



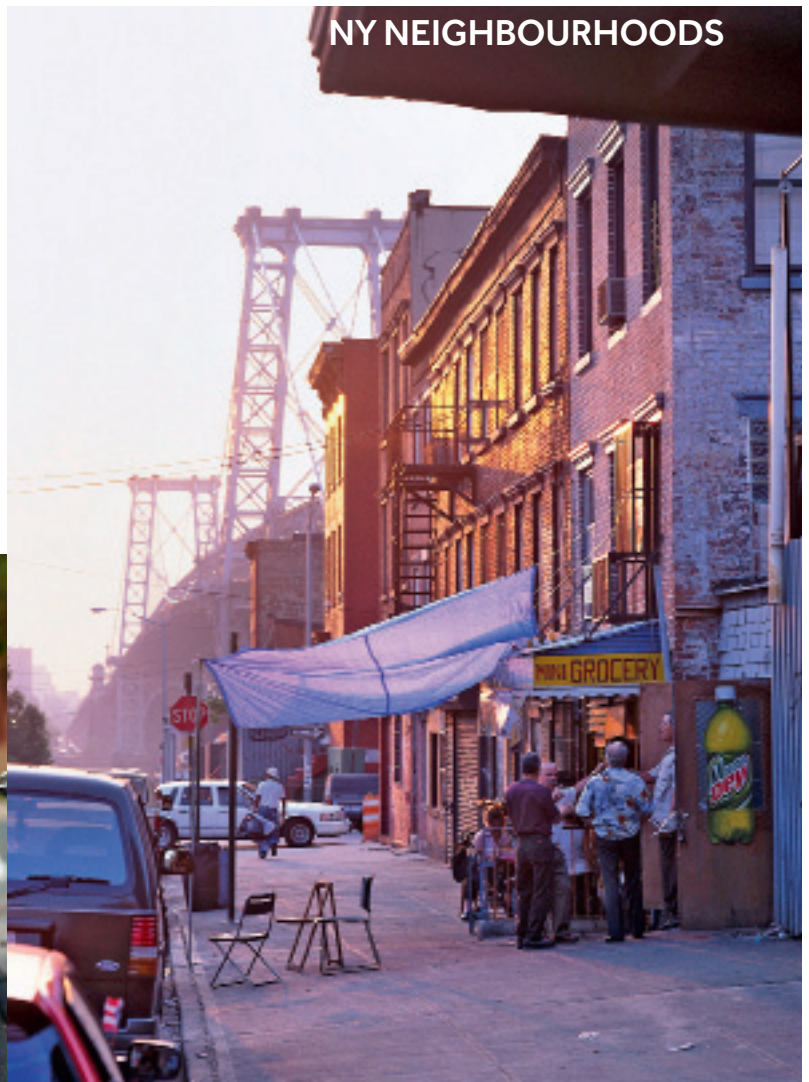
# NEW YORK

# STREETS AHEAD

You won't feel the city's pulse up the Empire State Building. For the real deal, lower your sights and go local. **Laura Goodman** and **Laura Goulden** reveal the four neighbourhoods you need to know – classic *and* cool

**Fountain of youth:** children playing in East River Park, Lower East Side. Opposite, **café-cum-lab** Blue Bottle, where coffee comes out of a siphon; Williamsburg hipster chick; the colourful

buildings in the Williamsburg district are as characterful as the folk who live there; a vintage motor adds to the scene; you're never far from a tune in a Bedford Ave café; the streets beyond Williamsburg Bridge



So much to see, so little time. New York is bristling with iconic sights: the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty, Central Park, Brooklyn Bridge... But while it's crucial to tick them off on your first visit, the dream stay in the Big Apple means setting your sights lower. Think about it. When you visualise the city, some of the most classic images are neighbourhoody: a jet-black coffee sipped on a sunny sidewalk; a bagel stuffed with smoked salmon, eaten at the kind of Formica table where Harry met Sally. So step away from the tourist crowds, sit down with the residents and take it one neighbourhood at a time. On a long weekend, you can actually do four. We've trawled two can't-miss classics and two cool newcomers to help you map out your perfect NY experience.

**COOL** THURSDAY  
**WILLIAMSBURG**  
 FOR BOW TIES AND BIG BRUNCHES

You can't walk two paces in Williamsburg without spotting something you want 'in' on. Ideas come to life on these shabby Brooklyn streets across the East River from Manhattan: coffee-making methods, loopy cocktails and fancy pickles. It's an education in all that's 'now'.

