

ONE DAY IN BROOKLYN WITH MRS. LIMESTONE

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NOTES WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Visiting NYC and want to see something a little different this time? Brooklyn is your friend. Come, take a look around. We don't bite. Much.

You know when you plan to visit somewhere new you'll ask a friend in the know to give suggestions. Consider this guide just that - a friendly local's recommendations to make the most of your time here.

With more than 70 square miles holding more than 2 ½ million residents, this is not a small town – you won't be able to see most or even much of it in a short jaunt. Don't let that deter you – there is loads to see even if you only have a day to poke around.

Brooklyn is broken into distinct neighborhoods with sometimes hard to distinguish boundaries. My suggestions are mostly focused in neighborhoods in Northwestern Brooklyn for several reasons. First, public transportation is very good. Second, it's close to Manhattan so it's easiest for tourists to pop in. Third, I live here and think it's the cat's pajamas. There are many, many other wonderful neighborhoods to explore in Brooklyn which I'm shamelessly leaving out here. There is only so much you can do in a single day. If you have time to roam, I urge you to explore.

You'll see I've indicated various points of interest by neighborhood. This should help you plan your trip.

SEE THE SIGHTS

Ready for your day in my fine borough? Be sure to wear comfortable shoes – you'll thank me later. Assuming you are staying in Manhattan, hop on the 6 train downtown and get off at the Bklyn Bridge City Hall stop where you'll start your walk cross the:

BROOKLYN BRIDGE Likely the most iconic stop you'll make on your trip. This beauty is open for all to traipse across whenever the mood strikes. And it's absolutely free! Do yourself a favor and take a stroll. Don't forget your camera – the scenery and the people watching can't be beat. After you've made the trek across the bridge's footpath, exit off the bridge and double back toward the river down Fulton Street toward:

FULTON FERRY *nabe: DUMBO* This pier is another fab photo spot as you stand in the shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge with the Manhattan and Williamsburg Bridges looming in the distance. (If walking across the bridge on foot isn't your bag, you can ride a water ferry directly here.) Take in the view while enjoying some of the worlds best ice cream (see the EAT section) and letting the lapping river current lull you into a picture perfect moment in Brooklyn. Even a jaded life long resident like me, can't resist this spot's appeal. A few minutes walk away you will find...

JANE'S CAROSEL *nabe: DUMBO* Set against one of the most iconic New York scenes, this restored antique carosel is fun for all ages and surprisingly reasonable at just \$2 a ride. Just a stones throw away you'll find...

BKLYN BRIDGE PARK *nabe: DUMBO* Only a few years ago this entire area was an off limits working set of piers. The city has transformed it into a great place to take a stroll, hit a well designed playground or have a picnic.

Aside from the sights above, walk around the neighborhood a bit to take in the former industrial area that shares its great views with some of the best food and shops in town.

You could easily spend the entire day enjoying **DUMBO** but if you are in the mood to see something a little bit different, make your way to Park Slope. The area features historic architecture, restaurants, shops and an expansive park. **2** toward Flatbush to the Grand Army Plaza stop

GRAND ARMY PLAZA *nabe: Park Slope* Head toward the giant arch for a 360 view of the area. Enjoy the fountain and the insane traffic pattern for a minute before moving on. You are at the very corner of Park Slope and Prospect Park. If you stopping by on a Saturday, cross the street for the greenmarket – even if you aren't shopping for groceries, you can sample some local fruits, cheeses and breads. If the market isn't your thing, there is plenty else to do here including the **BOTANIC GARDENS**, **BROOKLYN MUSEUM** and **PUBLIC LIBRARY**. And of course there is **PROSPECT PARK** loaded with gems including the **ICE SKATING RINK**, **ZOO** and **CAROUSEL**. Each of these park attractions are spread out so best to plan ahead if you want to partake in one or more. After you've had your fill of the plaza, mosey on over to the west side of the park fence for a few blocks until you reach:

MONTGOMERY PLACE *nabe: Park Slope* By no means exhaustive, this is Brooklyn architecture for those with short attention spans. One of the most interesting blocks for row house appreciation. If you want to see more, just stroll around the surrounding blocks to your heart's content. If your stomach is growling or your wallet howling for a release, you just happen to be in prime Park Slope – a plethora of restaurants and shopping await you a few blocks away along the main drags of Seventh and Fifth Avenue.

