

Non-Touristy Things to Do in NYC

Whether you are planning a last-minute trip, or interested in learning more about how the locals live in New York City, we've got you covered all right here for the Big Apple.

It can be your first time or far too many to count. There's still enough for everyone to find out about our favorite non-touristy things to do in NYC and to go around sharing.

Read on to find out more while jamming to Alicia Keys' *Empire State of Mind* hit!

Stroll And Enjoy Art at Socrates Sculpture Park in Queens

Want more than the Statue of Liberty or overcrowded Battery Park? As a 4.5-acre city park built over a landfill, Socrates park has dozens of interesting large-scale sculptures by local artists or activists. What's more interesting is seeing new collections popping in and out almost every month, and you can watch the artists work on the spot.

[Socrates Sculpture Park](#)

Wear Your Comfy Shoes For the High Line Elevated Park in Lower Manhattan

Not just any park, but the city's High Line was a railway track turned into a 1.5-mile safe pathway. We suggest this unique experience because you'll be walking above ground on what seems like a long bridge and encounter iconic street art and naturistic views. No clue where to start? Begin at Gansevoort St. and Washington St. in the Meatpacking District.

[The Highline](#)
[Meatpacking District](#)

Eat and People-Watch at Smorgasburg Open-Air Food Market

As an alternative to the touristy Chelsea Market, the Smorgasburg market is where you meet not just real New Yorkers but stuff your face with international dishes. Get a good feel of a typical USA food market every weekend from April till November. Plus, it makes a perfect share on a foodie's Instagram.

[Chelsea Market](#)
[Smorgasburg](#)

Wander Back in Time to the 30s at Eisenberg's Diner

If you're in the mood to eat something even more local yet avoid a less hectic crowd, then get a vintage feel of old New York at Eisenberg's sandwich shop. Opened in 1929, you can enjoy a classic tuna melt or ice cream while star-gazing at the old diner's walls lined with celebrity photos.

[Eisenberg's NYC](#)

Toast Atop an Elevated Acre in The Financial District

We certainly can't climb atop the Empire State Building like King Kong, but we can look out at NYC's skyline somewhere else. Unbeknownst to most, there is an elevated acre tucked away in the Financial District. Located on 55 Water St. near the East River and Wall Street metro, you may need to hunt for the escalator leading up to the small garden rooftop. From there, you can also see the Brooklyn Bridge.

[History of the Financial District](#)

Stop By Porto Rico Importing Co. Coffeehouse in Greenwich Village

If you happen to book your Airbnb in the West Village area, get the freshest and finest coffee at Porto Rico. Since 1907, the Italian family-owned business has also barely moved from Bleecker St. and has catered to many throughout history, right activists to new immigrant classes.

[Porto Rico](#)

Shimmy Down at Central Park's Roller Disco Fiasco

Suppose you catch yourself around Times Square during the warmer months. In that case, check out the nearby roller disco event hosted by Central Park's Dance Skaters Association. Rather than queue in a club line for hours or pay high entry fees, skate around for free to some old-school house and funk. Plus, the area switches to ice skating in the winter!

[Central Park Dance Skater Association](#)

Get Drunken Cozy at Brandy's Piano Bar in the Upper East Side

Full at a live jazz venue? Your first time in NYC can be at Brandy's. Way less pricey than a Broadway show's ticket, the small divey bar sets you back to a part of the city that many thought has long been dead. Talented piano players come on and are willing to take on scribbled song requests!

[Brandy's Piano Bar](#)

Unwind at One Of the Secret Speakeasies

Like most major large cities, New York has its hidden gems and beaten paths, one of them notoriously being the speakeasies scattered about the city. From the lower east side to the upper west side or among Brooklyn Heights' poshness, some of these retro-style bars remain throughout NYC, despite having gradually died out after the Prohibition era. We recommend hunting for them in the popular Tribeca area, Bushwick, or East Village areas.

[Speakeasies of the Prohibition](#)

Dress Up for Patent Pending in Tesla's Old Crib

For a calm night away from the bustle that's on Long Island City to Grand Central or midtown Manhattan, come down to the Radio Wave Building, starting around 4 P.M. Within an hour, its brunch or *Patent Coffee* area disappears when a "secret" accordion door opens up to become a cocktail lounge. The decorative brick walls and dim lighting of the speakeasy-style bar is a tribute to Nikola Tesla, who once lived in the building.

[Patent Pending](#)

Treasure Hunt on Canal Street in Chinatown

Apart from the touristy kayaking or lounging in Prospect Park, where it can get a bit overcrowded, you can visit Soho's Canal Street Market on a calmer weekday. This is where you can haggle your way through dozens of vendors selling knock-offs to bootleg versions. Talk about gritty, but the persistent crowd is at it every day and suits those who love a good treasure hunt.

[Canal Street Market](#)

Enlighten Thy Self at the Cloisters Museum on Washington Heights

Was the walking guided tour not enough, you think? If you're in or near Fort Tryon Park, which we always recommend, you'll find the Met Cloisters connected to the area. It's a less touristy alternative to those like the Metropolitan Museum of Art, MOMA, and Guggenheim exhibition. The serene French monasteries' gothic designs to their medieval imprints will leave you at ease (and maybe cure your hangover).

[Met Museum](#)

Conclusion

There we have it, folks! Beyond the jam-packed honking and hollering of New York traffic to getting poked by multiple selfie-sticks, you've learned now to dodge and twist at every corner—fleeing any tourist trap.

Although, let's admit it. The Empire State wouldn't be the same without all the chaos, its gritty charm, and that hustle and bustle. It's why we will always love NYC.