The action revolves round the bike- and boutique-lined Bedford Avenue, with most of the good stuff scattered between 5th and 11th Streets. Williamsburg takes coffee very, very seriously – if it's not coaxed through a ceramic dripper or siphoned using butane, it won't do. Get your kicks at Blue Bottle Coffee (160 Berry St; 00 1 718 387 4160, bluebottlecoffee.com; coffees around £1.80), an airy, very-Brooklyn space in which huge scientific-looking equipment sits on display. For lots of New Yorkers, coffee is a typical weekday breakfast – the aroma drifts like an invisible fog >

– but you're on holiday so go fill your boots at Egg (135 North 5th St; 00 1 718 302 5151, [eggrestaurant.com](http://eggrestaurant.com); breakfasts around £6). The Eggs Rothko is set to be a modern NY classic: doorstep of brioche with an egg cooked inside, coated in melted cheddar.

For afters, Mast Brothers (111 North 3rd St; 00 1 718 388 2625, [mastbrothers.com](http://mastbrothers.com)) is a mesmerising, grown-up chocolate factory; pop in to watch young pros pouring the molten stuff into moulds and mixing in nuts or maple syrup. Or buy its bars at the stocked-to-the-rafters Bedford Cheese Shop (229 Bedford Ave; 00 1 888 484 3243, [bedfordcheeseshop.com](http://bedfordcheeseshop.com)), along with giant jars of Damn Spicy pickles by Brooklyn Brine.

To fit in on Bedford, boys need a handle-bar moustache, girls a topknot. For your bang-on-trend Brooklyn uniform, hit In God We Trust (129 Bedford Ave; [ingodwetrustnyc.com](http://ingodwetrustnyc.com)). It sells heart-shaped jewellery inscribed with unorthodox messages ('balls to the wall'), colourful bow ties and well-made coats.

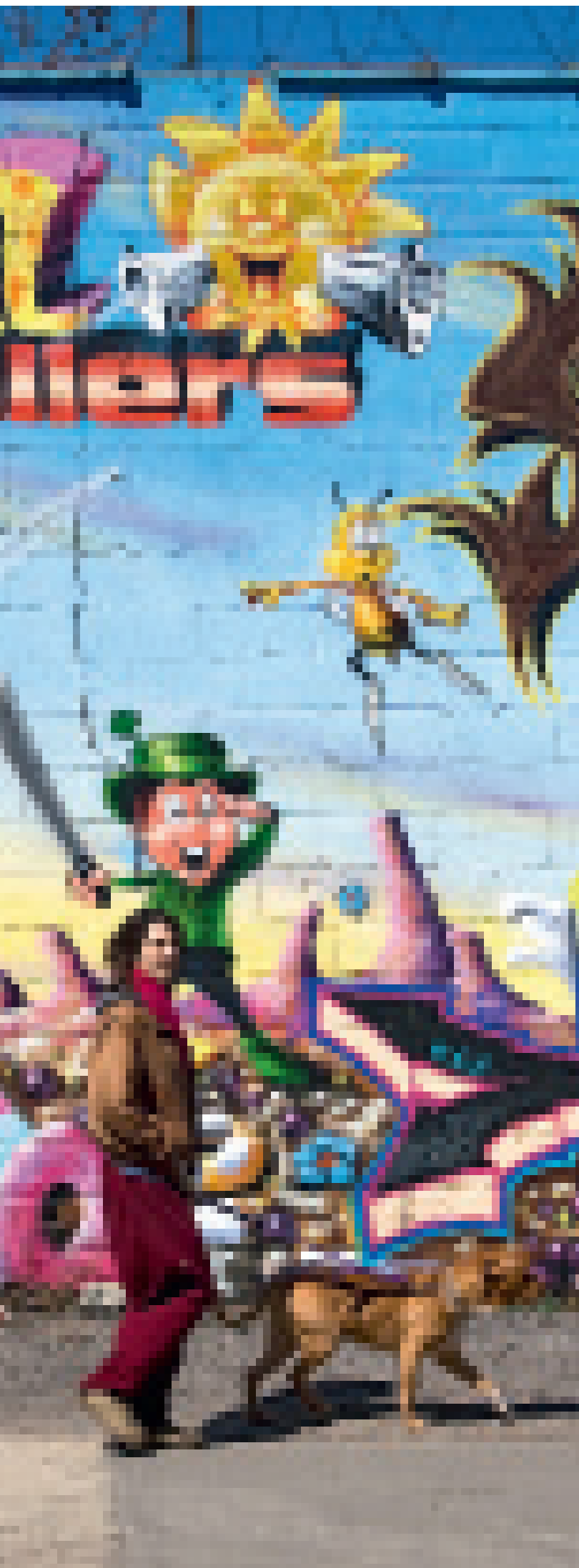
Ambling is the best way to shop. Signature spots include MeMe Antenna (218 Bedford Ave; 00 1 347 223 4219) – its white walls are cluttered with vinyls, burger-shaped purses and a million(-ish) tote bags – and Spoonbill Books (218 Bedford Ave; 00 1 718 387 7322), a spectacularly curated bookshop, full of art, design and fashion titles. Most delicious pitstop? Momofuku Milk Bar (382 Metropolitan Ave; 00 1 347 577 9504), serving divine blueberry-and-cream cookies, with milk that tastes of pretzels, and 'fancy' (boozy) shakes – don't miss the Cereal Milk White Russian (£4).

