

NEW YORK CITY

SPRING & SUMMER GUIDE 2012



The best places to eat, sleep and play
in New York City this spring and summer

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INTRODUCTION



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PACKING TIPS

1. "Bring an **umbrella**, maybe a light **raincoat** and **light jacket** or **sweater** in case you're in air conditioning and chill easily. You can always buy extra items if needed. The most important thing is having **comfy shoes!**"—TripAdvisor Member
2. "I highly doubt you need a **dressy outfit** for each day. Pack one and wear it more than once. You'll want to be comfortable in the heat, so pack **shorts**, **Capris**, **cotton shirts** and maybe a **pair of jeans** and a **pair of dressy slacks.**"—TripAdvisor Member
3. "If you want to be able to get into the bars and/or clubs without any problems, it's a good idea to have a proper **photo ID**. Your passport will do if that's all you have. Better safe than sorry!"—TripAdvisor Member, New York

Inside

NEW YORK CITY

When the British conquered the city in 1664, they named it after the Duke of York. When the defeated British cleared out in 1783, New York became the capital of the newly formed United States. It remained so until 1790, though some would argue that New York City is still America's "real" capital. The most populated city in North America, the Big Apple's eight million residents are spread out over five boroughs — the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island and Manhattan.

New York is a city of excess and extremes—the summers are hot and humid, winters are gray and frigid. The city that never sleeps truly has something for everyone and is even *everything* to some.

Top VIEWS



NEW YORK CITY'S BEST VIEWS



"Closed for 20 years, the top of Rockefeller Center, now called **Top of the Rock**, was reopened to the public in November 2005. Everything in it is top-notch, including the elevator ride. The view from the multi-level observation decks is breathtaking."—TripAdvisor Member, Milton, Mass.

Top of the Rock, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, 212 698 2000

"Walking the **Brooklyn Bridge** gives you the best view of the city. It not only provides a beautiful view of the skyline of NYC but also of the Statue of Liberty and the Manhattan Bridge. The view at night is spectacular and very romantic."—TripAdvisor Member, Arlington, Va.

Brooklyn Bridge, City Hall Park, Manhattan to Brooklyn Heights

See Manhattan from the outside by taking a **Circle Line Cruise**. "We saw some fantastic views of mid- and downtown as well as Jersey City and Hoboken, then went over to the Statue of Liberty. When we went under the Brooklyn Bridge and looked toward downtown, the view was breathtaking. We went up to the U.N. building and got views of the Chrysler and Empire State buildings."—TripAdvisor Member, Meath, Ireland.

Circle Line Cruise, Pier 83, W. 42nd St. and 12th Ave., 212 563 3200

Where to PLAY

TOP 10 Attractions

1. Manhattan Skyline
2. Metropolitan Opera House, West 62nd Street, Lincoln Center, 212 799 3100
3. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., 212 535 7710
4. Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St., Fifth Ave., 212 288 0700
5. Central Park, 59th to 110th streets, 212 310 6600
6. Top of the Rock, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, 212 698 2000
7. Broadway, 1 800 BROADWAY
8. Ground Zero Museum Workshop, 420 W. 14th St., Second Floor, 212 209 3370
9. High Line Park, 10th Avenue between Gansevoort Street and West 20th Street, 212 500 6035
10. St. Paul's Chapel, 209 Broadway, (at Fulton St.), 212 233 4164

FAMILIES



Finding the **Transit Museum**, located "below ground, in a former subway station, was well worth the effort. Our grandson loved 'driving' the buses, while we loved seeing the old subway cars."—TripAdvisor Member, Stamford, Conn.

New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place and Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn, 718 694 1600

The **New York Aquarium** is "worth the trip to Brooklyn. There are lots of animals to see, great displays of fish and other underwater creatures. The jelly fish were especially impressive. The aquarium is right on Coney Island, so you can take a stroll along the boardwalk and see the ocean while you're there!"—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto, Ontario

New York Aquarium, Surf Avenue & West 8th Street, Brooklyn, 718 265 3474

Palatial toy store **FAO Schwarz** is full of fun, particularly when "the employees are putting on a great show on the floor piano, a la Tom Hanks in *Big*."—TripAdvisor Member, Louisville, Ky.

