bar and lockers available. Try to visit on the weekdays, as the weekends bring large crowds and lines. Skate rentals and lockers are available. During the off-season, the space becomes a roller rink (call for hours and details). © wcities.com



contact:
tel: 212 838 3531
<http://www.serendipity3.com/>

location:
225 East 60th Street
New York NY 10022

hours:
11:30a-midnight Su-Th,
11:30a-1a F, 11:30a-2a Sa

5 Serendipity 3

DESCRIPTION: Around since the 1950s, this dessert shop is a classic to older Upper East Side residents, who in turn have made their children fans of this incredibly popular spot. Lines out the door do not deter families from waiting for a table or ordering takeout dessert. Small, white circular tables are scattered throughout the room, past which fast moving waiters weave back and forth. The menu features American food such as hamburgers, but dessert is what you really want to come here for. Be sure to try the famous frozen hot chocolate. © wcities.com



citysearch

contact:
tel: +1 212 644 9400
fax: +1 212 308 6094
<http://www.faoschwarz.com/>

location:
767 Fifth Ave
New York NY 10153

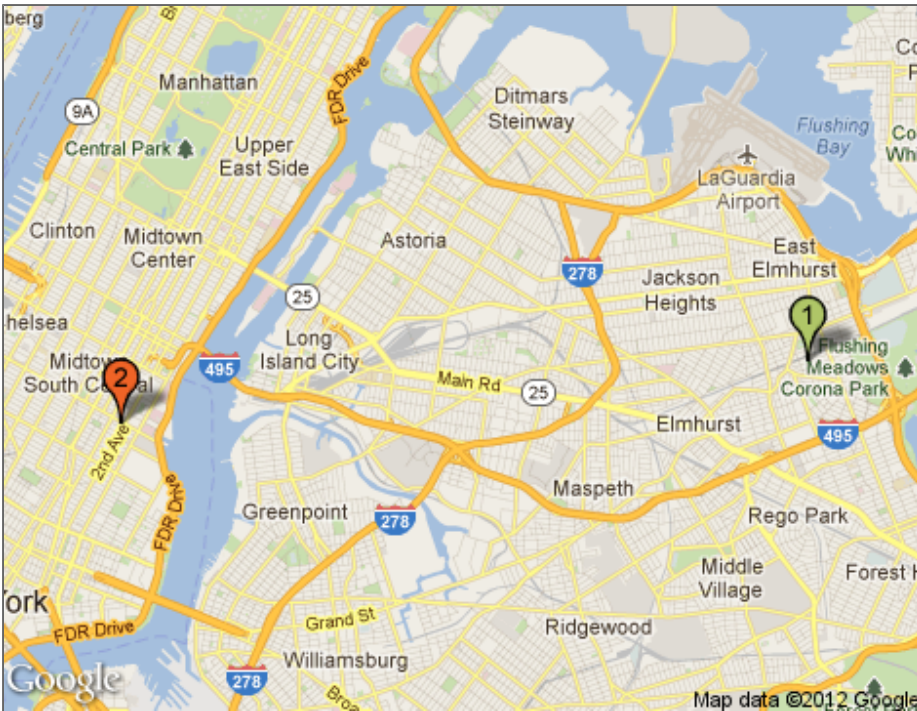
hours:
M-Sa 10a-7p, Su 11a-6p

6 FAO Schwarz

DESCRIPTION: After eliminating products carried by the big discounters, FAO Schwarz now carries those hard-to-find and oh-so-expensive items such as Vespa scooters for older children, mini-luxury cars such as Hummers and Jaguars, and serious karaoke machines. There's also a soda fountain where the kids can load up on sugar to fuel their romp through the magical store. The giant piano keys made famous in the movie Big thankfully still remain. © Frommer's



Day 2 - New York City



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: For one of New York's most kid-friendly attractions, head out on the 7 train from Times Square or Grand Central to 111th Street in Queens to visit the New York Hall of Science. After a long day of interactive exhibits, head back to Manhattan and down to Madison Square Park for a burger and frozen custard at another New York institution, Shake Shack.

contact:

tel: +1 718 699 0005

fax: +1 718 699 1341

<http://www.nyhallsci.org>

location:

47-01 111th Street
New York NY 11368

hours:

Call for details

1 New York Hall of Science

DESCRIPTION: The New York Hall of Science is an interactive museum geared towards children. The Space Pavilion at the 1964 World's Fair took place here, but now it houses more than 160 exhibits detailing the history and evolution of science and technology. A highlight is the outdoor Science Playground—a park filled with interactive games and displays, all designed to help children understand the human body. © wcities.com



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

2 Shake Shack

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

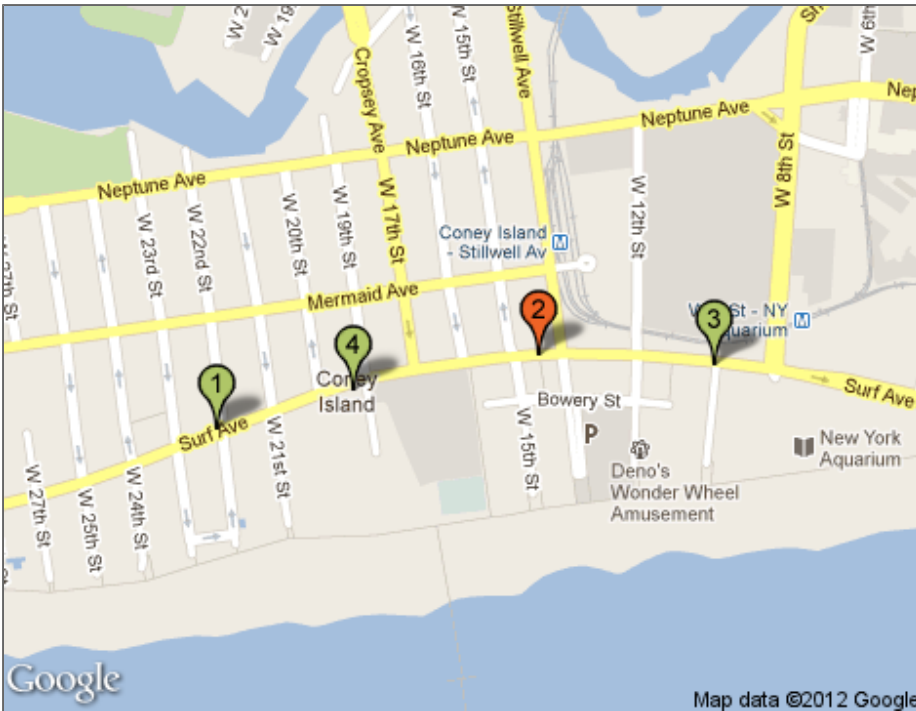
The Shake Shack now has five NYC locations (Madison Square Park, Columbus Ave near 77th St, Theater District, Upper East Side, and at Citi Field, new home of the New York Mets).

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 - New York City, Brooklyn



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Another day, another kid-friendly borough: head to Brooklyn's Coney Island for a walk on the boardwalk and a hot dog at Nathan's Famous. Older kids might enjoy the thrills of a ride on the rickety Cyclone roller coaster at Astroland Amusement Park, while young sports fans will love seeing a minor-league baseball game in the fun atmosphere of Keyspan Park, home of the Brooklyn Cyclones.

contact:

tel: +1 718 372 7099
<http://www.coneyislandusa.com/>

location:

1208 Surf Avenue (Post)
New York NY 11224

hours:

Call for details

1 Coney Island

DESCRIPTION: This peninsula in southernmost Brooklyn boasts a diverse community of 60,000 people and a broad, sandy beach with a historic boardwalk. Its selection of amusement parks and attractions may have seen better days, but they can still provide a rich slice of Americana and a day of family fun during a spring or summer visit. As a major resort and amusement destination, Coney Island reached its peak in the early 20th century. Its popularity declined after World War II and for many years it was sorely neglected, but in recent years the area has been revitalized with the opening of KeySpan Park, home of the minor league baseball team the Brooklyn Cyclones. In addition to the Cyclones fans that swarm the area in spring and summer, Coney Island attracts thousands to its annual Mermaid Parade, which takes place on Surf Avenue every summer and features an array of floats and performers in crazy costumes. Another star attraction is the original Nathan's Famous hot dog stand, which opened in 1916 and quickly became a landmark. Its annual hot dog eating contest, held every July 4th since Nathan's opened, has recently attracted widespread attention, including international television coverage.