At night, as the neon dive-bar signs flicker, move on to Wythe Avenue, parallel to Bedford. At bowling alley Brooklyn Bowl (61 Wythe Ave; 00 1 718 963 3369, [brooklynbowl.com](http://brooklynbowl.com)), DJs and live bands make the music, while the menu lists fried chicken, pulled-pork pizzas and root-beer floats. Beer comes from the nearby Brooklyn Brewery (79 North 11th St; 00 1 718 486 7422, [brooklynbrewery.com](http://brooklynbrewery.com)), open for drinks (Fri nights) and free tours (Sat/Sun). >



Mean streets: centre, the cheekily graffit'd walls of Williamsburg; left, the action revolves around Bedford Avenue, littered with bikes, bookstores and boutiques; bagels are up there with coffee as New Yorkers' favoured snack; Williamsburg Bridge connects Brooklyn and Manhattan, across East River. Opposite, the Manhattan cityscape – yours if you stay at Williamsburg's Wythe Hotel





### IF YOU DO FANCY SOME SIGHTSEEING...

Guidebooks are full to bursting with the major-league attractions, but we've homed in on some less obvious ways to spend your days

**9/11 Memorial** (Cnr Albany and Greenwich St; 911memorial.org; optional donations). Until the new World Trade Center complex is finished, getting into the memorial means queues and security checks to get through the building site. But it's worth persevering for the moving sight of water falling into the spaces where the towers once stood, framed with the names of those killed carved in bronze.

**MoMA** (11 West 53rd St; moma.org; £15). If you only do one gallery, do MoMA. It's a biggie but a goodie—a glass case of a building filled with modern treasures. Now showing is an exhibition about how design shapes our lives. Until the end of April you can also see Edvard Munch's *The Scream*.

**Rockefeller Center** (30 Rockefeller Plaza; topoftherocknyc.com; £15). You'd have thought word would have got out about the views from the GE Building's observation deck in the Rockefeller Center. But somehow the queue is still nearly non-existent and the vista just as good as from the Empire State Building. Plus, you get the more famous tower in your pictures.

**Grand Central Station** (89 East 42nd St; grandcentralterminal.com). The world's most famous station turns 100 this year. It's worth a trip to see the constellation-strewn ceiling alone, but throughout the year there will be special events, including a display of vintage locomotives, poetry readings and surprise celebrity guest appearances.



Property ladder: right, SoHo's famous fire escapes; from top to bottom, patriotism is alive and kicking on West Broadway; Bloomingdale's department store, SoHo; more fashion on Spring Street. Opposite, SoHo's Mondrian Hotel; cannoli treats in Little Italy; the area's model looks aren't just in the shop windows; Fanelli's was here long before SoHo became SoHo; cobbles and crossings





FRIDAY  
SOHO  
FOR CASHMERE AND COOKIES

Rippling cast-iron architecture, cobbled streets and zigzag fire escapes – this is the New York you’ve sighed over in the movies. Come also for the MoMA Design Store, for Italian delis that have drifted over from NoLiTa, and for undies from Victoria’s Secret. It can be busy, but never upsettingly so. Unlike 5th Avenue.

