



Hip and Hidden Local Recommendations

New York: Brooklyn, NYC

All reviews and descriptions organized on this [Google Map](#).



Best Of:

Bagel: **Bagel Point** (Greenpoint)

New York is known for their bagels and Bagel Point has some of the best in the city. You can't leave without trying the infamous Rainbow Bagel, but if you prefer a classic go with the Pumpernickle Everything.

BBQ/Beef Rib: **Hometown BBQ** (Redhook)

Come here to get your fix of authentic, pit-smoked meats using the classic Southern technique of smoking on oak wood. Unequivocally, the best BBQ in south Brooklyn (owned by the same people as Red Hook Tavern). Rustic counter-service choice featuring slow smoked meats, craft



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beer & live music on weekends. MUST ORDER THE BEEF RIB! Beware that the line can get long at peak hours...

Breakfast Burrito: **Santa Fe** (Williamsburg)

After living in LA, my wife and I consider ourselves breakfast burrito connoisseurs. Santa Fe has incredible Green Chile Breakfast Burritos. In the morning, they open up a window and you order your burrito to go. While their burritos during breakfast are incredible, don't sleep on their burgers for lunch which are famous in their own right. Lastly, fairly priced for BK.

Coffee: **Devoción Coffe** (DUMBO)

An upscale spacious coffee shop with high ceilings, leather and wood elements and lots of greenery, it is quiet and pleasant ambiance and you pay for it. When you go try a kouign aman - a new NYC pastry obsession, a kind of a cross between a croissant and a Cinnabon roll, it is very good. Arrive early to snag a seat (this is freelancer HQ for the surrounding blocks, and tables go quickly), but once you're in, there's strong Wi-Fi and stronger coffee. We especially appreciate the daily newspapers and magazines available for catching up on the news the old-school way. There are multiple locations, including one in Williamsburg.

Fried Chicken: **Pies n' Thighs** (Williamsburg)

If Lurgers is a pilgrimage for steak lovers, than Pies n' Thighs is for the fried chicken lovers. It has a casual but fun vibe with great Southern comfort food. There is also a location on the Lower East Side.

IPAs: **Other Half Brewery**

If you love IPA this brewery is a must. Plus you can't beat the views of Manhattan.

Pancakes: **Chez Ma Tante** (Williamsburg)

Brunch and pancakes - come hungry!

Pizza: **Lucali's** (Red Hook)

It is always controversial to call something the best pizza when you are in NYC. However, I think most would agree that this the best you can get in the Brooklyn area. Unfortunately, it is a pain in the ass to get into but walk-in only. Some say it's the best, some say overhyped- if you're willing to show up at 4:00 to put your name on the list you can decide for yourself! Note that its BYOB and cash only.

Steak House: **Peter Lurgers** (Williamsburg)

A close one with St. Anselm but this is the quintessential steakhouse and a "must" pilgrimage for any steak lover. Over a hundred years old and a cash only institution, it feels old-school with



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its decor. Known for perfect cuts of meat a pro tip is to actually come at lunch for the “Luger-Burger”.

Wings: Roebling Sporting Club

This has the best wings in the area and a ‘humble’ vibe. It is a sports bar with great hospitality, bar food done exceptionally well. And the wings are gluten-free!

Cheese: Cheeseboat

This will become an obsession. Do a quick google search and bring Lactaid.

Restaurants:

Bangkok Degree (Gowanus)

This is a stylish Thai restaurant that serves excellent local Thai food. The restaurant is filled with indoor plants and known for its Thai Iced Tea and Massaman Curry.

Birds of a Feather (Williamsburg)

This is a hip restaurant with wonderful Szechuan Chinese food. Hard to find a better Sichuan. Get the turnip cakes!

Celestine (Dumbo)

The spot for wood-fired Mediterranean and Middle Eastern dishes. Come for the river views. Great brunch, flatbread, and branzino.

Diner (Williamsburg)

Simply “Diner,” this is a quirky spot within a renovated 1920s train car. Come for the American classics with one of the best burgers in Brooklyn and a solid roast chicken throughout the week. If you stay late pretty to get rowdy as hordes of BK hipsters swarm for late-night eating to the bumping beats of old-school hip-hop. Before you go, know that there are strictly no-reservations, so expect to wait for a seat. Assuming you do have to wait, head over to the bar for a strong drink at the bar or you can venture over for wine at Marlow & Sons.

Emily’s Pork Store (Greenpoint)

This is an amazing authentic, old school Italian deli. Sandwiches are classic and they do them extremely well.

