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Top 10 Things to Do in NYC

New York City, Bronx, 1 Day

Table of contents:

- Guide Description 2
- Itinerary Overview 3
- Daily Itineraries 4
- New York City Snapshot 11

Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: New York is full of things to do, but not all of them are created equal. Here are 10 essential spots you should make a point to check off your list, especially if you're a first-time visitor to the city, or haven't been here in a while. Central Park, a sprawling oasis of green, offers a welcome respite from the city's crowded streets. Art lovers might head first to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and MoMA, while die-hard shoppers might choose Rockefeller Center. If the Top of the Rock offers a great bird's eye view of the city, so does the iconic Empire State Building, a little further downtown. Bustling Times Square can be a little overwhelming, but it's a must-see, especially if you're on your way to take in a Broadway show. Downtown, the WTC site is home to a moving tribute to the victims of 9/11. A walk across the majestic Brooklyn Bridge offers some of the best views of the city skyline, while the Statue of Liberty is only a ferry ride away. Finally, the Bronx is home to one of the city's most peaceful and beautiful outdoor spots--the New York Botanical Garden.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - New York City, Bronx



Metropolitan Museum of Art

Mammoth museum featuring art from around the world



Central Park

Urban oasis, perfect for exploring or relaxing



Empire State Building

Classic skyscraper offers great views from its observatory



Rockefeller Center

Commercial center, home to great entertainment



Brooklyn Bridge

Historic bridge offers stunning skyline views



Times Square

Iconic center revamped for the tourist's enjoyment



Tribute WTC Visitor Center

9/11 tribute, featuring interactive exhibits



Statue of Liberty

Lady Liberty welcomes the masses to New York and America



Museum of Modern Art

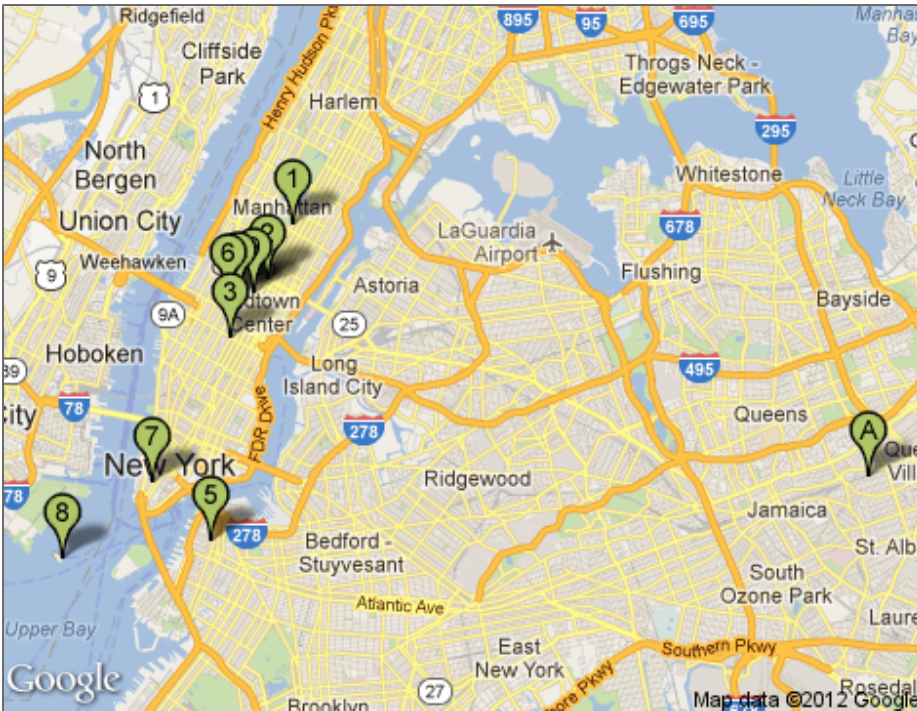
Cutting-edge museum with huge selection of contemporary art



New York Botanical Garden

Nature in New York

Day 1 - New York City, Bronx



QUICK NOTE

contact:

tel: +1 212 535 7710

fax: +1 212 570 3972

<http://www.metmuseum.org>

location:

1000 Fifth Ave

New York NY 10028-0198

hours:

Sun, holiday Mon (Memorial Day, Labor Day, and so forth), and Tues-Thurs

9:30am-5:30pm; Fri-Sat

9:30am-9pm

1 Metropolitan Museum of Art

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

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

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

First opened in 1872, the Met has been significantly expanded over the years, and its permanent collection now contains more than two million works of art, divided into nineteen curatorial departments. In addition to its giant holdings of American, European, Egyptian, African, Asian, Oceanic, Byzantine, and Islamic art, the museum is also home to encyclopedic



collections of musical instruments, costumes and accessories, and antique weapons and armor from around the world. A number of notable interiors, ranging from 1st century Rome through modern American design, are permanently installed in the Met's galleries. The Met also organizes and hosts a continually changing series of special exhibitions each year. © NileGuide

contact:

tel: +1 212 310 6600

<http://www.centralparknyc.org>

location:

Central Park Driveway
New York NY 10022

2 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: +1 212 736 3100
fax: +1 212 947 1360
<http://www.esbnyc.com/>

location:

350 5th Avenue, Suite # 3210
New York NY 10118

hours:

Daily 8am-2am, last elevator
at 1:15am

3 Empire State Building

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Kids love the NY Skyride, which offers a simulated flight over New York City without leaving the second floor of the Empire State Building. Tickets are \$25.50 or \$38 combined with a trip to the observatory.