Begin with a beer. Black-fronted Fanelli’s (94 Prince St) opened way back in 1847 and it’s just the place to steel yourself with a Brooklyn Beer before you take on Broadway. The mini-Bloomingdale’s department store (504 Broadway) is much more manageable than its iconic big sister, but is still best tackled early (doors open at 10am), before the pavements are flooded with the daily tide of hormone-riddled, fashion-hungry teens.

Next, tick off J Crew (99 Prince St), the high-street brand worn by Michelle Obama. It’s a sort of glamorous Gap stocked with cable-knit cashmere and pretty paisley-print blouses. Afterwards, top up blood-sugar levels with a giant cookie from Birdbath (160 Prince St). The frilly green awning of this Italian bakery, formerly known as Vesuvio, made it one of SoHo’s most recognisable shop fronts until it closed in 2009. It might have a new name, but it’s still worth stopping by for freshly baked treats. That done, retreat to the more peaceful streets of south SoHo.

It feels less developed down this end of the district. The artists’ studios that typified the area in the ’60s are now all squillion-dollar loft apartments and mega-bucks boutiques. Meanwhile, most of the galleries have moved on to cheaper Chelsea. In a surge of enthusiasm for the area’s past, the free-thinking Team Gallery (83 Grand St; teamgal.com) did the opposite, and relocated from Chelsea to south SoHo. Pop in to view against-the-grain works by New York artists, such as Cory Arcangel’s luminous digital displays.



**COBBLED  
STREETS,  
ZIGZAG FIRE  
ESCAPES –  
THIS IS THE  
NYC YOU’VE  
SEEN IN  
THE MOVIES**

The 2011 arrival of the flashy Mondrian Hotel (00 1 212 389 1000, mondriansoho.com; doubles from £208, room only) attracted more posh shops to cater for its moneyed guests. Cucumber-cool designer Alexander Wang opened up here at the same time (103 Grand St) – even if you can’t afford so much as a sock, you’ll have a fine time admiring the serene space inside, all milky walls and the occasional monochrome shirt. Step over the threshold at every-cool-kid-on-the-block’s favourite clothes

store, Opening Ceremony (35 Howard St), if just to view the bright mix of prints and flash-bulb shiny shoes.

A few doors down, E Vogel (19 Howard St; vogelboots.com) has been custom-making brogues and riding boots at this red-brick address since the ’60s, recently cobbling for the Abraham Lincoln outfit worn by Daniel Day-Lewis in the film. They take 14 weeks to make and cost a terrifying £1,000 a pair.

Take Mulberry Street north, past a thousand tricolour awnings – you’re in Little Italy now – until you get to Torrisi (250 Mulberry St; 00 1 212 965 0955, torrisinyc.com; four courses £46). This little lace-fronted Italian had to open a dedicated sandwich outlet next door to cope with demand. In the restaurant, you’ll get a four-course menu of sheep’s milk gnocchi and swordfish on polished wood seats and, next door, there’s the chicken parm (an escalope oozing mozzarella and tomato sauce; £8) – and glasses of vodka slush. >





**SATURDAY  
LOWER EAST SIDE**  
FOR BAGELS AND HIDDEN BARS

One of Manhattan's oldest neighbourhoods, the Lower East Side (LES) was once a congested slum. These days, its run-down laundromats and faded liquor stores are all part of the charm, sitting grittily between ritzy new concepts, and projecting the sense that this 'hood is open to anything.

To assimilate, wander down Broome Street between Orchard and Essex. On either side, sooty tenement buildings with iron fire escapes block the sunlight. Learn about the lives of immigrant families on a tour of restored apartments they used to live in at the Tenement Museum (103 Orchard St; [tenement.org](http://tenement.org); tours £14).

Modern-day LES is the kind of place where you can get away with specialising in one thing only. LES fans are very receptive to the array of popcorn flavours at Pop Karma (95 Orchard St; 00 1 917 675 7450, [popkarma.com](http://popkarma.com)) and the various meaty orbs at the Meatball Shop (84 Stanton St; 00 1 212 982 8895, [themeatballshop.com](http://themeatballshop.com)).

If you're on the go, grab a slice at red, green and white Rosario's Pizza (173 Orchard St; slices around £1.50). It's presided over by Sal, who will loudly and proudly declare his thin, deliciously greasy pizzas 'the best slice you ever ate'. He's not wrong.