Emmy Squared (Williamsburg)

This has hit the franchising world so its no longer unique to NYC. However, that doesnt change the fact that it gets rave reviews for its Detroit-style ‘za. Don’t forget that there is also get menu



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involving Italian sandwiches here. You can get spicy meatball, spicy chicken, and chicken parm, all served on pretzel buns.

Laser Wolf (Williamsburg)

Very chic and relaxed rooftop restaurant above the Hoxton with Israeli-style skewered snacks & Manhattan skyline views.

Llama Inn (Williamsburg)

A really solid spot for seasonal, shareable Peruvian dishes & Latin cocktails.

Lilia (Williamsburg)

Notoriously hard to get a reservation. The place where you have to set your alarm for 9:55am 30 days before when you want to go (reservations go live at 10:00am)! The restaurant is in a redone auto-body shop, and offers wood-fired Italian fare, and housemade pastas. Rumor has it that Missy Robbins, the chef, is an Obama family favorite. Try the rigatoni diavola!

Flatbush Counter (Prospect Heights)

This is a great option if you want a quick healthy lunch, or for picnic supplies in the park.

Karczma (Greenpoint)

A Polish joint with waitresses in traditional Polish dress standards. It has a rustic farmhouse feel. This can be a really fun date night.

K'Far (Williamsburg)

My friend Matt recommends K'Far and says that "K'far is a Philly-based Israeli bakery that recently opened their second location at the Hoxton hotel in Williamsburg. The pistachio bun is currently our favorite pastry--it's sweet, salty, nutty & moist--and the perfect size to share. We like to bring one home and heat it up in our toaster oven as a Saturday morning treat."

Kru (Williamsburg)

This is a favorite of the Infatuation team. They are known for their in modern takes on century-old Thai recipes. Don't get too cocky with the spices - it won't take you out but it should be respected. The infatuation describes the food as "nuanced, layered, and delicate".

Masalawala & Sons (Park Slope)

Another infatuation favorite, they say that "this is the only one where you actually feel like you're eating in someone's home. It's like you've been invited to a special family function where you'll sit under a wedding party's worth of gajras next to a mural featuring the man who inspired much of the food on the menu (the owner's father). In the back, more rainbow-bright murals surround



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an outdoor patio, where the people next to you won't mind if you join the audience watching a waiter shave fresh coconut meat into the shrimp curry at their table."

Misi (Williamsburg)

Another very difficult reservation but worth the effort to try. This is Lilia's sister restaurant where they also specialize in pastas! You'll need to log on at 8:59 28 days before your desired reservation. Worth it for the contemporary-chic Italian dining space dishing up elevated antipasto and handmade pasta dishes.

Pasta Louie (South Slope)

They make one fresh pasta noodle each day, and you pick your sauce. Come for the delicious food and lovely people. However, it's very popular so snag a reservation (or plan on a long wait!). Note that its patio only, so come in good weather!

Paulie Gee's (Greenpoint)

Arguably one of the most famous restaurants (which is saying something) in Greenpoint is Paulie Gee's pizzeria. This is considered one of the best spots in the entire city for Neapolitan style wood-fired pizza. The setting really has a 60s and 70s theme to it. Luckily, to get a taste of this famous pizza, you no don't have to wait for a table, you can always grab a slice to go!

Peter Pan Donut & Pastry Shop (Greenpoint)

Another Greenpoint icon that is 60+ years old. No trip to this little corner of Brooklyn is complete with donuts from Peter Pan. Stop by and choose whatever, you literally cannot go wrong. Worth getting here early enough to get one fresh out of the oven. Note: They're cash only and was the donut shop that MJ works at in Spiderman: No Way Home. Get the sour cream donut!

Pilot (Brooklyn Heights)

This is the sister spot to Hudson River favorite, Grand Banks. It is a 140-foot 1924 schooner docked just off Brooklyn Bridge Park, and has incredible views. This hotspot offers everything you'd want: oysters and lobster roll, but also a softshell crab po'boy, a tomato and watermelon salad, and a big selection of refreshing cocktails. If you are looking for a refreshing drink, tip back the Life at Sea, a house cocktail of vodka and bitter lemon syrup.

Red Hook Lobster Pound (Red Hook)

This is the freshest Maine lobster in this incredibly special part of NYC. Red Hook Lobster was one of the very first food vendors at the Brooklyn Flea and Smorgasburg, and quickly expanded to other pop up markets. She was crowned the "Best Food Truck in America" by the Daily Meal in June 2013, out of 400 trucks nationwide.