FAO Schwarz, 767 Fifth Ave., 212 644 9400

ROMANCE



"We just had to do the **horse-drawn carriage ride** and got to see the main attractions in the southwest corner: ice rink, dairy, zoo, etc. Had a really nice, chatty guide. I think the park is amazing and such a luxury in a city like New York."—TripAdvisor Member, United Kingdom

Horse-drawn Carriages, Various locations, Central Park

Drink champagne at dusk on the **Metropolitan Museum of Art** rooftop, overlooking Central Park, and then go downstairs to experience the "flickering world that is discovered as darkness unfolds within the Met, revealing its many wonders to visitors in a manner not soon to be forgotten."—TripAdvisor Member, New York

Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., 212 535 7710

Hold hands and stroll through the tree-lined **Greenwich Village**, then people watch from inside a cafe. "It is very rare that one feels part of those pictures and articles we read about. A stylish, classical yet continental feel is a great contrast to the metropolitan hustle and bustle of New York's over-crowded streets."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Greenwich Village, below 14th St. and west of Broadway

Where to PLAY



BUDGET

See the Statue of Liberty from the **Staten Island Ferry**. "It made me smile and I had a big stupid grin on my face the whole way. I loved being amongst all the tourists hanging over the side taking pictures. Everyone seemed so excited to be there."—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto, Ontario

Staten Island Ferry, Battery Park, 718 727 2508

The **Sony Wonder Technology Lab**, where you can play with all of tomorrow's technology today, is "the best kept secret in NYC. Totally free fun!"—TripAdvisor Member, Sumter, S.C.

Sony Wonder Technology Lab, 56th St. & Madison Ave., 212 833 8100

Tourists and locals alike rummage through the **Century 21** department store. "It's the best place to get designer labels for discount prices."—TripAdvisor Member, Guelph, Ontario

Century 21, 22 Cortlandt St., 212 227 9092

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ADVENTURE

There's "indoor skateboarding, ice skating, rock climbing and more at **Chelsea Piers**. Stop for a scoop of ice cream and a nice view of the Statue of Liberty from the end of the pier."—TripAdvisor Member, Dallas, Texas

Chelsea Piers, Pier 60 at 23rd Street, 212 336 6666

"Ice skating at **Rockefeller Center** is a breathtakingly beautiful experience that no one should pass up if given the chance."—TripAdvisor Member, Florida

Rockefeller Center, Between 47th and 51st streets, from 5th to 7th avenues, 212 332 6868

"Carve out a couple of hours and take a stroll across the **Brooklyn Bridge**. My personal recommendation? You can't give up the opportunity to walk the **Brooklyn Heights Promenade** and see fantastic views of the bridge and NYC skyline. You can always hop back on a train on the Brooklyn side."—TripAdvisor Member, New York City

Brooklyn Bridge and Brooklyn Heights Promenade, Brooklyn



EDUCATIONAL/HISTORICAL

Advance tickets are required for the city's "biggest little museum," the **Ground Zero Museum Workshop**. "This one-room museum is a must-see. The images and artifacts capture powerful moments that should never be forgotten."—TripAdvisor Member, Birmingham, U.K.

Ground Zero Museum Workshop, 420 W. 14th St., Second floor, 212 209 3370

Displaying recreated apartments from periods in the area's history, the **Lower East Side Tenement Museum** "is like a time machine. The second you walk into the dimly lit hall, you are transported back to another time."—TripAdvisor Member, Concord, N.H.

Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 108 Orchard St., 212 982 8420

"We tried **MoMA** out—I expected to be rolling my eyes at the whole thing. Totally wrong! We would each say what something looked like to us, and that was fun and interesting. We got a nice chuckle from the pieces such as 'red stick on the wall.' We were sad when we had to rush out."—TripAdvisor Member, Neenah, Wis.

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St., 212 708 9400

"This one-room museum is a must-see."



RELAXATION

The Cloisters, a branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is a "wonderful way to get out of concrete, busy New York and see another side to it! It was very pleasant to walk around the peaceful cloisters, chapels and gift shop without the hustle and bustle of crowds."—TripAdvisor Member, Dublin, Ireland

The Cloisters, 99 Margaret Corbin Dr., Fort Tryon Park, 212 923 3700

"It was a life long dream of mine to stroll through **Central Park**. I had my dream come true, and it was more than I had expected. We just walked and watched and walked some more. Whether you visit with children, lovers, mates or simply on your own, I highly recommend taking a picnic or a book and spending some time enjoying the world going by."—TripAdvisor Member, Brisbane, Australia

Central Park, 59th to 110th streets, 212 310 6600

"The **Metamorphosis Spa** was the icing on the cake for an already good trip. Initial greeting, aroma and atmosphere were conducive to serene relaxation. My wife truly enjoyed her deep tissue massage—'one of the best ever!'"—TripAdvisor Member, New York City