While the above itinerary with some eating and shopping stops factored in is more than enough to fill your day, it should be noted there are several other attractions that might be worth your time if you have a particular interest including:

NEW YORK TRANSIT MUSEUM *nabe: Brooklyn Heights*
BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY *nabe: Brooklyn Heights*
BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC *nabe: Park Slope*
PROSPECT PARK AUDUBON CENTER *nabe: Park Slope*
WOLLMAN'S ICE SKATING RINK *nabe: Prospect Park*
PROSPECT PARK CAROUSEL *nabe: Prospect Park*

SAVOR FAVORITE TASTIES

If there is something Brooklynites know how to do, it's eat. This borough can be a foodies dream come true if you make the right picks. Restaurant competition here is extremely stiff and only the best survive for long. If you're here just for the day, you'll have to make some tough decisions. Choose wisely.

GRIMALDI'S PIZZERIA *nabe: DUMBO* The restaurant recently moved in larger building at the corner so the line is more bearable the dining room less cramped. If the line isn't too long, its worth a stop for good thin crust pizza. Word to the wise: Wait for the pizza to cool before chomping down, you'll be nursing a burnt tongue for the rest of the day otherwise. 1 Front Street

JULIANA'S PIZZA *nabe: DUMBO* Despite the name, this pizzeria is run by the original Grimaldi who sold his namesake restaurant years ago and has come out of retirement to run this joint. In other words, this is the real old school deal. 19 Old Fulton Street

BROOKLYN ICE CREAM FACTORY *nabe: DUMBO* Worth the hype and line, this little manufactured cottage sits right on the pier and serves up delicious home made ice cream in a few spectacular flavors. I'm partial to the coffee but Mr. Limestone swears by the vanilla – no worries all of the flavors are delish.2 Cadman Plaza W

SCALINO *nabe: Park Slope* The very definition of that little restaurant only the locals frequent – this unassuming place serves up a small menu of authentic and tasty Italian dishes. The owners are always there to welcome you with a smile. The braised oxtails over polenta is Mr. Limestone's favorite while I'm partial to the simple but delicious self titled pasta dish that features ground turkey in the sauce. 347 7th Ave

AL DI LA *nabe: Park Slope* Adventurous Italian is how I'd describe the fare at this restaurant with a bright yellow sign. One of their most famous dishes is the braised rabbit but the entire menu is much more creative than you'll find at most Italian restaurants. Extremely popular so prepare to wait. 248 5th Avenue

TALDE *nabe: Park Slope* A truly inventive Asian American fusion menu awaits anyone brave enough to wait for a table. Run by Top Chef contestant Dale Talde. 363 7th Ave.

BLUE RIBBON *nabe: Park Slope* One our favorite brasseries - fine food in a casual setting. We recommend the steak for 2 and the grilled calamari. Should you be in the mood for seafood, their oyster selection is top notch. 280 5th Ave

LA BAGEL DELIGHT *nabe: Park Slope* Our second favorite bagel spot serves up the crusty on the outside, chewy on the inside ones that NYC is famous for. If you have a hankering, this is the spot. 122 7th Avenue

CAFE GRUMPY *nabe: Park Slope* This tiny storefront is part of a Brooklyn success story (you might recognize the name if you watch HBO's Girls) for good reason. The best latte in the world keeps me coming back. 383 Seventh Avenue

Smorgasburg *nabe: Dumbo* If you happen to be in the area on a Sunday when this food fair is open, be sure to save room. The ultimate in experiencing the latest and greatest in local food and drink. Check the bkflea.com website for dates.

SPEND BROWSING AND BUYING

You'll be hard pressed to find bargains in Brooklyn – this is New York City afterall. Rents are high and finicky customers abound. But if it's well curated collections, there is no shortage here.