DESCRIPTION: This 102-story Art Deco skyscraper, located at the intersection of Fifth Avenue and West 34th Street, has been one of New York's most notable landmarks since its completion in 1931. Built as part of an intense competition to build the world's tallest building, the Empire State Building overtook its rivals - 40 Wall Street and the Chrysler Building - to gain the distinction, which it held for four decades, before the World Trade Center towers were completed in 1971. With the destruction of the World Trade Center in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Empire State Building again became the tallest building in New York City. It was designed by Gregory Johnson and his architectural firm Shreve, Lamb and Harmon.

The building's façade is classic, with modernistic stainless steel canopies marking the entrances on 33rd and 34th Streets and leading to corridors surrounding a core of 67 elevators. Though the Chrysler Building is undoubtedly the more attractive of New York's two Art Deco towers, the Empire State Building has earned its reputation as a top destination largely due to the popularity of its indoor and outdoor observation decks. The outdoor observatory on the 86th floor, with its sweeping 360-degree views of the city, is one of the most popular in the world, and has been visited by more than 110 million people. The second observation deck, on the 102nd floor, is completely enclosed and much smaller, and it may be closed on days with especially high traffic. In addition to the observation spaces, the building has 85 stories (2,158,000 square feet) of commercial and office space. In 1964, floodlights were added to illuminate the top of the building at night; special colors are chosen to match seasonal and other events, such as Christmas, St. Patrick's Day, or victory by any one of New York's sports teams. © NileGuide



wcities

contact:

tel: +1 212 332 6868 / +1 212
632 3975
<http://www.rockefellercenter.com>

location:

47th to 51st streets
New York NY 10112

4 Rockefeller Center

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

The Rink at Rockefeller Center, a small but picturesque skating rink, is open from mid-October to mid-March.

DESCRIPTION: A major commercial center covering 22 acres between 48th and 51st Streets and 5th and 7th Avenues in Midtown Manhattan, Rockefeller Center is one of the city's foremost shopping and entertainment destinations. Oil billionaire and philanthropist John D. Rockefeller, Jr. leased the site from Columbia University in 1929 with plans to build a new home for the Metropolitan Opera. After the stock market crash of that year, plans were changed. Now, 19 buildings constructed in the Art Deco style house shops, restaurants, and offices, along with Radio City Music Hall.



wcities

The centerpiece of Rockefeller Center is the 70-floor, 872-foot GE Building at 30 Rockefeller Plaza (aka "30 Rock") - formerly known as the RCA Building - centered behind the complex's sunken plaza. The building is the headquarters of NBC and houses most of the network's New York studios, including the legendary Studio 8H, home of Saturday Night Live. The windows of the studio where NBC's Today Show is filmed are usually mobbed by crowd jostling for a look of the show's hosts and guests. Tours of the NBC studios are also available, and many visitors choose to wait in line for tickets to one of the many shows taped in the building. © NileGuide

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

5 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 (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



wcities

contact:

tel: +1 212 768 1560 (Times Square Alliance)

fax: +1 212 768 0233 (Times Square Alliance)

<http://www.timessquarenyc.org/>

location:

1560 Broadway, Between
46th & 47th streets

6 Times Square

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

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



wcities

New York NY 10036

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

In the decades after the Great Depression, Times Square became known as a dangerous neighborhood and a symbol of the city's decline and corruption from the 1960s to the 1990s. After a long-term development plan and a comprehensive crackdown on crime by the city government, the infamous center of pickpockets and porno theaters has been thoroughly reinvented and filled with more upscale and tourist-friendly attractions, hotels, vendors, and street performers. © NileGuide

contact:

tel: +1 212 393 9160 x138 /
+1 866 737 1184
<http://tributenyc.org>

location:

120 Liberty Street
New York NY 10006

7 Tribute WTC Visitor Center

DESCRIPTION: Located within the Standard Oil Building, just south of the World Trade Center, the Tribute WTC Visitor Center was created in the wake of September 11, 2001. Tribute offers visitors to the World Trade Center site a place where they can connect with people from the September 11th community. Through walking tours, exhibits and programs, the Tribute WTC Visitor Center offers "Person to Person History," linking visitors who want to understand and appreciate these historic events with those who experienced them.