Metamorphosis Spa, 127 E. 56th St., 5th Floor, 212 751 6051

WHERE to eat



FAMILIES

Keep the kids amused with the novelty at **Churrascaria Plataforma**, “an all-you-can-eat affair. The waiters come around with giant skewers of meat and slice off whatever you want onto a plate. It’s really fun!”—TripAdvisor Member, New York City

Churrascaria Plataforma, 316 W. 49th St., 212 245 0505

“I was born and raised in rural Tennessee and I know how barbecue is supposed to taste. I must admit, shhhh, don’t tell anyone I said it, but NYC has the best barbecue I have ever eaten! We were absolutely floored when we discovered **Virgil’s Real BBQ**.”—TripAdvisor Member, Tennessee

Virgil’s Real BBQ, 152 W. 44th St., 212 921 9494

“**Tony’s Di Napoli** has real Italian style. We had spaghetti with meatballs and rigatoni and chicken. Three plates was more than enough for six people!”—TripAdvisor Member, Beringen, Belgium

Tony’s Di Napoli, 147 W. 43rd St., 212 221 0100

TOP 10 Restaurants

1. Eleven Madison Park, 11 Madison Ave., 212 889 0905
2. Levain Bakery, 167 W. 74th St., 212 874 6080
3. Le Bernardin, 155 W. 51st St., 212 554 1515
4. Gramercy Tavern, 42 E. 20th St., 212 477 0777
5. Casellula Cheese and Wine Cafe, 401 52nd St., 212 247 8137
6. 53rd & 6th Halal, 53rd Street
7. Ess-a-Bagel, 359 1st Ave., 212 260 2252
8. Jean Georges, 1 Central Park West, 212 299 3900
9. La Grenouille, 3 E. 52nd St., 212 752 1495
10. Daniel, 60 E. 65th St., 212 288 0033

ROMANCE

There’s nothing that says New York quite like The **Gramercy Tavern**. This favorite is “simply one of the most delicious places that you can eat in New York. It’s outstanding.”—TripAdvisor Member, New York City

Gramercy Tavern, 42 E. 20th St., 212 477 0777

At the **River Café**, “the view over to Manhattan and the Brooklyn Bridge was just unbelievable. I won’t go into the food details, but the quality went way beyond anything I’ve eaten in the States and even to some extent in Europe. What impressed us most is that we were not hurried in any way.”—TripAdvisor Member, Germany

The River Café, 1 Water St., Brooklyn, 718 522 5200

A New York institution since 1962, **La Grenouille** serves “exquisite haute cuisine in a gorgeous setting with flowers galore and impeccable service. The food is not heavy and creamy but rather, creative and beautifully balanced.”—TripAdvisor Member, Washington, D.C.

La Grenouille, 3 E. 52nd St., 212 752 1495

BUDGET

Cheap and cheerful is on the menu at **Cafe Habana**. “Certainly not the type of place that provides a romantic setting, but they did offer an excellent meal.”—TripAdvisor Member, Montclair, N.J.

Cafe Habana, 17 Prince St., 212 625 2001

For an American classic, it has to be **Crif Dogs**. “A huge variety of hot dogs! Customize them, too! Melted cheese, sour pickles, bacon, onions, chili, coleslaw, fried egg, everything imaginable!”—TripAdvisor Member, New York City

Crif Dogs, 113 St. Marks Place, 212 614 2728

“**Cafe 28** was the best value food place in NY during our visit. The options were amazing - plenty of fresh fruit, salads, hot meals, sandwiches, cakes, coffee & so much more!”—TripAdvisor Member, Canberra, Australia

Cafe 28, 245 Fifth Ave., 212 686 7300

HOW TO GET AROUND



Walk the city—Since “all of Manhattan north of 14th St. is laid out in an easy-to-navigate grid, walking is often the simplest way of traversing short to moderate distances.”—TripAdvisor Member, Boston, Mass.

In-line skates—Grab a map of the waterfront and “skate virtually the entire circumference of Manhattan Island, a popular route.”—TripAdvisor Member, New York, N.Y.

