

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 you some suggestions. Consider this guide just that - one person'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.) You'll likely be able to tell you have arrived by both the amazing view and huge line for pizza. The charm of this once entirely industrial area isn't quite lost yet – walk down the cobblestone streets, take a rest on a bench in Brooklyn Bridge Park, have some of the world's best ice cream, enjoy a designer hot chocolate or just enjoy the atmosphere. Even a jaded life long resident like me, can't resist this area's appeal. Once you've had your fill of this part of town, it's time to move on to ritzier digs. Make your way away from the river, back up Old Fulton Street, right on Everit St to Columbia, right on Pierrepont St. until you get to the:

PROMENADE *nabe: Brooklyn Heights* Brooklyn's terrace directly facing downtown Manhattan. This pedestrian walkway has great views of Manhattan's skyline on one side and a peek into the posh homes of Brooklyn's upper echelon on the other. The promenade is a short walk in of itself but make a turn down any number of blocks and you can delight in the

wonderful architecture of the residential blocks that surround. If you turn down the right street, you might think you walked on a movie set – and you'd be right. Many a movie has filmed here. After you've taken in the scenery, walk down Montague Street for a cuppa and window browsing before hopping on the 2 or 3 train located on Court Street. 5 stops and you're at:

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 fabulous 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, boat house, 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 as far as I'm concerned. 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* It's not unusual to find a line that goes to the end of the block here. Often the wait for inside table is much shorter than a pie. If the line isn't too long, it's worth a stop for good thin crust pizza. Surly waitstaff, a cramped dining room and overloaded décor make for an old school Brooklyn treat. 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. 19 Old Fulton St

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 cuisine. At least one of the two brothers that own the place is always there to welcome you with a smile. The braised oxtails over polenta (when available) 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 Avenue

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 hanker-ing, this is the spot. 122 7th Avenue

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 hard to nab a table on a walk in. 248 5th Avenue

APPLEWOOD *nabe: Park Slope* If there is a restaurant that personifies this part of Brooklyn, Applewood is it. Sustainable ingredients from local farms, a husband and wife duo as owners and classic Amercian preparations await you here. It's hard to resist the charm if good food that is good for the earth appeals. As you'd expect, the menu is varied but always fresh. 501 11th Street

BLUE RIBBON *nabe: Park Slope* There is actually two restaurants here. One our favorites is the brasserie on the corner (sushi is right next door). We recommend the steak for 2 and the grilled calamari. Should you be in the mood for seafood, their oyster selection is top notch. Great food, friendly service, and cozy booths keep us coming back. 280 5th Ave

EL POLLO *nabe: Park Slope* This tiny hole in the wall serves up delicious, cheap Peruvian fare. I suspect the food isn't authentic but who cares? Their chicken stew with rice and beans is a winner for lunch or dinner. 291 5th Avenue

CAFÉ DU NORD *nabe: Park Slope* I wandered in here by complete accident one day and was struck by the style that oozes out of this teeny outpost. If you appreciate pretty interiors, you won't be sorry you stopped here. Their coffee is tasty too. 158 Berkeley Place

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 shoppe 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

CITY FOUNDRY *nabe: Boerum Hill* This is a mecca for industrial chic and the displays are lovely. If you are ever in the need for a vintage dentist chair or druggist cabinet, this is the first place to look. Prices are outrageous but it's such a fun shop to browse I can't resist recommending it. Stop in for a look but don't expect a friendly attitude by the staff – the only time I was able to get the employees attention was when I was warned that photographs weren't allowed. 365 Atlantic Avenue (open Fri to Sun, closed Mon; T-Th by appt. only)

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 packaging with an ever 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

SCAREDY KAT *nabe: Park Slope* A fun shop that carries loads of lovely letterpress but other great gift finds as well. You can

tell whoever owns this store spends a lot of time finding just the right thing. 229 5th Avenue

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

HOUSING WORKS THRIFT STORE *nabe: Brooklyn Heights* Think upscale Salvation Army. As with any thrift shopping, it's hit or miss but you just might find a Prada bag or Eames chair here for a discount. The best part is that proceeds go to a good cause. 122 Montague Street

BOB & JUDI'S COOLECTIBLES *nabe: Park Slope* Great little hole in the wall where you might find a gem or spend a few minutes admiring the bric a brac. 217 5th Ave

manly needs like leather jackets and jeans and cufflinks. Cute concept. 192 5th Avenue

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. In other words, this is a disclaimer that you shouldn't put too much stock in anything I say. 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 **WWW.BROOKLYNLIMESTONE.COM**