Stick to one slice, because once you've taken pictures of artfully graffitied walls, you'll want to be ready for your next eat. There are snooze-inducing pastrami sandwiches at Katz's (*When Harry Met Sally*) Delicatessen (205 East Houston St; 00 1 212 254 2246, [katzsdelicatessen.com](http://katzsdelicatessen.com)), but *everyone* knows that. An admirable alternative is An Choi (85 Orchard St; 00 1 212 226 3700, [anchoinyc.com](http://anchoinyc.com)), which serves the sandwich *du jour*, Vietnamese *banh mi*.

The original, stuffed with five-spiced pork belly, is excellent (£5.50).

Thank your lucky stars that smoked-fish company Russ and Daughters (179 East Houston St; 00 1 212 475 4880, [russanddaughters.com](http://russanddaughters.com); bagels around £6) survived gentrification, because no deli does it better. It has been, in its own words, 'Appetizing since 1914'. You can choose any one of six or so smoked salmons before picking a cream cheese to pair it with, and something to put it in (a chewy pumpernickel bagel, obviously).

For dinner, throw yourself in at the deep end. A bonkers evening awaits if you select wd~50's tasting menu (50 Clinton St; 00 1 212 477 2900, [wd-50.com](http://wd-50.com); £98). Chef Wylie Dufresne loves reaching out for new gourmet heights, with combinations including sweet shrimp and pine needle, or yuzu milk ice with basil. He's always shaking up the menu, so there's never a dull moment.

Night-time is fun in the LES, but you wouldn't necessarily know it when you're standing on the street. It's hushed up. Delve in for cocktails at Freemans (191 Chrystie St; 00 1 212 420 0012, [freemansrestaurant.com](http://freemansrestaurant.com)), which is just elusive enough to feel like a secret; it lives at the end of a tucked-away alley. Inside, you'll find a series of beautiful nook-like rooms, trendied up with taxidermy on the walls.>



**OWNER SAL  
DECLARES  
HIS THIN,  
DELICIOUSLY  
GREASY  
PIZZAS  
'THE BEST  
SLICE YOU  
EVER ATE'**



**NYC'S NEXT BIG NEIGHBOURHOODS**

The city that never sleeps never stops evolving – when you return, try these edgy-yet-exciting districts. But be quick...

**Harlem** is shaking off its old bad vibes, and in their place are gospel choirs, jazz clubs and plates of soul food. When you're bored of burgers, Amy Ruth's will soothe you with fried chicken, waffles and peach cobbler (00 1 212 280 8779, amyruthsharlem.com; mains around £9).

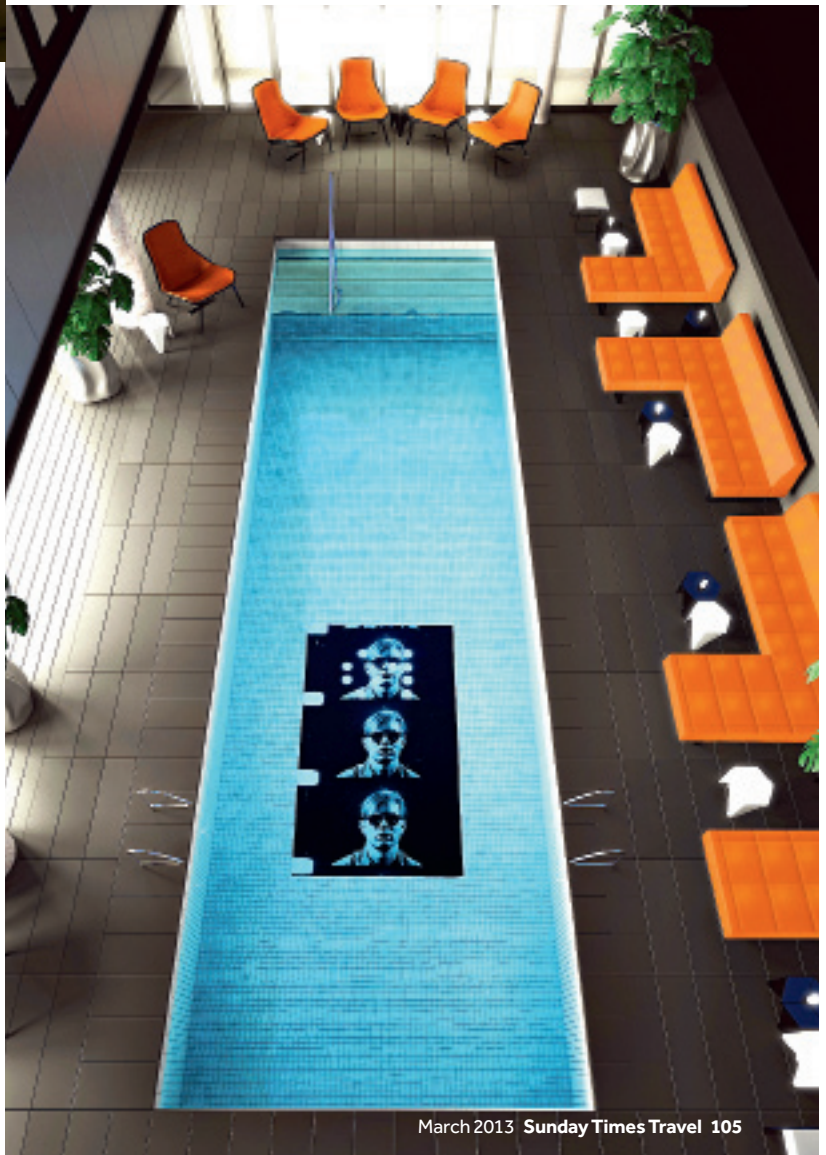
**Park Slope** is the Brooklyn address for young families with nifty buggies. It's a really good (and more wallet-friendly) bet for a weekend brunch when Manhattan is heaving. Try BKLYN Larder (00 1 718 783 1250, bklynlarder.com) for the cheddar and spring onion frittata sandwich on buttermilk biscuits (£2.80), or Du Jour Bakery (00 1 347 227 8953, dujourbakery.com) for 'monkey bread', a misshapen caramelised pastry, smothered with cinnamon (£1.80).

