



New York New York

10 cool things to do in the Big Apple...

Manhattan, an island of horizons. Roughly 23 miles of skyscrapers and dreams flourish on this sliver of innovation; just about every corner fuses edgy timewarps with modernity. Of course, many visitors know the fun but standard things to do, such as touring the MOMA, viewing the city from the Empire State Building, getting lost in Central Park, or sipping drinks on the roof at 230 Fifth. And yes, most certainly make time to enjoy all of these, but remember: Manhattan also offers sublime and quirky interludes not found on the standard Big Apple beaten travel path. Tara Leigh Parks seeks out holiday pursuits that will expand your horizons like a true urban islander.

1 The High Line

The High Line is located on Manhattan's West Side. It runs from Gansevoort Street to West 34th Street, between 10th & 11th Avenues

www.thehighline.org

This elevated park stretches from the Meatpacking District to Hell's Kitchen. In the 1930s, trains ran on these elevated tracks above the streets, but they languished after closing in 1980. Sections One and Two are now open to the public as a linear park, with other sections undergoing renovation. Once completed, this green space will contain one and a half miles of artwork, food, and plants. Currently, sampling food and art around the 23rd Street Lawn proves popular; locals bring their dogs during work breaks. The High Line represents the removal of old construction, a testament to how recycling abandoned spaces can revive cities.

2

Bikram Yoga NYC

Four Manhattan locations: Upper West Side, Upper East Side, Midtown, and Flatiron.

www.bikramyoganyc.com

Former National Ballet of Canada and Broadway dancer Donna Rubin became certified in Bikram Yoga in 1998; former manufacturer Jennifer Lobo worked as communications director for D&G before falling in love with this heated yoga flow. Together they opened NYC's first Bikram Yoga studio to enlighten the city about the joys of yoga done in a hot room to promote focus, strength and healing of old injuries. Take time to preserve fitness and sanity through a selection of classes led by highly trained experts. All levels welcome.



3 The Stone

Located in the East Village on the corner of Avenue C and 4th Street
www.thestonetheatre.com

Located in the heart of the East Village, The Stone invokes the avant-garde element of this famous neighborhood to promote musical performances without distraction. No drinks or food are served, no advanced ticket sales allowed. In true non-conformist spirit, The Stone sells CDs online instead of at shows, with all proceeds going to musicians. People simply show up, pay a small cover and then step into a unique artist space to surrender to experimental sounds. Both famous performers and newbies appear at this unique non-profit. The Stone values freedom of expression and commits itself to thought-provoking performances. All ages welcome.



Public Theater

425 Lafayette Street, just below Astor Place
www.publictheater.org

Founded by the late great producer Joseph Papp, acting legends Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline, and Al Pacino have all trodden the boards of the Public Theater. The Public also produces the beloved Shakespeare in the Park every summer in Central Park, plus houses Joe's Pub for cabaret-style performances. Considered America's most prestigious producer of Shakespeare and new works, the theatre is housed in the former Astor Library, a must-see New York City Landmark. Notable for its exploration of classical and new works that push cultural boundaries. *The Agency And The Costing of Stone Jobs* runs till 18 November, and *King Lear* runs till 20 November.



5 Watson Adventures Scavenger Hunts

Various locations in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx
www.watsonadventures.com

To enhance corporate teamwork or enjoy an urban escapade, seek out Watson Adventures Scavenger Hunts. Players solve clues about objects found in various locations, as well as the location itself. Written by stand-up comedian and WASH founder Ben Watson, who has written for *Entertainment Weekly*, each clue requires creative teamwork and deduction. Watson makes sure the trivia sparks surprise and laughter, and players often end up enjoying drinks together after hunting. Private or public hunts occur all over the city, and receive rave reviews from the *New York Times* and ABC News. Themed hunts are also available.

6 Trapeze School New York

Three Manhattan locations: Hudson River Park, West 30th Street and Governors Island

www.newyork.trapezeschool.com

Relish the rush of gliding through the air, or the challenge of acrobatics and trapezine instruction at the Trapeze School of New York. Classes usually consist of up to four students, but private one-on-one and group bookings are available as well as bookings for corporate events that reinforce skill building and trust. Challenging the activity status quo, an indoor location offers a warm place to practise during colder months, while an outside summer locale offers an inspiring view of the Hudson River. Truly one-of-a-kind chances to fly like a bird through the urban jungle.



7 The Skyscraper Museum

39 Battery Place in Lower Manhattan
The Museum shares a building with the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Battery Park City
www.skyscraper.org

The Skyscraper Museum expounds upon the vertical horizons that make NYC so distinctive, and how these architectural giants influence design internationally. Learn unusual facts about these steel and glass gods from both a historical viewpoint and as a driving force of future design. The museum also examines cultural issues connected to skyscrapers, plus the architects who created them. The design of The Skyscraper Museum itself creates the illusion of standing many stories above Manhattan, and is the only museum of its kind in the world. Rotating exhibits and educational programmes are offered in addition to the core gallery.



Spin New York

48 East 22nd Street at 5th Ave,
in the Flatiron District

<http://www.spinnewyork.com>

Co-owner Susan Sarandon won an Oscar, and now she's winning Ping-Pong games at Spin New York. That's right, one of the hottest venues in the city consists of a huge bar, food, pool, VIP rooms, and Ping-Pong courts of people pelting balls at each other with wooden paddles. Fun! Available for corporate event bookings as well as other private events, or just walk in and start swinging. Spin is open during the day, but after 9pm it's over 21s only. Book a private session with a pro, or sip a cocktail while keeping your eye on someone else's balls!

8

Le Bain

848 Washington Street at 13th Street,
in the Meatpacking District

www.standardculture.com

Stylish people and a half door make Le Bain one of the sexiest venues anywhere. Perhaps the Jacuzzi in the middle of the dance floor adds a certain charm, too. Located on the 18th floor of the Standard Hotel, Le Bain also offers a roof deck bar. Sublime yet lacking in pretension, this hotspot definitely earned its hot reputation. Relax on the rooftop in a lawn chair while savoring Pop Chips, cookies, and cocktails. Spectacular views of downtown abound, so strut through the fern grass and take a peak. Just try not to be the first ever streaker in the Jacuzzi.

10 Bedlam

40 Avenue C, between 3rd and 4th
Streets, in the East Village

www.bedlamnyc.com

Hit Alphabet city for the ABCs of mayhem and cocktails at Bedlam. Featuring a macabre assortment of taxidermy, books, and diagrams of the human body, dancing underneath a moose head while sipping a martini qualifies as normal here. Designed to suggest the rich interiors of a 19th century gentleman's parlour, the club consists of 1,600sq ft including a full-service bar and one of the best sound systems in NYC. Freak out over the artifacts, dance like a maniac, or nurse some stiff medicine nestled in a cosy benquette. Crazy definitely appeals to the senses in this high-profile club.



Tara Leigh Parks is the author of the novel book, *Ghostly of Manhattan* (Scholar Publishing). She writes a blog called Tara Leigh, Inside Out, which features creative non-fiction and short stories. She splits her time between NYC and Chalfont, Pennsylvania.