The space features interactive exhibits and five galleries that deal with different aspects of the 9/11 tragedy. All walking tours make five stops while traveling around the site. Most of the tour takes place indoors, traveling along the windows of the World Financial Center and looking out onto Ground Zero. Guides share key facts and reveal specific events of the day while weaving their personal experiences of survival, loss, and healing throughout the tour, giving visitors an unparalleled opportunity to connect with history first-hand. © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of Tribute WTC Visitor Center

contact:

tel: 212-363-7620
fax: +1 212 363 6304
www.nps.gov/stli/

location:

Liberty Island
New York NY 10004

hours:

8 Statue of Liberty

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

As of late 2009, the elevator at Liberty Island was reported to be "out of service for an extended period of time," so that visitors with Monument Access Passes were required to climb 168 steps to the top of the pedestal. Visitors should confirm via the website whether the elevator will be in service before their trip .



photo courtesy of Koshyk

Daily 9am-3:30pm (last ferry departs around 3:30pm); extended hours in summer

DESCRIPTION: This iconic copper statue was presented to the U.S. by France in 1886 as a commemoration of the U.S. centennial and a gesture of friendship between France and the U.S. Since then, it has stood at Liberty Island in New York Harbor as a welcome to all visitors, immigrants, and Americans returning from abroad. Construction of the statue, supervised by sculptor Frederic Auguste Bartholdi and engineer Gustave Eiffel (mastermind of Paris's famous tower), began in France in 1875 and was completed in 1884, after which the statue was dismantled and transported across the Atlantic to be reassembled.

Lady Liberty stands approximately 151 feet tall and weighs 225 tons (450,000 pounds). Visitors used to be able to climb the 354 steps to peer at the view through the windows in her crown, but this option is no longer available. Currently, the museum and ten-story pedestal are open for visitation but are only accessible if visitors have a "Monument Access Pass" which is a reservation that visitors must make at least two days in advance of their visit and pick up before boarding the ferry. There are a maximum of 3000 passes available each day (with a total of 15,000 visitors to the island daily). © NileGuide

contact:

tel: +1 212 708 9400
<http://www.moma.org>

location:

11 W. 53rd St
New York NY 10103

hours:

Sat-Mon and Wed-Thurs
10:30am-5:30pm; Fri
10:30am-8pm

9 Museum of Modern Art

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

From November 2009 through April 2010, the MoMA houses a major career retrospective of the wonderfully weird screenwriter/director/producer Tim Burton.

DESCRIPTION: Opened in 1929, the Museum of Modern Art was one of the first museums with a focus on modern art, and it boasts one of the world's most comprehensive collections. Its permanent collection numbers 135,000 paintings, prints, photographs, drawings, sculptures, films, and design objects, including works by Picasso, Cézanne, Van Gogh, Kandinsky, Dalí, O'Keeffe, Pollock, Warhol, and some of the best more contemporary artists, like Richard Serra, Cindy Sherman, and Chuck Close.

MoMA reopened in 2004 following a \$425 million expansion program that marked the museum's 75th anniversary. Led by the Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi, the renovation nearly doubled the capacity of the original building and revamped its appearance completely, starting with the striking entrance. A 110-foot-high atrium towers over an indoor walkway, extending over 53rd Street to a new entryway on 54th Street. The new six-story David and Peggy Rockefeller Building houses the main collection and temporary exhibition galleries, while the restored and expanded sculpture garden, named for museum founder Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, boasts more than 30 masterworks of modern sculpture. The MoMA's sleek next-door restaurant, the Modern, is also worth a visit.

© NileGuide



wcities

contact:

tel: +1 718 817 8700
fax: +1 718 220 6504
<http://www.nybg.org>

location:

Fordham Road
Bronx NY 10458

hours:

Apr-Oct: Tu-Su 10a-6p, Nov-
Mar: Tu-Su 10a-4p



New York Botanical Garden

DESCRIPTION: At the northern end of Bronx Park, adjacent to the Bronx Zoo, the New York Botanical Garden spreads its lush greenery across 250 sprawling acres. Founded in 1891 by botanist Nathaniel Lord Britton, the garden is a National Historic Landmark and one of the most outstanding horticultural and educational resources in the world. Its scope is immense, with dozens of separate gardens and plant collections (including daylilies, herbs, native plants, perennials, alpine plants, roses, annuals, magnolias, and tulips), and 40 acres of untouched woodland, the last of the forest that once covered all of New York.

The centerpiece of the Botanical Garden is the gorgeous Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, a Victorian-style glass house that is home to "The World of Plants". A tour through the conservatory takes visitors through 11 different habitats, including several types of tropical rain forest, a cactus-filled desert, and an ever-changing landscape of flowers and foliage. There are also exhibits of aquatic and carnivorous plants. The conservatory also houses the Botanical Garden's seasonal events, such as the Orchid Show and the Holiday Train Show. © NileGuide



Haupt Conservatory

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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