**Dumbo** is a neat little cobblestone area that's Down Under Manhattan Bridge Overpass (hence the name). It's ever so arty. Powerhouse Arena (00 1 718 666 3049, powerhousearena.com) is a massive, typically Dumbo bookshop, selling carefully selected books and stationery. St Ann's Warehouse is a similarly huge space, showcasing avant-garde theatre (00 1 718 834 8794, stannswarehouse.org).

**Astoria** sits across the river in Queens, with lots of green space and a steady flow of drinks. The Bohemian Hall and Beer Garden (00 1 718 274 4925, bohemianhall.com) is a giant, old Czech-style beer garden, while Sweet Afton (00 1 718 777 2570, sweetaftonbar.com) is smarter, with dim lights, an industrial feel and house cocktails.



Bread hot: above, artichoke dip, served alongside cocktails at current fave Freemans; left, a Lower East Side mural by artist/activist Keith Haring; below, Katz's famous sign and one of its pastrami sandwiches; right, the Andy Warhol filmstrip pool at Thompson LES hotel. Opposite, LES scenesters strike a pose; Katz's interior; take a pizza the action; LES graffiti; the city at dusk







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**BAFTA**  
awards



**SUNDAY**  
**THE WEST VILLAGE**

FOR LAZY STROLLS AND NOSTALGIC MUSINGS

New York is the place where global fads begin (thick-rimmed specs, drinks in jam jars, taxidermy). But the West Village doesn't go in for all that jazz. Its brownstones have been in place since the 1800s; walls are smothered in ivy; and wonky streets have names, not numbers. There are no major sights to tick off – this is the perfect place for coffee and watching people walking handsome dogs.

Succumb to refinement at Buvette (42 Grove St; 00 1 212 255 3590, [ilovebuvette.com](http://ilovebuvette.com); mains around £7). The dainty brunch includes dollops of jam and cream on perfectly twisted croissants and glossy marmalade *tartines*. Authors give radio interviews (the clack of coffee cups adds to the authenticity), while floaty dresses drift between counter and table. It's a tribute to a cutesy French *vie en rose* that never actually existed, but it's a nice place to pretend.

The action lies north: follow Grove Street until it bisects Bleecker. This tree-lined avenue is the busiest in the West Village due to its rows of shiny stores: Marc Jacobs, Burberry, Mulberry. It makes for a civilised afternoon's browsing, but the residents don't like it – they disapprove of the groomed shoppers that have taken over. Lord knows how they feel about Magnolia Bakery at number 401. Part of the *Sex and the City* bus tour, the queue for the crayon-coloured cupcakes here is never shorter than six people.

Carrie's stoop on Perry Street is another stop on the tour. It's a nice set of steps, but if it's famous homes you're interested in, there are ones that were actually lived in. The locals would suggest visiting Bob Dylan's old place on West 4th Street, or the White Horse Tavern (567 Hudson St), where Dylan Thomas supposedly drank himself to death (it's thought he really died from a combination of pneumonia and a dose of morphine).