wcities

Those coming to Coney Island shouldn't miss the Astroland Amusement Park, with its selection of rides including the historic Cyclone, built in 1927 and one of the oldest roller coasters still operating in the United States. Wonderwheel Amusement Park provides an even bigger selection of thrill rides, while the Coney Island Aquarium houses dolphins and sea lions. The Riegelmann boardwalk, another landmark, stretches continuously along the beach from West 37th Street in the community of Seagate through Coney Island proper and Brighton Beach to the beginning of the community of Manhattan Beach, a distance of approximately two-and-a-half miles. © NileGuide

contact:
tel: 1 718 946 2202
<http://www.nathansfamous.com>

location:
1310 Surf Avenue
Brooklyn NY 11224

hours:
Mo to Su from 08:00 AM to 01:00 AM

2 Nathan's Famous

DESCRIPTION: Home of the Famous Fourth of July International Hot Dog Eating Contest, Nathan's Famous has been serving mouth-watering hot dogs since 1916 at its landmark location in Coney Island. What started as a nickel hot dog stand has grown to a nationwide franchise, but hot dog aficionados swear that no other hot dog can compare to the original Nathan's! Maybe it's the sea air or the honky-tonk atmosphere – no one knows for sure, but one bite into these crunchy all-beef dogs will win over the greatest skeptic. The fries (with or without gobs of cheese or chili) are to die for! © wcities.com



contact:
tel: +1 718 372 0275 / +1 718 265 2100
<http://www.astroland.com/>

location:
1000 Surf Avenue
New York NY 11224

3 Astroland Amusement Park

DESCRIPTION: Head out to the boardwalk at Coney Island to experience true New York atmosphere and a place frozen in time, with old fashioned photo booths, a freak show, and rides right on the water. The main attractions are the fabulous Wonder Wheel Ferris that slides and swings as you spin around, and the world famous Cyclone roller coaster - this New York historic landmark has been luring thrill seekers since 1927. Eighty-six feet high and made completely of wood, the Cyclone will scare just about anyone! © wcities.com



wcities

contact:
tel: +1 718 449 8497
fax: +1 718 449 6368
<http://www.brooklyncyclones.com/>

location:
1904 Surf Avenue
New York NY 11224

hours:
Call for details

4 Keyspan Park

DESCRIPTION: Keyspan Park is home to the Brooklyn Cyclones. The ballpark is built on the same template as most others. However, it deftly makes use of the surrounding attractions. A few blocks away from here is Astroland, the amusement park at Coney Island; it makes for a wonderful view over the left field fence. Towards the right field wall are the endless blue waters of the Atlantic Ocean. It's a spectacular place to watch a game and the unmistakable energy of the Brooklyn fans just adds to the excitement. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Keyspan Park

Day 4 - New York City



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Just because you haven't shelled out for tickets to The Lion King, you can still give your kids a Broadway experience. Line up at the TKTS booth in Times Square for tickets to one of the many matinee shows; matinee tickets (same-day only) are on sale Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm. Get there early! Afterwards, it's a short walk to John's, one of the city's most popular pizzerias.

contact:

tel: 1 212 391 7560
<http://www.johnspizzeria.nyc.com>

location:

260 W 44th St
New York NY 10036

hours:

Mo to Su from 11:30 AM to 11:30 PM

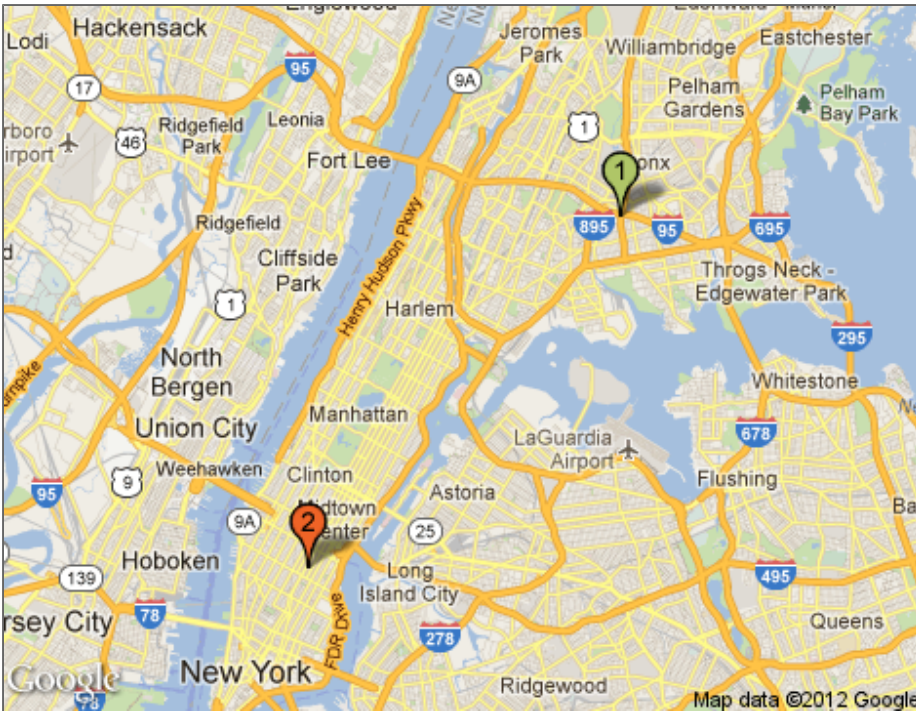
1 John's Pizzeria

DESCRIPTION: John's Pizzeria is an improvement from its Greenwich Village predecessor. This Times Square location is large and spacious and includes a sweeping staircase to a second floor, bringing a new dimension to your pizza-consuming experience. Despite this extravagant setting, this brick-oven pizza has remained the same since its humble beginnings. This is New York Pizza down to its crust. Aside from the seemingly endless selection of pizza-pies, you will surely want to try some of the other menu items, including Baked Ziti, Penne alla Vodka, Eggplant Parmigiana, and of course, Spaghetti & Meatballs. Their other locations include: John's of Blecker Street, and John's Pizzeria Eastside. © wcities.com



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Day 5 - New York City



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: On your last day, take the uptown 2 or 5 train to the E Tremont Ave-W Farm Square stop and head to the Bronx Zoo. Make sure to visit the Children's Zoo and its collection of interactive exhibits. For one last great family meal, check out Gramercy's Blue Smoke, for upscale barbecue and other comfort food (macaroni and cheese and homemade potato chips with blue cheese dip, to name just two options).

contact:

tel: +1 718 367 1010 / +1 718 220 5100
fax: +1 718 220 7114
<http://www.bronxzoo.com>

location:

Fordham Road
New York NY 10460

1 Bronx Zoo

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Try to visit the most popular exhibits, like the Congo Gorilla Forest, earlier in the day to avoid long afternoon lines. In colder weather, the Bronx Zoo puts fewer animals in outdoor areas, but additional indoor exhibitions are available to keep winter visitors entertained.

DESCRIPTION: Opened in 1899 by the New York Zoological Society (later renamed the Wildlife Conservation Society), the Bronx Zoo is the flagship of the largest network of metropolitan zoos in the country. The zoo grounds, as well as the adjoining grounds of the New York Botanical Gardens, were formerly the property of Fordham University. The university sold the land to the city for the price of \$1 on the condition that the lands would become a zoo and gardens and serve as a buffer between Fordham and the then-developing Bronx. Today, the Bronx Zoo houses more than 6,000 animals in its 265 acres of wooded grounds, including such rare or endangered species as Asian elephants, Chinese alligators, and snow leopards.



wcities

The Bronx Zoo established the world's first formal zoo education program in 1929 and since then has received many awards for its science-based educational programs, geared towards teachers and children in grades K-12. Today, the education program reaches more than 1.7 million schoolchildren in the New York metropolitan area and in school systems in all 50 U.S. states and in 15 countries. The zoo's many exhibitions are also an important part of its educational outreach efforts. They include Jungle World, a recreation of a tropical rainforest, and World of Darkness, where visitors can take a dark walk through the life of bats and naked mole-rats.
© NileGuide

contact:

tel: 1 212 447 7733
fax: 1 212 576 2561
www.bluesmoke.com

location:

116 East 27th Street
New York NY 10016

hours:

Sunday and
Monday--11:30am-10:00pm
Tuesday-
Thursday--11:30am-11:00pm
Friday and
Saturday--11:30am-1:00am

2 Blue Smoke

DESCRIPTION: Blue Smoke offers authentic barbecue accompanied by seasonal vegetable side dishes and home-style cakes and pies. Specialties like Iced Oysters On The Half Shell and Applewood-Smoked Chicken are served by the hospitable staff in a bustling atmosphere. The barbecue is really impressive; try the spice-rubbed and sauce-slathered pork and beef ribs and order a wine that complements it. Visit website for more details. © 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.

© 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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