Gray Line Bus Tours—“There are 48-hour all-loop, hop-on/hop-off passes, as well as nighttime tours, and they show you more than Manhattan. You’ll see the entire city plus Brooklyn.”—TripAdvisor Member, Canada

WHERE to eat



HEALTH-CONSCIOUS

Raw food has an avid following at **Pure Food and Wine**. "All I can say is 'Wow!' It was truly amazing. The ambiance is very relaxed and calm."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Pure Food and Wine, 54 Irving Place, 212 477 1010

"I had high hopes that **Risotteria** would provide me with great gluten free food, and I wasn't wrong. I had the roasted shrimp and gruyere pizza. Yum! I went back to the hotel with a piece of banana bread for breakfast."—TripAdvisor Member, Edinburgh, Scotland

Risotteria, 270 Bleecker St., 212 924 6664

"I make a point of eating at **Hangawi** every time I am in New York. The service is impeccable, and the food is unbelievable! The stone bowl rice dishes are particularly delicious."—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto, Ontario

Hangawi, 12 E. 32nd St., 212 213 0077

HIDDEN GEMS

For authentic Mexican cuisine, make your way to the hidden vault dining room of **La Esquina**. "It's located inside a taqueria that says 'Corner Deli.' You walk in, go through the door that says 'No Admittance.'"—TripAdvisor Member, New York City

La Esquina, 106 Kenmare St., 646 613 7100

"Hidden in a driveway next to a repair shop," **Fette Sau**, a BBQ-by-the-pound restaurant, is "a lot of fun, with its shared picnic tables and cheap beer. You'll walk out smelling like smoked meat, so don't wear your favorite outfit!"—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto, Ontario

Fette Sau, 354 Metropolitan Ave., Brooklyn, 718 963 3404

Tucked away in the Parker Meridien is the **Burger Joint**. "Impossible to find a joint with a \$10 burger at this elegant location. Then we saw that kitschy, beautiful neon light hidden behind the curtains and—what an experience! Great burgers, such nice staff."—TripAdvisor Member, Galicia, Spain

Burger Joint, Le Parker Meridien, 118 W. 57th St., 212 245 5000

SPECIAL EVENTS



Starting in Lower Manhattan and winding through all of New York's boroughs to finish with a festival at Staten Island's Fort Wadsworth, the **Five-Boro Bike Tour** is an exhilarating way to see the city's sights and get some exercise at the same time. (May 6)

Bike New York: The Five-Boro Bike Tour, 212 932 2453, <http://www.bikenewyork.org>

Prospect Park becomes party central in the summer months, with free outdoor events, performances and concerts every weekend during the **Celebrate Brooklyn!** festival. Pack a picnic and get there in the early evening to find a spot in the grass. (June 5 - August)

Celebrate Brooklyn!, Prospect Park, Brooklyn, 718 855 7882, <http://www.briconline.org/celebrate>

Celebrate diversity at **Pride NYC**, a week-long event featuring rallies, performances, a women's dance, a pier party and the annual Pride March on June 28th. (June 16 - 24)

Pride NYC, Various venues, 212 807 7433, <http://www.hopinc.org>

Get nautical at **Coney Island's Mermaid Parade**, a fishy afternoon of burlesque performances, stage shows, street artists, DJs, bands and a procession of amphibious costumed revelers young and old to greet the summer season. (June 23)

Mermaid Parade, Coney Island, 718 372 5159, <http://www.coneyisland.com/mermaid.shtml>

On the **Fourth of July**, New York celebrates American independence with music, food, entertainment and the grand Macy's Fourth of July Fireworks display, where 14,000 aerial shells light up the sky. (July 4)

Fourth of July Events, Various venues

Harlem Week is so jam-packed with events that it lasts an entire month! Festivities include walking tours, performances, lectures, vendors, food, a walk-a-thon, prizes, an outdoor dance festival and street party, and a full day of concerts. (July 29 - August 28)

Harlem Week, Various venues, Harlem, 212 862 7200, <http://www.harlemweek.com>

Check out one of the most important Grand Slam tennis tournaments of the year at the **United States Open** in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. (August 27 - September 9)

United States Open, Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Queens, 1-866-OPEN-TIX, <http://www.usopen.org>

Where to STAY



FAMILIES

The **Hilton Garden Inn** is “close to Times Square and allows for easy access to the double-decker sight-seeing bus. The concierge provided details regarding shows, dining and day trips.”—TripAdvisor Member, Woodbridge, Ontario

Hilton Garden Inn Times Square, 790 Eighth Ave., 212 581 7000

“I recently took my kids to NYC for spring break, and we stayed at the **French Quarters**. The hotel was charming with nice rooms, comfortable beds and small kitchenettes. The staff is very friendly and helpful and took a real personal interest in our visit.”—TripAdvisor Member, San Francisco, Calif.