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Robertas (Williamsburg)

Robertas's is hidden by an industrial, kind of uninviting exterior, but it is a hidden gem with a succinct menu that includes a few wonderful pizzas, plus seasonal veggies and pasta dishes. There's an indoor, primarily communal seating area where you can watch the pizza-making go down in the open kitchen. The vibe is casual and the ambiance always lively, as it routinely draws big crowds. While you can expect to wait, it's a good place to have a drink.

Smorgasburg (Williamsburg)

America's largest weekly open-air food market aka "The Woodstock of Eating" per New York Times. Open Saturdays 11am-6pm

Sunday in Brooklyn (Williamsburg)

The spot where several people will undoubtedly have their phones out for an Instagram brunch. Make a reservation or just be prepared to wait, but we promise it's worth it. The atmosphere of this place is amazing, and the pancakes are famous. Put your name down, and walk a few blocks to Devoción for coffee and a really cool vibe. This is the closest you'll come to SoCal in BK. The avocado toast, the breakfast sandwich, the quinoa bowl—they're all here. There are also malted pancakes served with brown butter and seared mushrooms and ramp kimchi atop flaky grilled flatbread, so something for everyone.

Sushi Lin (Park Slope)

Amazing sushi, particularly the omakase option.

St. Anselm

Such a good spot for a steak mainly because it's no nonsense and everything is delicious! Order the hanger steak and a glass of chilled red - great night.

Sweetwater (Williamsburg)

The spot is moody, cozy, and maybe just a little French? Great spot for mussels and fries.

The Fly (Clinton Hill)

Great vibes and cool restaurant known for its delicious chicken and cocktails. Same owners as Hart's down the street, another favorite.

The Four Horseman (Williamsburg)

Known for great natural wine, make sure to show up early for a seat at the bar or make a reservation. It's a small spot that gets packed without fail. A favorite order of the Goop team is 'the pasta with Meyer lemon, bottarga, breadcrumbs, and parsley for yourself, and the budino



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for dessert. The good vibes are a testament to a loyal crowd of regulars who are comfortable in the space and enthusiastic about the food.'

The Good Fork (Red Hook)

When you go here the Goop team recommends the 'homemade pork dumplings—they don't disappoint. While there's plenty to choose from as far as mains go, her other specialty is the steak and eggs, served Korean-style with kimchee rice cakes. (You can sub in tofu for the steak.) The same warmth that Kim puts into her cooking is palpable in the space—the dining room is vaguely maritime, with a curved wood ceiling and small booths that feel cozy. Go on a Wednesday for ramen night. Trust.'

Uncle Louie G

Another favorite ice cream stop.

Drinking

Barely Disfigured (Boreum Hill)

Seductive speakeasy - Low-lit lounge featuring craft cocktails amid bordello-inspired decor in a one-time massage parlor.

Boheim Bar (Cobble Hill)

Hip local bar, cool spot for drinks/snacks with great music/sound system.

Elsa (Greenpoint)

This spot's a hidden gem. Hands down, one of the best cocktail bars in Brooklyn. Great for a casual drink or date, and not at all pretentious. If not for the neon-lit "Elsa" sign and window showing the interior, I'd assume this were a. Hip and chill ambiance, and cute outdoor seating in the back. Snacks like nuts, olives, and a charcuterie board are available to order, but don't come here on an empty stomach if you're looking for something of more substance. I'm not much of a drinker but I love the Frozen Painkiller and Elsa's Dark and Stormy. Excellent bar for fancy cocktails

Do or Dive (Clinton Hill)

Down-to-earth local pub serving beer & cocktails amid weathered-brick walls & throwback decor. Dog friendly. Laid-back.

Finback Brewery (Gowanus)

Very cool local brewery. Don't let the nondescript exterior fool you! Great beers, and on weekends fantastic dumplings and asian foods as well.



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Grand Army (Boerum Hill)

Hip oyster and cocktail bar. Oyster happy hour weekdays 5-6pm, weekends 2-4. One of our favorite cocktail bars. They have great oysters along with some of the best seasonal cocktails we've found in the city.

Gold Star Beer Counter (Prospect Heights)

Best local spot for beer snobs, but also has delicious sandwiches!

Horses and Divorces (Williamsburg)

Dive-y bar with pool table and *vibes*

Pig Beach (Gowanus)

Decent BBQ spot, but you come here for the massive outdoor patio and party vibes. Good for large groups!