JACQUES TORRES CHOCOLATE *nabe: Dumbo* While this shop could easily have ended up in the food section, I think it's best left for souvenirs. In short - trendy chocolates in pretty packages perfect for that sweet tooth you have waiting for you at home. If you are visiting on a cold day, treat yourself to a very rich hot chocolate for the road. 66 Water Street

NORMAN & JULES *nabe: Park Slope* If you have little ones in tow or waiting for you back home, do not miss a stop at this fashionable toy store that has a secret garden playground for tots hidden in the back. 158 7th Avenue

BROOKLYN FLEA *nabe: Fort Greene* If you're here on a Saturday in the spring, summer or fall, make your way to this modern flea market that has great local vendors and tasty nibbles from all over. While bargains are hard to come by, there is no shortage of things to fill your suitcase and your belly. Entirely outdoors so sunny days are best. 176 Lafayette Ave

BROOKLYN SUPERHERO SUPPLY COMPANY *nabe: Park Slope* You can actually buy a can of gravity and a secret identity kit here. I'm not kidding. Their storefront is awesome. Nifty packages with an even better goal. Sales from the store help support a non-profit organization that provides free tutoring for children. Good idea all around. 372 5th Ave

BROOKLYN GENERAL *nabe: Columbia Waterfront* A bit out the way but should you happen to have wheels, this is a great stop for anyone who sews/knits. The staff are always willing to answer a question and seem to genuinely love their merchandise. You'll pay extra for the TLC but the warmth makes up for it. 128 Union Street

LOOM *nabe: Park Slope* Defying definition this little shop has all sorts of cute stuff from a few choice pieces of hip clothing to pretty cards to funky jewelry. 115 7th Avenue

WEST ELM MARKET *nabe: Dumbo* Easily one of my favorite stores, this shop is filled with stylish everyday living basics for the kitchen, laundry and storage with lots of products made by local companies. 50 Washington St.

CLAY POT *nabe: Park Slope* Don't expect much pottery here, it's the jewelry cases that are the real draw. Lots of handmade or unusual pieces here - great if you are looking for a little trinket as a selfish splurge or a wedding band. 162 7th Ave

STERLING PLACE *nabe: Park Slope* Another gift shop locally owned. This time the focus is more on home décor and less on wearable style but you'll find a little of everything here. 162 7th Avenue

BUILD IT GREEN *nabe: Gowanus* Only the die hard DIYer will appreciate this place but its can sometimes be a hidden gold mine for every kind of house related salvage you can imagine. 69 9th St.

FILM BIZ RECYCLING *nabe: Gowanus* If you enjoy a good junk store, this is a fun one. A non profit that sells items donated from film sets, you never know what you might find. 540 President St

STUFF

OTHER RANDOM TIDBITS

Rather than including tedious directions on these pages, I suggest you make your picks and visit www.hopstop.com for directions. Just enter where you want to go and it will tell you exactly how to get there using the NYC public transportation system. Really can't be beat.

While taxi cabs can easily be hailed from every corner in Manhattan, you'll find them more difficult to find in Brooklyn. You really don't need to take a cab but should your heel break (remember what I said about comfortable shoes?) or you find yourself with too much shopping bounty to lug it back, you can call car service for a car to take you back to your hotel. There are a lot of them but I use one called

Church Avenue. Their number is (718) 633-4444.

If you'd like to spend more time in Brooklyn but don't want to go it alone, there are a few tour companies that do speciality tours.
<http://www.brooklynwalkingtour.com/>
<http://www.asliceofbrooklyn.com/>
<http://www.urbanoyster.com/>
<http://www.bigonion.com/>

I've done my best to include accurate information in this mini guide. If I made a mistake, I'm truly sorry and I hope you'll let me know about it. With that in mind, if there is something you've done, eaten or purchased here that you want to rave about - I'd love to hear it. Email me your notes at bklimestoner@aol.com.

If you're still reading, I want to wish you a fabulous trip. I hope you enjoy visiting Brooklyn much as I enjoy living in it.

For more about living in Brooklyn, visit my blog

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