The French Quarters Guest Apartments, 346 W. 46th St., 212 359 6652

“We absolutely loved the **Sherry-Netherland** - perfect location, great beds, flatscreen TVs, tons of bathroom amenities. Our kids were made to feel welcome: each received a personalized gift bag with goodies inside. These are the little things that show the staff really cares.”—TripAdvisor Member, Florida

The Sherry-Netherland Hotel, 781 5th Ave. at 59th St., 212 231 6830

“...absolute perfection”



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ROMANCE

“**The Michelangelo** was absolute perfection. This is a beautiful hotel, from the gorgeous lobby to the large and nicely decorated rooms to the delicious complimentary breakfast (biscotti and Italian coffee, yummy!). Few match the high standards set by this Italian haven.”—TripAdvisor Member, Boston, Mass.

The Michelangelo, 152 W. 51st St., 212 765 0505

The **Hotel Elysee** is “an excellent hotel and a lovely place to stay. Helpful people at the front desk. Lovely room with classical ambiance. Bathroom was tiny but beautifully equipped and finished. Gorgeous lounge/ breakfast/cocktails area and library. A real find in a top area.”—TripAdvisor Member, Auckland, New Zealand

Hotel Elysee, 60 E. 54th St., 212 753 1066

There is a decidedly literary theme at **The Library Hotel**, where rooms are “lined with books of all shapes, sizes and subjects. It’s a lovely place to stay if you want to be right in the middle of bustling Manhattan.”—TripAdvisor Member, Tequesta, Fla.

The Library Hotel, 299 Madison Ave. at 41st St., 212 983 4500

BUDGET

“If you don’t want to stay in a Manhattan super hotel, this is the place for you! We stayed at the **East Village Bed & Coffee** for three nights and enjoyed the unconventional and easy-going atmosphere.”—TripAdvisor Member, Birmingham, U.K.

East Village Bed & Coffee, 110 Ave. C, 917 816 0071

“We were looking for an affordable hotel with some character, and that’s exactly what we got. Or rather, we got affordable and with lots of character” at the **Harlem Flophouse**.—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid, Spain

Harlem Flophouse, 242 West 123rd St., 347 632 1960

Located in Harlem, **Efuru Guest House** is “cheap, spotless and homey—what a find!”—TripAdvisor Member, Kildare, Ireland

Efuru Guest House, 106 West 120th St., 212 961 9855

“What a find!”

LUXURY

“The rooms are the highest point of **The Mark Hotel**: beautifully done in every aspect - from lights and temperature control to the shades, bathrooms and TV. Everything had been tastefully thought of and modernly done.”—TripAdvisor Member, Austin, Texas

The Mark Hotel, Madison Avenue at 77th St., 212 744 4300

“Rarely does a luxury hotel meet, let alone exceed expectations. In this regard, the **Trump Soho Hotel** is truly a rare gem. Our room had a spectacular view. The panorama of colors in the cityscape was like an ever-changing picture.”—TripAdvisor Member, Philadelphia, Penn.

Trump Soho New York, 246 Spring St., 212 842 5500

“**The Surrey** is superb. The front desk staff and concierge were extremely friendly, the rooms were beautiful, beds and linen first-class, and the room size and bathroom were excellent.”—TripAdvisor Member, Sydney, Australia

The Surrey, 20 E. 76th St., 212 288 3700

Where to **STAY**



HIDDEN GEMS

The **Casablanca Hotel** is “exceptional. The reception, the decor, the ambiance, the service—all is impeccable. We will definitely return to this charming hotel.”—TripAdvisor Member, Brussels, Belgium

Casablanca Hotel, 147 W. 43rd St., 212 869 1212

“When can we come back here?”

“From the moment we walked into **A Greenwich Village Habitué**, we thought, ‘What a find! When can we come back here?’ As long-term New Yorkers, the owners are kind, informative and helpful—but did not impose themselves whatsoever. It was the myriad of little and thoughtful touches that we really appreciated.”—TripAdvisor Member, Queensland, Australia

A Greenwich Village Habitué, Greenwich Village, 212 243 6495
(Note: Five-night stay required)

“On past visits, we stayed in Times Square for convenience. This time, we decided to try a B&B and found **Mount Morris House**. This friendly alternative was ten times nicer than some old hotel with tiny rooms.”—TripAdvisor Member, New Mexico

Mount Morris House, 12 Mount Morris Park West, 917 478 6214

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Edited/compiled by Dennis Maloney, Michelle Schwartz and Kris Horton

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