Public Records (Boerum Hill)

Cooler local cocktail bar, with the best sound system you might ever hear. Also has a separate small DJ/dance club venue for those who care for such things

Radegast Hall and Biergarten (Williamsburg)

Class and relatively authentic Biergarten. Good for meeting up with friends.

Skinny Dennis (Williamsburg)

A honky-tonk in Brooklyn? Oh yeah, and a great one at that. Pop in for a beer and shot, or Willie's Frozen (boozy) Coffee drink (named after Willie Nelson) and enjoy the rotating array of bands cranking out country and roots-rocks for an appreciative crowd.

Sunnys (Red Hook)

Quintessential cool Brooklyn bar. Live music.

Surf Bar (Williamsburg)

Great dive, better backyard.

Talea Beer Co. (Williamsburg)

Female owned & run brewery. Try out one of their sour beers.

The Commodore (Williamsburg)



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A classic Brooklyn dive bar with loud music, outdated furniture and the smell of old beer. You have to get a Pina Colada and their fried chicken sandwich (and the honey biscuits!). Order the hot breast and a piña colada to instantly transport yourself back to age 22.

The Lot Radio (Williamsburg)

Outdoor bar to listen to incredible djs spin. A small, fenced in, gravel lot, with seats and tables and a live DJ playing all day. They sell coffee and pastries, as well as beer and wine. Grab a drink and enjoy this idyllic Brooklyn spot.

Turkey's Nest (Williamsburg)

We thought you might like to know that at this legendary dive bar, you can get a beer or a 16 oz. margarita in a to-go cup so that you can walk around the park with it, if that is the kind of day you want to have.

TØRST (Greenpoint)

Hip, wood-clad Danish bar doing boutique beers & a compact food menu.

Activities:

Brooklyn Bridge and Park (DUMBO)

This is a great spot to take a walk. On one side you'll see the Manhattan skyline and on the other, some of the most beautiful old homes and streets in Brooklyn (we got our engagement photos done here). You will recognize many different car commercials and engagement shoots filmed around here....

Brooklyn Botanic Garden (Park Slope)

Very beautiful botanic garden, with an especially impressive Japanese garden. Also features a really good breakfast/lunch cafe that's only accessible with admission!

Vital Climbing Gym (Williamsburg)

For those looking to exert energy, this is a very cool climbing gym. A day pass will not only let you go rock climbing, there's also a full gym, saunas, yoga classes, and a rooftop with beautiful views of the city.

Heatonist (Williamsburg)

Stop by to buy (or sample) iconic hot sauces, including those featured on Hot Ones.

Domino Sugar Park (Williamsburg)



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Great hipster waterfront park has a taqueria, Other Half brewery, Roberta's pizza restaurant and an ice cream shop. Take in the view with a hang on the grass or a lounge, or play a game of sand volleyball or bocce.

Louis Valentino, Jr. Park and Pier (Red Hook)

Nice little park and pier on the water, with views of the Statue of Liberty and NY harbor. Grab a couple beverages from a bodega, and come here to hang out and watch the sunset before dinner at Red Hook Tavern!

Prospect Park

Visit Prospect Park on Sunday during the day to check out an assortment of local cuisine provided by food trucks. "Brooklyn's Backyard", and one of the primary reasons we love where we live. It's almost as big as Central Park, more beautiful, and without the tourists. Lakes, forested areas, and large grassy lawns, not to mention our wedding venue at the Boathouse!

Rooftop Pools William Vale (Williamsburg)

If you're staying at the William Vale, there is a rooftop pool that's free for hotel guests (and \$ per day for those not staying at the hotel).

Syndicated Bar Theater Kitchen (Bushwick)

Movie theater showing recent classics, plus a restaurant & bar serving American fare & cocktails. It is a favorite place for dates since they always have two different things playing on the back wall and so many options to eat from meat to vegan. Never have been disappointed here.

The Gutter (Greenpoint)

Old school bar with classic ten pin bowling set up! Old school vibe. The beer prices are fantastic and the bowling is great. There's only 8 lanes so I recommend checking in a bit beforehand in case there's a wait. Love the fact that you can order food delivery to this spot since they don't have a kitchen! Old-school, low-tech bowling alley with an attached barroom that hosts live music & has a selection of American craft beers. Divey bowling. Cheap beer. Incredible bathroom.

The Royal Palms Shuffleboard Club (Gowanus)

Unique and fun place to spend the day hanging with friends and having drinks. Shuffleboard is easy and fun for everyone.