Villagers prefer the past to the present, hence the popularity of beginning-of-time bookshop, Three Lives and Co (154 West

## Get me there

### GO PACKAGED

**Virgin Holidays** (0844 557 4321, virginholidays.co.uk) has hotels within reach of the areas featured and can sort three nights from £885pp, B&B (Heathrow flights). Or try **Thomson** (0844 050 2828, thomsonworldwide.com).

### GO INDEPENDENT

**American Airlines** (0844 499 7300, aa.com) flies from Heathrow and Manchester to JFK, from £514 return. Or try **Virgin Atlantic** (0844 209 7777, virgin-atlantic.com) for Heathrow to Newark or JFK, from £518. **BA** (0844 493 0787, ba.com) flies from Heathrow to JFK from £409.

### WHERE TO STAY

**Williamsburg: The Wythe** (00 1 718 460 8000, wythehotel.com; doubles from £125, room only) opened last year in a spot that should have gone long before – some rooms have direct views of Manhattan. Non-guests queue to reach the rooftop bar – you don't have to. Or stay at **King and Grove** (00 1 718 218 7500, kingandgrove.com; doubles from £110, room only), with its Miami-style pool. **SoHo:** Owned by Robert De Niro, **The Greenwich Hotel** (00 1 212

941 8900, thegreenwichhotel.com; doubles from £375, room only) is just outside SoHo, in TriBeCa. **Canal Park Inn** (thecanalparkinn.com; doubles from £118, B&B) is a former family home on the edge of SoHo that has been converted into four pretty little apartments. **Lower East Side:** The Bowery marks the western boundary of the LES, so the **Bowery Hotel** (00 1 212 505 9100, theboweryhotel.com; doubles from £200, room only) makes a fine base. **Thompson LES** (00 1 212 460 5300, thompsonhotels.com; doubles from £230, room only) is distinctly flashier, featuring graphic paintings and a rooftop pool with an image of Warhol. **West Village: One Fine Stay** (0800 612 4377, onefinestay.com; from £155 per night) rents selected residents' apartments when the owners are out of town – they have places in our four districts. **The Washington Square Hotel** (00 1 212 777 9515, washingtonsquarehotel.com; doubles from £88, room only) claims to have once housed Bob Dylan. Rooms are comfy, if not amazing.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

See [www.nycgo.com](http://www.nycgo.com).



Sign up here: clockwise from top left, the Bleeker/Perry intersection is close to the West Village action; the always-popular Spotted Pig; West Village brownies; cupcakes at Magnolia Bakery. Opposite, coffee stop in Greenwich Village

10th St; threelives.com). The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation called this red-and-black-fronted shop 'a pocket of civility' – the ultimate accolade in these parts. Here things are just the same as when it opened in the '60s: there are no section signs because bookworm staff can locate the tome you're after using their big brains, and in the evenings are readings from authors such as PD James and Jonathan Franzen.

But not *everything* new is bad. Even the most nostalgic New Yorkers can't fail to fall in love with the High Line, the disused elevated railway track that's been cloaked in exotic blooms and art installations. The southern tip pokes into the top of the West Village. Take the book you bought earlier and an Americano from Kava (803 Washington St; kavaync.com) and climb the stairs at the nearby Gansevoort Street entrance to the track. There are benches in the shaded woodland section, where the water features turn silver in the late afternoon sun.

For dinner: burger or lobster. The Spotted Pig (314 West 11th St; thespottedpig.com; burgers £12) isn't new, but that's the point. There's been a two-hour wait at this pot-plant-pretty bistro since it opened in 2004. Put your name down in person long before you want to eat because they don't take phone bookings. The surroundings are genteel and the burger is big but refined, pushed-up with a wedge of blue cheese and rosemary fries. Over on Charles Street, Mary's Fish Camp (No.64; 00 1 646 486 2185, marysfishcamp.com; mains around £14) has open windows, Florida posters on sky-blue walls, soft lobster rolls and silky clam chowder. Wind up at Cherry Lane Theatre (38 Commerce St; 00 1 212 989 2020, cherrylanetheatre.org) – the oldest continually operating off-Broadway playhouse is currently showing Jesse Eisenberg's *The Revisionist*, with the playwright and Vanessa Redgrave in the lead roles. ■